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Meet all the candidates**

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Ondo election: DHQ deploy troops for hitch-free poll

By Agency Reporter

The Defence headquarters said on Thursday that troops have deployed in strength to provided assistance to the police in ensuring a hitch free off-cycle governorship election in Ondo State, slated for 16 Nov 24.

Director of Defence Media Operations, Major General Edward Buba while making this known said, "Indeed, troops presence is to ensure security of citizens enabling them to cast their votes without any form of harassment or intimidation, while keeping mischiefmakers at bay. "The NAF is already engaged in flying sensitive electoral material in support of INEC"

This is just as Major General Buba disclosed that troops fighting against insecurity neutralized 88 terrorists and arrested 228 persons in the last one week.

"Troops also arrested 40 perpetrators of oil theft and rescued 181 kidnapped hostages.

In the Niger Delta, troops denied the oil theft of the estimated sum of N1.02billion.

"Troops discovered and destroyed 59 illegal refining sites, 13 crude oil cooking ovens, 20 dugout pits, 73 boats, 25 storage tanks, 3 barges, 7 speedboats, 73 drums, one tricycle, 5 pumping machines and 9 vehicles among others.

"Troops recovered 942,420 litres of stolen crude oil, 175,075 litres of illegally refined AGO and 4,980 litres of PMS.

Continuing, Buba said, "Troops recovered 84 assorted weapons and 2,393 assorted ammunition comprising 34 AK-47 rifles, 15 fabricated rifles, 11 dane guns, 5 fabricated revolver pistol, 8 locally made pistols, 3 pump action guns and one magnum pump action.

"Others are: 1,807 rounds of 7.62mm special ammo, 314 rounds of 7.62mm NATO, 146 rounds of 7.62mm PKM ammo, 77 rounds of 9mm ammo, 49

live cartridges, 25 magazines, 2 baofeng radios, 16 vehicles, 35 motorcycles, 27 mobile phones and the sum of N1,851,000.00 only amongst other items

Giving details of the offensives, the DMO said, "Troops of Operation Hadin Kai neutralized 40 terrorists, arrested 50 suspects and rescued 27 kidnappers hostages.

"Troops also recovered 24 AK-47 rifles, 5 fabricated rifles, 3 dane gun, one pump action gun, 609 rounds of 7.62mm special ammo, 91 rounds of 7.62mm NATO, 146 rounds of 7.62mm PKM ammo, 7 magazines, 9 motorcycles, 5 mobile phones amongst other items.

"The air component of Operation Hadin Kai on 7 November 2024, conducted air interdiction on mass movement of ISWAP/JAS terrorists fighters from Lake Chad Basin to the hinterland of southern Tumbuns. Battle Damage Assessment revealed that several terrorists were eliminated and their logistics destroyed.

"In the North Central, troops of Operation Safe Haven neutralized 9 violent extremists, arrested 41 persons and rescued 27 kidnapped hostages.

"Troops also recovered one magnum pump action gun, 7 fabricated rifles, one locally made pistols, one locally made revolver pistol, 115 rounds of 7.62mm special ammo, 34 rounds of 7.62mm NATO ammo, 7 rounds of 9mm ammo, 29 live cartridges, one magazine, 2 motorcycles and 5 mobile phones amongst other items.

"On 11 November 2024, troops in separate offensive operations made contact with violent extremists in Bokkos and Jema'a LGAs of Plateau and Kaduna States respectively.

"Following a fire fight, troops neutralized 2 terrorists and arrested 4 violent extremists. Troops also recovered 2 fabricated rifles and 72 rounds of 7.62mm special ammo.



"Troops of Operation Whirl Stroke neutralized 2 terrorists, arrested 20 violent extremists and rescued 8 kidnapped hostages. Troops also recovered one AK47 rifle, 2 locally made pistols, one revolver pistol, 16 rounds of 7.62mm special ammo, 12 live cartridges, 10 motorcycles and 3 mobile phones amongst others.

"On 4 and 7 November 2024, troops in separate operations responded to information on activities of violent extremists in Ibbi and Pupule Yorro LGAs of Taraba State as well as Logo LGA of Benue State respectively.

"During the operations, troops arrested 2 extremists and rescued 3 kidnapped hostages.

"On 7 and 9 November 2024, troops in separate operations responded to distress calls on activities of violent extremists/kidnappers in Takum LGA of Taraba State.

"During the operations, troops arrested 12 extremists and recovered one AK47 rifle, 2 locally made pistols, one revolver pistol, 16 rounds of 7.62mm special ammo, 12 cartridges, 10 motorcycles and 3 mobile phones amongst others.

"In the North West, troops of Operation Hadarin Daji neutralized 33 terrorists, arrested 41 persons and rescued 21 kidnapped hostages.

"Troops also recovered 7 AK-47 rifles, 2 fabricated rifles, 5 Dane guns, 935 rounds of 7.62mm special ammo, 189 rounds of 7.62mm NATO, 40 rounds of 9mm ammo, 6 magazines, 5 motorcycles and 3 mobile phones amongst others.

Panic as Air Peace flight makes emergency landing

By Olamilekan Botti



In the early hours of Thursday, an Air Peace aircraft travelling from Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport in Abuja to Lagos was unexpectedly halted on the tarmac due to suspected technical faults.

The incident raised alarms among passengers, many of whom took to social media platforms to voice their concerns and fears regarding the abrupt interruption.

Prominent human rights lawyer, Inihebe Effiong, who was aboard the flight, shared his experience on X, formerly known as Twitter. According to Effiong, the flight, which was scheduled for departure at 6:30 AM, was “forcefully” stopped while taxiing on the runway just before takeoff.

In his post, he recounted the chaos that ensued among the passengers: “While taxiing on the runway and just before takeoff, our Air Peace flight from Abuja to Lagos, scheduled for 6:30 AM today, was stopped forcefully, resulting in panic and screams from some passengers.”

In a further elaboration of the event, Effiong disclosed that the flight’s captain attributed the sudden halt to a bird strike. This incident has drawn attention to the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria’s recent announcements regarding the procurement of advanced

multimillion-naira bird strike detection equipment, raising questions about their efficacy.

He expressed relief that the unsettling incident did not occur after takeoff, noting, “Thankfully, whatever happened did not occur after takeoff. It would have been scarier. I am wondering whether there is bird detection radar technology at the domestic wing of Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport.”

During the confusion, Effiong mentioned that passengers were deboarded and were awaiting either the repair of the aircraft or the provision of a replacement. He further highlighted the urgency of better safety measures in the aviation sector, particularly about bird strikes, which have the potential to pose serious risks to aircraft during crucial phases of flight.

Another passenger, who preferred to remain anonymous, corroborated Effiong’s account of the incident and expressed concern about the maintenance and safety protocols of the airline.

“I am not sure what happened was due to a bird strike,” the individual stated, emphasizing the need for the airline to focus more on the safety and upkeep of its fleet. In response to the incident, Air Peace published an official

statement, signed by the company’s Head of Corporate Communications, Ejike Ndiulo.

The statement confirmed the aircraft’s grounding before takeoff due to the suspected bird strike, reiterating the airline’s commitment to passenger safety.

“We have deployed a replacement aircraft for the affected flight to minimize disruption and ensure that passengers can continue their journeys promptly. We appeal for the understanding of the passengers impacted by this development, as well as those on other flights that may experience delays,” the statement concluded.

Air Peace has previously faced scrutiny regarding its safety protocols, and this incident is likely to reignite discussions about air travel safety standards in Nigeria.

Passengers and industry experts alike are hopeful that the airline will conduct a thorough investigation into the matter, with a focus on implementing improvements that ensure the safety and security of all travellers.

However, as air travel remains a critical mode of transportation, the aviation industry is tasked with continuously enhancing its safety measures to foster passenger confidence and trust.

FG unveils N47.9trn budget proposal for 2025



By Dave Oludare Oso

The federal government has unveiled a proposed total expenditure of N47.9 trillion for the 2025 budget.

The Minister of Budget and Economic Planning, Atiku Bagudu, made this disclosure on Thursday while briefing journalists after the Federal Executive Council (FEC) meeting, presided over by President Bola Tinubu.

The proposed budget forms part of the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and Fiscal Strategy Paper (FSP) for 2025-2027, in compliance with the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2007.

Bagudu noted that the framework is set to be presented to the National Assembly by Friday or Monday, as mandated by law.

Key projections in the framework include a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate of 4.6%, an exchange rate pegged at \$75 to the Naira, and an oil production target of 2.06 million barrels per day.

Bagudu said, "The Federal Executive Council approved a memorandum by

the Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning, presented by the Director General of the Budget Office, Tanimu Yakubu, on the Medium Term Expenditure Framework and Fiscal Strategy Paper for 2025-2027."

He noted that the Council will transmit the framework to the National Assembly on Friday, November 15, or Monday, November 18.

The minister outlined the parameters, including "an oil price benchmark of \$75 per barrel for 2025, oil production of 2.06 million barrels per day, an exchange rate of N1400 to \$1, and a GDP growth of 4.6 per cent."

"For 2025, the Federal Government's budget estimate for aggregate expenditure is N47tn, including a borrowing of N13.8tn, which is 3.87 per cent of the estimated GDP.

"This includes projections, with, for the first time, provisions for contributions to the development commissions that have been approved by the National Assembly."

He added, "The budget size approved for presentation to the National Assembly in the MTEF is N47.9tn,

with new borrowings of N9.22tn to finance the budget deficit in 2025. We aim to sustain the commendable market deregulation of petroleum prices and the exchange rate, compel the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation Limited to significantly lower its oil and gas production costs, and potentially amend relevant sections of the Petroleum Industry Act 2021 to address key risks to the Federation.

Bagudu further noted that the MTEF included a review of the 2024 budget implementation, highlighting promising progress in revenue collection and expenditure management.

"Despite some lags in prorated targets, the overall trajectory shows that fiscal efforts are on track, with key non-oil streams performing better than anticipated," said Bagudu.

Further details about the budget proposal and its implications for the Nigerian economy are expected to be released soon.

Nigerians mock MultiChoice over loss of 243,000 Dstv, Gotv subscribers

By Agency Reporter

Subscribers to pay TV services have berated MultiChoice Group for announcing that its Nigerian unit, MultiChoice Nigeria, lost 243,000 subscribers on its Digital Satellite Television (DStv) and GOtv services within six months.

The South African-owned pay-TV operator had, in its Interim Financial Results for the period ending Sept. 30 released on Tuesday, announced the loss of 243,000 subscribers on its DStv and GOtv.

Reuters on Wednesday reported that MultiChoice had attributed the decline to Nigeria's high inflation rate, which has exceeded 30 per cent, resulting in rising costs of food, electricity and fuel, thus causing many customers to unsubscribe.

The company further reported a 566,000-subscriber loss in the Rest of Africa operations over the past six months, with Zambia and Nigeria contributing the largest shares.

The announcement had sparked reactions from Nigerians, especially DStv and GOtv subscribers, with many saying that the company was the cause of its woes.

Some of them, who joined the buzz on social media, said that they were no longer interested in subscribing to

MultiChoice services because the prices were no longer affordable, considering current economic situation of the country.

@cashoggy: "They will still lose more subscribers. Internet and smart TV have rendered Dstv unattractive with their rate.

"Imagine paying 25,700 for a premium subscription when you can surf the internet and watch all the programs for less."

Another Nigerian, @gentle_t said: "Why we dey sub again when 2/4/7, many people are using their phones to watch what they want."

@realbl posted: MultiChoice lost 243,000 subs because there is Multi-hunger in Nigeria. More so, there are now multiple choices replacing MultiChoice on our tablets when we need to watch soccer."

@NdubuisiNC: "The downfall of this company in Nigeria will be televised and will be sweet to me.

"A company this big can't improve on their content? Nigerians have cried for years about how boring it is, only football channels are what's keeping most of us."



@Jatiti_O wrote: "You people haven't realized that people don't watch TV anymore. They go out in the hot sun to look for money."

@ribaduabubakar2 said: "I subscribed to another platform and simply ignored them.

They kept increasing the price as if someone would die without them. I am willing to give out my decoder and dish for free."

@ekoh wrote: "Not only bad economy but also everyday increase in their monthly tariff. If they want to bounce back, they should cut their subscription price and make it a pay-as-you-go."

NAN reports that this development is coming barely eight months after Competition and Consumer Protection Tribunal (CCPT) ordered suspension of tariffs hike by MultiChoice Nigeria.

Lokoja varsity sacks four lecturers over sexual harassment, exam misconduct

By Agency Reporter

The Governing Council of the Federal University, Lokoja, Kogi State, has approved the dismissal of four lecturers of the university for alleged examination misconduct and sexual harassment.

