NCAA Meets Domestic Airlines Over Consumer Protection Breaches, Other Violations

▪ *Begins Awareness Campaigns Across Airport Terminals*



The Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) has engaged with selected domestic airlines over alleged breaches of Part 19 of the NCAA Regulations, which govern consumer protection and passenger rights in the aviation sector.

The meeting, convened by the Directorate of Public Affairs and Consumer Protection, was held on Monday, December 22, 2025, at the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja. Representatives of Rano

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TheMatrix

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Administering Oath Of Office...

Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu swearing in Hon. Abdul-Ganiyu Obasa as the Chairman of Agege Local Government following the resignation of the former chairman, Tunde Azeez, due to health reasons. (Pix 2). The governor also swearing in Mrs. Toyin Anjous-Ademuyiwa as Permanent Secretary of the Lagos State Office of Transformation, Creativity and Innovation.

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TheMatrix

Lead Story

By Babajide Okeowo

Insecurity: Kidnappers, Bandits Will Now Be Treated As Terrorists-FG

- Says Decision Reflects Decisive Shift In Nigeria's Counter-Terrorism Architecture
- Vows That Security Operations Will Follow Global Rules of Engagement
- Disxloses US-Nigeria Diplomatic Row Now Resolved, Relations Stronger



The Federal Government has declared that henceforth kidnappers and armed bandits operating across the country will be officially designated and treated as terrorists, as part of a tougher strategy to curb Nigeria's worsening insecurity.

Mohammed Idris, Minister of Information and National Orientation, made this known while speaking at his end-of-year press briefing in Abuja on Monday.

He disclosed that the era of what the government calls "ambiguous nomenclature" in Nigeria's security response is over.

Idris said the administration of President Bola Tinubu would no longer tolerate insecurity under any guise, warning that any individual or group that terrorises Nigerians would be dealt with as terrorists.

"Let me be clear about what this means: henceforth, any armed group that kidnaps our children, that attacks our farmers, that terrorises our communities is officially classified and will be dealt with as a terrorist organisation," he said.

"The era of ambiguous nomenclature is over. If you terrorise our people, whether you are a group or an individual, you are a terrorist, and you will be classified as such."

The minister said the decision reflects a decisive shift in Nigeria's counter-terrorism architecture, backed by concrete actions already taken by the federal government in 2025.

Idris said Tinubu has also declared a nationwide security emergency, which would lead to massive recruitment into the armed forces and the police, as well as the deployment of trained forest guards to dismantle criminal hideouts.

"What we used to have were dark, unmanned forest areas that became safe havens for terrorists and criminals," he said.

"With this declaration and recruitment drive, there will be no hiding place for criminals and terrorists in our forests."

Idris also stated that the country is fully prepared to protect its citizens from terrorists and other criminal elements, in strict compliance with globally accepted Rules of Engagement.

He was responding to concerns that trailed the new counterterrorism doctrine that classifies all armed groups operating outside state authority as terrorists, including bandits, militias, armed gangs, and their political or community enablers.

"Nigeria has to defend itself as a country by observing the highest standards of procedure. All our Armed Forces are trained and have been collaborating with their international partners, and they are following strict protocols of engagement with terrorists. We must commend our Armed Forces for observing that," he said.

The Minister also revealed that Nigeria has resolved its recent diplomatic spat with the US through a firm and respectful engagement. "The recent diplomatic spat with the United States has been resolved through firm, respectful engagement, culminating in a strengthened partnership," Idris said.

The information minister also pointed to the five-year, $5.1 billion bilateral health cooperation agreement signed between both countries as proof of strengthened ties.

"This has been described as the largest co-investment by any country to date under the America First Global Health Strategy. It will strengthen Nigeria's healthcare system, save lives, and attract investment," he said.

FG Declares Christmas, New Year Public Holidays



The Federal Government has officially declared Thursday, December 25, and Friday, December 26, 2025, as public holidays to commemorate Christmas and Boxing Day. Additionally, Thursday, January 1, 2026, has been designated as a public holiday to mark the New Year celebrations, providing citizens with the opportunity to observe these significant global festivities.

The announcement was formalised on Monday in a statement released by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Interior, Dr. Magdalene Ajani. Speaking on behalf of the Minister of Interior, Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo, Dr. Ajani confirmed that the Federal Government had approved these dates to allow Nigerians, particularly the Christian faithful, to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ and enjoy the traditional year-end break.

In his goodwill message, Minister Tunji-Ojo urged Nigerians to use the festive season as a period of deep reflection. He encouraged citizens to embody the core values associated with the season, specifically highlighting the importance of love, peace, and self-sacrifice in building a more cohesive and harmonious society.

Beyond the celebrations, the Minister called on all Nigerians to offer special prayers for the nation. He emphasized the need for divine intervention and collective effort in addressing the country's challenges, specifically focusing on the themes of sustained peace, enhanced national security, and continuous economic progress as the country transitions into the new year. Concluding the statement, the Minister advised all citizens to remain law-abiding and vigilant during the celebrations. He assured the public that the government remains committed to ensuring a safe and secure environment for all, while wishing Nigerians a joyful Christmas and a prosperous 2026.

Alaafin: Only Oyo Throne Can Confer 'Yorubaland' Titles

The Alaafin of Oyo, Oba Abimbola Akeem Owoade I, has issued a landmark declaration asserting that the Oyo throne holds the exclusive and supreme authority to confer chieftaincy titles that encompass the entire "Yorubaland." The monarch emphasized that such titles are not mere local honors but carry a continental significance that traces back to the foundational roots of the Yoruba empire.

Oba Owoade I made this pronouncement on Sunday during a colorful ceremony at the ancient Oyo Palace. The event was held to formally install the former Governor of Zamfara State, Alhaji Abdul-Aziz Yari, as the Obaloyin of Yorubaland, alongside Seyi Tinubu, the son of the President, who was honored with the title of Okanlomo of Yorubaland. Addressing the gathered dignitaries, the Alaafin clarified that titles bearing the suffix of "Yorubaland" are collective in nature rather than restricted to a specific town or domain. He argued that because these honors represent the spirit and unity of the entire Yoruba race, they can only be dispensed by a throne with established historical and legal jurisdiction over the nation.

The monarch further justified his position by citing a combination of traditional heritage, constitutional law, and judicial precedents. He noted that the unique status of the Alaafin as a central authority for the Yoruba people is a fact consistently upheld by history and reinforced by various landmark Supreme Court rulings regarding traditional leadership.

By bestowing these titles on prominent figures from diverse backgrounds, the Alaafin aimed to demonstrate the expansive reach of the Oyo Empire's traditional influence. He remarked that the selection of the awardees was based on their contributions to national development and their commitment to the progress of the Yoruba people, regardless of their geographical origins. The declaration serves as a firm reminder of the hierarchy within the Yoruba traditional institution, especially at a time when chieftaincy disputes often arise among various monarchs. Oba Owoade I's remarks reiterate that while many kings may grant local titles, the stewardship of honors that define the "Yorubaland" collective remains the sacred and legal duty of the Oyo Palace.



SIGNED & SEALED, $750 MILLION FINANCING...

Chairman, Heirs Energies, Mr. Tony Elumelu and (L) President and Chairman of the African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank), Dr. George Elombi, during the signing ceremony to mark the execution of a USD 750 million Financing Transaction between Heirs Energies and the Afreximbank in Abuja on Saturday

Official: Drug Test Now Compulsory For Federal Government Employment

The Federal Government of Nigeria has officially approved a new policy making pre-employment drug testing mandatory for all individuals seeking positions within the Nigerian Public Service. This landmark decision reflects the government's commitment to ensuring that the workforce responsible for national administration is both fit for purpose and free from the influence of illicit substances.

The directive was formally issued through the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (OSGF). Under this new mandate, all Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) are now strictly required to integrate drug screening as a non-negotiable condition for recruitment. This ensures a standardized approach to vetting potential civil servants across the entire federal structure. To ensure the technical integrity of the program, the Federal Government has directed all MDAs to carry out these screenings in close collaboration with the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA). The involvement of the NDLEA is intended to provide expert oversight, utilize specialized testing facilities, and ensure that the results are verified by the nation's primary anti-narcotics authority.

A primary objective of this policy is to curb the growing trend of substance abuse within the country and to protect the internal integrity of the workplace. By filtering out drug use at the point of entry, the government hopes to foster a professional environment where transparency and ethical conduct are upheld by all personnel in the public sector. Furthermore, the policy addresses broader concerns regarding national productivity and security. The administration believes that a drug-free public service is essential for maintaining high efficiency in service delivery. Safeguarding the mental and physical well-being of government employees is seen as a critical step in protecting the nation's socio-economic interests and administrative stability. This move comes amid heightened concerns from stakeholders and health experts regarding the rising rate of substance use, particularly among the youth population. By setting a high bar for public employment, the Federal Government aims to send a strong message about the impact of drug abuse on career prospects while simultaneously enhancing the overall quality of the Nigerian Civil Service.

News

By Babajide Okeowo

Fresh Condemnation Trails Tinubu's N58tr Budget Proposal

▪ *ADC: It's A Budget Of 'Quicksand, Rising Debt And Wishful Thinking'*

The African Democratic Congress (ADC) has strongly criticised President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's 2026 budget proposal, warning that the fiscal plan will plunge Nigeria deeper into debt and economic hardship if approved by the National Assembly.

In a preliminary review released on Sunday by its team of economists, the opposition party described the proposal—presented by President Tinubu on December 19, 2025—as a "Budget of Quicksand, More Debt and Wishful Thinking," in sharp contrast to the government's official theme of "Consolidation, Renewed Resilience and Shared Prosperity."

According to the ADC, the 2026 proposal merely recycles the frameworks of the 2024 and 2025 budgets, which it said were poorly implemented and largely deferred, raising doubts about the credibility and feasibility of the new fiscal plan.

"What has been presented to Nigerians is not a path to shared prosperity but a consolidation of fiscal recklessness," the party said, adding that the only thing the budget is capable of sharing is "more debt and greater misery in the years ahead." The party accused the Tinubu administration of fiscal chaos, noting that the 2026 budget was introduced at a time when the 2025 budget had only just been repealed and reenacted. It described the situation as an attempt to "build a house on quicksand," warning that Nigeria's fiscal planning has become unstable and incoherent.

The ADC further argued that the Federal Government is relying excessively on borrowing to mask deep structural problems in the economy, thereby mortgaging the future of younger generations.

"Nigeria is clearly in a fiscal mess," the statement said. "Rather than confront these problems, the administration continues to kick the can down the road, piling up unsustainable debt while indulging in financial profligacy."

The party also criticised what it described as the government's failure to exercise fiscal discipline, alleging that the administration is simultaneously running multiple budgets—an approach it said is unprecedented in Nigeria's history and undermines accountability.

While acknowledging that governments may extend budget timelines or implement supplementary budgets, the ADC said operating three or more national budgets at the same time represents a new low in fiscal mismanagement.

On revenue projections, the party described the figures in the 2026 budget as unrealistic and disconnected from economic realities. It noted that government revenue was pushed to N20 trillion in 2024, largely due to the effects of naira devaluation, before being doubled to N40 trillion in 2025 and further increased to N58.57 trillion in the 2026 proposal. "This is not vision; it is fantasy," the ADC said, arguing that the projections ignore weak oil outlooks and declining global prices.

The party also faulted the Federal Government's oil price benchmark of $64 per barrel, warning that it exposes the economy to global volatility at a time when international oil markets remain uncertain.

According to the ADC, the 2026 budget lacks sufficient detail and is built on unsustainable assumptions, leaving Nigerians vulnerable to further economic shocks.

The party concluded that the Tinubu administration has turned fiscal planning into a political ritual that fails to address the growing hardship faced by citizens, urging lawmakers to critically scrutinise the proposal before granting approval. Earlier, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) had strongly criticised the President's budget proposal, describing it as a "Budget of Consolidated Renewed Sufferings" rather than one that delivers shared prosperity to Nigerians.

In a statement issued by its National Publicity Secretary, Comrade Ini Ememobong, the opposition party faulted the budget presentation made by President Tinubu to the National Assembly, arguing that the claims of economic stabilisation do not reflect the realities faced by ordinary Nigerians.

According to the party, data from the 2025 World Bank Poverty and Equity Brief show that more than 30.9 per cent of Nigerians live below the international extreme poverty line, indicating that economic growth

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Nigeria-US Tensions Largely Settled - Information Minister

The Federal Government announced on Monday that the recent diplomatic friction between Nigeria and the United States has been largely resolved. The tensions were initially triggered by comments and threats from President Donald Trump regarding the alleged targeted killings of Christians in Nigeria, a narrative that had briefly strained the long-standing partnership between the two nations.

Minister of Information and National Orientation, Mohammed Idris, disclosed that the resolution was achieved through a strategy of "firm and respectful engagement." He noted that by maintaining open channels of communication and providing factual context to the U.S. administration, the Federal Government succeeded in strengthening the bilateral relationship rather than allowing it to deteriorate further.

A key point of the diplomatic resolution involved Nigeria's formal rejection of framing its internal security challenges as purely religious. Minister Idris clarified that the complex conflicts facing the country, ranging from banditry to jihadist insurgencies, do not discriminate based on faith. He emphasized that the Federal Government has worked to correct the international perception that one religious group is being targeted over another.

Expanding on the nature of the crisis, the Minister pointed out that both Muslim and Christian communities across the country have been equally devastated by the activities of bandits, jihadist groups, and the recurring farmer-herder clashes. By providing this comprehensive view of the security landscape, Nigeria aimed to shift the global discourse toward a more nuanced understanding of the socio-economic and criminal roots of the violence.

As a sign of the rejuvenated partnership, Idris highlighted a significant $2.1 billion aid package from the United States. This substantial financial commitment serves as a testament to the restored confidence in Nigeria's governance and its strategic importance as a partner in West Africa. The Minister assured that the implementation of this deal would be inclusive and transparent.

Concluding his statement, Idris emphasized that the benefits of this international support would reach all Nigerians across the federation. He specifically noted that the aid would bolster health sectors and support faith-based health providers, ensuring that the cooperation results in tangible improvements in the quality of life for citizens of all religious backgrounds.

NCAA Meets Domestic Airlines Over Consumer Protection Breaches, Other Violations

▪ *Cont'd from cover page*

Air, United Nigeria Airlines and XeJet were in attendance.

Discussions at the meeting centred on reported violations of Part 19 Regulations, particularly provisions relating to passengers' rights in cases of flight delays and cancellations, timely refunds, care and accommodation, as well as the right to adequate information, especially during the peak yuletide travel period.

Speaking during the engagement, the Director of Public Affairs and Consumer Protection, Michael Achimugu, reminded the airlines of their statutory obligations to passengers and stressed that full compliance with Part 19 of the NCAA Regulations is not optional.

Achimugu warned that persistent non-compliance would attract regulatory sanctions, noting that the Authority would not hesitate to enforce the law to protect the interests of air travellers. He emphasised that the meeting was part of NCAA's proactive oversight to ensure improved service delivery, transparency and accountability by airlines. The NCAA also underscored the need for airlines to strengthen communication with passengers, promptly address disruptions and uphold consumer rights in line with global best practices.

The engagement forms part of the Authority's broader efforts to safeguard passenger welfare and ensure a smoother travel experience during the festive season and beyond.

Meanwhile, the Con-

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COAS Orders Troops To Hunt Down Kidnappers Nationwide

The Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lt. Gen. Waidi Shaibu, has issued a decisive order to Nigerian Army troops to intensify their offensive operations against kidnappers and other criminal elements across the country. The General emphasized that there should be no safe haven for criminals, urging soldiers to track down and neutralize threats wherever they may be hiding.

