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Why sickness kills men faster than women



Some newly graduated Ordinary Seamen at the Nigerian Navy Basic Training School, Onne, Rivers State, after their passing-out-parade, last weekend.



Group hails Tinubu for intervening in Benin Republic coup attempt

**Commission exonerates
Ned Nwoke from
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Ugboko land saga**



**FG arraigns
ex-aviation
minister
Stella Oduah**

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internal democracy,
prepares for 2027
return**



Malami

EFCC detains ex-AGF Malami over recovered Abacha loots

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has detained a former Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami, SAN, following his inability to meet the bail conditions granted to him.

A source from the commission who confirmed the development, said that Malami was still in the custody till 10.00p.m on Tuesday for failing to meet the bail requirement.

The former minister has been asked by the anti-graft agency to clear himself of issues relating to money laundering, especially operation of suspicious accounts.

"We have detained the him over terrorism financing and the whereabouts of Abacha loot recovered from Switzerland and Island of Jersey in the UK.

"He would remain in custody until he fulfils the requirements.

"We arrested him for not meeting his bail conditions and he will remain in our custody until he meets those conditions.

"He is presently in our custody. He was initially granted bail but did not meet the conditions. The offences

against him are many," the EFCC source said.

The commission had asked the former minister to be appearing daily for interrogation through the December.

"Presently, we are investigating him for 18 different offences. Some of them are money laundering, abuse of office and terrorism financing.

We cannot put a figure to the amount involved now because we keep uncovering some of the deals as we investigate," the source disclosed.

Malami had insisted that allegations against him were "fabricated."

"For the avoidance of doubt, my public record in office stands in direct contradiction to any insinuation of complicity in terrorism financing.

"During my tenure as Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, I worked with other arms of government and relevant institutions to strengthen—not weaken—Nigeria's legal and institutional framework against money laundering and the financing of terrorism," he said.

Man, 24, arraigned over alleged intent to steal

A 24-year-old man, Johnson Emmanuel, was on Wednesday, charged before an Ota Magistrates' Court in Ogun, for allegedly entering into an uncompleted building with intent to steal.

Emmanuel, whose address was not provided, is standing trial on charges bordering on attempt to steal.

He, however, pleaded not guilty to the charge.

The prosecutor, ASP E.O. Adaraloye, told the court that the defendant committed the offence on Nov. 12, at about 6.00 a.m. at Pavillion Estate, in Ilogbo road, Ota.

He alleged that the defendant entered into an uncompleted building, belonging to one Mr Timothy Faleru, a nominal

complainant, with intent to steal from the property.

He alleged that the defendant however, ran out of luck as he was caught by a vigilance group and handed over to the police.

The prosecutor said that the offence contravenes the provisions of section 509 of the Criminal Law of Ogun, 2006.

The Magistrate, Mrs O.O. Fadairo, granted the defendant bail in the sum of N100,000 with one surety in like sum.

She ordered that the surety must reside within the court's jurisdiction and must be gainfully employed with evidence of tax payment to the Ogun Government.

She adjourned the case until Dec. 22, for hearing.

Police decry rising cases of gender-based violence in Ebonyi

By Victor Eze

The Police Command in Ebonyi on Saturday decried the rising cases of gender-based violence (GBV) and human trafficking across the nation, calling for an end to the crimes.

The Command made the call in Abakaliki during a commemorative march marking 70 years of women in policing in Nigeria.

Women police officers in the state, who marched through major roads of Abakaliki, also called for an end to corruption, drug abuse, child abuse, domestic violence, drug trafficking, and female genital mutilation (FGM), among other societal ills.

The Ebonyi State Commissioner of Police, Mrs Adaku Uche-Anya, who led the march, said that women have been en-rolled in the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) since 1955.

"Today, Nov. 29, the command joined the rest of the nation to celebrate 70 years of dedicated service by



Adaku Uche-Anya

women in the police force," Uche-Anya said.

Also speaking, ACP Bridget Onukaogu, Command Coordinator of the Nigeria Women Police (NIWOPOL), expressed appreciation to the Inspector-General of Police, IGP Kayode Egbetokun.

"We thank the IGP for recognising the contributions of women in the Nigeria Police Force and for his continued support to women.

"We also commend the Force Gender Advisor, AIG Aisha Abubakar, as well as

CP Adaku Uche-Anya, for their steadfast leadership and commitment to advancing the role of women in policing," Onukaogu said.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the awareness walk ended at the popular Udensi Roundabout in Ebonyi's capital.

The lineup of activities for the celebrations includes a Community and Career Outreach on Dec. 3 and a Women Police Symposium on Dec. 5.

FG arraigns ex-aviation minister Stella Oduah



Oduah

The Federal Government on Wednesday arraigned a former Minister of Aviation, Stella Oduah in an Abuja High Court over alleged fraud of N2.4 billion.

She is arraigned alongside Gloria Odita, on a five-count charge bordering on alleged fraud, obtaining by false pretence, and criminal breach of trust.

The prosecution alleged that the defendants conspired in January 2014 to obtain a total of N2,469,030,738.90 from the Federal Ministry of Aviation through Broad Waters Resources Nigeria Ltd and Global Offshore Marine Ltd under alleged fraudulent claims.

The prosecution further alleged that Oduah and Odita "agreed amongst themselves to obtain a sum of Two Billion, Four Hundred and Sixty-Nine Million, Thirty Thousand,

Seven Hundred and Thirty-Eight Naira, Nine Kobo (2,469,030,738.90) by false pretence.

"Pretending that the said sum represented 'Cost of Technical Supervision' and 'Security Integrated and Logistics Support Services,' a representation you knew to be false."

The offence violates Sections 8(a) and 1(1)(a) of the Advance Fee Fraud Act and is punishable under Section 1(3).

The government alleged that on January 13, 2014, the defendants "obtained the sum of Eight Hundred and Thirty-Nine Million, Seven Hundred and Eighty Thousand, Seven Hundred and Thirty-Eight Naira, Nine Kobo (839,780,738.90) by falsely pretending that the said sum represented 'Cost of Technical Supervision.'"

In count three alleges

that on February 12, 2014, the defendants obtained 1,629,250,000 from the ministry through Global Offshore Marine Ltd, claiming it was for "Security Integrated and Logistics Support Services," a representation the prosecution says was false.

In counts Four and Five, the FG accused Oduah, as minister at the time, of dishonestly misappropriating the same sums earmarked for a contract awarded to 1-Sec Security Nigeria Ltd.

The charge states that she "dishonestly misappropriated the sum by authorising the transfer of the said sum, which act is a breach of your official trust," contrary to Section 311 and punishable under Section 315 of the Penal Code.

The defendants however, pleaded not guilty to the charges preferred against them.

EDITORIAL

NFSS Bill: Tinubu looking for solution to insecurity, but ignoring way-out

The case of insecurity in Nigeria today has become a source of serious concern to citizens. Though, security threat is not limited to Nigeria, but the level of terrorism, banditry and kidnapping is taking on our toes. The federal government under President Bola Tinubu has been looking for solution to this menace, but seems not to understand what it needs to do in order to curtail the activities of these enemies of the nation.

Many people have recommended the use of already-made security outfit that can take immediate action instead of paying lip-service. The bill to establish an agency, Nigeria Forest Security Service (NFSS), which was hitherto known as Nigeria Hunter and Forest Security Service (NHFSS) is said to have passed second-reading on the floor of the National Assembly and currently awaiting presidential assent. And instead of the president's signature, which will make NFSS one of the statutory security organizations, the government is rather looking the other way round.

Investigations reveal that Nigeria's total landmass covers 92 million hectares. The forested corridor is about 9.1 million hectares; meaning, if we divide the entire Nigeria into nine, one-over-nine is forested. Nigeria has 1,129 forest reserves, 29 game reserves, 17 national parks, 470 grazing reserves located across the forest corridor and have because safe haven for criminal elements.

What Nigeria needs today is for Mr. President to assent to a bill on his table that was passed by the two houses of National Assembly. If that is done, it will motivate NFSS to take the battle to the forest and dislodge the common criminals. It has been said at different fora that most of the criminal in Nigeria today are not Nigerians. They are part of the machinery that worked for the former president of Libya, Muammar Gaddafi. These are the machinery that have worked with him and are the ones scattered all over the West Africa and Nigeria inclusive.

If government empowers NFSS today by signing the bill into law, obviously they will do wonders especially by supporting council authority on the issue of intelligent gathering and inter-agency collaboration to make sure that all these criminals are fished out of their hideout to face justice, and Nigerians go to bed with their two eyes closed.

NFSS has established its presence in all

the states of the federation including FCT; men and women, young boys and girls that have been trained in weapon handling and have made several arrests of bandits and criminal elements across Nigeria, and it is common sense that since these people are making serious impact in forest security, obviously they would do better when they are backed by the law, and are adequately remunerated.

Our forests are porous as most of the criminals hit in the city and run into the forest, especially Sambisa Forest, which has become so notorious for Boko Haram, and if the forest security is deployed across Nigerian bushes, it would be too hot for the criminals to operate with such impunity. We can say for now that we have some level of security within our cities, but what we need now is forest security, and if NFSS with its presence across Nigeria could be mandated to move into the bushes and apprehend the men of the underworld, it would mean that the federal government has finally found way-out of the security challenges bedeviling our country.

Recently, President Bola Tinubu ordered the withdrawal of officers and men of the Nigeria Police Force from giving security to VIPs, and said that instead the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) should do that. He said this will make more policemen available on the streets to provide security to the common man. The question now is, what if former President Olusegun Obasanjo had not signed the bill establishing NSCDC, which agency would President Tinubu use today?

The best time to sign NFSS bill into law is now. Nigeria is in a serious security mess. Imagine the return of kidnapping in our schools as witnessed in Kebbi and Niger states; similar to the Chibok and Dapchi girls' scenario. If the NFSS is deployed to the forests, where would the bandits take the students and pupils to? But because the forest has been made so conducive for them, they now carry out their nefarious activities and flee into the bushes.

Founded in 2016, it operates in many states. Its officers have worked alongside the police, military, NSCDC, and the Office of the National Security Adviser in critical areas. The Nigerian Hunters and Forest Security Service (NHFSS) was officially renamed to the Nigerian Forest Security Service (NFSS) in late 2024. Its Commander General is Dr. Wole Joshua Osatimehin.



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NGO boosts confidence of female sex workers in reporting GBV cases

By Austin Angwe, Makurdi

Concerned Women International Development Initiative, CWIDI, has disclosed that the two-year Amplify Change – Support project under the theme; Enhancing Protection from Gender – Based Violence, GBV, for Female Sex Workers, FSWs, in Benue State has increased confidence among the vulnerable category, particularly female sex workers to report cases of Gender Based Violence.

Speaking Friday during CWIDI's Amplify Change Project Dissemination and Close – Out Workshop held at Hallydays Hotel Makurdi, Director of Programmes for the organization, Mrs Bridget Okeke, revealed that the initiative has fostered stronger collaboration among justice actors as well as improved awareness among service providers on the human rights of sex workers.

Okeke, represented by Mrs. Becky Gbihi, State Project Officer of CWIDI, recalled that over the past 24-months, the project has worked to address critical gaps such as improving knowledge of existing legal protections and strengthening access to justice for female sex workers, FSWs who experience gender based violence, GBV.

She said throughout the period of training, dialogues and engagements, CWIDI supported women particularly Adolescent Girls and Young Women, AGYW, who are Female Sex Workers, FSWs, to better understand their rights under the Revised National Gender Policy and Violence Against Persons Prohibition, VAPP law 2015, adding that the organization has also brought together Justice sector actors, the Media and Health workers to increase quality of support available to survivors.



The CWIDI's Director of Programmes, commended its partners, the Amplify Change for believing in the project through logistical support which made the journey successful.

She on behalf of the organization expressed appreciation to the Benue State Government and all its actors, the media, health workers, community leaders and beneficiaries who trusted CWIDI by attending various trainings as well as sharing life experiences, adding that the exercise has given renewed hope that every woman regardless of identity or occupation deserves the right to access justice, protection and dignity.

In a presentation, State Project Officer of CWIDI, Mrs. Becky Gbihi, told stakeholders that they visited six brothels

in Gboko, Aliade and Makurdi and it was discovered during the exercise that Female Sex Workers, face daily discrimination, harassment and violence from both clients and law enforcement officers.

She said fear of arrest and stigma has prevented the FSWs from reporting abuses, adding that the study also revealed that there are no laws specifically protecting these category of people, although the VAPP law offer these vulnerable group general protection.

According to Gbihi, it was also found out that limited knowledge of legal rights and high cost of legal processes hinder female sex workers access to justice as well as Government Agencies such as the Ministry of Women Affairs lacking capacity to implementing the VAPP law.

She revealed also that support services by CSOs are equally inadequate as the FSWs are always left without essential legal and psychological support.