The council, under the leadership of Senator Victor Ndoma-Egba took the decision during the Second Council meeting held recently at Lokoja.

The council appreciated the Management for following the due process in the investigation that followed the allegations of

examination misconduct and sexual harassment against the lecturers.

It promised not to tolerate any act of unethical conduct in the University.

The Council urged the university to quickly process other pending cases of misconduct, especially the one in the faculty of Science that has been trending in the newspapers.

The Council notes with emphasis that it will not sweep any act of misconduct under the carpet.

While cautioning other staff and



lecturers, the council urged the students to always speak out when they are molested.

Betty Akeredolu calls Nigeria 'zoo country'

By Friday Omosola

Betty Akeredolu, the immediate past First Lady of Ondo State, has described Nigeria as a 'zoo.'

In a post on her X page, Mrs Akeredolu compared the just-concluded United States presidential election, which saw Donald Trump emerge, to Nigeria's 2023 presidential election that produced President Bola Tinubu.

She said: "Just thinking. 2023 Nigerian Presidential Election; total votes cast: 25 million and counting duration is 5 days. 2024 U.S Presidential Election, total votes cast, 155 million: counting duration: approx. 10 hours. Moral: When dishonesty is prioritized, simple things become difficult."

Mrs Akeredolu's tweet caught the attention of an X user, Paulexy, @paul_ozah who said, "Truth is indeed bitter. I can understand the attacks on her. We are doomed in this country Nigeria." Replying to Paul, she wrote: "Very bitter indeed! Who will rescue Nigeria? What a zoo country."

She stated that the 2023 presidential election benefiting an individual or group does not mean it was the best Nigeria could achieve.

Mrs Akeredolu also described the election as a tribal war of words, lamenting that the situation leaves Nigeria in a deeply sorrowful state.

She further said: "I dey laugh o. Honestly, this issue raised is topical aiming to agitate like minds to discuss and find solutions to our electoral misdeeds. Everybody in the political space including the electorate, is involved in electoral malfeasance. This information is for the uninformed."

"I have been in politics since 2007, way before my husband even thought about it. I contested under ANPP to represent Owerri Federal Constituency at the House of Rep in 2007. It was OBJ's "do or die" era, so there was no election! My involvement in Ondo State politics was only to provide spousal support to my husband to succeed given that my political experience is indisputable!



Believe it or not, Aketi's legacy in Ondo State is there for even the blind to see and bigoted to feel."

Her portrayal of Nigeria led many netizens to question her about her late husband's conduct while in power.

Rotimi Akeredolu, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) and former president of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) succumbed to a long-term illness that his family had deliberately kept private.

During his second term as governor, Akeredolu frequently travelled abroad for medical treatment.

In September 2023, after a three-month medical leave in Germany, he returned to Nigeria but chose to stay in Ibadan, Oyo State, rather than return to Ondo State to resume his duties.

Following his death, it was revealed that he had been battling prostate cancer—a condition his family, led by his wife, kept secret to retain control over state affairs.

Late Akeredolu stirred controversy in November 2021 when he appointed his son, Babajide, as the Director General of the Performance and Project Implementation Monitoring Unit (PPIMU) in the Governor's Office.

Despite calls from opposition parties to resign due to his deteriorating health, Akeredolu refused to step down or transfer power to his deputy, Lucky Aiyedatiwa, who is now the governor of Ondo State.

His aides defended this decision, insisting that he could govern the state remotely. Akeredolu's reluctance to relinquish power to his deputy became a defining aspect of his tenure.

In 2009, Akeredolu publicly called for President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua to resign,

citing his inability to continue performing his duties due to health issues.

At the time, Akeredolu was serving as the President of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) and urged the ailing president to step down, recommending that Vice President Goodluck Jonathan take over the leadership of the country. Yar'Adua and Jonathan had been elected as president and vice president in 2007.

However, Yar'Adua's health continued to deteriorate, and he passed away in May 2010.

Reactions

Coming from the wife of the Late Governor of Ondo State. A useless polarised entity that brought so much bitterness into the politics of Ondo State with her Igbotic shenanigans.

You are the most dishonest first lady in the history of Ondo State.

AdaOsiwin.

— Ade'. Ademola (@AdeHardemola) November 13, 2024

Madam Anyanwu, is this not you & your fellow igbotic clowns? LMAO. Ondo people are still regretting the fact that they voted Akeredolu and it's because of you. It's also because of you & your type that Yorubas have decided not to allow any non-Yoruba woman be first lady in any SW state pic.twitter.com/W3aNBMJsRP

— Adetutu † Osun's Daughter (@Asakemijimi) November 13, 2024

"When dishonesty is prioritized, simple things become difficult"

This is apt.

Another moral:

When the PROCESS is flawed, the outcome can NEVER be respected. pic.twitter.com/JvaIzAXXOH

— Concerned Citizen (@TimedFrank) November 13, 2024

Nigerian doctor wins Guinness World Record for largest drawing

By Dave Oludare Oso

31-year-old Fola David-Tolaram, a Nigerian doctor and artist, has achieved a groundbreaking feat by creating the world's largest drawing by an individual.

This was announced by Guinness World Records on Thursday via its website.

The impressive artwork, measuring 1,004.7 m² (10,814.5 ft²) – roughly the size of 3.8 tennis courts – was created on the pitch at Mobolaji Johnson Arena in Lagos and stands as a tribute to Nigeria's rich cultural diversity.

David-Tolaram, who described his creation as a map of Nigeria, showcasing the various cultures, said, "Nigeria is a multi-cultural nation. I wanted to create something that speaks to that and give people an avenue to celebrate their cultures."

According to him, his piece, titled, 'The Unity of Diversity', encapsulates the food, clothing, festivals, and music from across Nigeria, reflecting the

beauty of the nation's distinct traditions.

Before beginning the record-breaking drawing, the artist embarked on a journey across Nigeria, experiencing different cultures firsthand.

He said, "It was this experience that I brought to the stadium to create this drawing."

The project took six days to complete on a 1,360 m² canvas, with David-Tolaram using waterproof markers. The setup alone required two days just to assemble the canvases.

Initially planning to work from the centre outward in a circular motion, he adapted his technique as he progressed, moving between sections as needed.

Reflecting on the daunting challenge, David-Tolaram admitted to initial doubts.

"I remember standing right in the centre of this canvas, about to start this drawing, and feeling a lot of apprehension and fear. For five minutes I stood there making sure I conditioned myself for the beginning of such a challenge," he said.

But once he started, his confidence grew. "The moment my marker touched the



canvas, there was no going back. All the fear had gone away," he added.

Over the course of the project, he was buoyed by crowds of spectators who gathered at the 5,000-seat stadium to support him.

According to him, the atmosphere was "electrifying."

Now holding a Guinness World Record, David-Tolaram expressed his pride in the accomplishment.

"Holding a Guinness World Records title is absolutely unbelievable. I grew up reading about world records and never thought that I would be a record title holder.

Gov Adeleke presents N390bn 2025 Budget to Osun Assembly

By Friday Omosola

Osun State Governor, Ademola Adedeke, on Wednesday presented an estimated N390 billion budget for 2025 to the State House of Assembly. The budget tagged the 'Budget of Sustainable Growth and Transformation', received prior approval from the State Executive Council (SEC).

Governor Adeleke revealed that approximately N144 billion is allocated for capital expenditure, while N246 billion is designated for recurrent expenditure.

"Following the approval of the Osun State Executive Council earlier today, it was my pleasure to present the year 2025 Budget Appropriation Bill to the House of Assembly at the Osun State House of Assembly Complex.

"The 2025 Budget Appropriation Bill tagged "Budget of Sustainable Growth and Transformation" is valued at N390,028,277,740.00, with Capital Expenditure estimated at N144,231,183,800.00 and Recurrent Expenditure of N245,797,093,940.00."

Governor Adeleke highlighted the remarkable progress his administration has achieved across various sectors, noting that a detailed presentation of these accomplishments will be unveiled during the government's midterm anniversary.

He also reaffirmed that his administration has not taken any loans, either external or domestic, emphasising that prudent management of available resources has been



instrumental in addressing the needs and aspirations of the people of Osun State.

"I appreciate the Speaker of the Osun State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Adewale Egbedun and the entire members of the State Assembly for their continuous support in our bid to move Osun State to enviable heights."

Undergrad bags 14-mths jail for online love scam

By Dave Oludare Oso

A 20-year-old undergraduate, Ganiyu Alabi, was on Wednesday sentenced to one year and two months imprisonment for engaging in an online love scam.

Justice Rahman Oshodi of the Ikeja Special Offences Court sentenced him, following his plea bargain agreement to the charge of possession of fraudulent documents.

The defendant will serve his jail term at the Ikoyi Correctional Centre, in Lagos.

While delivering the judgment, the judge said he had considered the effect of cybercrime which damaged Nigeria's international reputation.

Oshodi also said he had taken into consideration the timely plea bargain entered into by the convict which had saved judicial time and resources.

However, he noted that he did not believe the convict was genuinely sorry because he lied to the court.

The justice said: "I do not believe you are genuinely sorry because you lied to this court that you started Internet fraud this year whereas in your confessional statement, it showed you started in 2023.

"Having been convicted of the charge of possession of fraudulent documents, I



hereby sentence you to one year and two months imprisonment or pay an N1m fine.

"You shall also serve two months of community service with the Lagos State Community Service Unit and a report of activity shall be submitted at the end of the service.

"You shall also be registered as an offender in the state."

Meanwhile, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) counsel, Mr Ahmad Usman, in his review of facts, told the court that the convict was arrested in a sting operation in Lekki, sometime in April.

Usman said the convict had in his possession fraudulent documents in which he represented himself as one Leana Decker, a white female to

unsuspecting members of the public.

He stated that the convict, in his confessional statement, admitted to having engaged in a dating scam via Facebook in which he had benefitted \$1000.

The prosecutor further tendered bundles of fraudulent documents which were tendered in evidence following no objections from defence counsel.

The prosecutor also told the court that the convict had restituted N500,000 to the anti-graft agency.

According to the prosecutor, the offence contravened Section 320 of the Criminal Laws of Lagos State 2015.

Lakurawa terrorists flee Kebbi as troops intensify onslaught

By Dave Oludare Oso

With the troops of the Nigerian military intensifying their onslaught against the newly formed terrorist group, Lakurawa, its members have fled the Kebbi and Sokoto states.

Since the emergence of the group, troops have continued to ramp up coordinated ground and air operations against the activities of the terrorists in the Northwest region.

Recall that the armed group had attacked residents of Mera community in Augie Local Government Area of Kebbi State in the past week.

Not less than 17 people lost their lives during the attack leading to the military sending a contingent of soldiers to the

area.

The troops upon arriving at the local government had a meeting with the deputy governor of Kebbi State, Umar Tafida at the Cabinet Office before proceeding to Mera.

Idris Zuru, the media aide to the state governor said the troops succeeded in dislodging the bandits.

He added that they also recovered several rustled cattle left behind as the attackers fled.

"The governor has pledged to safeguard the lives and property of all Kebbi State



citizens, leading him to seek federal government's intervention to counter-terrorism across the state," Zuru said.

NNPC hits 1.8mbpd crude oil production – Official

By Friday Omosola

The Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPC) has announced a significant milestone in crude oil and gas production, reaching 1.8 million barrels per day (mbpd) and 7.4 standard cubic feet per day (scfd) of gas.

At a press briefing on Thursday, NNPC announced it aims to increase crude oil production to 2mbpd by the end of 2024.

NNPC attributed the achievement to the mandate of President Bola Tinubu and the dedicated efforts of its Production War Room Team.

Group Chief Executive Officer, Mele Kyari, commended the team for their role in the production recovery process.

“The team has done a great job not only in recovering production but also in escalating it to levels acceptable to our shareholders, based

on the mandates from the President, the Honourable Minister, and the Board,” Kyari stated.

The Chief War Room Coordinator and Senior Business Adviser to the GCEO, Lawal Musa, highlighted that the milestone was achieved through the combined efforts of Joint Venture and Production Sharing Contract partners, the Office of the National Security Adviser, and various security agencies. He revealed that production was at 1.43mbpd when the Production War Room was inaugurated on June 25, 2024. The team quickly ramped up production to 1.7mbpd in August and reached 1.808mbpd in November.

“With sustained momentum and continued collaboration, especially on security, we are confident of hitting the 2mbpd target by year-end,” Musa said. Chairman of the NNPC Ltd. Board of Directors, Pius Akinyelure, lauded the team’s achievements and called for cash flow projections based on the new production figures to aid planning.