Lt. Gen. Shaibu delivered this directive on Monday during his maiden operational visit to the 2 Division at Odugbo Barracks in Ibadan, Oyo State. The visit served as a strategic assessment of the division's readiness and a platform for the Army chief to communicate his vision for a more proactive and technology-driven approach to internal security. During his address to the officers and men of the division, the COAS commended the troops for their recent breakthroughs and recorded successes in the fight against banditry and kidnapping. He acknowledged the sacrifices made by the personnel in maintaining peace within their area of responsibility and encouraged them to sustain the current momentum.



In addition to operational orders, the Army Chief placed a significant emphasis on the professional growth and discipline of the force. He reminded the troops that the success of any military operation depends largely on the synergy between intelligence gathering and swift tactical execution, urging them to remain vigilant and professional in their conduct.

Addressing the long-standing issue of personnel well-being, Lt. Gen. Shaibu assured the troops of a significant improvement in their welfare packages. He announced that approval has been granted for the extensive renovation of existing barracks and the construction of new residential facilities to ensure that soldiers and their families live in dignity. The COAS concluded by stressing that high troop morale is the cornerstone of operational success. He reiterated his administration's commitment to providing the necessary equipment and administrative support required to bolster the spirits of the fighting forces, ensuring they remain motivated to fulfill their constitutional mandate of protecting the nation.

Nigeria's New Ambassadors To Assume Duty In 2026



Nigeria's newly confirmed ambassadors will take up their posts in 2026, following clearance by the National Assembly, Information Minister Mohammed Idris said on Monday.

The minister noted the appointments, which include 34 career and 30 non-career ambassadors such as Femi Fani-Kayode, Reno Omokri, and Abdulrahman Dambazau, will strengthen Nigeria's diplomatic presence and global engagement.

The move fills long-vacant positions after the 2023 mass recall of envoys, responding to public demand for active ambassadorial representation.

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Spotlight

National Single Window Rollout: Calls For Legal Framework Ring Loud

• *Excitement As Maritime Journalists Get New Capacity Development Center*

Ahead of the 2026 rollout of the National Single Window platform, calls for a legal framework to back the scheme have once again resonated from critical stakeholders in the Marine and Blue Economy sector.

The National Single Window (NSW) is a centralized digital trade platform that allows importers, exporters, and other critical stakeholders to submit all regulatory documents and data through one unified system, instead of dealing separately with multiple government agencies.

Its main benefit is streamlining trade processes, reducing bureaucracy, and improving efficiency.

However, the rollout of the platform has been delayed over the years over several concerns with the major obstacle being the lack of a legal framework to support the system.

The stakeholders took the opportunity of the 10th Annual Seminar for Maritime Journalists and Launch of the Centre for Maritime Media and Capacity Development in Lagos last week to renew this call for a legal backing.

The three-pronged event organised by First Mediacon Network Limited (FMNL) is themed: "A Decade of Collaboration for Impact: Strengthening Maritime Journalism for the Future."

Speaking at the function, former Acting President of the Association of Nigerian Licensed Customs Agents (ANLCA) Dr Kayode Farinto emphasized the need for a legal framework in the implementation of the Single Window, adding that there must be punishment for Chief Executive Officers of agencies who deliberately circumvent, delay cargoes and make officers extort traders or freight forwarders unnecessarily.

"Our fears of the National Single Window are that we need a legal framework to legitimise the various Acts that would be submerged under one Platform.

"For example, the various government agencies like Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON), National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) and the Nigeria Customs Service now have the 2023 Act which we just began the implementation.

"For us to have these government agencies working together, there must be a legal framework so that it would be sacrosanct.

"In this legal framework, there must be punishment for Chief Executive Officers who deliberately circumvent, delay cargoes and make officers extort traders or freight forwarders unnecessarily" Dr Farinto stated



Highlighting the numerous benefits of the platform, he said, "The Single Window is an instrument that would take us to the promise land, but there must be attitudinal change. In the last 5 years, the level of compliance on the part of freight forwarders has increased geometrically, so the regulators must also have an attitudinal change. There must be monthly stakeholders' engagement.

Also speaking, the National Vice President of ANLCA, Prince Segun Oduntan expressed hope that the planned rollout of the National Single Window would adhere strictly to global best practices, delivering a truly unified platform capable of reducing delays, cutting costs and resolving long-standing inter-agency conflicts at the nation's ports.

Represented by the Senior Special Adviser to the ANLCA National President on Media, Alhaji Sulaiman Ayokunle, Prince Oduntan warned that the Single Window Platform would be bedevilled with multiple perforations if the various government agencies in the ports are not streamlined.

According to the ANLCA Vice President, modernization should be all encompassing and must carry everyone along for ease of doing business.

"On the National Single Window, our worries are enormous, teething problems are inevitable because the programme would be run on technology, and we know what technology does to us in the maritime industry, sometimes it is turned upside-down

"With the celebrated Single Window that will be launched next year, we don't need a Single window with many perforations. We hope that the platform will go by a legal framework, because presently, we have so many Windows with all the government agencies," Oduntan stated

Earlier, the Chairman of the occasion and Senior Partner, Akabogu and Associates, Dr. Emeka Akabogu, SAN, noted that the Nigeria Customs Service sits at the heart of the National Single Window framework but observed that over the years, Customs, importers and exporters have not operated in sync at the nation's ports.

Akabogu, however, stressed that without alignment and shared responsibility among these key actors, the NSW may struggle to achieve its objectives.

Meanwhile, maritime journalists in Nigeria are over the moon with the launch of the Centre for Maritime Media & Capacity Development, a landmark initiative aimed at strengthening professionalism and integrity in maritime reporting.

The launching of the center took place at a glamorous event held at BWC Hotel, Victoria Island.

Welcoming over 100 journalists drawn from the Print, broadcast and online platforms, the Chief Executive Officer of First Mediacon Network Limited, Sesan Onileimo, described the launch of the center as a culmination of a decade-long seminar built on sustained collaboration and capacity building.

Onileimo acknowledged the consistent support of the Nigerian Shippers' Council (NSC), noting that the seminar has, over the years, become a key performance benchmark for the Council's public relations engagement. He paid tribute to past and present leadership of the NSC, including former Executive Secretary Hassan Bello and the incumbent Chief Executive Officer, Pius Akutah, for sustaining the vision. He announced that, in fulfillment of a pledge made at the 9th edition, the newly launched Centre for Maritime Media & Capacity Development will henceforth take over the organization of the annual seminar, while also running year-round manpower development programmes for maritime journalists and content creators.

"The maritime media space is evolving rapidly under the pressure of digitalisation, artificial intelligence and social media. This Centre is our bold response to ensure journalists remain knowledgeable, relevant and impactful, regardless of how long they have been on the beat," Onileimo said, adding that the Centre is open to partnerships with industry stakeholders for greater impact.

The Comptroller-General of the Service, Bashir Adewale Adeniyi represented by the Zonal Coordinator, Zone A Headquarters, ACG Mohammed Babandede, commended the organisers on the launch of the Maritime Media and Capacity Development Centre.

He reaffirmed that Customs is fully integrated into the National Single Window project and will commence implementation in line with President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's directive for first-quarter 2026.

On his part, Executive Secretary/Chief Executive Officer Nigerian Shippers' Council (NSC), Dr. Pius Akutah, said as the maritime sector grows more complex; driven by digitalisation, new trade realities, regulatory reforms and global logistical shifts, journalism within this space must evolve accordingly

Akutah who was represented by the Director, Special Duties, NSC, Moses Abere, said the agency, as the Port Economic Regulator, remains committed to promoting efficiency, transparency and competitiveness within the maritime sector.

He said the theme of the event reflects the essential role of partnership in building a stronger maritime industry, noting that over the years, maritime journalists have worked closely with regulators, operators, policymakers and stakeholders to illuminate the challenges and opportunities of the sector.

He said the council considers the media as essential partners in informing stakeholders, shaping public understanding and strengthening accountability.

The event also featured technical sessions exclusively for maritime journalists, including discussions on the National Single Window project, which is scheduled to commence operations in the first quarter of 2026.

The session was anchored by the National Public Relations Officer, Nigeria Customs Service DC Abdullahi Maiwada.

Delivering the training titled "Data Journalism in Maritime Trade: Using Analytics to tell Bigger Stories," Maiwada encouraged journalists to embrace infographics and interpretation of data beyond just reporting the data. Maiwada noted the need for journalists to strike a balance between speed and accuracy in their reports.

The high point of the event was the presentation of awards to deserving stakeholders in the port industry by First Mediacon Network Limited.



LAI MOHAMMED'S BOOK LAUNCH...

L-R: Daughter of former President Muhammadu Buhari, Halima Buhari; Business Tycoon, Alhaji Nasiru Danu; former Chairman of APC, Chief Bisi Akande; former Minister of Information and Culture, Alhaji Lai Mohammed; wife of the former Minister, Mrs. Kudirat Mohammed and son of the former President, Yusuf Buhari (extreme right) at the launch of the book " Headlines & Soundbites: Media Moments That Defined an Administration," authored by the former minister in Abuja...recently

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Editorial

Stolen Childhoods: Kidnapping Threatens The Future Of Education

Nigeria once again finds itself confronted by a grim and recurring nightmare — the mass kidnapping of schoolchildren. What began as sporadic incidents several years ago has now evolved into a deeply entrenched criminal enterprise, threatening not just the safety of our children but the very foundation of our educational system.

From the abductions in Chibok and Dapchi to the recent raids on schools in Benue, Niger, Kaduna, Katsina, and Zamfara states, kidnapping has become a weapon wielded against the nation's future. Each attack echoes the same painful message: our classrooms, meant to be sanctuaries of learning, have become hunting grounds for criminals emboldened by the weakness of the State.

The implications are catastrophic. Parents are increasingly withdrawing their children from school, especially in the North, where insecurity has already crippled enrolment. Some schools now shut their doors for months, unable to guarantee safety. Teachers live in constant fear, choosing to abandon their profession altogether. And for the abducted children—many traumatised and scarred for life—their innocence and confidence in society's protection are forever altered.

This crisis strikes at the heart of national development. A country cannot claim to value education while its children are left unprotected. Nigeria's ambition for growth, innovation, and global competitiveness becomes hollow rhetoric if the basic right to learn is compromised. No nation prospers when its classrooms lie empty.



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Government response, though occasionally effective, has been largely reactive, inconsistent, and insufficient. Security deployments often come after tragedy has already unfolded. Promises of safe-school initiatives rarely translate into concrete protections. Intelligence gathering remains poor, local policing is weak, and communities feel abandoned.

TheMatrix Newspaper insists that this menace can no longer be treated as routine news. It is a national emergency. The government must implement a comprehensive, multi-layered protection strategy for schools — one that includes well-trained security personnel, community surveillance systems, rapid response units, and technology-driven monitoring.

Equally important is addressing the root causes: poverty, porous borders, the proliferation of weapons, and the flourishing criminal economy that rewards bandits with ransom payments. Without tackling these fundamentals, Nigeria will remain trapped in an endless cycle of kidnapping and rescue operations.

Citizens too must demand accountability and reject the normalisation of this horror. The abduction of even one child should shake the nation's conscience. It should provoke outrage, not resignation.

Our children deserve safe classrooms, not battlegrounds. Nigeria must rise to defend its most valuable asset — the minds and futures of its young ones. Anything less is a betrayal.

Letters in response to specifici publications in TheMatrix should be befi (150-250 words) and straight to the point. Interested readers may send such letters along with their contacts to opinion@thematrix.com We also welcome comments and opinions on topical local, national and international issues provided they are well written and should also not be longer than 750-1000 words. They should be sent to opinion@thematrix.com along with photograph, email address and phone numbers of the writer

Letters To The Editor

A Government Hiding Behind Insults Cannot Hide From Failure

Dear Mr. Bayo Onanuga,

Your latest statement on behalf of the Presidency is not a defence of democracy; it is a tantrum dressed up as a press release. When a government abandons reasoned argument for name-calling, mockery, and conspiracy theories, it is usually because it has run out of answers.

Nigeria's opposition does not need to be "virile" to be right. It only needs to speak the truth—and the truth is that a democracy where power consolidates itself through intimidation, inducement, and selective justice is already under severe strain.

The issue is not that politicians are defecting. The issue is why defections now coincide conveniently with investigations, arrests, and relentless pressure—while allies of the ruling party enjoy a curious and consistent immunity from scrutiny. Freedom of association cannot coexist with fear of persecution. One negates the other.

Invoking history does not excuse present abuse. The fact that impunity may have existed in the past is not a licence to refine or perfect it today. A government elected on the promise of reform should not be recycling the worst habits of previous administrations while pretending to be offended by legitimate criticism.



Your repeated claim that anti-corruption agencies are "independent" rings hollow when their actions are loud, selective, and politically convenient. Independence is not proclaimed by press statements; it is demonstrated by balance, fairness, and credibility. When investigations consistently move in one political direction, citizens are entitled to ask questions—without being smeared as criminals in advance.

Dragging up allegations, insinuations, and foreign cases—some concluded, some unresolved, some merely whispered—only reinforces what your statement desperately tries to deny: that intimidation has become a tool of governance. Guilt is determined in a court of law, not in the court of propaganda.

Nigeria's removal from the FATF grey list is welcome. But no economic or technical milestone can compensate for democratic backsliding, shrinking civic space, and the growing public perception that the rule of law is being bent to serve political power.

This administration must understand one thing clearly: criticism is not sabotage, opposition is not treason, and accountability is not an attack on the state. Democracies do not collapse because opposition speaks—they collapse when governments stop listening.

If the government is confident in its record, it should engage with facts, not insults; with transparency, not threats; and with humility, not hubris.

Nigeria deserves leadership—not lectures.

Phrank Shaibu
Senior Special Assistant, Public Communication
to H.E. Atiku Abubakar
Vice President of Nigeria, 1999–2007

Politics

By Ilesanmi Adewale

OBAFEMI AWOLOWO:
"Those who desire to reach, and keep their places at the top in any calling must be prepared to do so the hard way."



INEC Announces Fresh Bye-Elections For Disputed Rivers State Assembly Constituencies

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has officially scheduled bye-elections for the Ahoada East II and Khana II state constituencies in Rivers State. The commission announced on Monday that the polls will take place on February 21, 2026, marking a critical step in restoring full representation to the affected areas within the state's legislative house.

The decision was reached during an extraordinary meeting held at the commission's headquarters. Beyond the Rivers State exercise, INEC officials used the session to review their level of preparedness for the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Area Council elections. In a strategic move to maximize resources and logistics, the commission has slated both the Rivers bye-elections and the FCT polls for the same date.

Providing the legal context for the exercise, the commission cited Section 116 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended). This constitutional provision empowers INEC to conduct bye-elections whenever vacancies arise in state assemblies, ensuring that constituencies do not remain unrepresented for periods longer than the law permits.

The vacancies in the Rivers State House of Assembly arose from two distinct circumstances. The Ahoada East II seat was declared vacant following the formal resignation of its previous occupant. Conversely, the Khana II constituency lost its representation due to the unfortunate passing of its member, creating a void that necessitated a fresh democratic process to elect a successor.

To trigger the electoral process, the Speaker of the Rivers State House of Assembly formally transmitted a notification of the vacancies to the electoral umpire. With the official communication now received and the dates finalized, INEC is expected to release a detailed timetable and schedule of activities, including the nomination of candidates by various political parties in the coming weeks.

'Tinubu Is Happy With You' — NSA Praises Fubara



The National Security Adviser, Nuhu Ribadu, has praised Rivers State Governor Siminalayi Fubara, saying President Bola Tinubu is pleased with his leadership and commitment to peace in the state.