Gbihi said CWIDI at the end of the exercise recommended strengthening awareness of rights and legal literacy among female sex workers and other vulnerable groups, training of police and judicial personnel on GBV sensitivity and human rights standards.

The project she said also recommended establishment of specialized GBV courts to handle related cases promptly, provide legal aid and psychological services tailored to the needs of FSWs, engage community leaders and stakeholders

to reduce stigma and discrimination as well as ensure full implementation of VAPP law and appointment of protection officers.

CWIDI also request for establishment of an offense register to ensure proper documentation and coordination of referral pathways among justice sectors and CSOs.

Sharing their life changing experiences, two participants who simply gave their names as Grace and Bridget said the project exposed them to many things but most importantly their rights irrespective of occupation and what to do when such rights are violated.

Open grazing ban, step in right direction – Alia

By Austin Angwe, Makurdi

The Benue State Government has praised President Bola Tinubu for his recent policy pronouncement prohibiting open grazing and adopting ranching as the sustainable model for livestock production.

Benue Government in a statement by Dr.

Aondoakaa Asambe, Director General of the Bureau of Livestock Development & Transboundary Animal Diseases Control, Thursday, in Makurdi, described the President's declaration as a bold and visionary step capable of addressing the persistent herders' attacks on farmlands, farmers, and farming communities.

The statement noted that Benue State, under the leadership of Governor Hyacinth Alia, is already taking progressive steps in aligning with global best practices for livestock management and remains ready to collaborate fully with the Federal Government.

The government urged the Federal Government to expedite the transmission of a comprehensive legislative framework to the National Assembly, ensuring uniform implementation across the country and providing legal backing for the transition to ranching.

The statement emphasized that open grazing has evolved into a significant security and socio-economic concern, requiring clear policy direction backed by enforceable law.

The Benue State Government believes that with the right blend of policy, legislation, and collaboration,

NCDC reports 17 new Lassa fever cases, 1 death

The Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC) has reported 17 new confirmed Lassa fever cases and one death across four states in epidemiological week 47 (Nov. 17–23).

The agency disclosed this on Tuesday via its official website in the Lassa Fever Situation Report for Epi Week 47.

According to the NCDC, the cumulative number of confirmed cases in 2025 has risen to 1,089 with 179 deaths, compared with 1,095 cases and 179 deaths recorded over the same period in 2024.

It added that nine Local Government Areas were affected in the latest reporting week.

The report highlighted ongoing interventions, including healthcare worker training, community sensitisation, infection prevention and control (IPC) activities, and the distribution of medical supplies such as Ribavirin, thermometers, and personal protective equipment.

Challenges noted include late presentation of cases, poor health-

seeking behaviour, inadequate environmental sanitation, and low awareness in high-burden communities.

The NCDC urged states to strengthen community engagement on Lassa fever prevention and advised healthcare workers to maintain a high index of suspicion, ensuring timely referral and treatment.

Lassa fever is a viral haemorrhagic disease endemic in Nigeria, spread mainly through contact with food or household items contaminated by infected rats.

It can also spread from person to person, especially in hospitals with weak infection control measures.

The illness causes fever, weakness, vomiting, bleeding, and, in severe cases, organ failure.

Nigeria records the highest global burden, with most cases reported in Ondo, Edo, Bauchi, Taraba, and Ebonyi states.

Lassa fever remains one of Nigeria's deadliest recurrent outbreaks, driven by rodent exposure, poor sanitation, and delayed health-seeking behaviour.



Gov Alia



President Patrice Talon

Group hails Tinubu for intervening in Benin Republic coup attempt

The Tinubu Media Volunteers (TMV) has justified President Bola Tinubu's decision to move swiftly to restore rule of law, constitutional order and democracy in the Republic of Benin after some elements in the country's military briefly overthrew the democratic government of President Patrice Talon.

The putsch was foiled by the intervention of the Nigerian Air Force and later Nigerian ground forces at the request of the Beninese government.

This request prompted the approval of the President of Nigeria for the Nigerian Air Force to intervene immediately, and they successfully took over the country's airspace with the

coordination of the Beninese government.

In a statement signed by its Chairman, Chukwudi Enekwechi, and Secretary, Segun Ogedengbe, the group said Nigeria's role is a clear pointer to its high profile in the West African sub-region.

The statement read in part: "We laud the gallantry and professionalism of the Nigerian Air Force, which swiftly scrambled fighter jets to the Benin Republic within hours of receiving President Tinubu's directive.

"Indeed, they made Nigeria and the African region proud that, for the first time, a regional power like Nigeria was able to thwart a violent removal

of a democratic government through the barrel of the gun.

"It was not necessarily a major surprise to us, especially as Nigeria is the third strongest military force in Africa, with more than enough firepower to lead a sub-regional force.

"We are therefore glad that the Nigerian Air Force has demonstrated that the black race can, for once, boast of a professional and ready air force, capable of swinging into action at very short notice to stop a coup in a timely and professional manner."

The group noted that a military junta in the saddle in Benin is capable of causing a destabilising problem in the entire ECOWAS region.

Wike pledges more houses for FCT judges

The Minister of Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike, has pledged more housing projects for FCT judges, reiterating President Bola Tinubu's commitment to supporting the judiciary for enhance productivity.

Wike made the pledge at the Special Court session formally marking the commencement of the 2025/2026 Legal Year of the Court of Appeal in Abuja on Monday.

He said that budgetary provisions had been made to construct additional residential houses for FCT High Court Judges to mitigate housing shortages and ensure all judicial officers are appropriately accommodated.

According to him, well-equipped court facilities, chambers, and support infrastructure ensure that judicial work is conducted in a professional, safe, and conducive environment.

"Under the President's decisive action, the Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA) has formally handed over the Certificate of Occupancy for the Supreme Court's land.

"It has also commenced the full perimeter fencing of the entire complex to safeguard the nation's apex court against encroachment and security breaches.

"This swift, long-awaited intervention gives the Apex Court of our beloved country the much-needed confidence building which had not been done by the previous administrations."

According to Wike, the confidence building actions trickles down to each arm of the judiciary.

The minister also listed various

interventions and supports of the President for the judiciary through the FCT Administration.

These include the ongoing construction of secure and befitting residential quarters for Heads of Courts within the FCT and ongoing construction of a new Magistrate Court Complex in Jabi District to expand access to justice for FCT residents and reduce the burden on existing court infrastructure.

"Others are construction of Staff Quarters for the Nigerian Law School in the FCT and design and construction of the Court of Appeal Abuja division Complex and residences of the Justices of the National Industrial High Court Abuja Division and Federal High Court Abuja Division."

He stated that the projects were designed to directly support judges for effective performance of their duties.

"The reasoning of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's administration is that providing comfortable and secure accommodation allows judges to focus entirely on the timely and efficient administration of justice, free from the distractions of inadequate living conditions."

Reiterating the FCTA's continued support for the implementation of justice reforms, Wike said; "As we step into the new Legal Year, the FCT Administration remains resolute in its determination to further support the implementation of justice reforms.

"Our priorities for the 2025/2026 Legal Year are focused on consolidating the gains made and expanding support where it is most needed."

Why I chronicled my experiences as Buhari's minister – Lai Mohammed

Alhaji Lai Mohammed, former Minister of Information and Culture has narrated the reasons behind his new book, 'Headlines and Soundbites: Media Moments that Defined an Administration'.

Mohammed said the book was his personal effort to document contemporary Nigerian history from a vantage point as minister under the late President Muhammadu Buhari.

Speaking in an interview with AIT, monitored by the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), Mohammed said the book captures critical moments, decisions, crises, and communication battles that shaped the Buhari's administration.

"It is a compelling, insider chronicle of governance, communication and nation-building during the Buhari era, authored by Nigeria's longest-serving Minister of Information and Culture, spanning the author's near eight-year tenure (2015–2023),

"The book documents my stewardship of a vast and complex ministry, covering



Lai Mohammed

information management, cultural development, tourism promotion and national orientation.

"It offers a unique window into how major national policies were shaped, defended and communicated in real time," he said.

Mohammed explained that the motivation for the book stemmed from his desire to ensure that future generations understood how government works beyond

the often-distorted public narratives.

"This book is my own personal effort to write contemporary stories from the inside.

"I will be failing posterity if I do not document all the experiences and what I went through," he said.

He added that history continues to repeat itself because those who hold public office fail to share lessons from their experiences

According to him, the book reveals how decisions were made and how misinformation often overshadowed the facts during the Buhari years.

Mohammed insisted that Africans must tell their own stories to prevent distortions by external writers.

The former minister said the book would be inaugurated on Dec. 17, a date he deliberately chose in honour of President Buhari.

"It is the first posthumous birthday of president Buhari. If he were to be alive, he would have been 83 that day," he said.

Mohammed said he began writing the book in June, about a month before the former president's death, a loss he described as devastating.

"When he died, I was paralysed for days. When I recovered, I decided to dedicate a whole chapter to him in the book," he said.

Mohammed described Buhari as a leader who did not micromanage his ministers but provided them full support.

He recalled one remarkable

moment in their eight-year working relationship:

"In the entire eight years, the president asked me for a favour only once.

"He called and asked if I could deliver a paper on his behalf at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs. I agreed, and I did it gladly."

Mohammed also spoke of their long association, dating back to the formation of the All Progressives Congress (APC), describing Buhari as a leader who rewarded loyalty with trust.

The former minister dismissed public perceptions that Buhari was aloof or detached from national issues.

"Many commentators have little understanding of how government works.

"Anyone who worked with Buhari would know that he was always in touch, in charge and on top of his game.

"Apart from when he was ill, he presided over Council meetings effectively. He had institutional memory and experience from his prior leadership roles.

"To say he was disconnected is unfair," he said.

Wike terminates 14-year-old Apo-Karshi road project, mobilises SCC to site

The Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA) has revoked the 13-kilometre Apo to Karshi road awarded to Kakatar Engineering Ltd. Since 2011.

FCT Minister Nyesom Wike disclosed this after inspecting ongoing road projects in Karu, Gishiri and the dualisation of the Outer Southern Expressway in Abuja on Thursday.

Wike explained that the contract had been reawarded to SCC, adding that work was currently ongoing.

He stressed that completion of the road would provide an alternative route and decongest the current main road, easing traffic for residents of areas like Nyanya and Karu going to the city centre.

He recalled that the project was awarded since 2011 but faced so many delays due to lack of funding and other challenges.

"Like I said, we cannot continue to play politics when it comes to the welfare of the people," he said.

The minister said the construction of the road from



Wike (Pointing finger)

Kubwa to Bwari, equally awarded to SCC had also commenced, adding that when completed, it would provide an alternative route to Bwari.

Speaking on the inspected projects, the minister, who could not hide his joy with the progress so far, expressed optimism that they would be completed on schedule and inaugurated in

mid-2026 to celebrate President Bola Tinubu third year in office.

"You can see the happiness of everybody and that's what shows that the Renewed Hope Agenda is really working.

"People had never seen this type of development in Abuja before, and that is why you can imagine when we were at Karu, you saw how the students were

very happy.

"When we went to Girishi, look at how the pupils there were all happy and so, this makes us happy too.

"When we see that people are happy, people appreciate that they can see development, people appreciate that the government thinks about their welfare. So, that's what it takes,"

he said.

On what people should expect in 2026, Wike said that 2025 would be nothing compared to the kind of infrastructure that would be provided in the coming year.

According to him, the infrastructure will be partially tailored to lift the lives of the people and improve economic activities, including interventions in health and education.

The minister said that there would likely be no new project in 2026, adding much resources would be channeled towards completing ongoing projects across the intervening sectors.

"We want to make sure that the projects we have started this year will be completed in 2026.

"Mind you, that year appears to be a political year. So, you don't expect to start projects that you may not be able to finish within the period that you're appointed to stay.

"So, we want to make sure all projects we have started, by the grace of God, were completed," Wike said.

Confraternity of Christian Mothers seeks divine interventions in tackling insecurity

By Our Correspondent

The Confraternity of Christian Mothers, Abuja Archdiocese of the Catholic Church, has resorted to prayers to seek God's interventions in the escalating insecurity in some parts of Nigeria.

The President of the Confraternity, Dr Hope Cole, told

newsmen in Abuja that Nigeria's rising security threat required prayers from all patriotic citizens.

According to her, "Special prayers have been organized, beginning today, for God's intervention in the insecurity troubling our nation. It is the main focus of our Annual General Meeting. We are hopeful that as we carry out these

activities and celebrate our events with dedicated Masses, God will change our situation for the better. The AGM is a sacred moment for renewal, communion, and strengthening our mission as Christian Mothers.

"When women pray, heaven shakes. This is why our society is intentional about grooming mothers to be strong prayer pillars in their homes. A mother who raises her children in a Godly way becomes a blessing not only to her family but to the entire society."