He expressed optimism about increasing production to 3mbpd in the future.

“This milestone fills my heart with joy. I look forward to even greater accomplishments,” Akinyelure said. The Minister of State for Petroleum (Oil), Heineken Lokpobiri, also praised the team’s performance and reaffirmed the Federal Government’s commitment to supporting NNPC Ltd. in achieving its goals.

NNPC continues to position itself as a key driver of Nigeria’s energy production and economic growth, with ongoing efforts to enhance security and operational efficiency across the oil and gas sector.



Gov Okpebholo freezes state bank accounts

heads of Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), to ensure full and prompt compliance.

The governor further cautioned that any violation of the directive, including by heads of MDAs or civil servants, would attract severe penalties.

“All bank accounts in all the commercial banks have been frozen. Commercial banks must comply with the order and ensure that not a dime is taken out of the confers of Government until there is further notice.

“Heads of Ministries, Departments and Agencies must comply with this order and ensure that there is full compliance without any further delays.

“After the necessary investigations and reconciliations, the Governor will do the needful and decide on the way forward. For now, this order stands,” the statement read.

Furthermore, Governor Okpebholo directed the immediate reversal of the Ministry of Roads and Bridges to its original name, the Ministry of Works.

He criticized the name Ministry of Roads and Bridges introduced during the administration of former Governor Godwin Obaseki, as misleading.

According to him, the previous administration failed to construct any significant roads or bridges, making the name inappropriate.

The governor has instructed the relevant government agencies to implement the change without delay and ensure the new name is reflected immediately.

“It is funny how you can call a Government institution the Ministry of Roads and Bridges. Ironically, no single bridge was built by the same administration. Not even a pedestrian bridge.

By Friday Omosola

Edo State Governor, Monday Okpebholo, has issued a directive to freeze all state-owned bank accounts, effective immediately and until further notice.

In a statement released by his Chief Press Secretary, Fred Itua, the governor instructed commercial banks, as well as

Amotekun foils gambler's self-kidnap scheme in Ogun

By **Olamilekan Botti**

The Ogun State Security Network, commonly known as the Amotekun Corps, has successfully dismantled a self-kidnap scheme orchestrated by a 41-year-old resident identified as Enitan Awoyemi.

This elaborate plan was allegedly devised by Awoyemi in a desperate bid to evade repayment of a staggering debt amounting to approximately N1 million, stemming from his gambling activities.

The unsettling details of this case were made public through a statement issued on Wednesday by the state's Amotekun Commander, Brigadier General Alade Adedigba (retd.).

The incident unfolded in the town of Irolu-Remo, located within the Ikenne Local Government Area, where Awoyemi is known to reside.

According to reports, the suspect faked his abduction to avoid a substantial debt associated with his gambling habits. Awoyemi's wife, Mrs Tope Awoyemi, became the catalyst for uncovering this deceit after she approached the Amotekun Irolu outpost on November 10.

During her report, she revealed that her husband had contacted her, claiming to have been kidnapped the previous day by unidentified individuals who were demanding a ransom of N5 million for his release.

Alarmed by her husband's alleged predicament, Mrs Awoyemi immediately sought the assistance of the local security personnel. In response, the Amotekun Intelligence team sprang into

action, initiating a thorough investigation into the purported kidnapping.

Their inquiries quickly revealed the underlying truth: Enitan Awoyemi had accrued substantial debts from gambling activities, particularly from a lotto game, totalling a whopping N1 million. This revelation put the alleged kidnapping in a new light, suggesting that it was a calculated manoeuvre to escape his financial obligations.

Further investigation revealed that Awoyemi, a habitual gambler, had previously enjoyed a significant win of N6 million. Boasting about his fortune, he had used a portion of his earnings to acquire a sleek Toyota Corolla Sport car and a Bajaj Boxer motorcycle, both of which he intended to use for commercial purposes.

However, following a string of losses and an inability to settle his outstanding debts, Awoyemi resorted to the drastic measure of staging a fake abduction.

The diligent officers of the Amotekun Corps, in collaboration with the Vigilante Group of Nigeria and other local stakeholders, utilized a strategic approach to track down the suspect. Their relentless pursuit led them to Ijagba town and subsequently to Ota in the Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area.

The suspect was ultimately apprehended during routine patrol operations at the Irolu Okada Park early on Wednesday morning. Upon his capture, officers were intrigued by a strong odour of insecticide emanating from Awoyemi, which raised concerns about a potential suicide attempt.

Acting swiftly, they took immediate



BRIG GEN (retd)
AL ADEDIGBA GSS psc (tdc-1) CM GOM MNIN MSPSP Ptd
CORPS COMMANDER
OGUN STATE SECURITY NETWORK AGENCY AND AMOTEKUN

measures to transport him to Rufina Private Hospital in Iperu for urgent medical attention.

Responding to the gravity of the situation, Adedigba reassured the public that Awoyemi would be subjected to the appropriate legal repercussions.

“Once he is discharged from the hospital, he will be handed over to the police for further proceedings,” he stated, emphasizing the importance of accountability.

In conclusion, the Amotekun Commander commended the teamwork and cooperation that played a crucial role in the suspect's capture and urged residents to remain vigilant and proactive in reporting any suspicious activities within their communities.

“This incident underscores the significance of community cooperation in ensuring safety and security,” Adedigba remarked, reinforcing the collective responsibility of citizens to maintain a secure environment.

Ondo Poll: Tinubu behind governors to sustain APC commitment – Shettima

By Friday Omosola

Vice President Kashim Shettima has called on the people of Ondo State to re-elect Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa and his deputy, Olayide Adelami, in the upcoming governorship election.

Addressing a large gathering at the MKO Abiola Democracy Park, Akure, on Wednesday, Shettima assured voters that the duo would deliver hope, prosperity, and unity, ensuring continued progress in the Sunshine State.

Shettima urged the electorate to let their votes send a strong message of unity and strength, emphasising the importance of the election as a choice between progress and stagnation.

“Governor Aiyedatiwa is not just campaigning to retain his position but to bring hope and prosperity to every corner of Ondo State. This election is a chance to stand with a party that delivers and a leader who understands the heartbeat of the people,” Shettima stated.

He encouraged voters to remember the APC’s achievements and to secure the state’s future by re-electing Aiyedatiwa. Extending President Bola Tinubu’s support, Shettima conveyed the President’s confidence in Aiyedatiwa’s



leadership.

“President Bola Ahmed Tinubu fully endorses the Aiyedatiwa-Adelami ticket as torchbearers of prosperity for Ondo. Though he is engaged at a summit in Saudi Arabia, he stands firmly with the people of Ondo in spirit,” he added.

Shettima also urged voters to ignore distractions, focusing instead on the APC’s integrity and stability, and the practical solutions it offers for the state’s development.

Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa, addressing supporters, urged them to vote massively for the APC, honouring the legacy of late Governor Rotimi Akeredolu, who had expressed confidence in his leadership.

Mr Aiyedatiwa observed a minute of silence for the late governor and highlighted ongoing developments in the state, promising to deliver even more in his second term.

Abdullahi Umar Ganduje, APC’s

National Chairman, expressed confidence in Aiyedatiwa’s victory. “By the grace of God, come Saturday, Governor Aiyedatiwa will win. A vote for him is a vote for unity, peace, and development,” Ganduje stated.

He later invited Shettima to officially hand over the party’s flag to the governor.

Earlier, Shettima visited the Deji of Akure, His Royal Majesty, Oba Ogunlade Aladetoyinbo Aladelusi, commending his efforts in preserving Akure’s rich cultural heritage.

The Vice President praised Akure as a symbol of heritage and unity, noting the historical significance of the 850-year-old palace.

In response, the traditional ruler thanked President Tinubu for approving a teaching hospital for Akure and commended Aiyedatiwa’s support for traditional institutions, urging the people to vote overwhelmingly for the APC.

As Ondo heads to the polls, the APC rally showcased a united front, rallying supporters to sustain progress and prosperity under the party’s leadership.

No way for Atiku in 2027, Wike vows

By Dave Oludare Oso

The Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike, has said there will be no chance for former Vice President, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar to secure the Peoples Democratic Party’s presidential ticket in 2027.

The minister spoke during a live media parley in his office in Abuja on Wednesday.

On Atiku’s recent claim that his economic blueprint would rescue and serve Nigerians better than the current administration’s approach, Wike said Atiku had previously presented his blueprint to Nigerians, who rejected him.

The former Rivers State governor said,

“Did he not present it before Nigerians? Did Nigerians choose him? He is lobbying for another chance, but the chance will not be there. In which party? How can we rely on one man for so many years?”

“Look at America. I’m sure you all did not support Trump, saying he is this, he is a racist, he is that. We cried, but Americans thought differently, made a decision for the good of their own country.

“You presented your blueprint in 2023; Nigerians heard you clearly and said thank you, but it will not work. We will not support you. Criticism does not mean the opposition is working.



“Trump was not in government, yet he got to work and told the Republicans, ‘Listen, what do we do? We have to be serious.’ You can’t sideline people and say you will fight someone just because you feel he is too influential.”

Wike talks about his future in politics: “I’m Not Done Yet”

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

Nyesom Wike, the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and former Governor of Rivers State, opened up about his political future, asserting that he is far from finished with his journey in Nigerian politics.

Despite stepping down as the governor of Rivers after eight years in office, Wike remains a force to be reckoned with on the national stage.

His comments have sparked widespread speculation about his ambitions, and whether he’s eyeing a more prominent role in the country’s leadership in the near future.

Wike’s tenure as the Governor of Rivers State from 2015 to 2023 was marked by significant achievements, particularly in the areas of infrastructure development, education, and healthcare.

Rivers State witnessed a massive transformation under his leadership, with urbanisation and infrastructural projects such as roads, bridges, and the famous Flyover Roads in Port Harcourt. His government also focused heavily on education and human capital development, with notable investments



in the state’s universities and schools.

Wike’s administration was praised for prioritising security in the Niger Delta region, a key concern for a state that has long grappled with issues of militancy and oil theft.

However, his tenure wasn’t without controversy. His combative nature, frequent clashes with political rivals, and assertive stance against the federal government often made headlines.

Yet, even his detractors would agree that Wike succeeded in creating a strong political base in Rivers, making him one of the most influential governors of his generation.

After stepping down as Rivers State Governor in May 2023, many believed

that Wike would fade into the background of national politics.

However, the man known for his unflinching confidence and public persona made it clear in his interview that he is “far from done.”

“I’m not done yet,” Wike emphatically stated.

“There’s still a lot to be done, and I’m not the type to sit idly by.”

The implication here is clear: he plans to remain a key

player in Nigerian politics. With his larger-than-life presence in the political arena, many are asking: What role does Wike see himself playing moving forward?

While he hasn’t specified a particular office or political path, Wike’s comments seem to hint that he could have his sights set on a higher national office. With his track record of defying political odds and building formidable alliances, it’s not out of the question that he may be eyeing a presidential or vice-presidential bid in 2027.

Top shots redeployed in NNPC major shake-up

By Dave Oludare Oso

The Board of Directors of NNPC Limited has announced “a series of strategic leadership appointments.”

Announcing the development, Chief Corporate Communications Officer, NNPC Limited, Olufemi Soneye, in a statement on Wednesday said the following key appointments have been made:

Mr. Adedapo A. Segun has been appointed as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO). He previously served as the Executive Vice President, Downstream, where he made

significant contributions to the company’s downstream operations.

Mr. Isiyaku Abdullahi has been named Executive Vice President (EVP), Downstream.

Mr. Udobong Ntia has been appointed Executive Vice President (EVP), Upstream.

Soneye’s statement said, “These appointments align with NNPC Limited’s commitment to building a unified and competent leadership team to drive operational excellence and support the organization’s strategic objectives.

“These changes reflect our continued dedication to enhancing corporate governance, improving operational



efficiency, and ensuring long-term success in Nigeria’s energy sector.

“The Board and Management also extend their deepest appreciation to Mr. Umar Ajiya and Mrs. Oritsemeyiwa A. Eyesan for their outstanding dedication and service to NNPC Limited.

“NNPC Limited remains committed to achieving operational excellence, enhancing global competitiveness, and ensuring financial sustainability, while prioritizing the interests of the Nigerian public in the petroleum industry.”

Anyaoku: No leader can fix Nigeria with 1999 constitution

By **Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye**

Former Commonwealth Secretary-General, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, has issued a stern warning that Nigeria's persistent challenges cannot be resolved as long as the country continues to operate under the 1999 Constitution.

He argued that the constitution, which serves as Nigeria's foundational legal framework, is ill-suited to address the nation's deep-rooted divisions and numerous systemic issues.