Ribadu spoke on Monday during a visit to the Rivers State Government House, where he hinted at a possible resumption of oil exploration in Ogoniland, citing improved peace efforts.

He said the President directed him to thank Fubara for coordinating discussions on Ogoni peace, while ministers and NNPCL officials reaffirmed commitments to infrastructure projects, environmental clean-up, and community engagement.

Governor Fubara thanked Tinubu for his intervention, pledging continued support for peace and development in Ogoniland.

Bisi Akande Reveals How He Nominated Osinbajo After Talks With Tinubu



Chief Bisi Akande, a founding father of the All Progressives Congress (APC) and former Governor of Osun State, has provided a rare insider's account of the events that led to Yemi Osinbajo's emergence as Vice President. In a significant disclosure that challenges popular political narratives, Akande revealed that he personally nominated Osinbajo for the role after a series of strategic consultations with the now-President, Bola Ahmed Tinubu.

According to Akande, the idea of an Osinbajo candidacy dated back to 2011, during discussions aimed at replacing Tunde Bakare as Muhammadu Buhari's running mate. Speaking on Edmund Obilo's podcast, State Affairs, Akande recalled asking Tinubu for the name of the candidate they had previously considered. When Tinubu mentioned Osinbajo, Akande decided to move forward with the recommendation, effectively serving as the bridge that solidified the pairing for the 2015 elections.

This account offers a nuanced alternative to the widespread belief that Tinubu alone handpicked Osinbajo for the position. While acknowledging Tinubu's influence, Akande's version highlights a collaborative decision-making process between the two Yoruba leaders. This partnership was aimed at strengthening the APC's ticket with a technocratic candidate who had already proven his mettle as Lagos State's Attorney General under Tinubu's governorship.

The elder statesman also touched on the highly contentious 2022 APC presidential primaries, where Osinbajo contested against his political mentor, Tinubu. Despite Osinbajo's eventual third-place finish, Akande defended the former Vice President's right to seek the nation's highest office. He maintained that Osinbajo was under no obligation to step down, even as he (Akande) worked behind the scenes to minimize bitterness and ensure the emergence of a Yoruba president.

Regarding the role of former President Muhammadu Buhari in that contest, Akande revealed that Buhari personally reached out to him to clarify his position. According to Akande, Buhari denied instigating Osinbajo to challenge Tinubu. Buhari reportedly expressed surprise at Osinbajo's move, noting that in his own culture, one does not typically challenge their mentor for a position, though he ultimately wished the Vice President well in his quest.

These claims by Akande appear to conflict with assertions made in Buhari's biography, From Soldier to Statesman: The Legacy of Muhammadu Buhari. The book suggested that Buhari did not support Osinbajo's ambition because he felt he did not "know" him well enough, claiming he only became acquainted with him through Tinubu. Akande's account suggests a more complex relationship where the former President sought to distance himself from the internal rivalry within his party.

Ultimately, Akande emphasized that his primary goal throughout the 2022 cycle was to ensure a peaceful primary that would not destroy the party or the regional interests of the South-West. While he requested that one candidate voluntarily step down to create a united front, he holds no resentment toward Osinbajo for choosing to stay in the race, framing it as a legitimate exercise of democratic rights within the party structure.

Don't Be Fooled, APC Members Are Frustrated With The Current Administration, Dele Momodu



A chieftain of the African Democratic Congress (ADC), Dele Momodu, stated on Monday that many members of the All Progressives Congress (APC) are "crying behind closed doors" under President Bola Tinubu's administration. Momodu argued that Nigerians should be deeply concerned about the current direction in which the Tinubu-led APC is steering the country, suggesting that the public image of the party does not reflect its internal reality.

He made these disclosures while fielding questions from listeners during an X Space session titled "Avrilsspace: The Electoral Mathematics for 2027." According to Momodu, an average Nigerian must be worried about the leadership's trajectory. He noted that even those perceived as close associates or "cronies" of the administration often express profound dissatisfaction and unhappiness when engaged in private, candid conversations away from the public eye.

Momodu drew a parallel between the current federal situation and the political atmosphere in Lagos, where the President has long been considered the ultimate authority. He claimed that while many supporters publicly chant slogans of loyalty and "your mandate," their private sentiments tell a different story of frustration. He suggested that this phenomenon is common under powerful leaders, where followers maintain a public facade of support in the hope of personal gain or political patronage.

The ADC chieftain further explained that the current political structure relies heavily on a small circle of influential figures who make decisions for the entire nation. He emphasized that being a "friend" of the administration does not necessarily mean one is satisfied with its performance, noting that his personal interactions with high-ranking individuals reveal a significant gap between their public posturing and their private grievances.

Expanding on the psychology of political followership, Momodu observed that many "fanatics" are driven more by the hope of eventual benefits than by a genuine belief in the administration's policies. He noted that the survivalist nature of Nigerian politics often forces individuals to suppress their true feelings, leading to a situation where a leader may believe they have total support while the ground beneath them is actually shifting due to silent resentment.

As the conversation turned toward the 2027 general elections, Momodu hinted that these "secret tears" and hidden dissatisfactions would likely play a major role in the next electoral cycle. He argued that the mathematics for 2027 will be determined not just by those currently in power, but by the silent majority within the ruling party who may decide to break their silence when they feel the political costs of loyalty have finally outweighed the rewards.

News

By Ilesanmi Adewale

Alleged Tax Alterations: Presidency Dismisses Tampering Claims

The Presidency has issued a firm rebuttal against mounting allegations that Nigeria's newly enacted tax reform laws were clandestinely altered following their passage by the National Assembly. Government officials have moved to de-escalate the controversy, insisting that any version of the law currently being debated or circulated on social media platforms is unauthentic and lacks legal standing

This official denial comes in direct response to a series of high-profile claims made by a member of the House of Representatives, Abdulsamad Dasuki. The lawmaker sparked a national conversation by alleging that the versions of the tax laws released to the public contained significant discrepancies when compared to the specific documents that were debated and approved by the legislative chambers.

Representative Dasuki further contended that such unauthorized modifications, if proven true, would constitute a grave violation of the constitutional rights of lawmakers. He argued that the integrity of the legislative process is at stake if the executive branch or administrative officers can unilaterally adjust the substance of bills after they have been voted upon by the people's representatives.

Providing clarity on the matter, the Chairman of the Presidential Fiscal Policy and Tax Reforms Committee, Taiwo Oyedele, appeared on Channels Television's "Morning Brief" on Monday. During the interview, Oyedele sought to dismantle the narrative of foul play by addressing the technicalities of how bills are processed into law.

Oyedele stated categorically that there is currently no valid basis for any comparison between the "approved" and "circulating" versions of the law. He explained that the officially harmonized bills, which must be certified by the Clerk of the National Assembly before being transmitted for presidential assent, have not yet been made accessible to the general public.

The tax reform chief emphasized that the document currently causing a stir in the public domain did not originate from his committee or any official government source. He noted that in the digital age, unverified drafts often leak prematurely, leading to widespread misinformation and unnecessary panic among stakeholders and the citizenry.

According to Oyedele, the only individuals who can authoritatively state the exact contents of the bills transmitted to the President are the lawmakers themselves and the administrative leadership of the National Assembly. He clarified that once a bill leaves the committee stage and enters the legislative machinery for certification, even his committee members lose direct access to the final certified versions. Further addressing the internal politics of the House of Representatives, Oyedele pointed out that the relevant House committee tasked with overseeing tax matters had not even met to discuss these specific allegations. This suggests that the claims raised by individual lawmakers may not yet represent the collective finding or official position of the legislative body.

The Chairman urged the Nigerian public and the media to exercise restraint and avoid jumping to conclusions based on unverified PDF documents. He maintained that the transition from a legislative bill to a signed Act involves rigorous checks and balances designed specifically to prevent the kind of "doctoring" that has been alleged.

In light of the brewing controversy, Oyedele called for patience, suggesting that the public should allow the internal legislative investigations to run their full course. He expressed confidence that once the National Assembly concludes its verification process, the transparency of the tax reform journey will be vindicated.

The Presidency remains steadfast in its position that the tax reforms are intended to simplify Nigeria's fiscal landscape and drive economic growth. Officials believe that the current friction is a result of procedural misunderstandings rather than a deliberate attempt to subvert the will of the legislature, and they expect the official gazetting of the laws to resolve all lingering doubts.

'Follow Due Process': Kabiru Adamu Argues Presidency Lacks Sole Authority To Proscribe Terrorists

Kabiru Adamu, the Managing Director of Beacon Consulting Limited and a prominent security expert, has asserted that the President of Nigeria does not possess the legal authority to unilaterally designate any group as a terrorist organization. Speaking during a television interview on Monday, Adamu clarified that such a significant declaration is not a discretionary power of the executive arm of government but a strictly judicial process.

The security expert made these remarks during an appearance on "Politics Today," a program aired on Channels Television. His comments were prompted by recent discussions surrounding the President Bola Tinubu administration's stance on various armed groups and the terminology used by the executive branch to describe these entities in official communications.

Adamu emphasized that under the current Nigerian legal framework, neither the President nor any member of his cabinet has the statutory mandate to determine the status of a group regarding terrorism. He argued that this specific power resides exclusively with a competent court of jurisdiction, ensuring that such labels are backed by evidence and a transparent legal proceeding.

According to Adamu, the primary legislation governing this area is the Terrorism (Prevention and Prohibition) Act, as amended in 2022. This Act provides a comprehensive definition of what constitutes terrorism and explicitly outlines the mandatory procedures for identifying, classifying, and proscribing a group as a terrorist entity or identifying its financial sponsors.

The expert further explained that the law places the burden of proof on the Attorney-General of the Federation, who must petition the court to seek such a determination. It is only after the judiciary evaluates the merits of the petition and the evidence provided that a group can be legally branded and treated as a terrorist organization under the Nigerian constitution.

In conclusion, Adamu reiterated that the executive arm, while responsible for national security policy, must operate within the confines of the law. He noted that circumventing these judicial requirements could lead to legal challenges and undermine the rule of law, reinforcing the idea that the designation of "terrorist" is a legal status rather than a political label.

'They Took Advantage': Aisha Buhari Details How Buhari's Weaknesses Were Manipulated



Former First Lady, Aisha Buhari, has disclosed that old friends and extended family members of the late former President Muhammadu Buhari exploited his weaknesses.

Mrs Buhari said her late husband was vulnerable to various forms of scheming and manipulation by extended family members and old friends.

She made the disclosure in the biography, From Soldier to Statesman: The Legacy of Muhammadu Buhari, authored by Charles Omole.

According to Mrs Buhari, her late husband was deeply fond of his extended family members and old friends, a disposition they allegedly took advantage of.

The book quoted her as saying: "With most of her children living and studying abroad early in Buhari's first term, extended family members filled the void and occupied houses across the Villa.

"And because of his fondness and attachment to his extended family and old friends, Buhari was vulnerable to all kinds of scheming and manipulations. "Those who knew his weaknesses exploited them to the detriment of the lofty goals of his administration."

'Protect The Planet': Okonjo-Iweala Commissions Eco-Friendly Transport In Abia State



The Director General of the World Trade Organization (WTO), Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, has called for a unified global approach to tackling the dual crises of environmental pollution and climate change. Speaking in Umuahia on Monday, the global leader emphasized that initiatives promoting a safer climate are not just environmental necessities but are critical for safeguarding public health worldwide.

The occasion marked the official commissioning of a new fleet of electric buses procured by the Abia State government. Dr. Okonjo-Iweala, a former Nigerian Minister of Finance, lauded Governor Alex Otti for his visionary leadership, noting that Abia has set a historic precedent as the first state in the federation to officially launch an electric-powered public transportation system.

During her keynote address, the WTO chief highlighted the disproportionate impact of climate change on the African continent. She noted that while Africa contributes a mere three percent to global carbon emissions, the continent remains highly vulnerable to environmental shifts. Consequently, she argued that every region must play its part in transitioning toward a greener, more sustainable global economy.

In his remarks, Governor Alex Otti described the introduction of the electric vehicles as a bold step toward a new future defined by innovation and environmental consciousness. He stated that the global shift toward zero-emission technology is inevitable and expressed his administration's commitment to ensuring that Abia State remains at the forefront of this technological evolution. The Governor provided technical details regarding the new fleet, revealing that the buses were specifically engineered with inclusivity in mind. The vehicles feature specialized designs to accommodate the needs of Persons Living with Disabilities (PLWDs), ensuring that the benefits of modernized transport are accessible to all segments of the population.

In terms of performance and safety, Governor Otti disclosed that the buses boast an impressive range, capable of covering between 400 and 450 kilometers on a single full charge. Furthermore, the vehicles are equipped with advanced internal cameras designed to monitor passenger safety and record any unlawful activities, providing an extra layer of security for commuters.

As a gesture of goodwill to the people of Abia, the Governor announced that the electric buses will offer free transportation services to commuters along scheduled routes throughout the festive season. This free service period, which begins in December and extends into early January 2026, is intended to ease the burden of travel for citizens while introducing them to the efficiency of eco-friendly transport.

PUBLIC NOTICE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEWLY CONSTITUTED AD-HOC COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE AND APPRAISE THE PERFORMANCE AND BENEFITS ACCRUING TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FROM ALL CONCESSIONAIRES OPERATED PORTS (AIR AND SEA), TERMINAL AND RELATED INBOUND AND OUTBOUND SHIPPING ACTIVITIES FROM 2006 – 2025 (HR. 130/12/2025)

The House of Representatives of the Federal Republic of Nigeria hereby announces the establishment of the above referenced AD-HOC COMMITTEE.

The Committee was constituted to investigate, review and appraise the Terms of Engagement of all concessionaires of our sea and airports, terminals, jetties, etc and compliance with such Terms with a view to establishing benefits accruing to the Federal Government and all the users of the concessioned Federal Government facilities.

In fulfilment of its mandate, the Committee hereby invites **written Memoranda**, documentary evidence, expert submissions, and stakeholders' presentation from all affected parties and the general public.

Objectives of the Committee's Exercise
The Committee's objectives shall include but not limited to:

a) Establish levels of compliance with the Terms of Concessionaires' Agreement.
b) Tracking of all inbound cargoes from various relevant agencies, shipping companies and financial institutions' records of imports.
c) Tracking of all outbound cargoes from various relevant agencies and shipping companies' records of exports.
d) To reconcile all agencies records of imports and exports with Concessionaires' records of cargo discharge and load.
e) To determine the level of payments by shipping companies and ports users to both NPA and Concessionaires for all NPA collectable revenue in relation to remittances to NPA by Concessionaires and various deductions thereof.
f) Conduct a value-for-money investigation for all NPA approved ports development, port rehabilitation and port equipment purchases e.t.c executed by NPA or Concessionaires and contractors payments through Credit Notes.