Speaking also, the Chairperson of the Planning Committee, Mother Lucie Samuel-Mhii, stated that, "This year is truly unique. As a society, we are extending our love beyond our usual boundaries by visiting the orphanages and displaced persons' settlements. We are also committed to empowering the poorest among us, ensuring that no mother is left behind."

Senate probes sudden withdrawal of military personnel from Kebbi school

The Senate has mandated its joint committee on security to investigate the sudden withdrawal of military personnel from Government Girls Secondary School, Maga, Kebbi shortly before the bandits' invasion.

The committee is to report its findings in two weeks.

The upper chamber also directed the joint committee to probe the circumstances surrounding the killing of Brig.-Gen. Musa Uba.

The Senate also resolved to dissolve its standing committees on National Security and Intelligence, as well as Air Force with a view to reconstituting them.

It also resolved that the Leadership of the Senate should meet with President Bola Tinubu to brief him on the crucial resolutions and views of the Senate.

The resolutions were sequel to a motion moved by Senate Deputy Leader, Lola Ashiru during Wednesday's plenary.

The motion was titled "Urgent Need to Address Escalating Insecurity in Kwara, Kebbi and Niger, Call for Immediate and Comprehensive Federal Intervention".

Other resolutions of the Senate include commending President Tinubu and security agencies for their rapid interventions and rescue of some of the kidnapped victims.

"We urge them to sustain coordinated operations until all abducted persons nationwide are rescued and perpetrators apprehended.

"Advice the Federal government to strengthen the local vigilance

group to be able to respond swiftly to similar attack in future.

"This should also include a review of Nigeria firearm law to reflect the current security challenges as we have in more than 175 countries where responsible citizens are permitted to own guns.

"Resolve that the Senate undertakes a diplomatic engagement with the United States of America and other allied nations' Parliaments.

"To strengthen cooperation on intelligence sharing, counter-terrorism training in addressing Nigeria's security challenges.

"The Senate also observed a one-minute silence in memory of the departed souls."

In his contribution, Deputy Senate President, Jibrin Barau said that insecurity had increased all over the country since President Donald Trump made a statement showing the possibility of the US to intervene militarily.

"This was in order to deal with the perceived notion that there is a genocide of Christians in Nigeria.

"Since then, the spate of these terrorist activities have increased in this country. Which shows that those who are into these heinous crimes do not love our country.

"They're moving in convoy to commit these atrocities. So we should deploy technology," he said.

Senate Leader, Opeyemi Bamidele said "What is important is that a lot of people that were kidnapped, at least from Kwara, Kebbi and Niger, have regained their freedom.

"At what cost is what a lot of Nigerians are wondering about. Some Nigerians have said the government negotiated to get them out."



Dr Hope Cole

Security Police recall 11,566 personnel from VIPs

The Inspector-General of Police (I-G), Mr Kayode Egbetokun, on Thursday said 11,566 personnel attached to Very Important Persons (VIPs) had been recalled following a presidential directive.

The I-G said this in Abuja at a conference with Strategic Police Managers consisting of officers from the rank of Commissioners and above.

The police boss said the recalled officers would be deployed to active police entities immediately.

He said the presidential order was to ensure that more officers were repositioned from personalised

security duties to collective public protection responsibilities where their presence and operational impact were urgently required.

"However, while we move decisively to implement this directive, we must also act responsibly to manage its execution.

"We are mindful of the risk of misinterpretation, misinformation and exploitation by undesirable elements who may seek to capitalise on the situation for personal or political advantage.

"To guard against this, the force will release detailed

implementation modalities in due course, outlining clear processes, timelines, safeguards and accountability measures," he added.

The I-G said the modalities would be communicated internally first, and subsequently to the public through the appropriate professional channels in a structured and controlled manner.

Egbetokun said the approach was necessary to prevent opportunistic actors from weaponising ambiguity, spreading disinformation, or impersonating authority in ways that could distort or compromise the intent of the initiative.



Dr. Ikeji

Why sickness kills men faster than women, expert reveals

By Moses Okorie

A medical practitioner has revealed why more men tend to die of sickness than their women folks, attributing it to lack of medical check-up on the part of men as they are too busy taking care of their wives and children, and pay less attention to their own health.

Dr. Charles Ikeji, the Medical Director of Kefland Family Hospital located at the 2nd Gate of Apo Mechanic Estate in Abuja, the nation's capital, made this revelation, Tuesday, in an interview with NationsPride in his office, calling on men to always go for medical check-up to ascertain their health status as well as take some rest in order to live long and enjoy with their families.

According to him, "When a woman has a pain or anything, she will shout and call attention. They're always demanding attention. And because of that, they're able to talk about their complaints, but most men tend to endure, especially when they look at the economic aspect of it; spending of money, because they have to care for their wives and children. You see them trying to manage their health.

"Most men don't want to go to see doctor. They don't want to go for checkups, because they are considering other economic values, and they have this I don't care attitude; it has to be well".

According to him, only about 30 per cent of men seek medical attention compared to 70 per cent in women, because most men regard

women as weaker persons hence the reason for going to the hospital.

Dr. Ikeji enumerated some ailments that affect the men such as have high blood pressure, hypertension, other stress related diseases like peptic ulcer, prostate cancer; enlargement of prostate, and yet they don't find time to investigate until it gets out of hand.

"They are being busy; their works, lifestyles have taken over their health consciousness. They don't think it is necessary, especially in Africa, to go for a normal checkup. By and large, what they suffer mostly is hypertension and its complications. It may be stroke, kidney failure or blindness.

"So many of them have what we call glaucoma, which is a raised blood pressure in the eye. And other illnesses that are related with stress and tension, because they seem to stress more than women. Stress related diseases are more in men than women", he stated.

The physician advised men to slow down with some of their daily activities and believe that there is God, adding that things mustn't happen by what they get or what they achieve, but they have to rely on divine providence.

"They need to do medical and physical checkup from time to time. And they need to be conscious of these two killer diseases we have in Africa that are killing more people than road accidents; high blood pressure or hypertension, with is

complications. And then diabetes; sugar problems.

"Rest is very, very important. It is not of he that wills, or he that runs, but it is God that shows mercy. They need to be reliant on God more than ever in their own strength.

"And then cool down so that they will last longer and enjoy both their wives, their children and generations to come, and not just coming up, but before you know it, the man is gone. Death rate is so high among men, very high", he warned.

On other causes of death amongst men when compared to their women counterpart, is the high demand on men both from their immediate families and the society in general.

"Most of the time, the type of society we have is what we call patriarchal. That is, it's rested on fathers. Men are mostly the source of livelihood for family even though now the women are coming up.

"But men are those that usually go to fight, struggle, and work so hard to be able to take care of the women and their children. Even if there is war, it's men that usually go, and that is why there are more widows than widowers.

Dr. Charles Ikeji has practiced for 43 years in the medical field as a General Practitioner and then later on as a Family Physician. He said he only did his housemanship in public hospital and also in his days as a corps member with the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), and since then has been in private practice.

My government would continue to prioritize service to Benue people - Alia

By Austin Angwe, Makurdi

Benue State governor, Reverend Father, Hyacinth Alia has reassured the masses of Benue that his administration would continue to prioritize service to the people rather than patronize few people, insisting that Benue agenda is much bigger than that of any individual.

Governor Alia who gave the assurance while reacting to critics from the opposition in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Tersoo Kula, Monday, in Makurdi, argued that since taking over office in 2023, his administration has demonstrated capacity and unwavering commitment to foster development, the needed peace and social welfare, a development he noted has rebuilt trust as well as injected renewed sense of hope and progress across the state.

He said his administration having viewed agriculture and food security as key areas of focus, has supported farmers through improved inputs, mechanized equipment, and market access, adding that government has distributed farm implements and modern irrigation systems to boost local food supply which in addition has generated income, and created employment opportunities for thousands.

Alia disclosed that his government has done well in the area of infrastructural development, with significant investments in road construction, rehabilitation, and expansion with the state capital, Makurdi,

undergoing transformation, with improved drainage systems, streetlights, and public utilities.

He said his administration has prioritized peacebuilding and security, introducing community policing initiatives and collaborating with local leaders to resolve conflicts, stressing that youth empowerment and education have also received attention, with scholarships, skills acquisition programs, and vocational training creating opportunities for young people to contribute to society.

The governor who promised to uphold transparency and accountability in handling issues of governance stated that he would continue to rely on testimonies of Benue people on the streets rather than those of few people as the state is bigger than any individual.

He assured that he will continue to fix his eyes on the goal post with a burning desire to deliver more democratic dividends in the remaining six years of his administration, promising to make those who voted him as governor proud but urged Benue people to keep praying for him and his administration to enable him succeed.



Gov Alia

DG Bauchi Vigilante mourns passing of Sheikh Dahiru Bauchi

By Abdullahi Idris, Bauchi

The Director of Bauchi State Vigilante and Youth Empowerment Agency has expressed sadness over the passing of great Islamic jurist, Sheikh Dahiru Usman Bauchi.

This statement was issued and made available to media organizations by the public relations officer of the agency, Abdullahi Idris recently.

The statement reads "On behalf of Bauchi State Vigilante and Youth Empowerment the Director General, Ambassador Umar Aliyu Shayi expressed deepest condolences to the entire global Muslim community over the lost of well-respected

Islamic jurist, symbol of peace, unity, development, love and harmony among humanity.

"Sheikh Dahiru Usman Bauchi was a spiritual leader of excellence who lived a life of compassion and integrity in all perspectives, he was a great example of humility by all global standards".

Shayi prayed for the departed Sheikh to rest in paradise and urged Muslim communities and by extension his family to bear the great loss.

Sheikh Bauchi was buried in Bauchi on Friday when unprecedented crowd gathered at the Bauchi Eid ground to pray for the repose of his soul and to pay him their last rest.



Sheikh Dahiru Bauchi

Return of 100 abducted Niger students reflects President Tinubu's result-oriented disposition to national security – TMSG

By Moses Okorie

The Tinubu Media Support Group (TMSG) has described the rescue of 100 school children abducted from the St Mary's Catholic Primary and Secondary school in Niger State as yet another demonstration of President Bola Tinubu's result-oriented disposition to the country's security challenge.

In a statement signed by its Chairman, Emeka Nwankpa, and Secretary, Dapo Okubango, the group expressed its conviction that the remaining students would be rescued in due course, in line with the President's assurance.

The statement read in part: "It is a fact that since the three recent abductions in Kwara, Kebbi and Niger States, Nigeria has been in the glare of the international community with many people wondering how the President Bola Tinubu administration

would handle the situation.

"This was against the backdrop of allegations of persecution of Christians by US President Donald Trump as well as the designation of Nigeria as a Country of Particular Concern (CPC).

"But we dare say that with the latest situation, the administration has continued to prove its preparedness to weather the storm and protect all Nigerians, regardless of their religious or ethnic persuasions.

"As the President said in his reaction to the return of 100 pupils, it is only after the remaining 115 students and some of their teachers are back that a line would be drawn on the November 21 incident.

"When 38 worshippers abducted from a local church in Eruku, Kwara state, and 24 students abducted from a secondary school in Maga, Kebbi State, were rescued almost in

quick succession, we were certain that it wouldn't be long before the school children from the Catholic schools were rescued, and we were proved right.

"This was because of the swift response of President Tinubu in mobilising all security apparatus at his disposal, including issuing marching orders to security chiefs, which ensured the success of efforts to rescue the abductees, some of whom are as young as six years old."

The group also compared the President's reaction to the mass abduction in Niger to a similar situation in 2014 that shocked the world.

"President Tinubu's response is clearly in stark contrast to the lackadaisical response by a sitting government to a similar abduction of 276 schoolgirls from Chibok, Borno state by Boko Haram Terrorists.

"We recall that because of the delayed response, it was easy for

the insurgents to ferry the girls into the dense Sambisa Forest and it took another two years for a joint military patrol to find one of the abducted girls with a child and one of the suspected terrorists after she wandered out of the forest.

"And we need to also add that the first batch of Chibok girls, numbering 21, were released in October 2016 after negotiations facilitated by local and international partners".



Rescued children

Reps to probe Lamurde's conflict in Adamawa

The House of Representatives has called for an immediate, transparent, and independent investigation into alleged killings of unarmed protesters in Adamawa by military personnel.

The call was sequel to the adoption of a motion urgent public importance by Rep. Kwamoti Laori (PDP-Adamawa) at plenary on Wednesday.

Moving the motion earlier, Laori who expressed deep concern on the ongoing violent conflicts in Lamurde Local Government Area, stressed the need to identify and prosecute all security personnel found culpable.

He said that the conflict had resulted in loss of lives, destruction of property, and rising tension among communities already burdened by insecurity.