Anyaoku's comments were made at the launch of the book "The Noble Academic and Patriot: A Biography of Emeritus Professor Akinjide Osuntokun" at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA) in Lagos on Wednesday, where he served as the chairman for the occasion.

The elder statesman emphasised the need for a truly federal constitution that acknowledges and addresses Nigeria's pluralistic nature.

Describing Nigeria as a "pluralistic country" with diverse peoples, cultures, languages, and religions, Anyaoku stressed that the country's current constitutional framework is not equipped to handle such diversity. He compared Nigeria to other countries with successful federal systems, such as India, Canada, and Switzerland, which have managed their pluralism through genuine federal constitutions.

"The universal lesson is that pluralistic countries which have survived as single political entities in unity and progress are those that addressed their pluralism with genuine federal constitutions," Anyaoku said.

He further argued that the 1999 Constitution, which centralizes power, exacerbates Nigeria's divisions and inhibits meaningful progress in tackling critical issues such as economic underperformance, insecurity, corruption, and political instability.

"To those who think that the trouble

with Nigeria today is the political leadership, I would say that as long as we have the 1999 Constitution as our grundnorm, not even Angel Gabriel or Malaikah Jibrin as leaders can successfully tackle the divisiveness, the underperforming economy, poverty, insecurity, and the humongous corruption that we face today," he declared.

Anyaoku's call for a new constitution echoes the sentiment of several other prominent Nigerians who have criticised the centralizing nature of the 1999 Constitution, claiming it entrenches inequality and exacerbates tensions between the country's ethnic groups.

In addition to his political commentary, Anyaoku took the opportunity to highlight the achievements of Professor Akinjide Osuntokun, the subject of the biography being launched.

Anyaoku praised Osuntokun as an accomplished academic and a dedicated patriot, recalling how the professor had supported his own bid for the position of Commonwealth Secretary-General during the 1990s.

"I first knew of Jide Osuntokun when he was Adviser to Nigeria's Foreign Minister, General Ike Nwachukwu, and accompanied the Foreign Minister in his journeys to campaign for my candidacy for the office of Commonwealth Secretary-General," Anyaoku said.

He described Osuntokun as someone who had made significant contributions to Nigeria's development, both as an academic and as a civic-minded individual, earning recognition as a role model for young Nigerians.

A Comprehensive Review by Fayemi Dr. Kayode Fayemi, former governor of Ekiti State and the book's reviewer, provided an insightful look into Osuntokun's life and work.

He outlined how the biography project began in 2018, when Osuntokun served as Pro-Chancellor of the Ekiti State University, and how the professor had granted the authors extensive interviews to help document his



academic and family history.

Fayemi noted that the book, written in nine chapters, offers a deep dive into Osuntokun's genealogy, his family's history, and his academic journey.

The biography also highlights his contributions to Nigerian society, including his efforts during the Kiriji war and his father's pioneering role as an itinerant trader in the early 20th century.

At the event, former Labour Party presidential candidate Peter Obi also paid tribute to Osuntokun, acknowledging the lessons he could learn from him.

Obi lamented that Nigeria often celebrates individuals who have made no significant contributions to the country, while failing to recognise true patriots like Osuntokun.

"When the National Universities Commission Secretary-General said they are looking for PhD people to teach in our universities, I called him and said, why do you want anybody to do PhD when you don't pay them and you pay thugs 100 times what they are paid?" Obi remarked, criticising the culture of rewarding mediocrity in Nigeria.

Tunde Bakare, the Serving Overseer of the Citadel Global Community Church, also shared his admiration for Osuntokun, describing him as an influential teacher who had played a critical role in his own academic journey.

Bakare was tasked with unveiling the biography, which he presented with a heartfelt tribute to Osuntokun's enduring influence on his life.

The book launch attracted a host of dignitaries from various sectors, including government, academia, and the media.

Suicide attempt: OAU plans soft measures for extra-year students

By **Dave Oludare Oso**

In response to a recent attempt by a 200-level student to commit suicide following academic struggles, the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, has said the school is considering a waiver for extra-year students struggling with their studies.

Punch reports that this was contained in an internal memo on Wednesday, dated November 1, 2024, from the university's Senate Division.

It said the memo revealed that a special Committee of Deans meeting was convened to address the case of the affected student and thereafter came up with compassionate measures.

The memo, signed by the Deputy Registrar, M.S. Oluwajoba, revealed that the student, whose name was not stated, had transferred from the Faculty of Pharmacy to the Department of Biology Education, and reportedly attempted suicide on October 16.

The incident prompted the Dean of the Faculty to take up the matter to the higher authorities.

The memo seen by newsmen was titled, "Decision Extract: Re: Special Meeting of Committee of Deans held on

Wednesday, October 16, 2024," and directed to all deans.

It partly read, "The Dean, Faculty of Education reported a case of a suicide attempt by a Part II student who transferred from the Faculty of Pharmacy to the Department of Biology Education on Wednesday, October 16, 2024. After due deliberation on the matter, the Committee decided that: Members of staff should continue as usual to offer support to our students.

"The departmental and the Faculty Boards of Examiners are advised and encouraged to provide an enabling environment for students' support.

"Staff and Part Advisers should kindly cooperate in this regard.

"The above information supersedes the earlier circulated decision extract."

An earlier circular from the office, dated October 17, 2024, had said any student who had only one or two courses to pass to graduate, having attempted those courses in the previous semesters, "should be considered to graduate on compassionate grounds provided such assistance shall not change the candidate's class of degree."

When contacted, the Public Relations Officer of the university, Abiodun Olanrewaju, confirmed the decision of



the institution, noting this was to prevent further suicide attempts.

In an interview with on Wednesday, the varsity spokesperson said, "We want to reduce to the barest minimum the commission of suicide due to academic stress or rigour especially by those in the final year who are repeating one or two courses and they are being delayed by that.

"So, the human face there is, given the situation and circumstance of the country, we should just let them go. It doesn't cost the university anything, and so that it will not be that somebody commits suicide because of extra academic years."

However, a top official said the decision "is not official" but is being considered "in the wisdom of the university" given the situation's sensitivity.

Appeal Court sacks Ondo LP gov candidate, Ebiseni

By **Dave Oludare Oso**

The Court of Appeal, Abuja Division has disqualified Olusola Ebiseni as the Labour Party candidate for the upcoming Ondo State governorship election scheduled for Saturday, 16 November 2024.

The three-member panel of justices, in a unanimous decision with a lead judgement by Justice Hamma Barka delivered by Justice Adebukola Banjoko, held that "the appeal brought by the Labour Party against Olusola Ebiseni and two others is allowed."

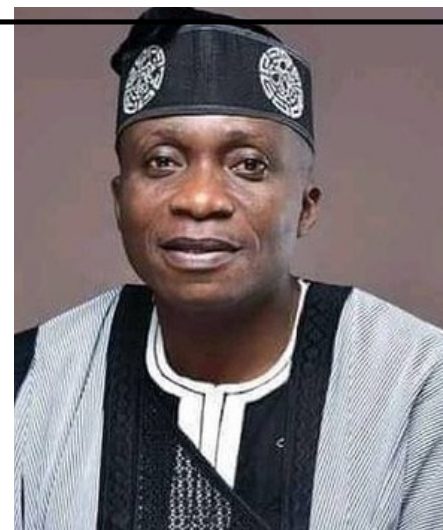
Justice Banjoko further added that the Certified True Copy of the judgement would be made available to the parties

in the appeal as soon as possible for their review.

Justice Abba Mohammed, in his contributory judgement, agreed with the decision of his fellow justices.

Previously, Justice Emeka Nwite of the Federal High Court in Abuja had ordered the Independent National Electoral Commission to accept and recognize Olusola Ebiseni and Ezekiel Awude as the Labour Party's governorship and deputy governorship candidates for the 16 November Ondo State governorship polls.

Justice Nwite affirmed that the second



primary election held by the Labour Party, which produced Ebiseni and Awude as the governorship and deputy governorship candidates, was valid and should be upheld by INEC.

APC, PDP intensify campaigns for Ondo gov poll

By **Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye**

As Ondo State prepares for its highly anticipated off-cycle governorship election on Saturday, November 16, both the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) and the opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) are ramping up their campaigns, with top party officials and governors converging on the state to secure votes.

On Wednesday, November 13, the APC staged a massive campaign rally at the MKO Abiola Democracy Park in Akure, the Ondo State capital, where key party figures including Vice President Kashim Shettima, National Chairman Abdullahi Ganduje, and several governors from the southwest, including Dapo Abiodun (Ogun), Babajide Sanwo-Olu (Lagos), Abdulrahman Abdulrasaq (Kwara), and Biodun Oyebanji (Ekiti), addressed a large crowd of supporters.

At the rally, Ganduje officially handed the party's flag to the APC's governorship candidate, Lucky Aiyedatiwa, and his running mate, Dr. Olayide Adelami, urging Ondo residents to come out in full force on Saturday to vote for the party.

In his address, Vice President Shettima rallied support for Aiyedatiwa, referencing past leaders of the state such as Adekunle Ajasin, Adebayo Adefarati, and Rotimi Akeredolu, and suggesting that had they been alive, they would have supported the APC.

"Your vote is your voice, and by voting for Lucky Aiyedatiwa, you are voting for progressive governance," Shettima said, emphasising the continuity of the development agenda of the ruling party. Similarly, Ganduje expressed confidence that the APC would win massively in the state, calling for a "unity vote" for Aiyedatiwa to secure political stability in the southwest.

He urged the electorate to vote for "continuity" and further development, particularly in terms of infrastructure and social services.

Lagos State Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu also spoke at the rally, urging the people of Ondo to ensure the election remains peaceful and free from



violence, asking them to vote for the broom emblem on the ballot and avoid conflicts that could tarnish the process.

Minister of Interior, Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo, added to the excitement, boldly declaring that the APC would sweep all 18 local governments in the state, calling it an "Operation One Direct," signaling his party's ambition for a clean sweep.

PDP Final Campaign Rally

Meanwhile, the PDP has scheduled its own grand campaign rally for Thursday, 14th November, also in Akure.

The rally will be led by top party figures, including Governors Ademola Adeleke of Osun State and Seyi Makinde of Oyo State.

The PDP is determined to challenge the APC's dominance in the state, with its leadership urging Ondo residents to vote for change and to reject what they term the "failed, corrupt, and inept administration" of the APC.

PDP's Publicity Secretary, Kennedy Peretei, strongly criticized Vice President Shettima's remarks, rejecting the suggestion that the PDP was a "reactionary" party, and instead positioned the APC as being out of touch with the people's needs.

The election campaign has not been without controversy, as political tensions in Ondo escalated following a violent clash between suspected APC and PDP thugs in Idanre Local Government Area on Wednesday, November 13.

Six people were reported injured and are receiving treatment at the University of Medical Sciences Teaching Hospital in Akure.

PDP spokesman Adeyemi Fasoranti accused APC supporters of being behind the violence, claiming that armed thugs

were threatening voters ahead of the election. In response, APC Chairman Ade Adetimehim denied the allegations, insisting that the APC was a peaceful party and had no involvement in any violent activities.

The Ondo State Police Command has launched an investigation into the incident and is working to ensure that those responsible are held accountable. Police have vowed a zero-tolerance policy toward political violence in the lead-up to Saturday's poll.

As the election date draws closer, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) is finalising its preparations.

On Wednesday, the Ondo State Resident Electoral Commissioner, Mrs. Oluwatoyin Babalola, supervised the inspection of sensitive electoral materials at the Central Bank of Nigeria's Akure branch. INEC officials reassured stakeholders of the transparency of the process, with materials set to be distributed to local governments beginning Thursday, November 14.

Despite concerns raised by the PDP over potential bias, INEC has insisted that Mrs. Babalola, who was appointed nearly a year ago, will oversee the election. The commission dismissed allegations of partisanship, calling on the PDP to provide evidence of its claims.

With both the APC and PDP making their final pushes for voter support, and election-related tensions rising, all eyes are on Ondo State as it heads to the polls this Saturday.

How Africa's monitored wildlife shrank by 76% in 50 years

By Agency Reporter

There's a rumble in the jungle, ripe with consequences for humanity. World Wildlife Fund (WWF) International's 2024 Living Planet Report states that in 50 years until 2020, monitored wildlife populations worldwide shrank on average by almost three quarters. The Living Planet Index, treated as a measure of the state of the world's biological diversity based on population trends of vertebrate species from terrestrial, freshwater and marine habitats, puts the decline in Africa at 76%.

The fastest drop was in Latin America and the Caribbean (95%), while North America registered an average decline of 39%. Europe and Central Asia clocked an average shrinkage rate of 35%.