Stakeholders

a) Ports and Terminals Concessionaires and Ports users (air and sea).
b) Private Jetties and Terminals operators
c) Shipping lines and their Agents
d) Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA)
e) Nigerian Customs Services (NCS)
f) Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA)
g) Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA)
h) Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC formerly DPR)
i) Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS)
j) Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA)
k) Free Trade Zone Authorities (FTZA)
l) Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN)
m) Banks and Financial Institutions
n) Gas Producers (NLNG, EGTL e.t.c)
o) NNPC Limited
p) Companies in Oil Exploration and Production
q) Shippers Council
r) Crude oil Inspection Agents
s) Oil Terminal dues Monitoring Agents
t) Import and Export Cargo Declarants
u) Domestic Charterers and Owners of Supply Vessels and Service Boats
v) Importers of Vessel on Temporary Importations
w) Importers and Exporters of dry and wet cargoes (bulk, break bulk, petroleum products and crude oil and gas)
x) Drilling Rigs Importers and Owners
y) Port Development Contractors

Period Under Review
The period under consideration shall be from 2006 - 2025

INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS TO BE PROVIDED TO THE COMMITTEE
The stakeholders shall be requested to furnish as applicable to the Committee the underlisted information covering each of the years 2006 – 2025, in a specified format and reporting template:

i. Submission of schedule (Excel soft copy) in the format of reporting **Template** showing Daily vessel report and ship positions for both import (dry and wet cargo) and export (dry and wet cargo), ballast and in-ballast covering each port, discharge and load terminals.
ii. Submission of schedule (Excel soft copy) in the format of reporting **Template** showing all revenue generated from NPA Import Bill Invoice (dry and wet cargo) and NPA Export Bill Invoice (dry and wet cargo) for both Dollar and Naira, ballast and in-ballast **(Vessels demurrage charge, Habor dues, Ship dues, Cargo dues, MOWAC, Berthage, Towage of Ships, Second Port of Call, Berth Rent, Contingency, EPL, Port Piers, Royalty, Fire Coverage, Contingent Deposit and inclusive of VAT e.t.c)** covering each Vessels' Arrival and departure into and from Concessionaires and NPA Operated Ports, Terminals, Jetties including Midstream Discharge.
iii. Submission of schedule (Excel soft copy) in the format of reporting **Template** showing all revenue generated from NPA Bill Invoice on crude oil and gas tankers (**Oil terminal dues and Tanker Royalties)** and for Gas Exports**, (Habor dues, Ship dues, EPL, MOWAC e.t.c)** covering each Crude oil and gas Terminals e.t.c.
Please, note and be guided that all submissions for Gas Tankers Exports should cover every vessel's outbound lifting of NLNG Bonny Products, Escravos Gas to Liquid Products (EGTL), NNPC Gas Tankers Exports, SPDC Gas Tankers Exports and all other Gas Producers Exports by Sea.
iv. Submission of schedule (Excel soft copy) in the format of reporting **Template** showing, all revenue received from Concessionaires, on **Cargo dues, Berth rent, Throughput fees (**Dollar and Naira payments)**, lease fees, VAT e.t.c** and various Deductions' through NPA Credit Notes issued to Concessionaires on account of Equipment purchase, Port Rehabilitation and Development Cost Recoveries.
v. Submission of schedule (Excel soft copy) in the format of reporting **Template** showing all shipping charges payments received from cargo owners on each Vessels' Arrival and departure for both Dollar and Naira charges, ballast and in-ballast cargo **(Export processing fee, Delivery charge, Fumigation Charge, Line agency fee, Nigeria Port surcharge destination, Container deposit, Stamp duty, Documentation and Terminal handling charge, Major Repair/ replacement, Demurrage/ Detention fee, Storage charge after 14 days on full export, Vessel re-nomination fee, VAT e.t.c)** covering Dry and Wet Cargo, import and export (bulk cargo, break bulk cargo, Petroleum Products, crude oil and gas and vessel/ equipment on temporary importations e.t.c) for each Vessels' Arrival into and departure from Concessionaires and NPA Operated Ports, Terminals, Jetties including Midstream Discharge.
vi. Submission of schedule (Excel soft copy) in the format of reporting **Template** showing all payments received from shipping lines and Cargo owners for NPA Import and export Bill and Terminal charges Invoice listings on Cargo discharge into Terminal and Cargo load for both Dollar

and Naira, ballast and in-ballast cargos, such as **Cargo dues, Demurrage charge, Equipment hire, Security Tariff, Provisional Cargo dues, Manifest, Berthing, Delivery charges, Storage, Stuffing and Unstuffing of Container, Weekend Surcharge, Green House levy, Facility, Terminal handling charge, Restow, Cargo Delivery invoice, Tally sheet, Vehicle and Delivery Instructions** covering each Vessels' Arrival and departure into and from Concessionaires and NPA Operated Ports, Terminals, Jetties including Midstream Discharge.

vii. Submission of schedule (Excel soft copy) in the format of reporting **Template** showing all revenue generated from Service Boats Pilotage/ Conservancy Bill Invoice inclusive of VAT covering each pilotage district and various Deductions' through NPA Credit Notes issued to Managing agents on account of commissions on Pilotage, Port Rehabilitation and Development Cost Recoveries, Equipment purchase and Pilotage balance remittance to NPA.

viii. Submission of schedule of all NPA approved Equipment purchase, Ports Development and Rehabilitation Project executed by NPA on one hand and on the other hand by Concessionaires or Investors' cost recoveries covering all Ports and Terminal Development, stating, Serial no, Client, Project Title, Investors' name, Investors' registered address, Investors' incorporation date, Contractors' name, Contractors' registered address, Contractors incorporation date, Contract year, Contract Approval date, Contract/ Project description, Date of Commencement, Completion date, Contract/ Invoice currency, Contract/ Project sum before and after VAT, Invoice date, Invoice no, Invoice amount, NPA payment Batch date, NPA payment Batch no, NPA payment Batch amount, Credit note date, Credit note no, Credit note amount and Net Port charges remitted.

The above requested information, should be accompanied with, but not limited to, the following documents (15 printed and scanned copies):

a) Vessel ship entry notice (ballast and in-ballast) for each port and discharge terminals.
b) Shipping company's import and export cargo manifest (ballast vessel).
c) NPA Vessel's debit notes for provisional and final bill invoice (Dollar and Naira), on ballast and in-ballast cargos issued to ship owner/ agents, Concessionaires for both dry and wet cargo imports and exports, covering all revenue as contained in ii.
d) NPA billings/ invoice payments for oil terminal dues issued to ship owner/ agent/ charterer.
e) Concessionaire's agreement(s).
f) NPA Correspondence and remittance statements from Concessionaires.
g) Cargo bill of lading for (bulk and break bulk) import and export.
h) Bill of lading, certificate of quantity, certificate of origin for crude oil and gas exports.
i) Cargo manifest and bill of lading for all gas tankers exports by NLNG, Chevron EGTL, NNPC gas tankers and other exporters.
j) NPA contracts on ports rehabilitations, equipment purchase, developments by NPA, Concessionaires, Intels (Pilotage amortizations and other investors).
k) NPA issued credit notes supported with various batch documents on ports amortized project cost recoveries.
l) Equipment purchase, Port development investor's/ contractor's invoices inclusive of VAT submitted to NPA for port amortized project recoveries.

This committee hereby calls for relevant submissions as listed above from interested public on the subject exercise, such submissions can be made available to the Committee in Room 3.62, New Wing, House of Representatives, Three Arms Zones,

Signed:

Hon Kolawole Davidson Akinlayo
Chairman

Hon Tajudeen Abbass Phd
Speaker House of Representative, Abuja

Fake Certificates: FUE Pankshin Alerts Employers, Orders Strict Verification

By Christiana Lot, Jos





The Federal University of Education (FUE), Pankshin, Plateau State, has warned employers and institutions within and outside the country to always verify academic certificates purportedly issued by the University, following the discovery of a syndicate involved in the production of fake results and certificates.

The Acting Vice-Chancellor of the University, Prof. Jere Ndazhaga, issued the warning on Monday during a press conference at the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) Press Centre in Jos, stressing that the advisory became necessary to protect the integrity of the institution and the credibility of Nigeria's education system.

Ndazhaga disclosed that the University recently uncovered criminal activities involving the forgery, alteration and issuance of academic results and certificates bearing the name of the institution, prompting swift security and legal actions.

According to him, "We consider it important to bring this matter to the attention of the public, particularly employers, professional bodies and academic institutions, in order to protect them from being deceived by fake certificates purportedly issued by this University. We strongly advise that all certificates presented for employment or academic purposes should be properly verified through the appropriate channels."

He explained that the discovery was made after a suspicious certificate was presented at the University's Examinations and Records Section, where irregularities were detected during routine verification procedures. "The vigilance and professionalism of our staff led to the immediate detection of inconsistencies on the document. Further investigations revealed that criminal elements were producing fake results and certificates, falsely claiming they were issued by the defunct Federal College of Education, Pankshin, now upgraded to a Federal University of Education," Ndazhaga stated.

The Acting Vice-Chancellor said the matter was promptly reported to security agencies, leading to the arrest, prosecution and eventual conviction of the suspects, who are currently serving jail terms.

He emphasised that the University would not compromise academic standards under any circumstance.

"There is no shortcut to knowledge. Every genuine certificate issued by this institution represents years of rigorous academic training, character formation and integrity. We will not tolerate any act capable of undermining the value of education or tarnishing the image of this University," he said.

Ndazhaga added that the management has continued to strengthen internal control mechanisms to curb academic fraud, while urging members of the public to cooperate with the University by reporting suspicious documents or activities.

As a growing institution following its recent upgrade to a full-fledged university, he said FUE Pankshin remains committed to transparency, accountability and excellence in service.

BusinessToday

By Babajide Okeowo

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Yuletide: FCCPC Cautions Road Transporters Against Arbitrary Fare Hike

The Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC) has cautioned inter-city road transport operators against arbitrary and unexplained fare increases during the ongoing yuletide travel period, following a surge in consumer complaints across several parts of the country.

The Commission recognises that seasonal demand, operational pressures and other legitimate cost factors may affect transport pricing. However, consumers are entitled to clear, accurate, and timely information on fares before travel.

Any fare adjustment must therefore be transparently communicated and applied fairly.

The FCCPC also notes that these complaints are arising at a time when there are reports of reductions in the pump price of premium motor spirit across parts of the country. While fuel cost is only one of several inputs that may influence transport fares, increases that are not properly explained or disclosed raise valid consumer protection concerns.

Commenting on the development, the Executive Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Commission, Mr Tunji Bello, said the FCCPC is closely monitoring market conduct throughout the festive season and has intensified engagement with transport unions, park managers and operators nationwide.

He explained that these engagements are preventive in nature and are aimed at encouraging responsible pricing practices, voluntary compliance and orderly market behaviour.

Mr Bello clarified that price increases are not, in themselves, unlawful. However, conduct that exploits consumers or takes unfair advantage of heightened seasonal demand may attract regulatory attention under the Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Act (FCCPA) 2018.

He further noted that practices such as inadequate fare disclosure, coercive conduct, or coordinated pricing arrangements among operators to the detriment of consumers will be subject to strict regulatory scrutiny. Where cases of violation are established, he warned, culprits face stiff penalties.

Naira Appreciates By ₦7.93 Against Dollar At Official FX Market



The Nigerian currency, the naira, gained against the American dollar at the official window on Monday.

At the official window, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) foreign exchange data showed that the naira closed at N1,456.56/$1, as against the N1,464.49/$1 it traded on Friday.

This represents an appreciation of N7.93 for the local currency against the American greenback.

At the black market, the Nigerian currency gained N20 against the American greenback to trade at N1,490/$1, as against the previous day's rate of N1,510/$1.

In the same vein, the local currency gained N5 against the British Pound to trade at N2,000/£1 as against the previous day's rate of N2,005£1.

The naira closed flat against the Canadian dollar to trade at N1,200/CA$1, the same as the previous day's rate of N1,200/CA$1.

Similarly, the naira gained N5 against the Euro to trade at ₦1,730/€1, as against the previous day's rate of ₦1,735/€1.

Equities Market Opens Week On High Note, Investors Pocket ₦257bn In Five Hours



Investors in the Nigerian equities market gained N257 billion at the close of trading on Monday to begin the week on a bullish note.

This followed the surge in the share prices of stocks such as Aluminium Extrusion, International Energy Insurance and Mecure, among others, on the trading floor.

The benchmark All-Share Index (ASI) surged to 152,459.07 points from the 152,057.38 points recorded the previous day.

After five hours of trading at the capital market, the equity capitalisation surged to N97.1 trillion from N96.9 trillion posted by the bourse on Monday.

The market breadth was positive with 34 stocks advancing, 20 stocks declining, and 91 stocks remaining unchanged in 33,327 deals.

An aggregate of 451,524,634 units of shares was traded, valued at N13 billion

Aluminium Extrusion, International Energy Insurance and Mecure led the gainers with 9.72%, 9.69% and 9.64% growth each in share prices, respectively, to close at N13.55, N2.49, and N60.30 per share, up from the previous N12.35, N2.27, and N55.00 per share.

Custodian, ABC Transport and Prestige Assurance led other price decliners with a 10%, 10%, and 7.41% dip each in share price to close at

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BusinessToday

By Babajide Okeowo

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Fidelity Bank Boosts Sustainable Firefighting Practices, Donates Hoses, Water Pumps

Fidelity Bank Plc has reinforced its commitment to community safety and sustainable ecological practices through the donation of essential firefighting and preventive equipment including hoses and gasoline water pumps to the Ikoyi Fire Service Station in Lagos.

The donation was made under the Fidelity Helping Hands Program (FHHP) by the True Serve team, reaffirming the Bank's commitment to the environment and community safety. Through the FHHP, members of staff identify areas of critical community needs, raise funds, and then receive matching monetary support from the bank to execute the projects.

Commenting on the reason behind the donation, Divisional Head, Brand and Communications Division, Fidelity Bank Plc, Dr Meksley Nwagboh, emphasized that the donation reflects the bank's dedication to strengthening emergency response capabilities and promoting public safety within the communities it serves.

According to him, "Fidelity Bank remains committed to supporting initiatives that contribute to the protection of our environment, lives and property. We see community safety as a shared responsibility and continuously extend support to both corporate bodies and individuals."

Dr Nwagboh further noted that, "We believe that preventive measures are far more effective than reactionary responses. This donation is part of our efforts to drive sustainable practices by providing the necessary tools. Our goal is to ensure that people live meaningful, safe,

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L-R: Lagos State Controller, Federal Fire Service, CF (Controller of Fire), Adebayo Funke; Tolulope Rojaiye, Marketing Business Partner, Fidelity Bank Plc; Assistant Superintendent of Fire, Ishola Folorunsho Olufemi; and Station Commander, Onikan Fire Station, Lagos, Okeke Ferdinand; during the donation of firefighting equipment to the Federal Fire Service at Ikoyi, Lagos, recently.

TCN Boosts Power Transmission Capacity To 8700 Megawatts In 2025



The Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN) has increased its electricity wheeling capacity to 8,700 megawatts (MW) in 2025 following sustained efforts to strengthen infrastructure, rehabilitate ageing assets, and expand transformer capacity nationwide.

The Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of TCN, Sule Abdulaziz, disclosed this in his 2025 End-of-Year Goodwill Message titled "Reflecting on a Year of Progress and Powering Our Future Together."

According to him, the achievements position the company to better support Nigeria's growing electricity demand.

Abdulaziz highlighted that a major milestone was recorded on March 4, 2025, when TCN transmitted an all-time peak generation of over 5,800MW, alongside a record maximum daily energy delivery of 128,370.75MWh, the highest in the nation's history within the period under review.

He also noted that the commissioning of 82 new power transformers and adding more than 8,500MVA to the national grid, significantly improved reliability and capacity.

The TCN boss further stated that the company advanced several critical transmission projects valued at over $1.16 billion, funded by development partners.

Key among them is the Abuja Feeding Scheme, which includes the construction of five new substations and a 330kV transmission line aimed at modernising the grid and expanding capacity.

Despite the progress, Abdulaziz acknowledged challenges such as vandalism, with 131 incidents recorded between

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Glo Fetes Christians At Christmas, Calls For More Compassion, Unity



Nigeria's technology and telecommunications company, Globacom, has extended warm Christmas greetings to Christians nationwide and globally as they commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ.