According to him, these disturbances are occurring at a time when the nation continues to grapple with widespread insecurity caused by criminals, bandits, terrorists, and kidnappers.

The lawmaker said that it was imperative that the situation in Lamurde does not escalate beyond control.

"The killing of eight unarmed women including a 13year old by personnel of the Nigerian Military during a peaceful demonstration in Lamurde LGA and injuring over thirty others, some with life-threatening injuries and fractures who are currently receiving treatment in Numan and Yola Specialist Hospitals is tragic.

"This tragic incident mirrors similar occurrences in Dong,

Kodomti, Lawaru, Nzuruwe, and Shaforon communities in 2017, where civilians suffered at the hands of security personnel without any meaningful investigation, prosecution, or compensation, suggesting a troubling pattern of impunity.

"We condemn in strong terms the killing of unarmed civilians, which is inhumane, unjustifiable, and constitutes a gross violation of fundamental human rights guaranteed under the Constitution," he said.

Laori emphasised the need to restore public trust in security institutions through accountability, transparency, and strict adherence to rules of engagement.

He said that failure to act urgently may lead to further breakdown of law and order, loss of lives, and deepening of communal grievances.

In his ruling, the Speaker, Rep. Abbas Tajudeen, mandated the House Committees on Human Rights, Defence, and Internal Security to visit Lamurde LGA on a fact-finding mission and report back within two weeks for further legislative actions.

He urged the Chief of Defence Staff to direct all military personnel deployed in Lamurde and across Adamawa to exercise maximum restraint, maintain professionalism, and strictly adhere to the rules of engagement in the discharge of their duties.

The house mandated Committee on Legislative Compliance to ensure compliance and observe a minute of silent in honour of the deceased.

God Alia says he won't use God's name for political propaganda, but serve Benue

By Austin Angwe, Makurdi

Benue State governor, Reverend Father, Hyacinth Alia has assured people of the state that though a priest, he would not use God's name in his present office for propaganda as done in the past by others.

Governor Alia who gave the assurance while addressing a group of Christian community, emphasized that his journey from the pulpit to public service has given him a strong reminder that the gospel could be most convincingly preached through acts of service to humanity than propaganda.

The governor who quoted the book of James 2:18 during his address to the people in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Tersoo Kula, Wednesday in Makurdi, said he has demonstrated with his two and half years in office that Christian ministry is not limited to sermons on the pulpit but is also deeply rooted in fulfilling covenants and meeting peoples basic needs.

He assured the people that his administration would continue to work quietly delivering results that speaks louder than propaganda, despite calculated evil mechanization from the opposition elements, promising never to use

God's name for legitimacy, influence or emotional appeal but insisted that his physical impact of development projects would always do the talking.

The governor also explained that the fulfilment of his second contract with Benue people might not come with the expected noise required by the opposition but argued that his achievements which speaks for themselves and has undeniable effects are long-lasting.

He stated that as a cleric, he has anchored his administration on compassion, community development and responsible governance which he noted has epitomize Christ instruction in Mathew 5:16 which teaches people to allow their light shine before men for them to see their good works to glorify the Father in heaven.

The governor disclosed that his intention to prioritize social welfare, restore dignity to public institutions, work force and to champion policies that uplift the vulnerable should be seen as deliberate policies aimed at translating practically spiritual values into tangible results, arguing that these acts of service does not only strengthen the society but also inspire others to serve and to demonstrate that leadership

that is anchored in faith could transform lives.

Governor Alia who described leadership by example as one of the highest forms of evangelism also revealed that faith - driven leadership could illuminate a path of hope, humility and collective progress for the state, stressing that his leadership as a cleric should imply that preaching the gospel is most impactful when what is preached is lived out practically.

On why his much commitment to work as governor, the cleric said he developed a thick skin on assumption of office having discovered that the food basket was not only broken and needed amendments but required complete renewal.

He admitted that he was aware the task to govern Benue would be herculean yet he accepted it, pointing out that on assumption of office he found a situation that was even more deplorable than he had imagined, which according to him required giving his sweat, and utmost sacrifice.

The governor who said the process of fixing the state is still on going, assured that he would continue to do that to the end of his second term, promising to even give his soul for development of the state.



Sen Nwoko

Commission exonerates Ned Nwoko from alleged Idumuje Ugboko land saga

By David Okpashi

The National coordinator of the National Guide for Truth and Justice, Marcus Okafor has strongly denied online claims by Sahara Reporters publisher Sowore Omoyele, alleging the involvement of the senator representing Delta North, Senator Ned Nwoko in land grabbing and community violence in Idumuje Ugboko.

Recall that the allegations has drawn sharp rebukes from community leaders and legal sources familiar with the matter.

Reacting to the claims, Marcus Okafor described it as "malicious falsehoods" lacking any factual basis.

According to him, the 90-hectare land in Idumuje Ugboko, designated for the establishment of a Sports University, was formally approved in 2015 by the late Obi of the community, HRM Albert Nwoko, following extensive consultations with stakeholders from the four federating villages. The land was subsequently allocated to Linas International Limited, a company owned by Senator Nwoko.

Okafor explained that tensions in the community escalated only after Chukwunonso Nwoko, the current 'state-installed Obi', began issuing unilateral orders from the palace while his father was still alive.

He said following HRM Albert Nwoko's death in February 2017, violent attacks orchestrated by Chukwunonso Nwoko left 29 community members traumatized.

"Homes were destroyed or burned, and several victims

remain incapacitated to this day. Some families have spent years seeking justice in court for the atrocities committed.

"These are the characters Sowore is celebrating today, while completely forgetting the victims", Okafor said.

He described the latest media reports as a distortion of facts meant to portray the oppressors as victims.

"The 2017 mayhem included the brutal assault of community leaders such as Chief Chukwuka Christopher Ogwu (Iyase) and Chief Sunday Odemodu (Odogwu), whose homes and vehicles were vandalized.

"One innocent bystander, Cyprian Kumuolu; a motorcycle rider from Benue State, was killed in front of Chukwunonso's residence, and his body was allegedly mutilated and disposed of.

"Another victim, Kennedy Iloh, former secretary of the community's land allocation committee, later died from injuries sustained during the attack. Some survivors, like Ogbuefi Victor Omezi, were forced to relocate abroad for safety after losing their homes and businesses", he added.

Okafor emphasised that legal investigations and official records support Senator Nwoko's innocence. A former Inspector General of Police inquiry cleared him of any land grabbing, and Delta State authorities confirmed the legitimacy of the land allocation.

Compensation amounting to hundreds of millions of naira was paid to farmers whose crops were affected by the land allocation.

Additionally, he said key allegations including a

forged letter purportedly signed by HRM Albert Nwoko were proven false in court, resulting in the conviction of Chukwunonso Nwoko and two others for forgery in March 2024.

He also condemned attempts to implicate Senator Nwoko or his family in unrelated deaths, including that of a young man named Blessing, who tragically drowned at a government-approved tourist site.

"These are concocted stories that ignore the real perpetrators and the suffering of the victims from the 2017 mayhem," Okafor said.

Highlighting the positive impact of Senator Nwoko's initiatives, Okafor noted that the Sports University in Idumuje Ugboko is now in its third year, providing significant benefits to the local community and achieving global recognition.

"The university project has been a transformative force for Idumuje Ugboko, contrary to baseless claims," he said.

According to him, "As the ANIOMA state creation movement gains momentum, Senator Nwoko's supporters remain focused on his legislative achievements and community development projects".

Okafor urged that disputes be resolved through lawful channels rather than media campaigns that spreads misinformation.

According to him, "The focus of ANIOMA people is on progress, transformation, and justice," while affirming that the community is fully supportive of Senator Nwoko's efforts to uplift the region.

Ebonyi governor secures strong community support following Effium peace efforts

By Eze Victor

In a strong show of confidence, the Alioma and Ezekuna Alioma autonomous communities in Ohaukwu Local Government Area have endorsed Governor Francis Nwifuru for a second term, citing his pivotal role in restoring peace and driving development in Effium.

The endorsement came during the communities' annual gathering at Ebeta Primary School, Effium, a colorful event marked by cultural displays, communal solidarity, and the conferment of chieftaincy titles on notable stakeholders and peacemakers.

The gathering brought together dignitaries, traditional rulers, community associations, and residents from across the newly created autonomous communities.

Chief Chinedu Awo, Senior Special Assistant to the Governor on Power, commended Governor Nwifuru for his steadfast commitment to resolving the long-standing Effium communal crisis.

"The governor's peace-driven leadership has accelerated recovery in these once-troubled communities, putting them

firmly on the path of stability and growth," he said.

Awo further noted that the communities were experiencing a "restoration of their long-lost glory" and pledged their support not only for the governor's second-term bid but also for other APC candidates in upcoming elections.

The newly installed chiefs, including Chief Christian Nweke and Chief John Ochiagu, vowed to champion justice, truth, and lasting peace, leveraging their positions to foster unity and development in their communities.

Paramount leader Chief Emmanuel Owuru and community stakeholder Dr. Joseph Utobo praised the collaborative efforts of the government, security agencies, and residents in stabilizing Effium, noting that the addition of new chiefs would strengthen local governance and communal harmony.

The event concluded with cultural performances and prayers for the continued success of Governor Nwifuru's administration and the sustained peace now enjoyed in Effium and neighboring communities.

Anambra bishop pledges to support police



L-R: Bishop Ibezim and AIG Oladipo

Most Rev. Alexander Ibezim, Anglican Bishop of Awka Diocese, pledged the church's support to the Nigeria Police Force for improved security delivery in Anambra.

Ibezim pledged the assurance while receiving Mr Abayomi Oladipo, an Assistant Inspector-General of Police, Zone-13 Headquarters, Ukp, at the Bishop's Court in Awka on Wednesday.

The Bishop commended Oladipo's strategic leadership, describing his efforts as vital to strengthening the security framework of the zone.

He praised the dedication of officers under the AIG's command, appreciating the courtesy visit, while offering prayers for guidance and strength in his duties.

"We will continue to support the Nigeria Police Force in ensuring better security delivery in Anambra and across the zone," he said.

Oladipo thanked the archbishop for the warm

reception and stressed that no security framework can succeed without collaboration with critical stakeholders, including faith-based institutions.

He appealed for sustained partnership with religious bodies to curb insecurity and promote peace across the zone.

The AIG said the visit underscored the Police commitment to building strong, multi-sectoral partnerships vital for sustainable peace and security.

He noted that engagement with religious leaders aligns with the Force's community-oriented policing strategy under Inspector-General of Police, Mr Kayode Egbetokun.

Oladipo emphasised that faith-based institutions are key allies in promoting moral values, social cohesion and proactive crime prevention across the zone.

He added that strengthening collaboration between law enforcement and community leaders enhances trust, safety and collective responsibility for security throughout Zone-13.



Changing tides at NDDC with Ogbuku at the saddle



By Ifeatu Agbu

The tides have changed. The narrative is now about gains rather than pains as the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, sails in calm waters with gentle waves swaying in acclamation.

In such a salutary atmosphere, it is not surprising that awards and accolades are tumbling in for the captain steering the ship of the foremost intervention agency.

Like an oyster, delivering precious pearls, the Managing Director of the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, Dr Samuel Ogbuku, is transforming and reshaping the Niger Delta region.

For his remarkable vision and strides, Ogbuku now wears the badge of a transformational leader in the development of the Niger Delta region.

He is leading the charge in transitioning the NDDC from transaction to transformation, ensuring effective service delivery to underdeveloped communities. This positive trajectory has attracted recognition and accolades from many quarters.

Since he mounted the saddle at the NDDC, Ogbuku has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the socio-economic upliftment of Nigeria's oil-rich region, bringing remarkable improvements in infrastructure, healthcare, education, and community development.

As expected, Ogbuku's outstanding performance has seen him hug the spotlight and share the podium with other eminent Nigerians to receive awards for excellence, industry, and enterprise.

On December 3, 2025, the Awards Committee for the BusinessDay Public Lecture Series honoured him as an outstanding public service provider, reflecting his exceptional dedication and commitment to excellence and setting a high standard for his peers.

Ogbuku stood tall as he received an award for outstanding public service executive. Within a short time, he has demonstrated that he is on a mission to transform the socio-economic landscape of the Niger Delta. It was a night of celebration, pomp, and ceremony. Presenting the award to Ogbuku, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Yusuf Tuggar, said the event was designed to celebrate Nigeria's finest. He commended Ogbuku's leadership qualities and urged him to do more for the region, as his goodwill always speaks for him.

Speaking during the ceremony, the NDDC Chief Executive Officer expressed joy over the award and remarked that it showed that Nigerians appreciated the work the NDDC was doing in Nigeria's oil-rich region.

Ogbuku stated: "It is a recognition of our hard work all through the year. We thank God

for the opportunity of service, and we thank President Bola Ahmed Tinubu for giving us the platform to showcase our ingenuity. He put together a team that has transformed the administration and development of the Niger Delta region.