"These figures are alarming for all of us who care about the state of our natural world," WWF International's director general Kirsten Schuijt notes in the report.

Experts attribute the trend to habitat loss, overexploitation, and pollution. Other threats include the proliferation of invasive species, diseases and climate change.

Schuijt reckons that the decline is "an indicator of the unrelenting pressure caused by the dual climate and nature loss crises – and the threat of breakdown to the natural regulatory system that underpins our living planet."

Freshwater populations have suffered the strongest declines (85%), followed by terrestrial (69%) and marine ecosystems (56%).

Development projects, deforestation and pollution have contributed to an 85% drop in marine life population in 50 years.

According to experts, this reflects the increasing pressures placed on rivers, lakes, oceans, and wetlands from excessive grazing, fishing, land use, deforestation, pollution, and water abstraction.



Freshwater fish, for example, are often threatened by dams and other alterations to their habitat, all of which block their migration routes.

Food production is the leading cause of habitat loss, accounting for 70% of water use and responsible for over a quarter of greenhouse gas emissions.

The latter contributes to the rapid heating of the earth.

The WWF report warns that ecosystem degradation could push the continent past critical tipping points unless targeted recovery and action plans are urgently implemented.

According to the report, what happens in the next five years will determine the future of life on Earth.

So, is it all gloom and doom for the world

"While time is running out, we are not yet past the point of no return," reassures Schuijt.

"The power and opportunity to change the trajectory are in our hands."

AFRICAN TEMPLATE

Kenya is seen as a beacon in conservation efforts after achieving various milestones, proving that consistency and collaborative interventions will help save species from extinction and ensure they thrive.

Amid the decline in global wildlife populations, the East African nation has restored the dwindling count of priority species such as the African lion, the elephant, and the black rhino.

Intense conservation efforts have stabilised the situation and led to an increase in numbers across all three

species.

"The rebounding of the black rhino in Kenya from 400 individuals in the 1980s to 1,004 in 2023 is a huge milestone for this critically endangered species," Jackson Kiplagat, head of conservation programmes at WWF-Kenya, tells TRT Afrika.

Kenya has laid out ambitious targets in its National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans to ensure the restoration of ecosystems and sustainable use of biological diversity.

"Kenya is at the forefront of making significant contributions to fight climate change and restore nature, having committed to the Global Biodiversity Framework and the Paris Agreement, among other global and national commitments," says Mohamed Awer, chief executive officer at WWF-Kenya.

"The redoubling of the nation's ambition to achieve the Bonn Challenge to restore 10.6 million hectares of degraded landscapes is a step in the right direction."

MARATHON MENTALITY

These efforts are, however, far from adequate.

Concerted efforts across the continent and worldwide are required to meet global goals on nature, climate and sustainable development by 2030.

"If we are to stop nature loss at the scale needed to avoid global and devastating tipping points, climate finance must flow from the global level to the grassroots to build the resilience of local communities bearing the brunt of nature loss and climate change," says Awer.

Defence Ministry hands over three new helicopters to Navy

By Dave Oludare Oso

The Ministry of Defence has handed over three Agusta Westland 109 Trekker Helicopters to the Nigerian Navy.

The Director Naval Information, Commodore A Adams-Aliu in a statement on Wednesday, said the brief handover ceremony was done at the Caverton Helicopters Limited (CHL) hangar facilities in Ikeja Lagos.

According to the statement, the AW 109 Helicopter has a purpose-built VIP configuration with a full leather and noise attenuation system.

He said, "Furthermore, the helicopter is designed with a landing skid which gives it a better loading capacity compared to wheeled helicopters.

"Additionally, the helicopters are designed with auxiliary tanks which give them extended endurance of up to 3hrs40mins.

"Thus, the helicopter could be used for long-range transport flights. The helicopters could also be retrofitted with purpose-built mission



equipment."

The Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Emmanuel Ogalla accompanied by other senior officers were present to receive the newly acquired helicopters.

Also present at the hand-over ceremony were the Permanent Secretary MOD, Dr Ibrahim Abubakar Kana, Director Navy Affairs MOD, Dr Raji Isiaka Ogunshola, the President Caverton Group, Chief Remi Makanjuola and the Managing Director Caverton, Group Captain Bello (retd).

The naval chief thanked the President

and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Nigeria, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu for his unflinching support to the Armed Forces in general and the Nigerian Navy in particular.

He also expressed gratitude to both the Minister of Defence and the Minister of State for Defence for facilitating the acquisition of the helicopters to boost NN operations such as Air Recce, Search and Rescue, Air Insertion and MEDEVAC.

I stopped Deji Adeyanju from becoming PDP Publicity Secretary – Wike

By Dave Oludare Oso

The Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike, has lambasted the renowned lawyer and activist Deji Adeyanju over his criticism of some demolitions in the nation's capital.

Recall that Adeyanju along with Vincent Martins Otse, popularly known as VeryDarkMark on Friday last week led a protest against the FCT Minister over the demolition of Ruga, a settlement along Airport Road, Abuja. Adeyanju had said, "There is no

justification for this demolition," asking President Bola Tinubu to urgently address the matter.

Reacting, Wike in an interview with selected journalists on Wednesday said Adeyanju was just being jobless.

According to the former governor of Rivers State, he previously turned down the request of the lawyer to be given the role of Publicity Secretary of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

He said, "I saw one young man, they call him Adeyanju. He is from Kogi State. This young boy came to me that he wants to be the National Publicity



Secretary of the PDP and I said no.

"I said he won't be, and he was not. I have no regret about it. He has suddenly become a civil society activist.

"He has no job and that's why he decided to turn to a civil society activist."

CLAIM THAT TINUBU'S HAND IS BAD: Sowore lied — Reno Omokri

By Agency Reporter

A former presidential aide, Mr Reno Omokri on Wednesday said the presidential candidate of the African Action Congress (AAC), Omoyele Sowore lied in his alleged claim that President Bola Tinubu doesn't shake others with his right hand because it's bad.

Omokri, in his Facebook page said he was reacting to Sowore's claim on his Honest Bunch podcast interview that President Tinubu shook him with his left hand because the President's right hand is bad and can't be used to shake.

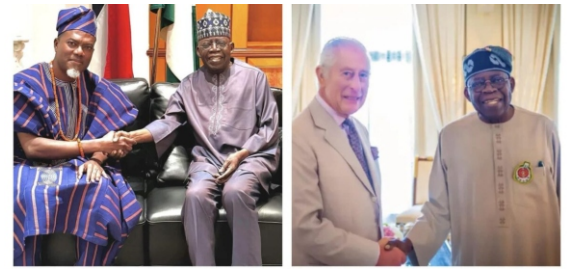
Omokri, who shared three photographs and a video of President Tinubu, where he shook hands recently with him, King Charles III and former Vice President, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar said, "If you look at this photograph, you will see President Tinubu shaking me with his right hand. It was actually the President

that extended his right hand to me. Out of respect, I waited for him to offer to shake me. I did not initiate it."

The ex-aide to former President Goodluck Jonathan added: "I have also attached another photo of President Tinubu shaking King Charles III with his right hand.

"Additionally, there is yet a third photo of the President shaking Waziri Atiku Abubakar with his right hand. This photo was taken at the National Mosque in Abuja two weeks ago.

"Omoyele Sowore is a notoriously dishonest and manipulative person. He tells deliberate lies against people he does not like and magnifies those lies via his Sahara Reporters, which is nothing more than a political blackmail publication."



He concluded: "I met with the President alone for about twenty minutes. There is absolutely nothing wrong with his left hand, or any hand for that matter. The man is of a sound mind and body, and Nigerians should disregard the lies told by Omoyele Sowore."

Share

Nobody has ever defeated Tinubu, NSA warns Lakurawa

By Dave Oludare Oso

The National Security Adviser (NSA), Nuhu Ribadu has issued a stern warning to Lakurawa, a new Islamic sect operating in the North-West region, cautioning them to desist from acts of terrorism or face dire consequences. Ribadu spoke during the opening ceremony of the Comptroller General of Customs Conference in Abuja on Wednesday.

Ribadu emphasized the administration's commitment to national security, saying, "No one dares President Bola Tinubu and gets away with it."

The NSA further stressed that the emergence of the sect is ill-timed, as the administration is fully prepared to combat any threats to Nigeria's peace and stability.

He vowed that the terrorist group would be eradicated from the country, reinforcing the administration's zero-tolerance stance on terrorism and violent extremism.

Last week, the Defence Headquarters confirmed the emergence of a new

terror group known as 'Lukarawa' in the Northwestern states of Sokoto and Kebbi.

Addressing a news conference in Abuja, the Director, Defence Media Operations, Major General Edward Buba, said the new terror group is exacerbating insecurity in the North-West region but the Armed Forces of Nigeria are already containing them.

General Buba said, "Troops are confronted with a new terrorist sect in the North-West. This sect is known as Lukawaras, the Lukawaras are affiliated to terrorists in the Sahel particularly from Mali and Niger Republic.

"They began incursion into Northern part of Nigeria, mainly Sokoto and Kebbi states, and like I mentioned, they came in from Niger and Mali axis."



He added that the new terror group emerged from Mali and the Republic of Niger after the coup that led to the breakdown of military cooperation between Nigeria and Niger.

The military also declared nine terrorists wanted for their roles in the security challenges bedeviling the nation.

Gov Okpebholo freezes state bank accounts

By Friday Omosola

Edo State Governor, Monday Okpebholo, has issued a directive to freeze all state-owned bank accounts, effective immediately and until further notice.

In a statement released by his Chief Press Secretary, Fred Itua, the governor instructed commercial banks, as well as heads of Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), to ensure full and prompt compliance.

The governor further cautioned that any violation of the directive, including by heads of MDAs or civil servants, would attract severe penalties.

“All bank accounts in all the commercial banks have been frozen. Commercial banks must comply with the order and ensure that not a dime is taken out of the confers of Government until there is further notice.

“Heads of Ministries, Departments and Agencies must comply with this order

and ensure that there is full compliance without any further delays.

“After the necessary investigations and reconciliations, the Governor will do the needful and decide on the way forward. For now, this order stands,” the statement read.

Furthermore, Governor Okpebholo directed the immediate reversal of the Ministry of Roads and Bridges to its original name, the Ministry of Works.

He criticized the name Ministry of Roads and Bridges introduced during the administration of former Governor Godwin Obaseki, as misleading.

According to him, the previous administration failed to construct any significant roads or bridges, making the name inappropriate.

The governor has instructed the relevant



government agencies to implement the change without delay and ensure the new name is reflected immediately.

“It is funny how you can call a Government institution the Ministry of Roads and Bridges. Ironically, no single bridge was built by the same administration. Not even a pedestrian bridge.

“In the coming days, we will look at more actions taken by the luded.

EFCC grants Okowa bail, seizes his passport

By Dave Oludare Oso

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has released the immediate past governor of Delta State, Ifeanyi Okowa.

Okowa was released on administrative bail following his detention after he was invited by the commission for questioning over an alleged diversion of N1.3tn derivation fund.

A source within the commission said the EFCC also seized the former governor’s travel passport pending the conclusion of the investigation of the diversion of public funds against him.

The source said, “Okowa is no longer in our custody.

“He was released last Wednesday after meeting his bail conditions, which include depositing his travel documents with the commission, pending the conclusion of our investigations of the allegations against him.

“The sum involved allegedly is too huge to take risks. And what we have done is not out of place. This is to prevent anyone under investigation from jumping the bail he/she had been granted.”



Ondo Poll: IGP deploys DIG Alabi for election oversight



The Inspector-General of Police (IGP), Kayode Egbetokun

By Friday Omosola

The Inspector-General of Police (IGP), Kayode Egbetokun, has introduced extensive security measures to ensure a peaceful, transparent, and credible gubernatorial election in Ondo State on November 16.

In a statement, police spokesperson Olumuyiwa Adejobi revealed that the IGP has assigned DIG Sylvester Alabi as the Coordinating DIG for the election. Alabi will oversee the implementation of security strategies to maintain law and order throughout the electoral process.

Additionally, AIG Bennett Igweh and CP Tunji Disu have been appointed as

the AIG and CP Elections, respectively.

[PHOTO CREDIT: X]

The police added that all vehicular movements on roads, waterways, and other transportation channels will be restricted from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Election day.

READ ALSO: Appeal Court sacks Ondo LP gov candidate, Ebiseni

More so, the police said exceptions will be granted only to individuals on essential duties, such as ambulance services, fire services, accredited media personnel, and other critical responders.

Furthermore, the police noted that security aides and escorts assigned to

VIPs are prohibited from accompanying their principals to polling booths or collation centres to prevent disruptions.