In a statement issued Tuesday, Globacom described the Yuletide as a season of reflection, urging Christians to embody the teachings of Jesus — love, humility, obedience to God, and a steadfast commitment to the welfare of all humanity.

"The noble but lowly circumstances of the birth of Christ teach salient virtues including obedience to God, humility, love for mankind, and a fastidious commitment to the good of all. We urge Christians to commit to practicing these virtues, as followers of Christ", the company stated.

Globacom also highlighted the responsibility to care for others, noting that Jesus' act of feeding the multitude (as recorded in the Gospels) serves as a timeless reminder to share and support one another, especially in challenging times.

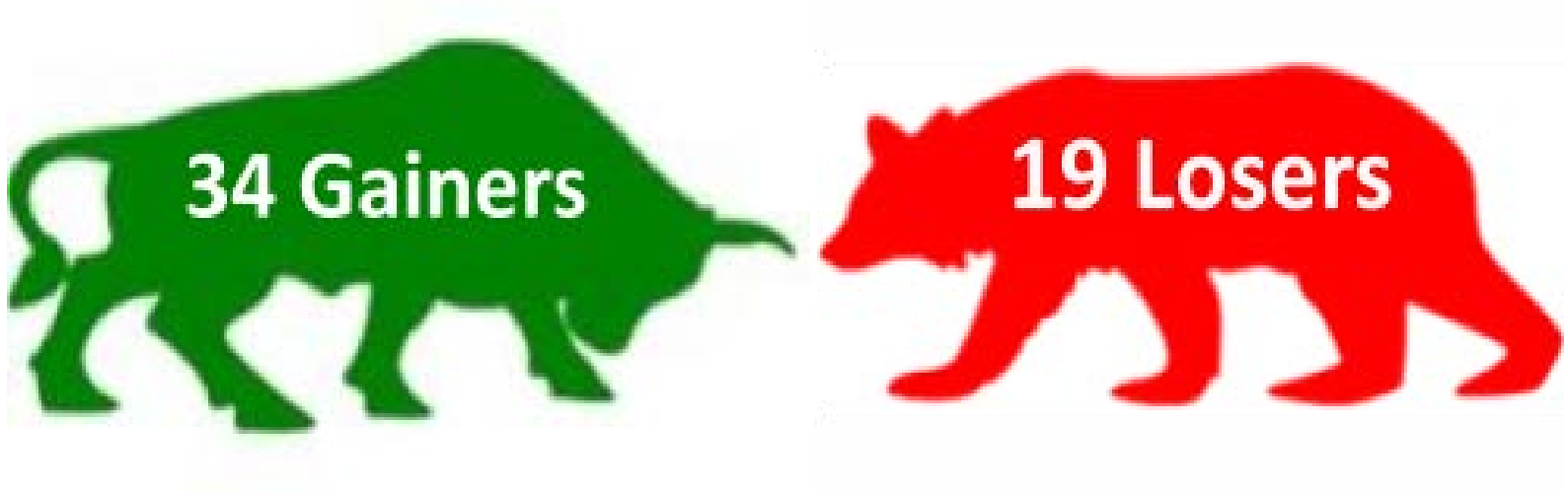
It called on Nigerians to carry the spirit of Christmas beyond the festive season by reflecting the love and peace that

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MarketIntelligence

Pricelist of Traded Equities 22 December, 2025



All Share Index (ASI)	Deals	Volume	Value	Market Capitalization	YTD Change
152,459.07	33,327	451.52 million	N13.03 billion	N97.19 trillion	48.12%
0.26%	29.84%	-63.60%	-56.31%	0.26%	

TOP GAINERS

Symbol	Previous Close	Close	Change	%Change
ALEX	12.35	13.55	1.20	9.72
INTENEGINS	2.27	2.49	0.22	9.69
MECURE	55.00	60.30	5.30	9.64
ROYALEX	1.77	1.94	0.17	9.60
AUSTINLAZ	2.42	2.65	0.23	9.50

BIGGEST VOLUMES

Symbol	Trades	Volume	Value
TANTALIZER	494	50,179,553	127,471,990
FIRSTHOLDCO	1,158	32,615,228	1,492,577,911
ACCESSCORP	1,538	27,315,828	562,342,853
CUSTODIAN	161	22,096,657	857,832,289
CHAMS	389	21,316,796	71,140,818

BOTTOM LOSERS

Symbol	Previous Close	Close	Change	%Change
ABCTRANS	3.50	3.15	-0.35	(10.00)
CUSTODIAN	39.00	35.10	-3.90	(10.00)
PRESTIGE	1.62	1.50	-0.12	(7.41)
GUINEAINS	1.22	1.13	-0.09	(7.38)
ELLAHLAKES	13.95	13.05	-0.90	(6.45)

SMALLEST VOLUMES

Symbol	Trades	Volume	Value
AIRTELAFRI	4	120	299,640
MORISON	2	199	1,025
INFINITY	1	350	2,660
TRANSEXPR	1	450	968
CNIF	14	1,001	110,103

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MarketNews

PRICES FOR SECURITIES TRADED AS OF DECEMBER 22/2025

Symbol	P. Close	High	Low	Close	Change	%Change	Trades	Volume	Value
ABBEYBDS	5.85	5.85	5.85	**5.85**	0.00	0.00%	71	98,373	605,846.30
ABCTRANS	3.50	3.51	3.15	**3.15**	(0.35)	-10.00%	163	1,345,185	4,592,211.55
ACADEMY	7.35	7.30	7.30	**7.30**	(0.05)	-0.68%	45	709,699	5,185,586.20
ACCESSCORP	20.50	20.95	20.50	**20.50**	0.00	0.00%	1,538	27,315,828	562,342,852.65
AFRIPRUD	13.60	13.60	13.60	**13.60**	0.00	0.00%	130	952,833	13,246,040.85
AIICO	3.90	3.97	3.70	**3.93**	0.03	0.77%	495	11,890,104	46,371,287.01
AIRTELAFRI	2,270.00	2,270.00	2,270.00	**2,270.00**	0.00	0.00%	4	120	299,640.00
ALEX	12.35	13.55	13.55	**13.55**	1.20	9.72%	124	3,425,327	46,391,091.45
ARADEL	679.90	679.90	679.90	**679.90**	0.00	0.00%	855	2,235,252	1,511,692,330.70
AUSTINLAZ	2.42	2.66	2.65	**2.65**	0.23	9.50%	131	5,097,001	13,530,496.85
BERGER	42.00	43.95	43.95	**43.95**	1.95	4.64%	115	424,410	18,298,265.50
BETAGLAS	370.00	370.00	370.00	**370.00**	0.00	0.00%	389	72,387	24,106,209.00
BUACEMENT	170.00	174.00	174.00	**174.00**	4.00	2.35%	871	496,191	85,560,651.30
BUAFOODS	734.20	734.20	734.20	**734.20**	0.00	0.00%	769	63,040	45,412,463.90
CADBURY	59.60	59.60	59.60	**59.60**	0.00	0.00%	261	386,179	22,159,160.15
CAP	74.00	74.00	74.00	**74.00**	0.00	0.00%	36	90,579	6,307,815.35
CAVERTON	5.35	5.30	5.30	**5.30**	(0.05)	-0.93%	90	1,032,887	5,577,413.15
CHAMPION	16.95	16.75	15.50	**16.75**	(0.20)	-1.18%	239	14,034,247	233,686,575.60
CHAMS	3.28	3.51	3.05	**3.51**	0.23	7.01%	429	21,316,796	71,140,817.84
CHELLARAM	13.20	13.20	13.20	**13.20**	0.00	0.00%	15	20,136	284,432.00
CILEASING	6.10	6.20	6.20	**6.20**	0.10	1.64%	50	639,211	3,898,597.00
CNIF	100.00	100.00	100.00	**100.00**	0.00	0.00%	14	1,001	110,102.60
CONHALLPLC	4.30	4.31	4.21	**4.22**	(0.08)	-1.86%	63	1,513,843	6,419,090.89
CONOIL	187.20	187.20	187.20	**187.20**	0.00	0.00%	79	8,133	1,382,290.50
CORNERST	5.79	5.79	5.79	**5.79**	0.00	0.00%	56	675,266	3,804,093.02
CUSTODIAN	39.00	39.00	35.10	**35.10**	(3.90)	-10.00%	161	22,096,657	857,832,289.20
CUTIX	3.00	3.00	2.95	**3.00**	0.00	0.00%	244	4,985,975	14,915,996.78
CWG	18.60	18.80	16.75	**18.80**	0.20	1.08%	242	4,565,941	79,955,184.70
DAARCOMM	0.94	0.94	0.87	**0.94**	0.00	0.00%	109	1,790,893	1,600,425.90
DANGCEM	610.00	610.00	610.00	**610.00**	0.00	0.00%	1,071	989,673	596,784,261.00
DANGSUGAR	59.00	60.00	60.00	**60.00**	1.00	1.69%	1,034	1,782,759	106,351,489.85
DEAPCAP	1.70	1.70	1.67	**1.70**	0.00	0.00%	48	6,115,970	10,366,293.70
ELLAHLAKES	13.95	14.00	13.00	**13.05**	(0.90)	-6.45%	930	14,218,636	189,508,669.45
ENAMELWA	40.50	40.50	40.50	**40.50**	0.00	0.00%	2	1,267	51,313.50
ETERNA	28.50	28.50	28.50	**28.50**	0.00	0.00%	136	193,883	5,552,736.60
ETI	37.90	38.00	37.90	**38.00**	0.10	0.26%	155	7,867,270	298,630,719.10
ETRANZACT	12.60	12.60	12.60	**12.60**	0.00	0.00%	87	698,925	8,038,793.65
EUNISELL	80.00	80.00	80.00	**80.00**	0.00	0.00%	85	109,733	8,508,531.35
FCMB	10.60	10.60	10.45	**10.55**	(0.05)	-0.47%	485	3,020,239	31,869,521.80
FIDELITYBK	19.00	19.75	19.00	**19.05**	0.05	0.26%	576	3,393,540	65,016,800.20
FIDSON	43.00	43.00	43.00	**43.00**	0.00	0.00%	248	187,443	7,848,276.45
FIRSTHOLDCO	44.95	46.80	44.95	**46.00**	1.05	2.34%	1,158	32,615,228	1,492,577,910.80
FTNCOCOA	4.42	4.69	4.55	**4.69**	0.27	6.11%	147	1,742,099	8,088,127.21
GEREGU	1,141.50	1,141.50	1,141.50	**1,141.50**	0.00	0.00%	66	2,273	2,335,280.20
GTCO	88.10	88.30	88.10	**88.10**	0.00	0.00%	1,496	2,873,348	253,444,094.15
GUINEAINS	1.22	1.18	1.13	**1.13**	(0.09)	-7.38%	65	1,571,343	1,838,579.95
GUINNESS	289.70	289.70	289.70	**289.70**	0.00	0.00%	164	449,072	143,038,691.20
HMCALL	3.99	3.99	3.99	**3.99**	0.00	0.00%	26	340,166	1,344,210.58
HONYFLOUR	17.75	17.75	17.75	**17.75**	0.00	0.00%	407	1,147,234	22,200,233.10
IKEJAHOTEL	33.10	34.10	31.50	**34.10**	1.00	3.02%	166	1,173,224	37,670,528.85
IMG	32.40	32.40	32.40	**32.40**	0.00	0.00%	8	4,220	135,507.50
INFINITY	7.00	7.00	7.00	**7.00**	0.00	0.00%	1	350	2,660.00
INTBREW	12.00	12.50	12.50	**12.50**	0.50	4.17%	137	863,313	10,826,525.05
INTENEGINS	2.27	2.49	2.49	**2.49**	0.22	9.69%	30	275,100	659,947.91
JAIZBANK	4.64	4.79	4.63	**4.63**	(0.01)	-0.22%	566	3,751,922	17,683,143.93
JAPAULGOLD	2.38	2.44	2.31	**2.44**	0.06	2.52%	148	7,210,150	17,145,294.88
JBERGER	139.00	139.00	139.00	**139.00**	0.00	0.00%	123	55,741	7,717,065.60
JOHNHOLT	4.90	4.90	4.90	**4.90**	0.00	0.00%	27	77,639	413,007.65
JULI	8.06	8.06	8.06	**8.06**	0.00	0.00%	4	1,300	9,438.00
LASACO	2.47	2.60	2.47	**2.50**	0.03	1.21%	101	8,648,502	21,882,500.15
LEARNAFRCA	6.30	6.30	6.30	**6.30**	0.00	0.00%	44	372,456	2,352,142.85