"We also thank the Minister of Regional Development, Engr. Abubakar Momoh, who has provided us with technical and administrative support. This honour calls on us to do more and reminds us that next year we must redouble our efforts and do better.

"We will not rest on our oars until we satisfy the yearnings of the people of the Niger Delta region and take development to the nooks and crannies of the region as part of the Renewed Hope Agenda of President Tinubu's administration."

Giving his impressions on the award to the NDDC Managing Director, the Executive Director, Finance and Administration, Alabo Boma Iyaye, said that the honour would energise the Commission to do more.

He said the award has validated the contributions of the NDDC in driving sustainable development in the Niger Delta. "This recognition and acknowledgement will encourage us to continue contributing to the development of our region and the nation."

Also speaking, the NDDC Executive Director, Corporate Services, Hon. Ifedayo Abegunde, described the award as a significant recognition for the NDDC. He thanked the BusinessDay newspaper and noted that the NDDC would continue to give back to the communities in the Niger Delta region.

Earlier, in his welcome address, the Publisher of Business Day, Mr Frank Aigbogun, said that the BusinessDay awards were meant to honour functionaries in strategic government positions who demonstrate exceptional performance and leadership.

He noted: "The BusinessDay Public Lecture and Award Series is a veritable platform for thought leaders, policymakers, and business experts to discuss the most pressing issues facing Nigeria's economy and proffer implementable solutions."

Aigbogun, represented by the Editor of BusinessDay, Mr. Lolade Akinmurele, said that public service must be more than doing a job efficiently and honestly. "It must be a complete dedication to the people and to the nation."

Coming on the heels of the BusinessDay Public Service Excellence Award is yet another accolade from President Tinubu. This time, the nation's seat of power is conferring the Distinguished Award for Excellence in Infrastructure Delivery and Sustainable Regional Growth on Ogbuku.

The recognition aligns with President Tinubu's earlier commendation of the NDDC leadership during the Niger Delta Stakeholders Summit in Port Harcourt on July 12, 2024, where he commended the Commission's Board and Management for working cohesively to accelerate development in the oil-rich region.

Firmly seated behind the wheels, Ogbuku has fast-tracked progress in road and bridge construction, building of schools and hospitals, and the provision of essential social amenities across Niger Delta communities. These efforts have strengthened regional infrastructure and promoted inclusive growth.

Ogbuku's impact on the Niger Delta is profound and far-reaching. With his inspiring dynamism, the region looks forward to sustained development and a brighter future for its people. The transforming taking place in the region is a testament to what dedicated and visionary leadership can achieve.

The impressive infrastructural developments that have come with the Ogbuku era continues to be appreciated at the local, national and international levels. On October 21, 2025, the NDDC Managing Director was honoured by the London Political Summit and Awards (LPSA) as the Nigeria Regional Government Development Champion of the Year 2025.

The award ceremony, held at the UK House of Commons in London, was presented to Ogbuku for his outstanding contributions to regional development, innovation, and governance in the Niger Delta.

Earlier in March this year, all

roads led to Marrakesh in Morocco, where the Niger Delta icon bagged the African Public Service Award from Heritage Times in recognition of his transformative leadership and service to the Niger Delta region.

The academic community recognised the star from the South-South region and endorsed it. Thus, the Governing Council and the Senate of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, on July 26, 2025, awarded the Degree of Doctor of Public Administration, DPA (Honoris Causa), at the 54th convocation ceremony of the university.

On June 30, 2025, the Nigerian Army saluted the efforts of the NDDC under Ogbuku's leadership, decorating him with the Nigerian Army Outstanding Service Commendation Medal.

The army declared: "We honour Ogbuku for his immense contributions to the development of the Nigerian Army Infrastructure, human capital Development, as well as enhancement of the Nigerian Army's operation, efficiency and accomplishment of the Chief of Army Staff's command philosophy.

Emulating the army, the Nigeria Police Force gave its own thumbs-up, conferring the Police Support Recognition Award on the NDDC leadership. The award was presented at the inaugural Nigeria Police Award and Commendation Ceremony in recognition of continued support for the Police Force and their partnership in building the Country's security architecture.

Before the BusinessDay award, other media houses had seen the gem in Ogbuku. The Sun newspapers had, in April, conferred the Sun Public Service Award on Ogbuku for his contributions in the repositioning of the interventionist agency and implementing policies and projects that have improved the well-being of the people of the Niger Delta region.

Similarly, the Daily Independent newspapers bestowed an honour on the NDDC as the "Interventionist Agency of the Year 2024." The newspaper recognised the NDDC's achievements and transformative impact on the Niger Delta region.

Ademola Adeleke: Between dancing steps and political cul-de-sac



By Wale Sadeeq

Gov. Ademola Adeleke of Osun is known for dancing hysterically at virtually every public occasion, to the admiration of his supporters, who saw his action as a move to downplay the rigours of governance and introduce some flair.

Nonetheless, from recent developments, it appears that the dancing step Adeleke is renowned for is losing its rhythm.

This is not because the 'Dancing Governor' wants that unique feature, long associated with him to come to diminish, but because of the apparent political survival for which he is seriously battling.

To his critics, however, governance is not a business for the comedians, nor something to be trivialised.

Sen. Iyiola Omisore, a former APC National Secretary, is one of the fierce critics of Adeleke's dancing theatrics, insists that the state requires a more serious, experienced and visionary leader.

"The image of a 'dancing governor' does not reflect the gravity of the challenges facing Osun.

"Osun does not deserve a dancing governor.

"Public office requires depth, discipline and focus. No leader who truly appreciates the weight of governance trivialises it.

"Governance is not salesmanship or entertainment; it requires substance, not choreography," Omisore, a former deputy governor of the state, said.

According to him, tolerance, competence and leadership

capacity, not entertainment, define good governance.

He added that the constant display of dancing within the corridors of power signaled a lack of seriousness toward statecraft.

Indeed, the critics saw the governor as somebody who might eventually dance away the destiny of the people of Osun with his "Nollywood approach" to governance.

However, while explaining his passion for dancing, the governor said that it brings him 'immense joy', even though delivering dividends of democracy to the people of Osun gives him even greater satisfaction.

"Dancing gives me joy, but delivering on my electoral promises and providing the dividends of democracy to the good people of Osun gives me even greater joy," he said.

Observers, however, note that Adeleke has of recent lost the dancing steps and he is no longer in his element.

They argue that the governor might have reached a cul-de-sac in his political journey, with his second term bid now being seriously threatened.

Only recently, he announced his defection from Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) on whose platform he won the governorship election in 2022, citing persistent leadership turmoil at the party's national level.

The governor was said to have made an attempt to defect to the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) sometime in May, even though he denied ever making such a move.

Adeleke, at a stakeholders' meeting, was quoted to have said that the rumour about his

imminent defection into the APC was fake news emanating from those intimidated by his extra-ordinary performance in state leadership.

However, the Director of Media and Information of APC in Osun, Kola Olabisi, in a statement, insisted that Adeleke was indeed planning to leave PDP for APC.

Indeed, the visit by the governor, his elder brother, Deji Adeleke and renowned Afrobeat artiste, Davido to President Bola Tinubu in his Lagos residence in June was said to have been part of the arrangements to seal the defection.

His subsequent visit to a prominent APC national leader and former governor of the state, Chief Bisi Akande, in his Ibadan residence, was also widely believed to be another major move in the defection plan.

Stakeholders also pointed to what they called the 'desolate state' of PDP as the reason for the governor's plan to dump his party for APC.

Meanwhile, reports have it that the attempt hit the rock because of the conditions given to him by the APC leadership at the national level.

Part of the conditions, according to the reports, was that he would have to queue up and that he would not be given an automatic ticket for the governorship election under APC.

With the failed attempt to join APC, Adeleke now faces an uphill task in his second term bid in 2026.

Meanwhile, the Accord, a much-stable but relatively less-popular political party, has offered its platform for

the governor following his resignation from his former party, PDP.

The party's Chairman in Lagos, Dele Oladeji, was quoted as saying that the party would be happy to receive should he formally decide to declare for the platform to pursue his second term ambition in 2026.

"We are waiting for his declaration; that is what we can say for now; we are waiting for when he will declare for Accord.

"In Accord, we are ready for him; whenever he decides to step in, we are set to receive him; accord is a haven devoid of political turbulence.

"It is a very stable and sanitised political platform; we have no factions and no godfathers; any candidate who joins us between now and 2027 is sure of a peaceful and dependable structure.

"If he decides to step in, we will be ready to work with him and ensure his success," Oladeji told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Lagos shortly after Adeleke announced his exit from PDP.

But Adeleke, on Tuesday, officially joined Accord Party, a development largely seen as a bold move in the pursuit of his political destiny.

The governor, while announcing his membership of Accord at the Banquet Hall of the Government House and in the presence of national and state leaders of the party, also revealed his intention to seek re-election on the platform of the "Thumb-Up" party.

Surprisingly, Adeleke disclosed that he had joined the party more than a month ago, even though he was silent on why he did not make the move public.

"I joined the Accord Party more than a month ago, precisely on Nov. 6, as a platform to seek re-election in 2026.

"This was after weeks of consultation and deliberations

with stakeholders and opinion leaders.

"Stakeholders and residents of Osun State are aware of why we are taking this important decision.

"We intend to pursue a second term in office on the platform of the Accord Party to complete the ongoing delivery of good governance and democratic dividends, which have been applauded at home and abroad," he said.

Adeleke said that he opted for the party because its mission of welfarism aligned with his administration's focus on citizens' and workers' welfare.

Good as the move may appear to be, watchers of political events in Osun are wondering how strong, popular and widely acceptable is Accord in Osun.

They also expressed concern about how effective the platform can be for the actualisation of the governor's second term ambition, basing their worries on the party's antecedents.

For instance, since the establishment of the party by former Gov. Rashidi Ladoja who is now the Olubadan of Ibadanland, it is not on record that it has won governorship election in any state in the country, though this does not mean that Adeleke may not spring a surprise.

Notwithstanding the confidence exuded by the governor during his formal defection to Accord, analysts are of the opinion that winning the governorship election in 2026 by Adeleke may not be a tea party, given the presence of bigger political parties like APC and ADC.

To them, the governor may need to hang his dancing shoes for now, halt his theatrics and hit the ground running if he must ride on the back of Accord to the Government House for a second term.

(NANFeatures)



PDP pledges internal democracy, prepares for 2027 return

The National Chairman of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), Tanimu Turaki, assured Nigerians of the party's commitment to internal democracy and fairness on Wednesday in Abuja.

Turaki made the remarks during a meeting between the new National Working Committee (NWC) and PDP members of the National Assembly.

He promised an open-door policy, ending impunity and internal manipulation, as the party implements new strategies to reclaim power in 2027.

Turaki said: "I want to assure Nigerians, especially PDP members nationwide, that we will listen and respond to their needs promptly and transparently."

"There will no longer

be room for impunity, manipulation or favouritism. Nigerians will be allowed to aspire and achieve their goals. PDP is now a true party."

He described the meeting as crucial, highlighting the National Assembly caucus's role in the party's mission to return to power in 2027.

"Together with members of the National Assembly, we will transform Nigeria through the instrumentality of the PDP," Turaki added.

Sen. Abdul Ningi, speaking for the Senate PDP caucus, commended the NWC for convening the meeting and praised the leadership's direction.

Ningi emphasised that the party possesses the capacity and resources required to return to power and called for loyalty from members.

"We know the issues in PDP are man-made. Man-made problems require man-made solutions. The challenges are solvable," Ningi said.

He warned that some may forget PDP's contributions, but the party's long-term vision extends well beyond 2027.

"Our thinking is beyond 2027. Anyone seeking to terminate PDP over 2027 issues is not aligned with our values," Ningi added.

The Minority Whip of the House of Representatives, Ali Isa, affirmed lawmakers' commitment to work

with Turaki's leadership to safeguard Nigeria's democracy.

He urged Nigerians to support the PDP, reinforcing the party's capacity to advise and strengthen the country's democratic institutions.



Tanimu Turaki

Edo assembly hails governor's 'unprecedented' infrastructure drive

The Edo House of Assembly has praised Gov. Monday Okpebholo's infrastructure push, calling it "unprecedented in the state's history."

Deputy Speaker Atu Osamwonyi made the remark on Wednesday during an oversight visit to key projects in Edo South Senatorial District.

Osamwonyi, who led the team, expressed satisfaction with progress on the drainage system and the Sapele Road flyover bridge.

Other lawmakers on the tour included Addeh Isibor, Yekini Idaiye and Ugabi Kingsley.

He said the projects reflected the governor's commitment to renewal and transparency across the state.

The Deputy Speaker praised Okpebholo for delivering projects many considered impossible under limited

financial conditions.