Additionally, unauthorized security personnel and quasi-security agencies were barred from operating during the election period, and the use of sirens by unauthorised vehicles is strictly prohibited.

“Special consideration will also be extended to individuals with disabilities, pregnant women, nursing mothers, and those facing mobility challenges to ensure that polling stations remain accessible. Designated election lines have been established for inquiries and reporting incidents. These lines will be publicized as soon as possible.

READ ALSO: Bitcoin hits record high above \$90,000 after Trump’s election

“The Nigeria Police Force urges citizens to report all suspicious activities that may threaten the integrity of the electoral process and reaffirms its commitment to fostering a safe and democratic environment as the state gears up for the elections.

“The Police will also be working with the military and other Federal security agencies as collaborative efforts from all stakeholders are vital to ensuring that the elections are conducted fairly and peacefully,” said Mr Adejobi.

#2024OndoElections: Meet all the candidates

By Dave Oludare Oso

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has confirmed in a statement that 17 candidates from different political parties are running for the Ondo State governorship election. The election is scheduled for Saturday, November 16, 2024, with a diverse slate of candidates vying for the top position. Below is a summary of the 17 candidates and their respective parties competing to lead Ondo State for the next four years.

Falaiye Ajibola (A)

Falaiye Ajibola is a candidate for the governorship election in Ondo State, representing the Accord Party (AP). His campaign emphasizes a commitment to addressing the state's pressing issues, including economic development and social welfare.

He studied at Ekiti State University, obtaining his Bachelor's degree. Mr Ajibola has been involved in local politics and is recognized for his grassroots connections within the community. The 64-year-old candidate chose Samuel Ikuyajolu as his running mate.

Akinuli Omolere (AA)

Akinuli Omolere is a Nigerian politician who recently emerged as the governorship candidate for the Action Alliance (AA) Party in the upcoming Ondo State gubernatorial election. His candidacy was confirmed during the party's primary election, where he received 45 out of 73 valid votes.

Mr Omolere has a professional background with significant business and management experience before his political career. He is notably recognized as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Lery Hago, a luxury travel concierge service focused on creating bespoke travel experiences. His entrepreneurial journey has also co-founded various ventures across different sectors, including beauty, fashion, and product packaging. He chose Adeyemi Oluwatoyin as his running mate.

3 Ajayi Adekunle (AAC)

Ajayi Adekunle is a poet, activist, thespian, and conversationalist under the African Action Congress (AAC). Mr Ajayi is known for actively participating in protests against government policies, particularly those he views as detrimental to the populace. He has been involved in various movements that challenge corruption and advocate for transparency in governance. His nomination as the AAC candidate



reflects his involvement in local politics and his aspirations to lead in a gubernatorial capacity. He is in this race with Dada David as his running mate.

Nejo Adeyemi (ADC)

Nejo Adeyemi is a legal practitioner under the African Democratic Congress (ADC). The 40-year-old candidate is a prince of Mahin Kingdom in Ilaje Local Government, Ondo State, and the Principal partner of Myson Law Practice.

Mr Adeyemi emerged as the ADC's candidate for the Ondo State governorship election after winning the party's primary on Apr. 26, 2024, where he secured 114,911 votes against his closest opponent. His campaign emphasises good governance, adherence to the rule of law, educational reform, healthcare improvements, and infrastructure development. He picked Ibrahim Olaide as his running mate.

Akinodi Ayodeji (ADP)

Akinodi Ayodeji, popularly called Ejanla, is a prominent Nigerian businessman and politician. He was born on May 9, 1985, in Ondo town, Ondo State, Mr Ayodeji hails from a Yoruba Christian family. His educational journey began at St. Mary's Nursery & Primary School and continued at Ondo Boys' High School for secondary education. He later attended the University of Benin in Edo State, earning a degree in Computer Engineering.

Additionally, he pursued further studies in real estate development at the Metropolitan School of Business and Management in the UK and the London Real Estate Academy. Moyosola Olorunmonu is his running mate.

6. Lucky Ayedatiwa (APC)

Lucky Aiyedatiwa, the sitting governor of

Ondo State, was born on Jan. 12, 1965. He hails from Obe-Nla, in the Ilaje Local Government Area of Ondo State. In 1986, he obtained a Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) in Economics and Government from Lagos State College of Education (now Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education), Ijanikin, Lagos. Mr Ayedatiwa later attended the University of Ibadan for an Advanced Diploma in Business Administration in 2001.

He became an alumnus of Lagos Business School – Pan Atlantic University, Lekki, Lagos, where he obtained Post Graduate Certification in Chief Executive Education (CEP) in Business Management in 2009.

In 2013, he obtained a Master's Degree in Business Administration (MBA) from the University of Liverpool, United Kingdom. Mr Aiyedatiwa served as the federal commissioner who represented Ondo State on the Board of the Niger Delta Development Commission from 2018 to 2019. He was selected as Rotimi Akeredolu's running mate in the 2020 Ondo State gubernatorial election. He became acting governor of Ondo State on 13 December 2023, as Mr Akeredolu left for end-stage leukaemia treatment. Following the death of Mr Akeredolu on 27 December 2023, Mr Aiyedatiwa was sworn in as governor of Ondo State.

Olatunji Popoola (APGA)

Olatunji Popoola is a 66-year-old politician running as the APGA

continue on page 21

candidate for governor of Ondo State in the upcoming election. His running mate is Taiwo Adedeji, who is 40 years old. Mr Popoola was also confirmed to be the State Chairman of the All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) in Osun State. In 2023, members of the Association of Progressive Political Parties in Osun State (Osun APPPS) passed a vote of confidence on Popoola as the Chairman of IPAC, indicating his growing influence and support within the broader political community.

As of 2024, Mr Popoola is a candidate for the Ondo State gubernatorial election under the APGA banner.

Olorunfemi Ayodele (LP)

Olorunfemi Ayodele, a unionist, emerged as the Labour Party (LP) governorship candidate. He was the former General Secretary of the Senior Staff Association of Statutory Corporations and Government-Owned Companies (SSASCGOC), an affiliate of the Trade Union Congress of Nigeria (TUC).

The 59-year-old hails from Uro Ajowa, studied at Prowess University, USA, and picked Olabisi Adu as his running mate.

9 Olugbenga Edema (NNPP)

Olugbenga Edema, born Nov. 15, 1966, in Ogogoro, Ilaje LGA of Ondo State, is a politician, lawyer, mentor, and philanthropist. Formerly an aspirant of the APC, Mr Edema defected to NNPP in June 2024. He is part of a political landscape that emphasizes the importance of rotating leadership among the three senatorial districts of Ondo State. This arrangement aims to ensure equity and justice in governance, with Mr Edema representing the Ondo South district in this electoral cycle.

10. Agboola Ajayi (PDP)

Agboola Ajayi, the candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), was born on Sept. 24, 1968. He hails from Kiribo Town of the Western Apoi tribe in the Ese Odo LGA of Ondo State. He attended Community High School in Kiribo Town and later moved to Methodist High School in Okitipupa LGA. He then studied law at Igbinedion University, Okada, in Edo State. He graduated with a Bachelor of Law (LL.B) in the 2nd Class Upper Division and was subsequently called to the bar in 2010 after graduating from Nigerian Law School in Abuja.

Mr Ajayi started his political career under

the Social Democratic Party (SDP) platform and became the chairman of the SDP in Old Opoi Ward 1 from 1988 to 1998. He also served as a member of the House of Representatives and represented Ilaje/Ese Odo federal constituency under the PDP. During his time in the House, Mr Ajayi was chairman of the House Committee on NDDC from 2007 to 2010.

11. Francis Alli (PRP)

Francis Alli is the governorship candidate for the Peoples Redemption Party (PRP). He hails from Okitipupa Local Government Area and is the party's National Secretary. Mr Alli holds a degree in Sociology from the University of Lagos, where he developed a strong foundation in social issues and community dynamics. His academic training has equipped him with insights into the challenges various demographics face within society, which he aims to address through his political career.

Francis Alli.

12. Akingboye Bamidele (SDP)

Akingboye Bamidele was born and raised in Igodan-Lisa, Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria. Mr Bamidele's educational journey laid the foundation for his illustrious career. He studied at Lagos Business School, Pan-Atlantic University, and Herriot Watt University, Edinburgh, Scotland. With over 40 years of experience in the private sector, Mr Bamidele's entrepreneurial ventures have left an indelible mark on Nigeria's economic landscape. As Chairman and CEO of Benshore Maritime Services, he has pioneered innovative solutions in dredging, maritime services, and pollution control, driving sustainable growth and development.

Akingboye Bamidele

13. Otitolaju Akinmurele (YPP)

Otitolaju Akinmurele is a prominent Nigerian politician and candidate for the Young Progressives Party (YPP) in the upcoming governorship election in Ondo State. He has positioned himself as a reformist leader aiming to address the state's challenges, which he attributes to corruption, incompetent leadership, and political arrogance.

Mr Akinmurele has been vocal about the need for change in Ondo State, emphasizing that the region is rich in natural resources, including significant bitumen deposits, yet remains underdeveloped due to poor governance.

14. Adegoke Kehinde (YP)

Adegoke Kehinde's multifaceted background combines legal expertise, political engagement, and a commitment to youth empowerment. The 35-year-old is committed to youth mentorship and engagement. Mr Kehinde is passionate about mentoring and guiding young people, emphasizing education and career development. His initiatives through the High Flyers network demonstrate his dedication to fostering leadership among youth in Nigeria.

15. Abbas Mimiko (ZLP)

Abbas Mimiko Abbas is the governorship candidate for the Zenith Labour Party (ZLP). He is the younger brother of former Governor Olusegun Mimiko. Despite this familial connection, Mr Mimiko has emphasized his desire to campaign independently and gain support based on his own merits rather than relying on his brother's political legacy. He is a trained medical doctor who specializes in psychiatry. He completed his medical education at the University of Lagos College of Medicine. Mr Mimiko has articulated a vision for governance that includes rejuvenating the economy, enhancing agricultural productivity, improving education, and strengthening security measures within Ondo State. He believes the state has untapped resources that can be leveraged for development.

Other candidates

There was little to no public information about the candidates of the other two parties. They are Ogunfeyimi Kolawole (Allied Peoples Management) and Fadoju Babatunde (Action Peoples Party).



WHO seeks urgent action over high diabetes cases

By Helen Okechukwu

The World Health Organization (WHO) on Wednesday raised concern over the high rate of diabetes cases witnessed around the globe and urged countries to take adequate action to suppress the increase.

It was noted that the number of adults living with diabetes worldwide is beyond 800 million, more than quadrupling since 1990, adding that The Lancet made this known in new data research on World Diabetes Day. In the disclosure, analysis reviewed by the NCD Risk Factor Collaboration (NCD-RisC) with support from the WHO said the result showed that the diabetes epidemic needs to be addressed urgently worldwide, most especially in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).

Speaking on the impact of unhealthy food being produced for consumption, WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said, "We have seen an alarming rise in diabetes over the past three decades, which reflects the increase in obesity, compounded by the impacts of the marketing of unhealthy food, a lack of physical activity, and economic hardship." Emphasizing the need to tackle this epidemic, Ghebreyesus stated, "To bring the global diabetes epidemic under control, countries must urgently take action. This starts with enacting policies that support healthy diets and physical activity, and, most importantly, health systems that provide prevention, early detection, and treatment."

Rising to 7% to 14% between 1990 and 2022 in adults, LMICs experienced the largest increases, acknowledging the diabetes rates have increased while access to treatment remains low.

"This trend has led to stark global inequalities: in 2022, almost 450 million adults aged 30 and older—about 59% of all adults with diabetes—remained untreated, marking a 3.5-fold increase in



untreated people since 1990. Ninety percent of these untreated adults are living in LMICs," WHO noted.

With most affected adults aged to be between 18 and older, 20% of those having diabetes are located in the WHO South-East Asia and the Eastern Mediterranean Regions.

WHO noted, "These two regions, together with the African Region, have the lowest rates of diabetes treatment coverage, with fewer than 4 in 10 adults with diabetes taking glucose-lowering medication for their diabetes."

WHO Response Commitment:

WHO reaffirmed its commitment to address the global diabetes burden; the agency launches a global monitoring framework on diabetes on Wednesday.

The framework contains comprehensive guidance to countries in measuring and evaluating diabetes prevention, care, outcomes, and impacts.

The launched framework aims to keep track of key indicators such as glycaemic control, hypertension, and access to essential medicines, with countries taking note of the improvement as they target interventions and policy initiatives.

These approaches will empower countries to prioritize resources effectively, driving significant improvements in diabetes prevention and care.