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PRICES FOR SECURITIES TRADED AS OF DECEMBER 22/2025

Symbol	P. Close	High	Low	Close	Change	%Change	Trades	Volume	Value
LEGENDINT	5.55	5.55	5.55	**5.55**	0.00	0.00%	40	222,041	1,202,808.45
LINKASSURE	1.70	1.72	1.60	**1.60**	(0.10)	-5.88%	89	6,077,133	9,999,923.87
LIVESTOCK	6.25	6.25	6.25	**6.25**	0.00	0.00%	100	419,959	2,543,418.70
LIVINGTRUST	3.35	3.44	3.35	**3.44**	0.09	2.69%	24	509,893	1,714,363.52
MANSARD	14.00	14.00	14.00	**14.00**	0.00	0.00%	122	747,387	9,634,424.68
MAYBAKER	17.80	17.80	17.80	**17.80**	0.00	0.00%	102	382,668	6,524,927.85
MBENEFIT	3.18	3.27	3.10	**3.10**	(0.08)	-2.52%	220	13,544,366	43,349,666.02
MCNICHOLS	2.90	3.18	2.90	**2.95**	0.05	1.72%	87	2,859,702	8,441,636.14
MECURE	55.00	60.30	60.30	**60.30**	5.30	9.64%	221	707,568	41,425,320.60
MEYER	13.10	13.10	13.10	**13.10**	0.00	0.00%	9	17,079	230,564.85
MORISON	4.69	4.69	4.69	**4.69**	0.00	0.00%	2	199	1,024.85
MTNN	531.70	531.70	531.70	**531.70**	0.00	0.00%	2,394	1,174,675	585,387,096.50
MULTIVERSE	12.15	12.15	12.15	**12.15**	0.00	0.00%	33	72,772	917,793.85
NAHCO	109.50	109.50	109.50	**109.50**	0.00	0.00%	185	419,305	45,409,322.15
NASCON	107.95	111.00	111.00	**111.00**	3.05	2.83%	135	521,743	55,686,490.75
NB	79.50	79.50	79.50	**79.50**	0.00	0.00%	412	1,647,189	130,278,235.35
NCR	72.70	72.70	72.70	**72.70**	0.00	0.00%	83	66,140	4,603,305.55
NEIMETH	6.15	6.15	6.15	**6.15**	0.00	0.00%	121	689,312	4,294,598.15
NEM	26.30	25.30	23.70	**25.30**	(1.00)	-3.80%	195	5,828,077	139,587,140.20
NESTLE	1,958.00	1,958.00	1,958.00	**1,958.00**	0.00	0.00%	206	9,961	19,495,859.90
NGXGROUP	66.75	63.85	63.85	**63.85**	(2.90)	-4.34%	240	1,508,079	95,119,164.35
NIDF	115.00	115.00	115.00	**115.00**	0.00	0.00%	129	222,213	25,150,772.40
NNFM	84.30	84.30	84.30	**84.30**	0.00	0.00%	17	5,963	452,591.70
NPFMCRFBK	3.74	3.78	3.70	**3.75**	0.01	0.27%	179	3,088,301	11,552,407.55
NSLTECH	0.78	0.79	0.76	**0.78**	0.00	0.00%	87	14,819,626	11,554,200.83
OANDO	38.00	38.65	38.00	**38.00**	0.00	0.00%	538	4,508,170	172,036,920.35
OKOMUOIL	1,109.00	1,109.00	1,109.00	**1,109.00**	0.00	0.00%	617	297,861	322,894,914.30
OMATEK	1.09	1.17	1.08	**1.10**	0.01	0.92%	82	4,445,135	4,897,209.16
PRESCO	1,430.00	1,450.00	1,450.00	**1,450.00**	20.00	1.40%	495	279,653	405,171,301.30
PRESTIGE	1.62	1.52	1.50	**1.50**	(0.12)	-7.41%	56	5,098,529	7,718,633.10
PZ	47.00	47.40	47.00	**47.00**	0.00	0.00%	333	3,004,576	141,427,867.65
REDSTAREX	8.70	8.70	8.70	**8.70**	0.00	0.00%	26	89,988	786,838.20
REGALINS	1.01	1.03	0.98	**0.99**	(0.02)	-1.98%	78	4,824,415	4,795,807.68
ROYALEX	1.77	1.94	1.94	**1.94**	0.17	9.60%	107	7,766,394	15,060,169.62
RTBRISCOE	3.30	3.35	3.32	**3.35**	0.05	1.52%	45	1,426,946	4,736,543.55
SCOA	7.10	7.10	7.10	**7.10**	0.00	0.00%	17	9,038	69,672.20
SEPLAT	5,809.00	5,809.00	5,809.00	**5,809.00**	0.00	0.00%	243	83,509	442,811,917.90
SFSREIT	418.75	418.75	418.75	**418.75**	0.00	0.00%	75	7,234	2,979,224.70
SKYAVN	88.45	88.45	88.45	**88.45**	0.00	0.00%	9	2,318	184,628.70
SOVRENINS	3.87	4.18	3.90	**3.98**	0.11	2.84%	162	8,037,704	32,689,681.79
STANBIC	95.20	95.20	95.20	**95.20**	0.00	0.00%	294	364,731	36,022,545.45
STERLINGNG	7.10	7.30	7.00	**7.30**	0.20	2.82%	384	3,382,325	24,308,014.30
SUNUASSUR	4.73	5.17	5.17	**5.17**	0.44	9.30%	72	936,099	4,734,220.55
TANTALIZER	2.69	2.95	2.43	**2.58**	(0.11)	-4.09%	494	50,179,553	127,471,990.19
TIP	12.50	12.55	12.55	**12.55**	0.05	0.40%	164	1,198,625	14,969,187.60
TOTAL	640.00	640.00	640.00	**640.00**	0.00	0.00%	75	8,041	4,631,616.00
TRANSCOHOT	155.60	155.60	155.60	**155.60**	0.00	0.00%	89	87,228	12,537,093.80
TRANSCORP	41.00	41.00	41.00	**41.00**	0.00	0.00%	257	1,106,155	45,305,760.90
TRANSEXPR	2.15	2.15	2.15	**2.15**	0.00	0.00%	1	450	967.50
TRANSPOWER	307.00	307.00	307.00	**307.00**	0.00	0.00%	77	109,692	30,307,899.60
TRIPPLEG	4.42	4.42	4.42	**4.42**	0.00	0.00%	17	24,849	104,125.02
UACN	87.75	87.75	87.75	**87.75**	0.00	0.00%	212	359,151	31,930,623.95
UBA	40.00	40.30	39.00	**39.00**	(1.00)	-2.50%	1,211	10,188,680	403,775,180.50
UCAP	17.85	18.35	18.05	**18.05**	0.20	1.12%	209	1,589,800	28,772,806.80
UHOMREIT	51.85	51.85	51.85	**51.85**	0.00	0.00%	49	46,562	2,539,499.80
UNILEVER	72.00	72.00	72.00	**72.00**	0.00	0.00%	189	3,284,442	216,951,132.00
UNIONDICON	6.60	7.20	7.00	**7.00**	0.40	6.06%	87	1,235,799	8,670,021.15
UNIVINSURE	1.15	1.16	1.15	**1.16**	0.01	0.87%	61	1,534,306	1,776,150.94
UPDC	5.15	5.25	5.15	**5.15**	0.00	0.00%	131	1,250,257	6,428,729.00
UPDCREIT	6.95	6.95	6.90	**6.90**	(0.05)	-0.72%	265	3,131,035	21,645,692.55
UPL	6.00	6.00	6.00	**6.00**	0.00	0.00%	15	46,411	281,247.55
VERITASKAP	1.75	1.77	1.75	**1.75**	0.00	0.00%	149	11,876,680	20,883,702.03

PHOTOS SPEAK...

LAGOS STATE GOVERNOR, BABAJIDE SANWO-OLU YESTERDAY ATTENDED THE GROUND-BREAKING CEREMONY FOR THE LAGOS STATE SECURITY TRUST FUND OFFICE COMPLEX IN IKEJA.









LAGOS STATE GOVERNOR, BABAJIDE SANWO-OLU ON SUNDAY RECEIVED THE OLORI EYO, THE WHITE CAP CHIEFS, TRADITIONAL LEADERS, AND OTHER PARTICIPANTS AT LAGOS HOUSE, MARINA, DURING THE IJADE OPA EYO PROCESSION.









TheMatrix

IMAGES...

PRESIDENT BOLA AHMED TINUBU ADDRESSING A JOINT SESSION OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DURING THE 2026 BUDGET PRESENTATION LAST FRIDAY.



















NELSON UTIP
SOUTH-SOUTH BUREAU CHIEF
07034380347

News From South South

A'Ibom Police Command Render A Review Of It's 2025 Ops, Outline Priorities Of 2026

The Police Command of Akwa Ibom State has given a review of the security situation in the state in year 2025 and a projection into it's priorities in the coming year.

In a release issued by The PPRO of The Command, DSP Timfon John and made available to The Matrix, The Commissioner of Police Baba Mohammed Azare fsi. further outlined its operational focus for 2026, assuring residents of sustained peace and safety.

According to the Release, The CP attested to the generally peace and calm and stable security environment of The Oil Rich State.

"Speaking during an end-of-year press conference with journalists, the Commissioner of Police CP Baba Mohammed Azare, fsi, Mnipr, stated that the security situation in Akwa Ibom State remained generally peaceful, calm, and stable throughout the year under review. This, he noted, was achieved through intelligence-led policing, proactive patrols, strategic deployments, community cooperation, and effective inter-agency collaboration.

The Commissioner disclosed that the Command recorded significant operational successes during the year, including the arrest of suspects involved in armed robbery, cultism, kidnapping, violent crimes, and other criminal activities. He added that firearms, ammunition, stolen vehicles, and other dangerous exhibits were recovered, while several criminal hideouts and identified black spots across the state were dismantled.

He further stated that the Command ensured adequate security coverage for political, social, religious, and economic activities across the state, while maintaining strict enforcement of laws and government directives aimed at preserving public order.

On public safety, the Commissioner reiterated the Command's stance against jungle justice, unlawful gatherings, and activities capable of breaching public peace. He also confirmed compliance with the Executive Order of the Akwa Ibom State Government restricting masquerade activities to approved locations, with mandatory police permission and security coverage, a measure which significantly reduced violence and disorder.

CONTINUE ONLINE







Community Clash Claims One Life, House Burnt In Itsekiri



Itsekiri youths of Ugborodo and Ogidigben riverine communities in Warri South West Local Government Area of Delta State engaged in a squabble that left one Dead and and a house razed down over the weekend.

Emiko Onuwaje, the diseased was said to have been attacked and killed along a road in Ogidigben. This resulted in an outrage creating tension across the Ugborodo axis.

In a retaliation, the residence of Capt. John Deja Okpeyor was set ablaze by angry youths. It's on record that Okpeyor was installed as a chief of the Warri Kingdom that same day.

The killing and subsequent arson occurred sequel to a youth leadership tussle in Ogidigben. Youth were mobilized to confront perceived opponents of the installation within the community.

It was acertained that Onuwaje, the victim was not involved in any mobilisation or attack on any residence. He is said to have been assaulted and killed on the road by unknown assailants, describing the incident as a criminal act that should not be linked to wider community disputes.

Security have been beeved

CONTINUE ONLINE

Gov Fubara Consoles Bayelsa Gov On Ewhrudjakpo's Demise



Governor Simi Fubara of Rivers State has commiserated with the people of Bayelsa State over the demise of Their Deputy Governor, Lawrence Ewhrudjakpo.

He described Ewhrudjakpo as a man of exceptional calibre whose public service was defined by intellectual depth, humility and uncommon dedication.

Fubara stated this when he led leaders from Rivers State on a condolence visit to Bayelsa State Governor, Senator Douye Diri, following Ewhrudjakpo's sudden death on December 11.

He arrived Yenagoa in a black attire with a matching cap, symbolising mourning.

The Governor described the demise of The Deputy Governor as a monumental loss to both Bayelsa and Rivers States , he noted that both states share deep historical, cultural and political ties.

Fubara also said that the loss had personally touched him, stressing that death remained an event beyond human control and was determined only by God, who gave and took life.

He assured the Bayelsa State Government of Rivers State's readiness to support funeral arrangements for the late Deputy governor.

"Wherever you want us to come in, I want to assure you that we will give our support. We know that there is no word of condolence that can fill the void, but only God

CONTINUE ONLINE

News From South South

BY NELSON UTIP &
AMGBARE PRINCE &
FELIX ASUQUO

Esele Gives 230 Bags Of Rice To Edo Community For Christmas



Peter Esele, former President of the Trade Union Congress (TUC), has donated 230 bags of rice to Ologua Community, Ohordua, Esan South East Local Government Area of Edo over the weekend.

Interacting with Newsmen at the distribution venue, he said that beneficiaries cut across his ancestral Ologua Community and extended to neighbouring communities in the locality.

Esele further said that the essence of the gesture was to identify with the elderly, vulnerable, poor, and less privileged at a time when love was being celebrated.

He also said that rice donation to households in the community and environs commenced 10 years ago and had become an annual event which many families in the locality looked forward to.

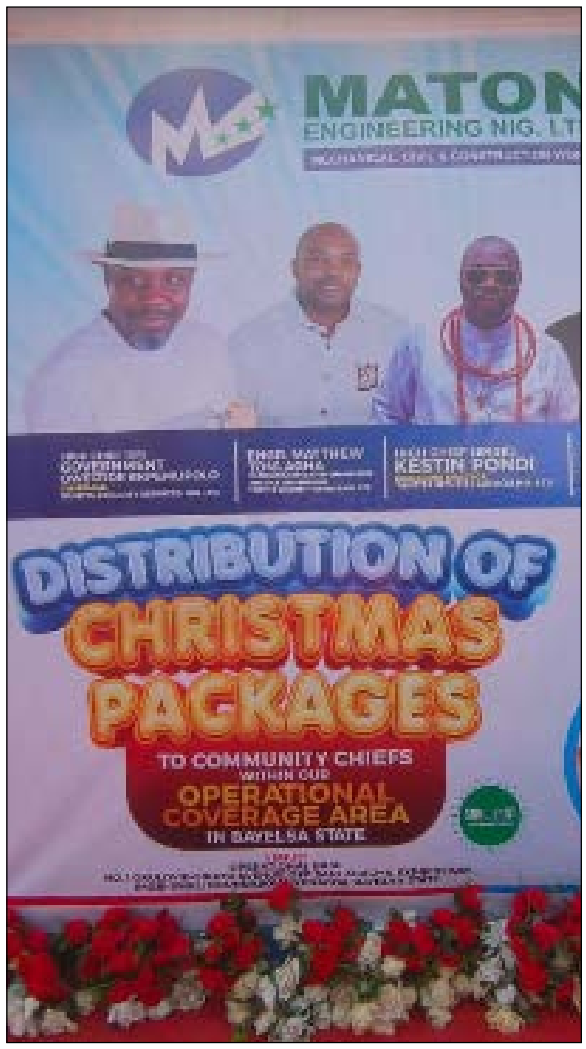
"This gesture which began in 2015 has now become an annual event, which is my own way of giving back to the community that nurtured me.

"There is no better time to identify with the poor, vulnerable and needy in the society and show them love than now.

"The Christmas season and celebration is a period so many people look forward to, because it's a season of love, sharing and giving.

"So, it is my belief that this little contribution from me, will be able to make an impact in those homes that benefitted from this gesture today." Esele said.

Elated beneficiaries of the benevolence of Esele prayed fervently for the philanthropist, they described him as a man of impeccable character who remembers his roots.







Tantita Security Services Distributes Christmas Gifts To Bayelsa Host Communities

In continuation of its yearly tradition, Tantita Security Services Limited's Bayelsa State Office has distributed Christmas packages to host communities in its operational areas, reinforcing ties with local stakeholders amid efforts to maintain peace in the Niger Delta.

The distribution ceremony took place at the company's Bayelsa State Head Office along Imgbi Express in Yenagoa.

In his opening speech, the Bayelsa State Coordinator of Tantita Security Services, Great Joshua Maciver, represented by Joseph Maciver presented food items, with local government coordinators in attendance.

Each host community received bags of rice, a cow, and a cash donation. The gifts were handed over to community chiefs, women leaders, and youth presidents as a token of appreciation for their ongoing support and cooperation in ensuring security and smooth operations.

In his remarks, Hon. Ebiango Egain, Tantita's Coordinator for Ogbia Local Government Area, praised the company for fostering peace and strong community relations.

He noted that enhanced security measures have improved safety on rivers and waterways, boosting movement and economic activities in the region.

Joseph MacIver thanked the company's leadership, including Chairman High Chief Government Oweizedei Ekpemupolo (Tompolo), Vice Chairman Engr. Matthew Tonlagha, Managing Director High Chief (Engr.) Kestin Pondi, and General Manager Operations High Chief Godfrey Tari Pondi, for their dedication to combating oil theft and promoting regional security.

Community representatives described the gesture as timely and appreciated, pledging continued partnership for peace, unity, and development in Bayelsa.

Tantita Security Services reiterated its commitment to community-oriented initiatives and collaboration with traditional leaders, women's groups, youth organizations, and other stakeholders to sustain lasting peace in the state.

Cross River FRSC Arrests 932 Traffic Offenders In 6 Months

The Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) in Cross River State has arrested no fewer than 932 motorists for various traffic infractions.

This includes attempts to bribe personnel and overloading, within the last six months.

The Sector Commander of the FRSC in the state, Innocent Etuk, disclosed this during an interview with journalists who paid a fact-finding visit to the command's headquarters in Calabar.

Etuk said since assuming office in June 2025, 548 motorists had been apprehended for overloading, while 384 others were arrested for attempting to compromise FRSC personnel.

According to him, the figures have placed Cross River as the third highest command nationwide in terms of arrests related to attempts to corrupt FRSC officials, describing the development as a morale booster for the command.

He attributed the outcome to his resolve to end what he described as a culture of indolence and compromise within the system.

"Upon my resumption, I made it clear that it would no longer be business as usual. Indiscipline and compromise will not be condoned," Etuk said.

The sector commander further revealed that the command currently operates four mobile courts, through which 157 traffic offenders have been arraigned, 153 convicted, while four were discharged.

Etuk also expressed concern over road crashes recorded during the third quarter of the year, noting that 33 crashes, represent-

CONTINUE ONLINE



CityMetro

•POLICE UPDATE • CRIME BUSTING• CRIME WATCH •

Man Kills Cousin Over ₦1,000 Burial Refund In Delta State

A family gathering turned tragic in Delta State when a 47-year-old man allegedly killed his first cousin during a heated argument over the refund of a ₦1,000 contribution.