"In my entire life in Edo, this flyover project is the first of its kind. We are here physically, and work is ongoing," he said.

He added that the Assembly would continue to back the governor and resist efforts to slow the administration's progress.

The team also inspected the 14-kilometre Ekae Road and the 5.86-kilometre Amagba-Obagie-N'Ebvusa link road.

Members said they were impressed with the pace and quality of work recorded at the sites.

Commissioner for Works, Felix Akhabue, credited the progress to the governor's strict directives on standards and timelines.

He said the Assembly's involvement boosted accountability and assured citizens of quality delivery.

Bauchi governor refutes defection to PRP

Gov. Bala Mohammed of Bauchi State has dismissed as misleading report insinuating his defection from the People's Democratic Party (PDP) to the People's Redemption Party (PRP).

This is contained in a statement by his media aide, Mr Mukhtar Gidado, on Wednesday in Bauchi.

He dismissed the report as false and a figment of the author's imagination.

Gidado said the state government stated unequivocally that the governor never contemplated leaving the PDP, initiate any move to defect to another party or make overtures to the PRP.

The governor's aide said that

such a baseless remark would have been dismissed as the ramblings of an attention-seeker desperate for relevance.

He said experience has shown that silence in the face of falsehood can be misconstrued as acquiescence.

"It must be placed on record that, in line with his inalienable right to freely associate in pursuit of a stable and prosperous polity, Gov. Bala Mohammed, like any citizen reserves the right to determine his future political alignments."

"Should that time ever arise, such a decision will not be dictated by the dubious machinations of political turncoats who thrive on falsehood and malice," said Gidado.

Gidado said the governor has been at the forefront of rescuing the PDP from the contrived crises, stressing that his leadership credentials required no further validation.

He said that Mohammed's credentials have been acknowledged both within and beyond Bauchi State, underscoring his decisive victories over the PRP in the two fiercely contested elections.

Gidado urged residents of the state, especially supporters of the PDP to remain vigilant, ensuring that the hard-won gains of recent years in empowerment, infrastructure, rural development, and tourism were not entrusted to self seeking elements.

Tinubu tasks Osun APC governorship aspirants on unity, consensus



President Tinubu

President Bola Tinubu has urged All Progressives Congress governorship aspirants in Osun State to unite and embrace consensus ahead of the party primary scheduled for Saturday.

Presidential spokesperson, Mr Bayo Onanuga, disclosed this in a statement issued on Wednesday in Abuja.

He said the President met the aspirants at the State House, Abuja to strengthen harmony before the contest.

The aspirants present included former Deputy Governor Olugboyega Alabi, Dotun Babayemi, Akin Ogunbiyi, Sen. Babajide Omowore, Kunle Adegoke (SAN), Babatunde Oralusi, Mulikat Abiola Jimoh

and Munirudeen Oyebamiji.

Also in attendance were APC National Chairman, Prof. Nentawe Yilwatda; the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Senator George Akume; and Chairman of the Progressive Governors Forum, Gov. Hope Uzodimma.

The Minister of Marine and Blue Economy, Adegboyega Oyetola, also joined the meeting.

Tinubu commended the aspirants for their contributions to the party and appealed for cooperation to avoid the rancour that affected the APC in the last Osun election.

He urged them to rally behind the consensus candidate that

the APC will present for the governorship poll.

"You all have a duty and obligation to the party by ensuring the candidate of our party wins the next election in Osun State."

"You must strengthen the bonds of unity, party supremacy and collective responsibility."

"I have absolute confidence in your ability to deliver victory to our party in Osun State. You have my support and that of the National leadership of APC to win the coming election."

At the end of the meeting, the aspirants and APC leaders issued a joint declaration committing to unity and support for the chosen candidate.

Senate seeks exemption from police withdrawal

The Senate on Wednesday sought for an exemption from the order by President Bola Tinubu for the withdrawal of police personnel attached to 'Very Important Persons' (VIPs) nationwide.

The upper chamber's request was sequel to a Point of Order on Privilege raised

by Sen. Abdul Ningi (PDP-Bauchi) during plenary.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) recalled that the president had, on Nov. 23, ordered the withdrawal of police personnel attached to VIPs nationwide.

He also directed that the officers be redeployed to

strengthen core policing duties across communities.

In his point of order, Ningi complained about the withdrawal of his only police orderly, while many political office holders in the country were still enjoying police cover.

He demanded that it

should be done across board in the spirit of fairness and equity.

Ningi said: "Mr President, I've been around this National Assembly since 1999. Right from 1999, I was having one police orderly.

"I have never questioned any additional security personnel. I woke up today and I was told my police orderly and other police orderlies had been withdrawn.

"Mr President, I don't have any problem with that. My problem is that this thing should go across the board.

"Let's see what happens from the Office of the President, to the Vice-President, to the Senate President, to the Speaker of the House, to the Ministers.

"After they had withdrawn my orderly, I saw two convoys of ministers and they were carrying lots of security personnel.

"I have also seen daughters and sons of political office holders having orderlies and having security covers. Mr President, I have seen singers having orderlies.

"I cannot ever imagine that a senator of the Federal Republic of Nigeria who has been here for a very long time having only one orderly and he was withdrawn."

"This is unheard of in any democracy. And that's why I said this is a matter that insults me; it concerns me; it is not right and it should be taken with all the seriousness

it deserves," he said.

The senator urged the Senate President to ask the Chairman of the Committee on Police to please investigate why other people were having security covers in spite of the presidential order.

"You cannot just put the national assembly as scape goats while others enjoy the privileges of security control," he said.

In his remarks, Deputy Senate President, Jibrin Barau, who presided over plenary, said that the leadership of the senate had a meeting on the issue.

"Yesterday, I'm sure you saw us, we had a leadership meeting. This was discussed and we took an action and we expect the outcome of that action to be available to us today.

"It is of concern to us and I will raise the issue. And we're dealing with that. We will be at the top of the situation," Barau said.

He assured that the issue raised would be taken seriously, stressing: "I'm sure we have a president who listens to us and, by the grace of God, he will exempt us from that order.

"We all stand by Mr President in his effort to deal with the security problem in our country.

"The president is doing very well and we always commend him because we know what he's doing," he said.



Senate

Osun 2026: Accord Party clears Ademola Adeleke for primary

The screening committee of the Accord Party has screened and cleared Gov. Ademola Adeleke for the party's governorship primary, which is being held today in Osogbo.

This is contained in a statement by Mr Ibe Thankgod, the chairman of the committee, who is also National Organising Secretary of the party, on Wednesday in Osogbo.

Thankgod said that the governor had fulfilled all the requirements for nomination and participation at the primary.

He said the committee subsequently cleared Adeleke

as the sole aspirant for the party's governorship ticket and concluded all required documentation with the relevant bodies.

Thankgod described the governor as a worthy gubernatorial aspirant of the party.

According to the statement, the certificate of clearance was presented to the governor by the committee chairman.

In response, Adeleke expressed appreciation to the screening committee and the entire party leadership.

The governor said that he was prepared to lead the

party to victory in 2026.

"I am ready for the primary, and I am ready for the general elections.

"We are winning by God's grace," he said.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that Adeleke, on Tuesday night, announced his defection to the Accord Party.

Adeleke said that he had joined the Accord Party more than a month ago to seek re-election.

The governor resigned his membership of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) on Dec. 2.(

Governor Namadi appoints 3 special advisers, urges productivity

By Abdullahi Idris, Dutse

Governor Umar Namadi has approved the appointment of 3 additional Special Advisers to enhance governance and foster development in the state.

This was contained in a statement signed by the Secretary to the Government of Jigawa State, Malam Bala Ibrahim

Malam Bala Ibrahim said the appointments are based on merit, competence, and personal integrity, ensuring that the state is guided by capable individuals committed to serving the public.

The newly appointed Special Advisers are:

1. Kabiru A. Sugungun
Special Adviser on National Assembly Matters
 2. Ibrahim Ahmed Kwaimawa
Special Adviser on Industrial Relations
 3. Ado Sani Birnin Kudu
Special Adviser on Civil Service Matters
- While congratulating

the appointees, the SSG expressed confidence in their ability to contribute positively to the administration's goals and objectives.

"These appointments reflect our commitment to excellence in governance and the belief that our state deserves leaders who are dedicated, knowledgeable, and trustworthy," he stated.

Malam Bala Ibrahim urges the public to extend their support to the new advisers as they embark on their responsibilities.

The appointments are with immediate effect.



Jigawa State enters strategic agreement for 100,000 hectare Alfalfa Project to drive livestock development

By Abdullahi Idris, Dutse

Governor Umar Namadi today presided over the signing of a landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with a consortium of investors for the large-scale production of alfalfa, under which the Jigawa State Government has committed to providing up to 100,000 hectares of land to support the project, marking one of the largest alfalfa production initiatives in Africa.

The MoU was signed following a visit by a high-level delegation

led by the Director General of the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), Kashifu Inuwa.

The delegation included the Managing Director of NEXIM Bank, Mr. Abubakar Abba Bello; the Managing Director of MOFI, Dr. Armstrong Takang; the Managing Director of Jaiz Bank, Mr. Haruna Musa; and several private-sector partners such as Capemano, Alami Capital, EL-Meena Farms, and Matura Farm, as well as representatives of NSIA and other key institutions.

Speaking after the signing, Governor Namadi reiterated Jigawa's total commitment to agriculture and livestock development, describing agriculture as the backbone of the state's economy.

"Agriculture is the lifeblood of this state. About 90% of our population depends on it for their livelihood, and it contributes more than 50% of our GDP. Any serious government that genuinely aims to uplift its people should prioritize agriculture, the governor said.

He highlighted Jigawa's

impressive accomplishments in agriculture, noting its ranking as the second-best state in Nigeria for ease of doing business and its leading role in crop production.

"We are number one in wheat production, and this year alone, we cultivated 315,000 hectares of rice. Our plan to achieve 500,000 hectares by 2030 is fully on track."

Speaking on livestock development, the governor described alfalfa as a game-changing opportunity for the state.

"Livestock is synonymous with agriculture. That is why we deliberately created the Ministry for Livestock this year. Jigawa is home to the largest livestock market in Africa—the Maigatari market—and this project will further strengthen our leadership."

The governor expressed strong confidence in the new partnership, saying that the successful alfalfa pilot project by Matura Farm has already demonstrated exceptional global potential.

"When Matura Farm started, many people doubted it was possible. Today, he is producing some of the highest-quality alfalfa in the world," he said.

He assured the investors of the state's readiness to provide the full 100,000 hectares required for the project.

"The project is targeting 100,000 hectares. I want to assure you that we will make all of that available over time."

Governor Namadi emphasized Jigawa's peaceful environment and investor-friendly framework as its major advantages:

"We are the most peaceful state in Nigeria today. Jigawa is safe, open for business, and committed to providing all the support you need."

He further pledged seamless facilitation through the state's

investment promotion agency:

"We have a one-stop-shop investment platform—InvestJigawa—that manages everything from land allocation to regulatory processes. You have found a committed partner."

"As a government, we will do whatever it takes. This business is profitable—you have the land, the labour, the security, and the political will. Everything you need is here."

In his remarks, NITDA Director General Kashifu Inuwa stated that the project aligns directly with President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's priority agenda on food security and expanded agricultural production, confirming that the initiative will take off immediately.

"Priority number two of the President's agenda focuses on boosting agriculture to achieve food security. The investment-friendly climate in Jigawa is one of the key reasons we are bringing this project here."

Providing technical insight, the Commissioner for Livestock Development, Professor Salim Mohammed, described alfalfa as a transformative high-protein forage crop capable of boosting livestock productivity, generating mass employment, and expanding export revenues.

"On 1,000 hectares alone, over 150 youths are employed before cultivation begins—and many more will participate through planting, irrigation, harvesting, processing, and marketing."

He noted that herding communities, especially Fulani pastoralists, will directly benefit from improved feed availability.

"Fresh alfalfa significantly improves milk production, meat quality, and breeding outcomes."

He confirmed that the project represents a multi-billion-naira investment.



Pi-CNG's clean mobility, affordable transport programme enters new phase

The Presidential Initiative on Compressed Natural Gas (Pi-CNG) on Thursday unveiled the Pi-CNG 2.0 programme and its electric mobility roadmap, aimed at expanding President Bola Tinubu's nationwide transition to cleaner and more affordable transport energy.

Ismael Ahmed, Executive Chairman/Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Pi-CNG, while unveiling the programme in Abuja at a news conference, said that the president was eager to see Nigerians enjoy cheaper means of mobility, to cushion the effects of fuel subsidy removal.

He said that the Pi-CNG 2.0 programme and its electric mobility roadmap, was also aimed at showcasing different brands of electric vehicles and tricycles already in use in the country.