In 2021, WHO's Global Diabetes Compact was launched to reduce the risk of diabetes, ensure that diabetics have access to equitable, comprehensive, affordable, and quality treatment and care, and further prevent type 2 diabetes.

The same year, a diabetes resolution was

endorsed at the World Health Assembly, calling member states to prioritise the fight against this epidemic and the management of risk factors such as obesity.

The document from WHO noted, "In 2022, WHO established five global diabetes coverage targets to be achieved by 2030. One of these targets is to ensure that 80% of people with diagnosed diabetes achieve good glycaemic control. Today's release underlines the scale and urgency of action needed to advance efforts to close the gap."

It was added that "the upcoming year 2025 presents a significant opportunity to catalyse action against the alarming rise in diabetes worldwide with the Fourth High-level Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) to take place in September."

"This meeting brings heads of states and governments together to set a powerful vision for preventing and controlling NCDs, including diabetes, through a collective commitment to address root causes and improve access to detection and treatment. By aligning efforts towards the 2030 and 2050 goals, this high-level meeting is a pivotal moment for strengthening global health systems, including primary health care, and halting the rise in the diabetes epidemic."

Lassa Fever, CSM: Be hygienic, NCDC boss warns Nigerians

By Helen Okechukwu

The Director General of the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), Jide Idris, has issued a public health warning to residents, urging them to prevent further outbreaks of Lassa Fever and cerebrospinal meningitis (CSM) in Nigeria by maintaining a clean environment.

DG Idris made this statement in Abuja while addressing the press, encouraging residents to seal any rodent entry points to prevent them from gaining access to homes.

Lassa fever is a severe and highly contagious viral disease characterized by hemorrhagic symptoms, primarily caused by the Lassa virus.

The primary carrier of this viral disease is the multimammate rat, commonly referred to as the African rat, which serves as its main reservoir.

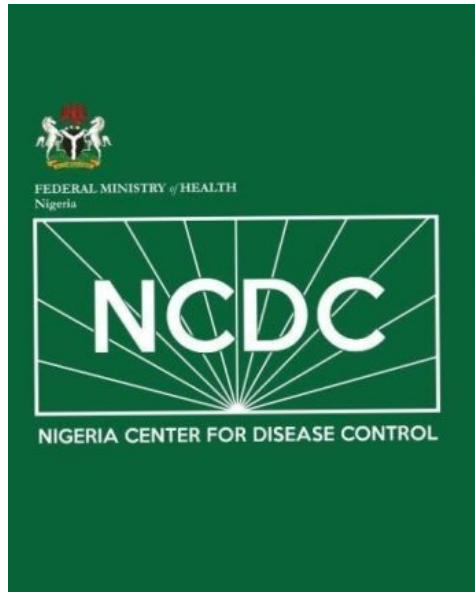
However, other rodent species also have the potential to carry the virus.

Idris advised communities to establish dumping sites far from residential areas to reduce rodent infestations, especially during the peak season from December to June.

The DG of the NCDC also noted that Nigeria has recorded a higher incidence of these viral diseases compared to previous years.

Highlighting the impact of Lassa fever, he stated, "In 2022, Nigeria reported 1,067 confirmed cases across 27 states and 112 LGAs. In 2023, 28 states and 114 LGAs reported 9,155 suspected cases, 1,270 confirmed cases, and 227 deaths. As of 13 October 2024, 8,569 suspected cases, 1,035 confirmed cases, and 174 deaths have been reported across 28 states and 129 LGAs."

Idris emphasized that poor sanitation, inadequate healthcare infrastructure,



and vulnerable populations pose significant health risks to communities in Nigeria.

He encouraged residents to store food items in airtight containers, especially rice, garri, beans, and corn, to protect them from contamination.

Speaking to journalists, he noted that healthcare workers play an important role in preventing and managing Lassa fever.

He urged them to be proactive and adhere to standard preventive measures to ensure their safety, including the use of protective equipment.

To further prevent Lassa fever outbreaks and maintain the current level of surveillance in Nigeria, he advised that suspected cases should be reported promptly.

Idris explained that cerebrospinal meningitis (CSM) affects the brain and spinal cord through inflammation and can be triggered by various pathogens, including bacteria, viruses, parasites, fungi, injuries, and certain medications.

He noted that although CSM cases have been reported throughout 2024, they can be more severe during the dry season. Factors such as dust, strong winds, cold nights, overcrowding, and poor

ventilation contribute to transmission.

The northern part of the country is the most affected region, with 19 states in Nigeria facing CSM cases.

He stated, "In 2023/2024, Nigeria recorded 4,915 suspected cases and 380 confirmed cases, with 361 deaths across 174 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in 24 states, including the Federal Capital Territory.

"A total of 2,281,750 doses of the Men5CV-ACWYX vaccine were provided in Bauchi, Gombe, Jigawa, and Yobe, covering 134 wards in 13 LGAs. The campaign targeted individuals aged one to 29 years, comprising 70 percent of the population."

To prevent further outbreaks, Idris encouraged residents to get vaccinated against meningitis, particularly young children, individuals living in overcrowded households, smokers, and those exposed to poor ventilation and indoor air pollution.

He stressed the importance of avoiding overcrowded spaces and maintaining good hygiene practices.

Meek Mill parts ways with Diddy

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Rapper Meek Mill has officially distanced himself from his longtime associate, Sean “Diddy” Combs, amid an ongoing swirl of legal troubles surrounding the music mogul.

Earlier this week, a fan encountered Meek Mill in a public setting and requested a shoutout, leading to a viral moment captured on Instagram.

While the interaction appeared casual at first glance, it soon took a notable turn, revealing Meek’s feelings towards Diddy’s recent controversies.

The video, which rapidly gained traction on social media platforms, showcased Meek Mill affirmatively distancing himself from Diddy, who is currently embroiled in a series of legal cases and allegations of sexual assault.

With a firm stance, the Philadelphia rapper reiterated his separation from the troubled artist, declaring, “No Diddy,” serving as a stark reminder of his intent to disassociate.

In the candid clip, the 37-year-old

hip-hop star addressed the camera directly, making his message unambiguously clear.

“You already know how we are playing out; this is real life. Yeah, no Diddy gang Meek Mill in real life; don’t ever disrespect me, you heard?” he asserted, conveying a sense of seriousness regarding his relationship with Diddy.

The public’s reaction to Meek Mill’s statements has been a mix of shock and support, especially given the longstanding history between the two artists.

Over the years, Meek and Diddy collaborated on multiple tracks and were often seen together at social events, even donning matching outfits that showcased their camaraderie.

Their friendship has often been a subject of admiration and intrigue in the hip-hop community.

However, this friendly facade has been severely tested since February 2024, when Diddy became the target of intense scrutiny following an explosive lawsuit from



prominent producer Rodney Jones.

In his accusations, Jones alleged that Diddy and Meek Mill had a romantic relationship, a claim that ignited a firestorm of gossip and speculation.

Diddy, facing multiple sexual assault lawsuits and ongoing legal issues, has found himself at the centre of a media frenzy, significantly impacting his relationships.

Meek Mill’s recent remarks appear to reflect a broader sentiment in the industry regarding the implications of associating with an embattled figure like Diddy.

Gospel actor, Baba Gbenro passes away

By Dave Oludare Oso

The Nigerian gospel film industry has suffered the loss of a prominent actor in Mount Zion’s popular series Abattoir, Moses Korede Are, popularly known as Baba Gbenro.

Fellow gospel actor and producer, Oluwaseun Adejumbi, who shared the news on the Instagram, expressed sadness at the passing of his friend and colleague.

Adejumbi wrote, “Heavens’s Gain Again. General Has Gone to rest.”

Loved by fans for his role in Abattoir, Baba Gbenro was also a key figure in gospel filmmaking.

He founded Calvary Movies Drama Ministry in Ogbomoso, Nigeria, and served as the CEO of Calvary Movies Television, dedicating his career to spreading the gospel through film.

Following the announcement,

many fans and well-wishers took to his last Instagram post, shared just six days ago, to pay their respects and express their shock at his sudden demise.



Destiny Boy welcomes first child with partner

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigerian singer Destiny Boy and his partner Iremide have joyously announced the arrival of their first child, a beautiful baby boy.

The talented 20-year-old musician took to Instagram early Wednesday morning to share this heartwarming update, captivating his millions of followers with photographs of both Iremide and their newborn son.

Expressing his deep gratitude and uncontainable joy, Destiny Boy, whose real name is Afeez Adeshina, heartbreakingly shared, “Alhamdulillah. Junior is here. My first son.”

His heartfelt announcement has since elicited an overwhelming wave of congratulatory messages from fans, friends, and fellow musicians who flooded the comments section with warm wishes and blessings.

The journey of Destiny Boy is as inspiring as it is impressive. Born and raised in Nigeria, he embarked on a musical path at a remarkably young age, crafting a distinctive sound that marries traditional Fuji music with modern rhythms.

Destiny Boy first honed his craft at T2 Boys Studios in Agege, where he gained valuable experience initially working as a backup dancer for the well-respected Fuji maestro, Pasuma.

This foundational experience paved the way for his ascension as a prominent solo artist.

Destiny Boy captured the public’s attention in 2019 with his cleverly crafted Fuji cover of Davido’s

chart-topping hit, “If.” As the cover swiftly went viral on social media, it marked a significant turning point in his career, presenting a fusion of contemporary music with rich African traditions that resonated deeply with audiences.

Following this breakthrough, he delivered more captivating covers, showcasing his versatility by reinterpreting popular tracks from influential artists such as Tekno, 2 Baba, 9ice, and Small Doctor.

But it’s not just covers that have established Destiny Boy as a prominent figure in the Nigerian music scene.

His original music catalogue reflects both his unique artistry and his deep roots in Fuji music, featuring popular tracks such as “Lamba,” “One Transaction,” “Gbese,” “Billion Dollar,” “Mio Gbonkankan,” and “L.” Each of these songs exhibits his signature blend of traditional Fuji sounds with contemporary Nigerian tunes, carving out a niche that continues to attract fans both locally and internationally.

With the birth of his son, Destiny Boy enters a new chapter of his life, one that is bound to inspire new themes within his music.

As he embraces this fresh experience of fatherhood, fans are eagerly anticipating how this major life milestone will influence his artistic



expression.

Many music lovers know that motherhood and fatherhood often bring profound changes in the way artists create and connect with their audience, potentially leading to an evolution in Destiny Boy’s sound and messaging.

In the wake of this joyous announcement, it is clear that Destiny Boy is not just a rising star in Nigeria’s flourishing music landscape, but also a devoted partner and now, a proud father.

As he navigates this exciting new journey, fans and followers remain supportive, eager to witness how his family life will intertwine with his music, further enriching Nigeria’s vibrant cultural tapestry.

Stay tuned for more updates about Destiny Boy’s life and career, as this talented and versatile artist continues to rise to greatness in the world of music.

Zuckerberg, T-Pain release anniversary song for wife

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Mark Zuckerberg, the influential founder of Facebook and its parent company Meta, has unveiled a special rendition of the iconic rap hit “Get Low.”

This musical tribute serves to celebrate his enduring relationship with his wife, Priscilla Chan, as they mark their dating anniversary.

Zuckerberg and Chan, who began their romantic journey back in 2003 and exchanged vows in 2012, have shared numerous cherished moments over the years.

This year, however, Zuckerberg decided to take his anniversary celebration to new heights by creating a unique musical gift for Chan that echoes their early days together.

To bring his vision to life, Zuckerberg teamed up with famed American musician Faheem Rashad Najm, more popularly known as T-Pain.

The duo has adopted the band name “Z-Pain” for this collaboration, which reportedly holds significant sentimental value, reminding them both of their college experience and the love story that began on campus.

The 40-year-old billionaire took to his Instagram account to share the heartfelt inspiration behind this tribute.

“Get Low was playing when I first met Priscilla at a college party,” Zuckerberg revealed in his post. “For this reason, every year we listen to it on our dating anniversary. This year, I worked with T-Pain to create our version of this lyrical masterpiece.”

This newly crafted version of “Get Low” is now available for streaming on Spotify, allowing fans of both Zuckerberg and T-Pain to enjoy the

refreshing take on a classic.

Concluding his Instagram post with the affectionate note “Love you P,” Zuckerberg demonstrated the depth of his feelings for his wife, further highlighting the sincerity of this annual celebration.

Zuckerberg’s Instagram post included several captivating visuals. Fans were treated to a picture of the new song’s lyrics, an album cover featuring Zuckerberg and T-Pain together while holding acoustic guitars, and candid snapshots from their lively recording session.