The incident, which occurred on December 12, 2025, in Ughelli South, was confirmed by the spokesperson for the Delta State Police Command, SP Edafe Bright, in a video shared on X on Monday.

According to Edafe, the family had recently returned from the burial of a relative and convened a meeting.

The atmosphere, however, soured when a dispute broke out regarding a ₦1,000 contribution refund.

"This young man was dragging and bringing all down fire and brimstone that they must give him back his 1,000," Edafe said.

He continued, "In the process of dragging, he started fighting. Somewhere along the line, according to him, while he was trying to wriggle his way out of the fight, he used his hand to hit one of the brothers, a relative of his, who eventually died.

"Now, N1,000 argument has led to the death of a family member. He was being cautioned even by this very guy who eventually passed.

"The spirit that possessed him, according to him, would not allow him to listen to the voice of wisdom. The man who died is 42 years. Somebody has died just because of N1,000."

The suspect, identified as 47-year-old Ezekiel, expressed remorse while speaking and claimed that the death was accidental.

He admitted that several relatives, including the deceased, had pleaded with him to calm down. "It was by mistake. I didn't know when I hit him," he said.

Ezekiel explained that the ₦1,000 in question was a contribution made for the burial rites, which is traditionally refunded to the owner after the ceremony.

"After everything, they always shared it. That's how we return the money to the owner," he stated.

Edafe used the tragic incident to urge the public to exercise emotional restraint even in the face of minor provocations.

"Mine is to talk to our listeners to understand the importance of controlling your temper. You have to calm down. Any form of fighting could lead to death. It can turn into manslaughter. It could turn to murder. Please, a word they say is enough for the wise. Prevention is better than cure," Edafe concluded.

PUNCH reported in 2023 that a man, Ibrahim Dauda, allegedly killed his brother, Tunde, during a fight over N1,000 at their residence in the Igando area of Lagos State.

Recently, in September, the Anambra State Police Command arrested one Okwuchukwu Ezimuo for stabbing his relative to death over a family land dispute in Idemili South Local Government Area of the state.

Armed Bandit Arrested After Gun Battle In Zamfara

An armed bandit has been arrested by security forces after a gun battle in Tsafe Local Government Area of Zamfara State.

The incident was contained in a post shared on X on Monday by security analyst, Zagazola Makama.

According to Makama, the clash occurred around 4:55 p.m. on December 21 along the Tsafe–Yanwaren Daji feeder road.

Zagazola Makama said bandits had blocked the road and disrupted movement when a security patrol team arrived at the scene.

"The team engaged the criminals in a gunfight, forcing them to flee with gunshot injuries.

"During the encounter, one of the bandits was arrested. He was identified as Umar Alhaji Buhari, also known as Bingel.

"The road was later cleared, allowing motorists and other road users to continue their journeys without obstruction,"Makama wrote.

The arrested suspect has been handed over to the police at the State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID) in Gusau for further investigation.

Speeding Trailer Kills Nine In Gombe Crash

The Federal Road Safety Corps has confirmed that nine people died in a road accident on the Kaltungo-Cham Road in Kaluwa community, Kaltungo Local Government Area of Gombe State.

The Sector Commander of the FRSC, Gombe Command, Samson Kaura, confirmed the crash in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria on Monday.

Kaura said 18 persons were involved in the accident, with five sustaining varying degrees of injuries while four others escaped unhurt.

"The victims were rushed to the General Hospital in Kaltungo for treatment, while the bodies of the deceased were deposited at the hospital's mortuary," he said.

According to him, preliminary investigations indicated that the crash resulted from loss of control caused by excessive speed and brake failure.

Kaura said the incident, which occurred around 8:33 a.m. on Monday, involved a trailer and a Sharon bus.

"The trailer was speeding on a sloping road and, as a result, lost control and hit the Sharon bus from behind, which caused the bus to somersault.

"We have been advising motorists to avoid excessive speed, especially given the nature of the road, which is sloping. Drivers must travel at a controllable speed to prevent such crashes and the loss of lives and property," he said.

The sector commander further urged motorists to always inspect their vehicles before embarking on any journey, particularly during the yuletide season.

Police Rescue Pastor's Wife, Daughter In Plateau

The Plateau State Police Command has rescued the wife and one daughter of a pastor who was abducted from his home in Bokkos Local Government Area of the state.

The incident was contained in a post shared on X on Monday by security analyst, Zagazola Makama.

According to Makama, the abduction happened around 12:20 a.m. on December 22 at Makudang Mangor village.

Zagazola Makama said that suspected kidnappers broke into the residence of Pastor Gayus Tashvwam of the COCIN LCC Church and took him away along with his wife and two daughters.

Following a report to the police, the Divisional Police Officer in Bokkos mobilised a joint team of police officers and local hunters.

While searching nearby bushes, the team successfully rescued the pastor's wife and one of his daughters without injuries.

Security forces have since increased patrols in the area, and efforts are ongoing to rescue the pastor and the remaining daughter, as well as arrest the suspects.

Midnight Fire Razes Residential Building In Ibadan

A twin three-bedroom private residential building in Ibadan has been razed by a midnight fire

The incident occurred at No 2, Ebony Street, Oluwakeyin Alia, Airport Area in Ibadan.

Our correspondent gathered that the inferno occurred at exactly 12:23hrs on Sunday.

However, no casualty was recorded during the incident.

Chairman, Oyo State Fire Service, Maroof Akinwande confirmed the incident to DAILY POST on Monday.

He said the fire was caused by electrical appliances plugged while not in use.

Akinwande in the statement said that the operation was successfully carried out with the support of men of the Federal Fire Service.

"Upon arrival, it was a twins three (3) bedrooms private residential building that was engulfed by fire.

"Our officers quickly swung into action and restricted the fire from spreading to nearby buildings and properties.

One Killed As Bandits Raid Settlements In Katsina

One person has been killed and several livestock stolen after suspected bandits attacked settlements in Katsina State.

The incident was contained in a post shared on X on Monday by security analyst, Zagazola Makama.

According to the post, the attack happened around 11:30 p.m. on December 20 at two Fulani settlement camps on the outskirts of Kauyen Gabas Village in Karare District, Rimi Local Government Area.

Zagazola Makama said the armed bandits stormed the settlements at night, shot one person dead, and escaped with an unconfirmed number of livestock.

Following the attack, troops and other security personnel from nearby areas were deployed to the scene.

They reportedly blocked suspected escape routes and launched cordon-and-search operations to arrest the attackers and recover the stolen animals.

Hotelier Rescued From Suspected Suicide As Fire Guts Popular Hotel In Suleja

Fire has razed Abagbo Garden and Hotel, a popular hotel situated in the Kwankwashi area of Suleja, Niger State, leaving the owner, Sunday Agbo, in a state of shock and despair

It was gathered that the fire, which occurred on Sunday afternoon, was caused by a generating set. The fire spread rapidly, destroying properties and goods worth millions of naira.

It was also learnt that despite efforts by men of the state Fire Service from the Suleja Division, who lmobilized to the scene to save the situation, a substantial part of the hotel was destroyed.

Eyewitnesses who described the incident as a "mysterious fire" due to the speed and the magnitude of destruction, said neighbors and good Samaritans had to intervene to prevent Agbo from committing suicide after he watched his life's work go up in flames.

"The director of the hotel watched helplessly as the fire reduced his life time investment into rubbles. He took to his heels but was immediately chased and held down by people who suspected that he was heading for a suicide mission," an eyewitness disclosed.

The hotel, also known as "car wash hotel", is one of the most popular in Suleja. It was gathered that over 200 cartons of beer were destroyed.

Agbo, an indigene of Benue State, was said to had taken a loan of over N10 million to renovate the hotel and was yet to pay for the 200 cartons of beer delivered on Saturday before the incident occurred.

He was later taken away from the scene of the fire incident to his home where families and friends visited to sympathize with him and consoled him over the heavy loss.

Responding to sympathizers, the hotelier said, "I don't know how I will come out of this, I am finished. What else do you want me to be doing in this life?"

Health/IT

BY BABAJIDE OKEOWO

Nigeria Refines Polio Eradication Strategy As WHO Strengthens Support Towards 2026 Targets



Nigeria's efforts to interrupt circulating variant type 2 poliovirus (cVPV2) by 2026 gained renewed momentum as the World Health Organization (WHO) Polio Eradication Programme (PEP) held its annual strategic retreat.

The two-day meeting brought together WHO zonal and state coordinators to review progress, identify operational gaps, and refine strategies to better support government-led eradication efforts in the year ahead.

The retreat reaffirmed WHO's commitment to aligning its work with the National Polio Emergency Action Plan (NPEAP) and the priorities of the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA), which leads Nigeria's polio eradication programme.

Opening the meeting, WHO Deputy Representative Dr. Alex Chimbaru representing the WR emphasised the importance of ensuring that WHO's technical support remains fully aligned with national frameworks.

"Our role is to reinforce the government's leadership under the renewed hope agenda, provide technical guidance, evidence, and operational support where it is most needed," he said. "Every adjustment we make must help close the remaining immunity gaps and strengthen the systems that protect children."

Addressing the participants at the retreat, Dr. Muyi Aina, Executive Director of the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA), reaffirmed the federal government's resolve to the fight against polio. "The government remains steadfast in its commitment to reaching every child with life-saving vaccines," Dr. Aina noted. "The technical expertise provided by WHO continues to be an essential pillar in achieving our shared goal of a polio-free Nigeria."

Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) partners also reaffirmed their continued support for Nigeria's eradication efforts.

Despite significant progress, cVPV2 continues to circulate in areas with low immunity

CONTINUE ONLINE

NCPWD Embarks On Medical Outreach, Treats Over 150 With Various Medical Conditions



The National Commission for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD), last week touched the lives of persons with disabilities through a medical outreach for persons with disabilities in Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory.

The outreach carried out in Karonmajiji, FCT, Abuja, with the support of the Commission's development partners like TLM, CHAI, CBM, and SightSavers witnessed the treatment of over one hundred and fifty persons with disabilities including children with various health threatening conditions treated for better livelihood.

The Executive Secretary, NCPWD, Hon. Ayuba Gufwan Burki, represented by the Director of Social Integration, Mr. Lawrence Edelifo Idemudia said the outreach was aimed at assisting persons with disabilities (PWDs) with the necessary medical treatment on some of the health challenges facing them.

He noted that, without good health, human productivity would be hampered, stating that the Commission was deeply concerned for the overall health conditions of the persons with disabilities.

Ayuba stated that, the commission was preparing to rollout a broader and more encompassing medical programme after this pilot intervention so that a broader spectrum of persons with disabilities will be accommodated.

He urged the beneficiaries to cooperate with the medical team to ensure that the pilot phase succeeds to the benefit of the persons with disabilities.

Sarkin Guragu, FCT, Abuja, Alhaji Muhammed Suleiman Katsina, on behalf of persons with disabilities in Abuja, expressed appreciation and gratitude to the Commission for initiating the laudable programme for persons with disabilities, saying, the exercise has again among other initiatives proven that the Commis-

CONTINUE ONLINE

NITDA Bags Multiple SERVICOM Awards

The National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) has received three esteemed Service Compact with All Nigerians (SERVICOM) awards during its annual Ministry's Departments and Agency's' Awards.

This is in recognition of its exceptional citizen-centered service delivery.

Director General of NITDA, Kashifu Inuwa Abdullahi received a personal commendation plaque for his support and commitment to citizen-centered service.

NITDA was also presented with a Special Recognition Award from the SERVICOM Office, for its sustained efforts in connecting government to citizens through quality service delivery.

Furthermore, NITDA was named 2nd Best Performing Public Service Unit (PSU) Team B in the MDAs' category.

These honors highlight NITDA's leadership in digital transformation and efficient public service under SERVICOM's evaluation of timeliness, transparency, and customer satisfaction.



TheMatrix ShowBizGist



Behind The Scenes Becomes Highest-Grossing Nollywood Film Of 2025

Funke Akindele has shattered another Nollywood record as her latest film, Behind The Scenes, crossed ₦500 million at the box office within one week to become the highest-grossing Nollywood movie of 2025.

The FilmOne-distributed movie reportedly earned ₦512 million, breaking five opening-week records and emerging as the fastest Nollywood film to hit the ₦500 million mark this year.

Released nationwide on December 12 after successful advance screenings, the film features an all-star cast and further reinforces Akindele's dominance at the box office, following the massive success of Everybody Loves Jenifa.

Naeto C: Marriage Made Me Step Back From Music



Naeto C says marriage and fatherhood led him to pause his music career.

Speaking on BEAT FM, the rapper said getting married in 2012 and becoming a father in 2013 made him realise that focusing on music would not give him the life he wanted.

He added that music was driven by passion, not fame, and that every attempt to return to the studio has been met with setbacks.

Pastor Chris Okafor Breaks Silence On Doris Ogala Allegations

Pastor Chris Okafor has addressed the controversy with actress Doris Ogala, insisting that allegations against him must be proven in court.

Speaking at his marriage thanksgiving service, he said he remained silent earlier on divine instruction and will not comment further as the matter is under investigation. "He that alleges must prove," Okafor stressed.

The comments follow Doris Ogala's arrest after accusing the cleric of failing to honour an alleged marriage promise, a claim that has drawn widespread social media attention.



Nicki Minaj Speaks Out On Persecution Of Christians In Nigeria



American rapper Nicki Minaj has spoken out on the persecution of Christians in Nigeria, citing personal ties and troubling reports of violence.

At AmericaFest, Minaj said her Nigerian pastor and her fan base in the country made it impossible to stay silent.

She condemned kidnappings and killings during church activities, stressing that silence only empowers oppression.

She also highlighted global challenges to religious freedom, urging people to remember those who cannot worship openly and praising leadership that safeguards this right.

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TheMatrix Sport
PAGE 25 • DECEMBER 23, 2025



'He Has Everything': Rooney Predicts Declan Rice Will Wear The England Armband

Former Manchester United and England icon Wayne Rooney has identified Arsenal midfielder Declan Rice as the future captain of the English national team. Speaking after watching the 26-year-old deliver a commanding performance in Arsenal's hard-fought 1-0 victory over Everton, Rooney noted that Rice's leadership and technical presence were pivotal in lifting the Gunners back to the top of the Premier League table. According to reports from BBC Sports, the legendary striker believes Rice possesses the unique blend of tactical maturity and drive required to eventually succeed Harry Kane as the Three Lions' primary leader. Rooney praised Rice's infectious personality and growing influence on the pitch, suggesting that the midfielder is already prepared for the weight of national responsibility. "For me, he's the one who's probably waiting for Harry to hang up his boots at some point," Rooney remarked, emphasizing that Rice's standout character makes him a beloved figure among teammates and fans alike. By excelling in high-pressure matches, Rice continues to validate Rooney's prediction that he is the natural heir to the England armband when the current era of leadership eventually concludes.