Ahmed said that the new operational phase of Pi-CNG would focus on availability, affordability and acceptability of CNG and EV technologies across the country.

"Our mission remains to build a resilient multi-energy transport ecosystem that lowers costs for Nigerians and positions the country as a continental clean mobility leader."

According to Ahmed, five Liquefied Compressed Natural Gas

(LCNG) and daughter stations will be commissioned in Kano from January 2026 before expansion to Kaduna, Gombe, Maiduguri and Katsina.

He said the initiative which was originally introduced to cushion the effects of fuel subsidy removal, had evolved into a catalyst for a nationwide clean mobility transition.

"The programme has over the past 20 months ignited the gas-to-transport value chain through partnership with industry players, state governments, financiers and automotive manufacturers.

"Our key achievements include the rollout of the Conversion Incentive Programme in 28 states, establishment of more than 58 refueling stations, deployment of thousands of natural gas vehicles, enlistment of over 300 conversion partners and training of more than 6,000 Nigerians.

"We have attracted two billion dollars investment so far in this programme and it is evidence of investor confidence in Nigeria's clean mobility agenda but a major lesson from the first phase was that sustained offtake depended on reliable gas supply.

"The Initiative subsequently deepened engagement with regulators, producers and

midstream operators to secure long-term feedstock and optimise logistics across the virtual pipeline network.

"Pi-CNG also recorded progress in local manufacturing efforts, particularly with plans for an industrial park in Ajaokuta dedicated to producing CNG components to reduce import dependence and promote domestic value creation.

"Other milestones include strengthened gas infrastructure in northern states and a partnership with the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) to expand CNG stations in the region," Ahmed said.

He also said that Pi-CNG activated a national e-mobility programme designed to deploy electric vehicles (EVs) in collaboration with strategic Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEMs).

Ahmed announced that the Pi-CNG would unveil its full presence in Kano State, in the first quarter of 2026, with President Bola Tinubu expected to inaugurate the Northern Corridor's CNG network.

"This Initiative is people-centred; the President's priority is improving the livelihood of ordinary Nigerians, as cheaper transport will directly reduce the cost of goods and services.

Jigawa opens tender for procurement of 10 Toyota Hilux, urges transparency

By Abdullahi Idris, Dutse

The Jigawa State Government has opened tender for the procurement of ten Toyota Hilux vehicles for security agencies in the State.

Declaring the bid opening, Bello Datti, Permanent Secretary, Directorate of Special Services and Council Affairs, reiterated the government's commitment to enhancing support for security formations in maintaining peace and security across State.

He said the initiative aligns with Governor Umar Namadi's 12-point agenda, emphasizing the importance of security in safeguarding the lives and property of citizens.

He urged the technical committee to ensure a transparent and impartial

selection process. He also called upon the successful contractor to adhere to the project timeline.

Sani Ismai'l, representing Civil Society Organizations, highlighted the need for contractors to prioritize quality and timely delivery throughout the project execution.

Responding on behalf of the bidders, Shu'aibu Adamu, a representative from Zurfat Investment Limited, expressed gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the procurement process and assured their commitment to meeting the government's standards.

This bidding process represents a significant advancement in enhancing the mobility and operational efficiency of Security Agencies in the State.



Taming the Chaos: Maikalangu's battle to formalize AMAC's informal economy

By Kingsley Madaki

The Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) is a territory defined by stark contrasts: the organized affluence of the city centre versus the raw, surging energy of the satellite towns and informal markets.

At the heart of this dynamic is Hon. Christopher Zakka Maikalangu, the Executive Chairman of AMAC, whose administration faces the challenging task of bringing structure, safety, and regulation to the council's most vital yet chaotic, economic hubs:

The Apo District Market, Apo Resettlement Garki, Karu Motor Park, and Karu Market informal sector.

Maikalangu's approach is defined by a dual strategy: Enforcement for order and intervention for welfare.

1. From Chaos to Coordination: The Karu Motor Park & Market Axis

The Karu Motor Park and its neighbouring informal market have long served as a critical—and congested—gateway connecting the FCT to Nasarawa State.

This axis has been notorious for crime, traffic gridlock, and revenue leakage.

The Security and Infrastructure Overhaul:

In a major intervention, the Maikalangu administration recently inaugurated a newly constructed Karu Motor Park, a project worth an estimated N1.56 billion developed under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP).

The initiative addresses two critical issues:

Security:

Maikalangu explicitly stated that the park's launch is a direct measure to combat "one-chance" crimes in the capital.

The park is equipped with state-of-the-art facilities, including CCTV cameras and monitored entry/exit points, to ensure passenger safety and coordinate the transportation sector.

Order and Revenue:

By establishing a secure, organized hub with registered vehicles, the council aims to stop illegal loading on roadsides and bring the transport sector under a unified regulatory and revenue net. The new park features shops, offices, restrooms, and a restaurant, further integrating it into the local economy.

The Fire Intervention:

The human element of the informal sector was brought to the forefront when a devastating fire engulfed the Karu Community Market. While the congestion of the informal settlement behind the main market hindered fire services, Maikalangu's response was swift.

He visited the site, led a National Assembly delegation for impact assessment, and pledged a relief package to help the over 1,300 affected traders recover and rebuild, assuring them of government support for their devastated livelihoods.

2. Sanitizing Commerce:

Apo Market and Resettlement Garki
The Apo District Market, particularly the informal structures and roadside trading in Apo Resettlement Garki, presents a different kind of challenge: balancing FCDA master plan compliance with the livelihood of the original settlers and new economic entrants.

Removing Barriers to Formal Trade:
Maikalangu has been vocal about his administration's commitment to "removing all obstacles that are strange to economic growth," including poor infrastructure and the stress of doing business.

His strategy has been to facilitate the relocation of traders displaced by the FCDA's demolition of illegal

roadside structures into safer, authorized community markets.

Kpaduma Initiative:

Following the demolition of some illegal shops, Maikalangu directed affected traders to immediately utilize existing space in the ongoing remodel Kpaduma market, urging those selling on the roadside to move into the organized market for their own safety and to ensure environmental order.

This approach seeks to sanitize the environment while retaining the economic activity within a regulated space.

Welfare and Outreach:

Beyond regulation, the Chairman has maintained a visible presence in the Apo Resettlement area, underscoring his administration's commitment to welfare.

This includes flagging off the distribution of palliative food items at the Apo Resettlement Town Hall, demonstrating direct support to low-income residents affected by economic hardships.

3. The Grand Vision:

A Digital and Regulated AMAC

Maikalangu's interventions in the major market and park hubs are tied to his larger vision: a transparent and well-governed AMAC.

Primarily aimed at capturing the vast economic activity that occurs in places like Apo and Karu, ensuring that the revenue generated returns to these communities in the form of better services and infrastructure.

The legacy Maikalangu seeks to build is one where the informal sector—the unseen engine of AMAC's economy—is no longer a source of chaos and leakage, but a regulated, safe, and accountable contributor to the council's development.

Madaki is the Senior Special Assistant on Media and Public Affairs to the Executive Chairman AMAC, Hon Christopher Zakka Maikalangu





Presidency commends CSOs on health sector reforms

Dr Salma Anas-Kolo, Senior Special Adviser to President Bola Tinubu on Health, has commended Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) for their significant contributions to reforms recorded in Nigeria's health sector.

Anas-Kolo gave the commendation in Abuja at the fifth anniversary of the Centre for Well-being and Integrated Nutrition Solutions (CWINS), an NGO.

She said CSOs had remained at the centre of ideas that helped drive the health sector agenda, adding that their efforts had "made the impossible possible".

According to her, some of the most remarkable progress in the health sector resulted from the voices and energy of civil society, noting that government alone cannot deliver sustainable reforms.

"Today, we are enjoying the Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHC PF), which represents one per cent of the consolidated revenue for

health. We have not even fully achieved the one per cent, yet the impact is visible," she said.

She urged CSOs to intensify advocacy at the sub-national level, stressing that states must allocate a fair percentage of their budgets to health.

"That should be the next loud voice. State governments must allocate at least two per cent of their budget to health. That is the advocacy we want to hear," she said.

Anas-Kolo said strong CSO advocacy also led to the development of Nigeria's procurement plan and workplan for funding family planning commodities.

She urged civil society groups to continue championing health sector transformation to ensure Nigeria meets its Universal Health Coverage (UHC) targets before 2030.

She also called on state and local governments to be more intentional in their contributions, adding that CSOs must help define clear roles and responsibilities for

sub-national actors.

"CSOs must ensure adequate resource allocation and policies that place citizens, especially women and girls, at the core of governance," she said.

The Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Prof. Ali Pate, represented by Dr Ladidi Bako, Director of Nutrition, said the CWINS anniversary provided an opportunity for reflection and renewed commitment.

Pate noted that Nigeria is facing the triple burden of malnutrition: undernutrition, overnutrition and micronutrient deficiency.

He said government had strengthened nutrition governance and integrated nutrition into national development priorities.

"Our partnership with CWINS and others has enabled inclusive programme design, stronger data generation and expanded nutrition interventions for school-age children, adolescents, women and the elderly," he said.

FG seeks speedy trials, stronger security response to GBV

The Ministry of Women Affairs has called for faster prosecution of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) cases and strict adherence to standardised response protocols by all security agencies to strengthen justice for survivors in Nigeria.

Hajiya Imaan Sulaiman-Ibrahim, Minister of Women Affairs, made the call on Wednesday in Abuja at the National Dialogue on Ending GBV, organised in collaboration with the World Bank Group Nigeria.

Sulaiman-Ibrahim, represented by the Permanent Secretary, Mrs Esuabana Asanye, said improving data and reporting systems, as well as strengthening the National GBV Data Situation Room, would boost accountability and coordinated national action.

She noted that the 2025 edition of the 16 Days of Activism had renewed national attention on the escalating threats faced by women and girls, particularly in digital spaces.

Highlighting alarming global figures, she said more than 830 million women had suffered intimate partner violence, while 250 million had faced sexual violence from non-partners.

She added that one in every three women worldwide would experience violence in her lifetime.

According to her, Nigeria mirrors

this reality, with 31 per cent of women aged 15 to 49 having experienced physical violence, and one in four girls surviving sexual abuse before adulthood.

She described those affected girls as "children who never had the chance to grow without fear, carrying physical, emotional and psychological scars into adulthood."

The minister warned that Nigeria loosed trillions of naira annually to GBV, resources she said could have been used to build schools, equip hospitals and create jobs.

She also noted that digital violence had risen by more than 45 per cent in the last four years, exposing girls to cyberbullying, digital blackmail and online humiliation that often remained permanently online.

Sulaiman-Ibrahim said the ministry, under President Bola Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda, was adopting a coordinated, evidence-driven response through improved laws, survivor support services and expanded access to justice.

She reported progress in legal reforms, including the domestication of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act in 35 states and the Federal Capital Territory, as well as near-universal adoption of the Child Rights Act.



Navy extends medical outreach to 769 indigents in Badagry community

The Forward Operating Base (FOB) of the Nigerian Navy, Badagry, Lagos, on Wednesday extended medical rhapsody to 769 indigents of Iworo and Epeme communities in Badagry, Lagos State.

The exercise recorded an impressive turnout as hundreds of community members received free medical consultations, medications, and essential health sensitisation.

A substantial volume of drugs and medical supplies were dispensed, reflecting the Navy's commitment to enhancing community health and welfare.

Speaking before the take-off of the ceremony Navy Capt. Leye Omotayo, the Commanding Officer, FOB, Badagry, said the medical rhapsody was not only a gesture of goodwill but a lifesaving intervention for the residents of

Iworo Kingdom.

Omotayo noted that the Medical Rhapsody was conducted in alignment with the Nigerian Navy's Civil-Military Cooperation objectives.

"This is in strict compliance with the strategic directives of the Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice Admiral A. Abbas, aimed at strengthening trust, partnership, and security within host communities," he said.



He noted that the medical rhapsody was meant for the elderly and vulnerable who might be facing challenges in accessing quality healthcare.

"The initiative underscored the Nigerian Navy's dedication to addressing pressing health issues and enhancing the quality of life in its host communities," he said.

Omotayo said they had medical personnel and medication for

between 600 and 1,000 residents of the kingdom.

"We have four medical doctors and many other personnel to attend to the residents.

"We have pharmacists and drugs for them, once they go through the process and they prescribe drugs for them; they will go and get it immediately," he said.

Omotayo urged residents to take advantage of the healthcare services, describing the rhapsody as a "hospital setting brought to the doorstep of the community."

Also speaking, Dr Nimotallah Olajire the Medical Director, FOB, Nigerian Navy, Badagry, said the medical rhapsody would include medical consultations, medical education, malaria parasites test, blood pressure, sugar check and deworming exercise, among others.

Olajire urged the residents of

Iworo Kingdom to pay attention to their health.