These images beautifully encapsulated the creative partnership at work, showcasing a fun atmosphere infused with dedication and artistry.

Chan’s reaction to the surprise gift was both joyful and heartwarming, captured in Zuckerberg’s Instagram story for all to see.

In the video, she can be seen laughing and affectionately calling the tribute “so romantic.” Her expressive happiness serves as a testament to the thoughtfulness that went into the musical collaboration.

Reflecting on the nostalgia that the song evokes, Chan shared her playful side, saying, “21 years later, I can’t get quite as low, but it brings back a lot of fun memories.”

Her words offer a glimpse into the couple’s shared journey, emphasizing the laughter and enjoyment they have experienced throughout their time together.



T-Pain, renowned for his contributions to the music industry, also took to social media to express his excitement about the collaboration.

With enthusiasm, he posted, “Z-Pain has arrived ... Get Low by Zuck and me out now,” further amplifying the celebratory spirit surrounding the release of the song. Originally released in 2002, “Get Low” was penned by hip-hop icons Lil Jon and The East Side Boyz.

Over the years, the track has resonated with countless audiences, becoming a staple in party scenes and a nostalgic reminder of youth.

By reimagining this classic, Zuckerberg and T-Pain bring a fresh perspective while honouring the song’s enduring legacy.

Overall, this musical project not only highlights Zuckerberg’s romantic gestures toward Chan but also showcases the power of music in weaving together valued memories in a relationship.

As the couple continues to grow together, this musical tribute stands as a symbol of their love, dedication, and shared experiences a melodic reflection of their journey through life, hand in hand.

Republicans take full U.S. control as Trump returns to white house

By Dr. Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi



Republicans gain control of the House, achieving a “trifecta” with the presidency and Senate under Trump. This unified government sets the stage for sweeping policy changes and reforms.

Washington, D.C. — In a major political victory, the Republican Party has taken control of the U.S. House of Representatives, completing a “trifecta” by holding the presidency and both houses of Congress. This gives the Republicans full control of the federal government, opening the door for major policy changes.

Former President Donald Trump returned to the White House after a decisive win in the 5 November election, running on a platform of “America First” policies. Late on Wednesday, the Associated Press confirmed the Republicans had passed the crucial threshold of 218 seats in the House of Representatives, securing a majority among its 435 seats. This victory allows Republicans to lead both Congress and the White House.

“We stand united, determined, and ready to deliver the America First

Agenda,” wrote House Speaker Mike Johnson on social media. With a clear majority, Republicans are now in a strong position to push for key goals, including stricter immigration rules, tariffs on imports, and reductions to environmental protections.

This “governing trifecta” recalls the last time Republicans held all three branches of government from 2017 to 2018, during Trump’s first term. However, full party control is often brief. When Trump held a trifecta previously, he managed to pass a major tax cut but faced setbacks on other goals, like his effort to repeal the Affordable Care Act. Similarly, Biden’s 2020 trifecta was short-lived, with his “Build Back Better” spending plans scaled back significantly.

The Republican majority faces a key challenge in the Senate’s filibuster rule, which requires 60 votes to pass most major bills. Without a 60-seat majority, Republicans will still need support from some Democrats to pass certain legislation. However, having control of both the House and Senate does make it easier for Republicans to confirm key appointments, including judges, further boosting their influence in the federal courts.

The Supreme Court, already holding a conservative majority at six to three, provides Trump with a key advantage this time around. This could allow him to pursue policies that are less likely to face legal challenges, a common obstacle during his first term.

Yet, history has shown that such political dominance can be short-lived. Both Trump and Biden experienced similar trifectas during their first two years in office, only to lose control in midterm elections. Republicans know they must move quickly to make the most of this period of unified government.

With Trump and the Republican Party in charge, the U.S. could see bold legislative changes ahead. Whether these plans become reality will depend on how effectively the party manages this rare opportunity for full control in Washington.

Read Also: Trump returns to Washington for White House meeting with President Biden

Read Also: Trump names Musk to new department as team takes shape

We expect same US policy with Trump – Russia Foreign Minister

By Agency Reporter

Moscow's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov does not expect any change in U.S. policy towards Russia or Ukraine under incoming president Donald Trump because all U.S. governments have an interest in weakening Russia.

"They feel comfortable when they weaken Russia and its influence," Lavrov said in an interview with Russian state television.

Russia has repeatedly accused the United States of supporting the war in Ukraine mainly to weaken Moscow.

"Ultimately, everything that happens can be traced back to the desire to eliminate Russia as a competitor," Lavrov said.

He added that Washington will continue to strive to keep everything under its control.

Lavrov is representing Kremlin chief Vladimir Putin at the G20 summit in Rio de Janeiro next week, where he will also

meet U.S. representatives. During the election campaign, Trump stated that he intended to end the Ukraine war through a deal with Russia, though he provided no details.

Putin congratulated Trump on his election victory last week and expressed openness to dialogue.

At the same time, he emphasized that Trump was unpredictable, adding that it remains to be seen what exactly the new Trump administration will do.

Lavrov warned, however, against a resumption of the Minsk agreements to resolve the conflict.

The agreements, brokered by Germany



and France in 2014 and 2015, had among other things, envisaged autonomy for the Donbas region, which Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky later rejected.

Russia attacked Ukraine on February 24, 2022, purportedly to pre-empt what Moscow claimed was an attempt by the Kiev military to reclaim the regions of Luhansk and Donetsk, controlled by pro-Russian separatists.

Man with explosives blown up at Brazil's Supreme Court

By Agency Reporter

A man carrying explosives died in a blast as he attempted to attack Brazil's Supreme Court on Wednesday, police said, days before the country hosts the G20 summit.

Brasilia vice governor, Celina Leao said preliminary information suggested it was a "suicide", and came seconds after an explosion in a nearby car that the man was seen getting out of.

"This citizen approached the Federal Supreme Court, tried to enter, failed, and the explosion happened at the entrance," Leao told reporters, adding that no one else was hurt.

The body was found with "devices still on it," she added.

"A police inquiry will be opened to investigate the attacks," Federal Police said in a statement.

The man was named as Francisco

Wanderley Luiz, a 2020 local council candidate for the Liberal Party of the former president Jair Bolsonaro, according to GloboNews network citing police documents.

A government employee in the capital, Laiana Costa, told local media that she saw the man pass by: "There was a noise, and I looked back and there was fire and smoke."

Authorities have already heightened security in the country ahead of the two-day G20 summit starting on Monday, when world leaders including US President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping will visit.

Xi Jinping is scheduled to travel to Brasilia for a state visit on Wednesday.

JUDGES EVACUATED

The Supreme Court said in a statement that two explosions happened at the end of Wednesday's session and that the judges were safely evacuated.

The court is located in the Praca dos Tres Poderes, which also fronts onto the



presidential palace and the Congress.

President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva was not in the palace at the time of the explosions, a spokesman said.

Jorge Messias, the Brazilian solicitor general, condemned the attacks.

"We need to understand the motivation behind the attacks, as well as restore peace and security as quickly as possible," he posted on X. The presidential palace was sealed off and a large police contingent deployed around the plaza.

Real Madrid star Marc Cucalon announces retirement at 19

By Kayode Akinwumi

Marc Cucalon, a highly regarded youth player for Real Madrid, has announced his retirement from professional football at the age of 19 due to complications from a serious knee injury. Cucalon, who joined Real Madrid's academy in 2016, was considered a talented midfielder with a bright future. He suffered a ruptured ACL during a UEFA Youth League match in Glasgow on September 6, 2022.

After enduring 796 days of recovery and setbacks, including an uncommon bacterial infection that affected the cartilage in his knee, Cucalon has made the difficult decision to step away from the sport. In an emotional Instagram post, Cucalon expressed his gratitude to everyone who supported him during his time at Real Madrid. He thanked his family, friends, teammates, coaches, and medical staff for their unwavering support.

Cucalon acknowledged the difficulty of leaving home to pursue his dream,



but he emphasized the joy he felt seeing his family's pride in his accomplishments. He also expressed appreciation for the lessons football has taught him, particularly the importance of perseverance and resilience. Cucalon concluded his message by thanking Real Madrid for their unwavering support and the fans for their encouragement.

Cucalon's announcement has been met with an outpouring of support

from the football community. Real Madrid legends Marcelo and Guti, along with current first-team player Aurelien Tchouameni, have left messages of encouragement on his Instagram post. While Cucalon's professional football career has been cut short, his resilience and positive outlook suggest a promising future in whatever path he chooses next.

Premier League Clubs Seek Compensation in Manchester City Case

By Kayode Akinwumi

Four Premier League clubs have taken legal action to seek compensation if Manchester City is found guilty of breaking financial rules. Manchester United, Liverpool, Arsenal, and Tottenham Hotspur have all filed potential claims before a statute of limitations deadline last week.

These claims stem from allegations against Manchester City, first published by Der Spiegel in November 2018, based on leaked documents known as "Football Leaks". The allegations involve 115 breaches of Premier League financial rules, including failure to provide accurate financial information over nine seasons.

The clubs are expected to claim for loss of earnings if Manchester City is found guilty. The potential penalties against Manchester City include expulsion from the Premier League.

Manchester City, led by their head coach



Pep Guardiola, maintain their innocence and are fighting the charges. An independent commission is reviewing the case, with a verdict expected near the end of the season.

Manchester City, the reigning Premier League champions, are currently five points behind Liverpool in the standings. Despite a recent dip in form, defender Ruben Dias remains confident in the team's ability to bounce back.

Harry Kane berates England teammates for withdrawing from squad

By Kayode Akinwumi

England captain Harry Kane has publicly criticized his teammates for withdrawing from the national team squad ahead of crucial matches. Kane expressed his disapproval of players prioritizing club commitments over international duty, stating that “England comes before anything.”

Eight players, including Phil Foden, Jack Grealish, and Declan Rice, withdrew from interim manager Lee Carsley’s squad on Monday, just days after the initial announcement. Some of these withdrawals followed statements from club managers indicating that their players would not be released for international duty.

Kane, who has 101 caps for England, suggested that the absence of a permanent manager might be a factor in players’ decisions to withdraw. Former manager Gareth Southgate resigned after Euro 2024, and his successor, Thomas Tuchel, is not due to start until January.



Kane believes that Southgate fostered a strong sense of commitment to the national team, and he is concerned that this attitude might be waning. He praised Southgate for instilling a sense of joy and excitement in playing for England.

The England captain’s comments highlight a potential tension between

club and country loyalties among players. With important European Championship qualifiers approaching, Kane’s remarks have sparked debate about the commitment of some players to the national team.

Troost-Ekong reveals why He chose Nigeria over the Netherlands

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

Super Eagles captain William Troost-Ekong has revealed that a pivotal phone call from the late coach Stephen Keshi and the opportunity to play international football at a young age were the key factors in his decision to represent Nigeria over the Netherlands, the country of his birth.

In a recent interview on the Sports Afterparty Podcast, Troost-Ekong, now 30, explained that the choice between playing for the Dutch national team and Nigeria came at a crucial point in his career when he was 21.

At the time, he had already represented the Netherlands at youth levels, including the U19 and U20 teams, but there was no clear pathway to the senior team.

“Just at the start of the season, I had played for the Dutch U19 and U20 squads, but there was no real perspective yet for the first team,” he recalled.

“The choice was between trying to progress and later in my career maybe have a chance to play for the Netherlands or have a chance now to play for the Super Eagles, who were kind of going through a

transition stage where a lot of their defenders at that time were a little bit older, so I knew that they wanted to make some changes there.”

Troost-Ekong admitted that it was this opportunity for immediate international exposure that ultimately swayed his decision.

The Dutch national team, while having a deep pool of talent, did not offer the same near-term prospects for him to feature in the senior squad.

Meanwhile, the Nigerian team, in transition at the time, presented a more immediate opportunity to secure a place in the squad, which he saw as a chance to kickstart his international career.

Troost-Ekong, who has become one of Nigeria’s most consistent players over the last decade, made his Super Eagles debut in 2014 and has since become a central figure in the team.

His leadership was solidified when he assumed the captaincy on an interim basis at the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) in 2021. He has also etched his name into the history books by becoming the highest-scoring defender in AFCON history, with five



goals, including three in a single tournament.

His impressive performances in Africa’s premier football competition earned him a nomination for the 2023 CAF Men’s Player of the Year award, a testament to his impact on the continent’s footballing stage.

Looking ahead, Troost-Ekong is focused on Nigeria’s upcoming 2025 AFCON qualifier against Benin Republic, scheduled for Thursday in Ivory Coast.

Despite Nigeria only needing a point to qualify for the tournament in Morocco, Troost-Ekong dismissed concerns about complacency.