FIFA Ranking: Super Eagles End 2025 In 38th Position

AFCON: Salah Scores Winner As Egypt Beat Zimbabwe, S'Africa Edge Angola

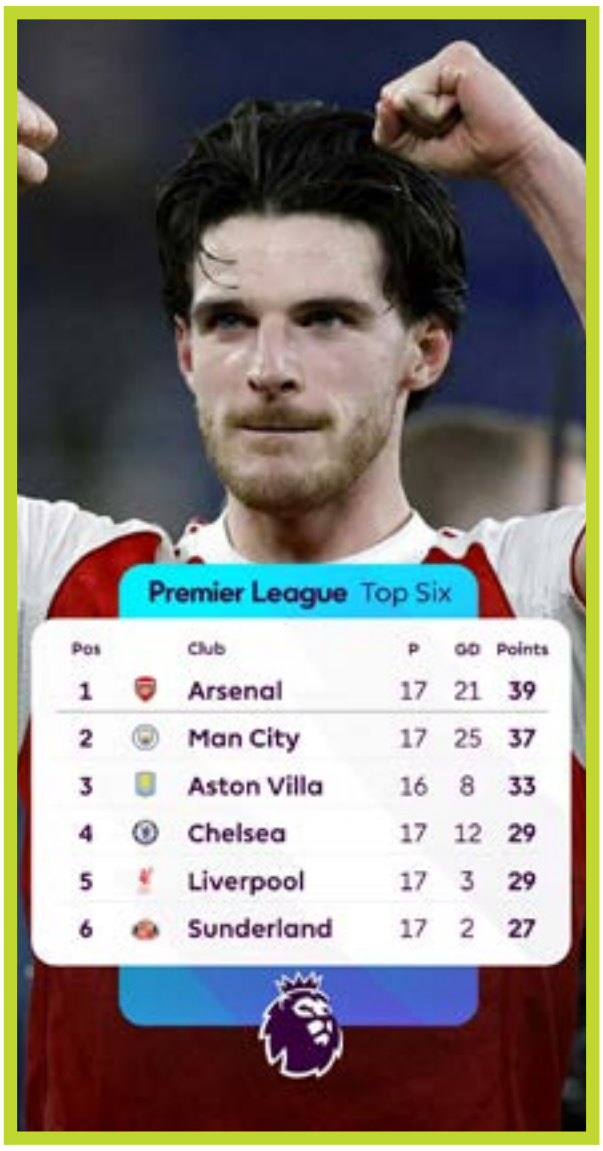


Mohamed Salah showed his killer instinct to score an injury-time winner as Egypt came from behind to beat Zimbabwe 2-1 in their opening match at the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations. The Liverpool forward's trophy cabinet is stuffed with silverware from his time at Anfield but he is yet to lift the Afcon trophy with the Pharaohs, and for large parts of the game in Morocco it looked as if this campaign was likely to get off to an inauspicious start.

While Salah is nicknamed the Egyptian King, it was Prince Dube's first-half strike which handed the Warriors the lead against the run of play in Agadir. A combination of poor Egypt finishing and good goalkeeping from 40-year-old Washington Arubi gave the southern African side hope of pulling off a shock before Manchester City striker Omar Marmoush hammered home in the 64th minute to level things up. And as the clocked ticked into added time it was Salah who latched on to a loose ball in the penalty area to poke home and seal three points for the seven-time champions. In the earlier game, Lyle Foster was the hero as South Africa narrowly edged out Angola 2-1 in an absorbing encounter in Marrakesh as both sides opened their Group B campaign at the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations (Afcon). Burnley striker Foster, who missed the previous Afcon after taking time out for his mental health, curled home in fine style from the edge of the box in the 79th minute to settle a hard-fought game.

Seeking to build on their third-place finish at the 2023 finals in Ivory Coast, South Africa took the lead midway through the first half when Oswin Appollis showed good composure to pounce on a loose ball before finding the bottom left-hand corner.

Having also impressed when reaching the quarter-finals at the previous tournament, Angola levelled 10 minutes before the break as Show stylishly flicked home Fredy's free-kick, rewarding their spirited response to going behind. But moments after blazing over, Foster settled the encounter to ensure South Africa maintained their record of having never lost to their fellow southern Africans at Afcon. The 25-year-old's winner atoned for his role in Tshepang Moreri's fine strike early in the second half being ruled out, with Foster caught offside in the build-up.



AFCON 2025: Ndidi Expresses Confidence As Super Eagles Gear Up For Tanzania Test



Super Eagles captain Wilfred Ndidi has declared the team's readiness for their opening fixture against Tanzania at the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations, AFCON.

Eric Chelle's side have enjoyed a smooth build up to the clash with Taifa Stars, with all 28 players available for selection.

The three-time champions have also only lost once in their last 14 group stage games at the AFCON.

They will head into the clash with Tanzania as the overwhelming favourites going by their pedigree and past records in the competition. Ndidi believes a positive start will set a good momentum for the rest of the competition. "The spirit in the camp is very high, we're very energised. This game is very important for us, it's the game that sets the momentum," Ndidi told a press conference on Monday.

Ndidi missed the previous AFCON hosted by Cote d'Ivoire due to injury. The 29-year-old was recently appointed captain of the team following William Troost-Ekong's retirement from international football. He was part of the Super Eagles squad to the 2019 and 2021 AFCON finals.



TheMatrix

Foreign

BY ILESANMI ADEWALE

Russian General Killed In Car Bomb, Ukraine Suspected



A senior Russian general, Lt. Gen. Fanil Sarvarov, was killed Monday when a bomb exploded under his car in southern Moscow, with investigators suggesting Ukrainian involvement.

Russia's Investigative Committee confirmed the attack, noting Sarvarov led the Operational Training Directorate and had fought in Chechnya and Syria.

Officials said multiple lines of inquiry are ongoing, including possible Ukrainian orchestration.

The incident follows similar attacks on Russian military officials, which Moscow has attributed to Ukraine.

Lawmakers Threaten Legal Action Over Partial Epstein File Release



Two US lawmakers are threatening legal action against Attorney General Pam Bondi after only part of the Department of Justice files on Jeffrey Epstein were released.

Republican Congressman Thomas Massie said he may pursue contempt proceedings against Bondi for failing to make all documents public.

Sudan Calls For RSF To Be Declared Terrorist Group



Sudan has urged the international community to designate the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) as a terrorist group, accusing the UAE of funding and arming the group.

Speaking at the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum in Cairo, Sudan's Minister of Cabinet Affairs, Dr. Lamia Abdel Ghaffar, called for the RSF and its regional backers to be held accountable for crimes against Sudanese citizens.

The RSF has been fighting the Sudanese Armed Forces since April 2023, a conflict that has killed tens of thousands and displaced over 14 million people, triggering famine and disease.

Earlier this month, the UK sanctioned four RSF commanders over atrocities in Darfur, though the UAE was not sanctioned.



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Worlds on Marble

Religion is not averse to common sense, hence common sense should be used on moral principles first, it is not possible to have such moral principles separated from religious values - Anonymous

THE PERSPECTIVE

By Lasisi Olagunju

Gumi And His Terrorists

During the Kiriji War of the nineteenth century, a grim parable of war came and became a subject of racial slur and morbid joke. An Oyo-Ibadan warrior, disarmed and cornered by an Ijesa fighter, collapsed to the earth and begged for his life. The Ijesa man, scornful of pleas, mocked him with a cruel logic: he threw his machete at the captive and ordered him to beg the blade, not the man. "Ada lo a bè; èmi kó a bè."

The unarmed warrior rose, took the weapon, and killed his captor. The war taught its lesson: in the theatre of enemies, negotiation, just as begging, is surrendering the weapon that will undo you.

Sheikh Ahmad Abubakar Mahmud Gumi is a trained soldier and a medical doctor. He left the Nigerian army as a captain. Two days ago, Gumi was on Facebook calling on Nigeria to arm the enemy with begging and surrender. He wrote: "They say: negotiation doesn't work. It's a lie. It worked with militants in Niger Delta creeks. Rather, it is war that doesn't work, 16 years we're still fighting BH (Boko Haram) and 11 years fighting bandits. It's stupidity doing the same thing and expect different results."

Imagine if Gumi had remained in the army, and had risen to become a General and Chief of Army Staff, and was asked by his Commander-in-Chief to fight and defeat Boko Haram in the North East, bandits in the North West and kidnappers in Niger, Kogi and Kwara States. What would have become of that Commander-in-Chief and the order he gave?

If you think Gumi would have carried out that order and spare his lord, the president, it means you haven't been following his consistent advocacy on how to treat terrorists. He wants negotiation with the enemy as the sure way to peace.

He didn't start today. In a February 2021 interview with the AIT, Gumi came out with a weird suggestion that bandits destroying his North were taught kidnapping by Niger Delta militants: "They learnt kidnapping from MEND (Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta). I do not see any difference. They were the first victims of rustling, their cattle is their oil," he said.

In a May 2021 BBC report, Gumi was quoted comparing terrorist bandits with coup plotters: "If the country could pardon coup plotters who committed treasonable offences in the era of military administration, the bandits can as well enjoy similar forgiveness even better under democratic rule," he said.

In that same report of more than four years ago, he said what he has been saying repeatedly recently: "Kidnapping children from school is a lesser evil because in the end, you can negotiate and now bandits are very careful about human lives."

Nigeria dodged a bullet in Gumi exiting the army before his Iroko became problematic, exacting tributes. How many more Gumis do we have in the officer corps of the Nigerian Army? Imagine him rising to the very top, becoming a General, and making a case for the enemy.

Born in 1960, Ahmad Gumi arrived as son of the late Sheikh Abubakar Mahmud Gumi, one of Northern Nigeria's most influential and outspoken Islamic scholars, who also served as Grand Khadi of the Shariah Court of Appeal. From anyone from such a lineage you would expect moral clarity, intellectual rigour, and principled leadership. Those are expectations that make today's Gumi's public interventions impossible to treat lightly.

Anyone who chose an early formation as Gumi did clearly chose a path that combined science, discipline, and service. The sheikh studied medicine, then enlisted in the Nigeria Defence Academy, and served as a medical officer in the Nigerian Army Medical Corps. Rising to the rank of captain, it is given that his training was to heal and also to understand the brutal arithmetic of conflict. At the NDA, people who know say every cadet was taught that violence against the violent is neither abstract nor negotiable. The soldier-doctor is schooled in a hard truth: forces that threaten life must be subdued decisively, they are not candidates for indulgence and accommodative rhetoric.

Gumi's academic journey and his present politics are diametrically irreconcilable. After retiring from military service, Gumi relocated to Saudi Arabia where he immersed himself in Islamic scholarship. In Mecca, he earned a PhD in Usul al-Fiqh, the principles that govern Islamic jurisprudence. I do not think people of knowledge would dismiss this credential as casual. My findings tell me that his specialisation, Usul al-Fiqh, "concerns itself with moral reasoning, justice, public interest (maslahah), and the limits of tolerance in the face of disorder." People of knowledge say his area of Islamic scholarship prioritises justice for the victim, and guiding societies away from chaos. They say his background makes his advocacy for negotiating with terrorists troubling, troublous and self-deconstructing.

It is hard to hear or read Gumi and not see contradiction hardening into failure of his callings: he was trained to protect life and confront mortal threats without illusion. He was also schooled to appreciate the value of justice. He failed spectacularly in all three. The more we read some people's lives, the more we see contradiction in starker hues. Where in his religious books, including jurisprudence, did Gumi read sanctifying terror and asking society to wear "soft gloves" when faced with those who murder the innocent and destabilise the society? Should we not tell Gumi that to blur the line between justice and appeasement is to betray both the uniform he once wore and the faith he now invokes? Someone who saw me write this said that in matters of terror it is neither courage nor wisdom to preach accommodation.

How do we tell a soldier, doctor and a PhD that it is suicidal to confuse mercy with surrender? Yet we have to tell him that what he advocates is suicide. We saw it in the Kiriji War story above. The enemy appeased today is the death of tomorrow.

Why is it difficult for Gumi and his supporters to see that Boko Haram, banditry and other criminal gangs in Northern Nigeria are not pursuing the same objectives as the militants of the Niger Delta? Terror organisations destroying the very basis of the existence of Gumi's society are not misunderstood political movements waiting for a conference table; they are a machinery of horrendous violence who kill and abduct without borders. They are forever dangerous to freedom and to, even religion.

Governments across continents have long understood this danger. Britain's Margaret Thatcher vowed to never negotiate with the IRA terrorists: "We do not negotiate with terrorists," she declared. US's George W. Bush bluntly insisted that: "You've got to be strong, not weak. The only way to deal with these people is to bring them to justice. You can't talk to them. You can't negotiate with them." His position echoed the same logic as Thatcher's. Scholars such as Paul Wilkinson and Walter Laqueur argue that talks with terrorists confer recognition, and recognition, like sunlight to mold, allows terror to spread. As some others observed, terrorism seeks legitimacy more than victory; it longs to be seen as a political equal rather than a criminal aberration. To grant Gumi's wish is to reward criminals and criminality; defeat and destroy society.

History and scholarship teach that there is a moral grammar to politics, and terrorists deliberately violate it.

Paul Gilbert is a British moral and political philosopher who has been very stellar for his work on terrorism, political violence, war ethics, and the moral limits of negotiation. My reading of his works shows that he has written extensively to draw a very thick line between terrorism and legitimate political struggle. He argues that because terrorism targets civilians, it collapses the moral conditions that make dialogue, compromise, or negotiation intelligible. More directly, it is his position in a 1994 article that by engaging in violence against civilians, terror groups had breached the "conventions of debate required for negotiations". Another scholar, Jan Narveson, also hold that 'terrorists' put themselves in "Hobbes' state of nature with respect to us" and thus do not deserve a roundtable treatment. "Engaging with terrorists would translate their violence into a legitimate means to be heard and thus lead other groups to engage in similar activities." That quote, if you don't mind, you find with other viewpoints in Harmonie Toros' 'We Don't Negotiate with Terrorists!: Legitimacy and Complexity in Terrorist Conflicts'.

In plainer terms, what Gumi professes is equal in criminal foolishness as one bargaining with the arsonist while the house is still burning.

Gumi, soldier, physician and religious scholar, wants Nigeria to turn crime into curriculum. He must stop what he is saying or be asked to stop. In his prescription is quiet injustice to those who choose peaceful paths. The state should stop pretending that it does not know how to tell him that what he preaches is that violence pays.

Some would say that his call is a camouflage for politics. Gumi wants to negotiate with criminal bandits. Negotiate with whom among the disparate leaders of the terrorists? Does this explain why previous peace agreements entered into with bandits by the north failed? In the North, communities organise colourful engagements with those destroying them today; tomorrow they receive death from those who visited yesterday. Yet, one of their leaders say they must keep negotiating. The enemy is right inside their bedroom.

Why would a religious leader seek to make a political class of kidnappers, and elevate terrorists to statesmen? In a normal society, it won't be difficult to accept that negotiation with terror undermines citizens who pursue change without violence, telling them, after the fact, that bombs speak louder than ballots. Rejecting Gumi and his doctrine of negotiation with terrorists will not be a rejection of peace, it will be a defensive wall against assaults on peace and justice. Anyone who is not a lover of terrorism would know that criminalization, not conversation, is the language the rule of law understands.

People who wage war against society deserve war. To approach the enemy with votaries of appeasement is to strengthen them to do more harm. We must never be forced to misunderstand who the enemy is. Peace, like poetry, has rules; when those rules are shattered by criminal bloodshed, the answer is justice and protection, not glass-clinking at the negotiating table.

In the savannah lived a hyena who seized the riverbank and called himself its lord. When drought came and society was starved of the river's nourish, other animals sent the tortoise to negotiate access, carrying calabashes of honey and promises of peace. The hyena laughed, took the gifts, and demanded more; each concession tightening his grin. "Talk is cheaper than teeth," he said, and the river remained closed.

At last the terrorised animals learned what the tortoise had not: the hyena fed on bargaining itself. Each plea taught him the shape of their fear. So the herds moved together, guarded the springs, and starved the hyena of leverage. Access to the river opened again, not because words softened the hyena, but because unity denied him profit. And the forest remembered: when a predator thrives on terror, negotiation becomes its meal.

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