In his remarks, Oba Oladele Kosoko, the Oniworo of Iworo Kingdom, commended Omotayo for his remarkable leadership and unwavering commitment to the wellbeing of the local populace.

He expressed profound gratitude on behalf of the community and the local council to the Commanding Officer, the officers and men of FOB Badagry, and the Nigerian Navy at large.

Mrs Afusat Liadi, a resident of Iworo, one of the beneficiaries of the medical rhapsody, said she was treated for malaria and was given different drugs.

She thanked the Navy for bringing the free medical outreach to them, urging them to always extend the exercise to them regularly.

YouTube introduces new recap feature, Gospel makes top list

YouTube has introduced a new personalised recap feature to help users better understand and celebrate their viewing habits.

The platform also released Nigeria's 2025 top-searched creators, artists and trending content, led by the gospel hit "No Turning Back II".

The Head of Music for Sub-Saharan Africa at YouTube, Addy Awofisayo, disclosed this in a statement on Wednesday.

He noted that Nigeria's creative scene continued to define digital culture in 2025 through fast-rising musicians and influential Nollywood storytellers.

Awofisayo said the year was marked by "explosive musical talent and captivating storytellers" who further cemented Nollywood's global influence.

She added that the new Recap feature gives every user "a fun, personal way to celebrate the videos that made their year special".

According to her, YouTube remains "a unique window into the heart of culture," reflecting the sounds, stories and moments that shaped how people danced, laughed and connected throughout the year.

She said the platform's 2025 lists show how Nigerian content continues to resonate globally, from chart-topping singles to must-watch films and skits.

Awofisayo explained that music searches in 2025 showcased a strong blend of gospel and Afrobeats, with "No Turning Back II," Shallipopi's "Laho," and Davido's "With You" among the most-watched songs and visuals.

She said the year also

underscored Nollywood's staying power and the rise of independent digital storytellers.

Channels such as Omoni Oboli TV, Itelediconstudio, and the comedy sensation Brain Jotter featured on the list of creators who captured public attention.

"These creators are not just making videos; they are building creative powerhouses and shaping the future of entertainment in Nigeria," Awofisayo said.

She added that the newly launched YouTube Recap experience would allow users to look back at their year on the platform through personalised stats, music highlights and viewing insights.

According to her, the feature is designed to make YouTube more interactive and reflective, helping viewers rediscover the content that defined their year.



Innovation key to Nigeria's development says Abiru

Sen. Mukhail Abiru (APC Lagos-East) Chairman, Senate Committee on Banking, Insurance and Other Financial Institutions, says that innovation is key in the quest for Nigeria's development.

Abiru gave the advice at the Lagos State University of Science and Technology (LASUSTECH) research fair on Wednesday in Ikorodu.

The event has as its theme: "Rebuilding Nigeria's Research and University System in a Fast-Changing Global Environment."

Abiru, who was the special guest of honour at the maiden research fair advocated a radical transformation of research and innovation approach in the nation's university system to keep pace with global technological change.

The lawmaker said that innovation-driven education remained central to national competitiveness.

"Nigeria must re-imagine, re-engineer and reinvigorate" its research culture if it hopes to remain relevant in a world shaped by artificial intelligence.

"We must pay special attention to biotechnology, renewable energy, digital finance, and other emerging technologies," he said.

He underscored the need for

universities to become engines of economic growth through knowledge enterprise and industry-aligned innovation.

Abiru, who is the co-founder of (Senator Adetokunbo Innovation Lab (SAIL) Empowerment Foundation, commended LASUSTECH for convening the fair that sought to deepen collaboration between academia and industry.

The lawmaker said the idea reflected successful global models such as Silicon Valley, Germany's research and industry synergy as well as South Korea's university government and industry partnership.

According to him, SAIL Innovation Lab, Ikorodu, Lagos, had demonstrates the transformative power of equipping young Nigerians with digital, technology and entrepreneurial skills.

"Many of our youths are now software engineers, product designers, data scientists and startup founders making their mark nationally and internationally."

"SAIL Innovation lab has proved that Nigerian youths will excel when given the right platform," he said.

Science academy assures of unbiased cannabis oil recommendations

The Nigerian Academy of Sciences (NAS) has assured that its recommendations on the possible legalisation of cannabis oil for medical use will be balanced, culturally appropriate and based strictly on scientific evidence.

Dr Oladoyin Odubango, Executive Secretary of NAS, gave the assurance in an interview on Wednesday in Abuja.

Odubango said the academy was finalising its advisory to the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), which had requested scientific guidance on the subject.

NAS, in collaboration with NDLEA, held a workshop in October on "Cannabis Oil Debate: The Path Forward for Nigeria."

It examined global regulatory models, therapeutic applications, production standards and other issues surrounding cannabis oil.

Odubango said the academy had since undertaken a formal consensus study to develop evidence-based recommendations for the agency.

"The NDLEA asked us to advise them on the scientific view concerning the legalisation of cannabis for medical use."

"That study is more or less completed," he said.

He said NAS and NDLEA were currently working to agree on a date for the formal presentation of the recommendations, initially targeted for December.

He advised that the recommendations should remain confidential to the NDLEA, until when due to be made public.

He said that the process of the study was designed to eliminate personal or religious biases.

"The academy is meant to provide unbiased scientific advice."

"When we set up the consensus study committee, members put aside personal views, but the common goal was to look at the science together."

"It took a very good, balanced view and anyone anywhere in the world would respect the findings. Nigerians will be happy when it is released."



Human Rights Day: Use of modern technology, AI will enhance justice delivery — Stakeholders

A coalition of human rights group in Ebonyi has advocated the use of modern technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI), including Text-to-Speech (TTS) tools and online court hearings, to enhance the justice delivery system.

The coalition includes the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), the Human Rights and Conflict Resolution Centre (HRCRC), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), among others.

The group made their position known during a press conference commemorating the 2025 International Human Rights Day in Abakaliki on Wednesday.

The year's celebration was themed "Human Rights: Our Everyday Essentials."

Mr. Christopher Okorie, Coordinator of the NHRC in Ebonyi, said the event was significant in efforts to protect and promote the everyday rights of citizens.

Okorie noted that the coalition

remained committed to building a nation where the rights of all are safeguarded.

He explained that the adoption of modern technology and AI tools would significantly speed up court processes, documentation, and recordings.

According to him, every voice matters, and no one should be left behind in the promotion of human rights.

"Our celebration today is a reminder that human rights flourish where communities embrace harmony, mutual respect, and peaceful coexistence," he added.

Okorie also called for the establishment of shelters for victims of human rights abuses in Ebonyi and across other states of the federation.

He lamented the absence of such facilities in the state, noting that shelters would support and protect victims while their cases are being investigated.

Also speaking, Mr. George Etamesor, Executive Director of HRCRC in the state, expressed concern about the high number of awaiting-trial inmates in Nigerian Correctional Centres and called for urgent decongestion of the facilities.

"Sadly, most of the inmates awaiting trial are held for minor offences, enduring inhumane conditions including inadequate food, poor healthcare, among others."

"This not only violates the right to dignity and fair trial but also fuels cycles of poverty and re-offending."

"On this day dedicated to everyday essentials, we emphasise that justice delayed is justice denied."

"We propose accelerated judicial processes, expanded use of non-custodial sentences such as community service, and greater investment in rehabilitation programmes."

David Raya steps up for Arsenal as Gunners down Club Brugge with makeshift defence

Arsenal claimed a resounding 3-0 win over Club Brugge to maintain their lead atop the UEFA Champions League table.

The Gunners took the lead via a thunderbolt from Noni Madueke before Martin Zubimendi put a chance on a platter for the Englishman to notch his brace.

Gabriel Martinelli scored to become the first Arsenal player to net in five consecutive Champions League matches.

While Madueke, Zubimendi, and Martinelli will likely get all the plaudits, David Raya between the sticks deserves recognition for a stellar performance.

Arsenal had managed only one clean sheet in six coming into this tie, but the 30-year-old refused to be beaten.

The Spaniard made seven saves, including six from inside the box and prevented

expected goals of around 1.12.

The 'magnificent' goalkeeper also completed 21 of 24 passes, demonstrating effective distribution.

Raya made smart saves from Carlos Forbs, Christos Tzolis and Aleksandar Stankovic.

Football London gave him an 8/10 rating and hailed his performance. He was the unheralded hero for Arsenal on the night.

With the shaky Piero Hincapie and midfielder Christian Norgaard lining up in defence in front of him, Raya needed to be at his best for Arsenal and delivered the goods.

The North Londoners have been decimated by injuries, leaving them light at the back.

William Saliba, Gabriel Magalhaes, and Cristhian Mosquera are all currently sidelined.

Arsenal will need Raya to play out of his skin in the coming games as they look to take their lead at the top of the Premier League table into the new year.

Manchester City are breathing down their necks.

Arsenal's watertight defence was the core of this team.

At the beginning of the season, they harboured dreams of breaking Chelsea's record of only 15 goals conceded in a season.

However, with injuries threatening to break the rearguard and derail Arsenal's campaign, they will have to shelve those dreams and hope Raya steps up till the defenders return.

The Gunners welcome bottom-of-the-table Wolverhampton Wanderers to the Emirates Stadium this weekend.



During the eight and a half years he has spent at Liverpool, Mohamed Salah has been beloved by supporters, who rank the 'Egyptian King' among the club's greatest ever players.

But since his unexpected declaration that he feels scapegoated by Liverpool for the club's poor run, having been picked as a substitute for three consecutive matches by manager Arne Slot, Salah's character has been called into question by fans, former players and beyond.

So who is Salah the man - away from the latest headlines?

Over the past few months, BBC Sport has spoken to some of those who know him best to find out more about the personality and resilience of the man behind the goals, the glory, and the gossip.

Salah's relentless intensity and refusal to accept lower standards from himself or those around him have underpinned Liverpool's success, and perhaps also explain why he has found criticism of his diminished role tough to handle.

"We are all massively influenced by our past - how we were raised, where we grew up," says Jurgen Klopp, who won every major trophy in English and European football while managing Salah at Anfield. "Mo knew early on [in his life] that he had to do more than others.

"He always developed. He never stops. That is his mindset.

"After each summer break he came back and had a new skill. It was like he had spent the whole time just practising one particular type of pass.

"We pushed each other, just to make sure that we would never stop. And we never did stop. That moment lifting the Premier

League bonded us for life. He will be remembered as one of the greatest of all time.

"I wouldn't say he is easy to manage, but he is also not difficult to manage. You [only] have problems with Mo Salah if he is not playing or you take him off."

Salah has been criticised by some for not giving more frequent media interviews before his intervention in the mixed zone at Leeds' Elland Road, particularly after defeats and poor performances.

He has been accused of demonstrating a lack of leadership. But he has often delivered calls to arms to fans on social media, external in difficult moments, and those who have played alongside him describe Salah as a man who refuses to give up and is capable of inspiring others.

"He will always be trying to prove someone wrong," says former Liverpool team-mate Adam Lallana.

"He is not macho. I would often tell my children about how he behaves, how he doesn't get too high in good moments, doesn't beat himself up too much in low moments. He would always remain completely focused on the job in hand.

"I would look at him and it would make me feel calm because of how in control he would be all the time.

"Knowing Mo, he will always be fighting, being resilient, and trying to find ways to better himself."

Salah defended his record when speaking at Elland Road, and compared himself to England captain Harry Kane - delivering what he felt was a reminder to those inside and outside of Liverpool who have forgotten what he is capable of.



Coach hails Sunshine Stars' mentality in 3-1 win over Heartland

Sunshine Stars Head Coach, Olarewaju Ale, has praised his players for showing strong winning mentality in their 3-1 victory over Heartland FC in Akure on Wednesday.

Ale told reporters that Heartland showed good tactical discipline, but he commended his players for obeying instructions and displaying resilience throughout the match.

Heartland opened the scoring in the sixth minute, taking early control before the home side settled into the game.

Sunshine Stars equalised in the 38th minute through a brilliant

long-range strike by Bismarck Adeyosoye, ensuring a 1-1 scoreline at half-time.

Adepoju put the hosts' ahead in the 71st minute with a clever back-heel finish from Yusuf Olowoshile's long throw.

Opeoluwa Olufemi sealed the win in the 82nd minute with a composed strike, capping an entertaining contest for the home crowd.

Ale thanked the supporters for their encouragement, saying their energy helped the team maintain focus and secure the win.

"I am just coming into the team,

and I've not fully introduced my philosophy yet. I thank God for the victory," he said.

He added that quick reactions had been a weakness in training, noting that the players improved noticeably during the match.

"We will maintain this winning mentality. Scoring three goals at home is very good. We will remain focused and avoid distractions," he said.

Heartland Head Coach Emmanuel Amunike congratulated Sunshine Stars, admitting his side's individual errors played a major role in the defeat.