

**40 Abia Arise Farmers  
Receive Empowerment  
Grants from  
Chief Anderson Okoro**

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**Gov Otti Flags Off Abia  
Leadership Academy  
Bootcamp**

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**Institute Moves To  
forestall Building  
Collapse**

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# NATIONAL Ambassador

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"Uplift the people, project the nation"

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■ A Cross-section of Beneficiaries during the opening ceremony of the Abia Leadership Academy Bootcamp at Government College Umuahia, Abia State, recently.

**SSG Hails  
Abam Women,  
as Pillars of  
Peace, Growth**

By Ndubueze Ngozi

**T**he Secretary to the Abia State Government, Professor Kenneth Kalu, has commended the vital role of women in fostering peace, stability, and development, describing them as indispensable agents of societal transformation.

Prof. Kalu made the remarks at the 2025 First General Congress of the Inyom Abam Onyerubi Development Union (Home and Abroad), held in Atan Abam, Arochukuwu Local Government Area, with the theme "Homecoming."

In his address, the SSG emphasised that women are the foundation of every thriving society, beginning with their roles within the family as primary role models and caregivers.

He applauded the unity and commitment displayed by Abam women and congratulated the Local Organizing Committee for the successful planning and execution of the congress. The SSG expressed optimism that the gathering would serve as a catalyst for meaningful dialogue and community-driven initiatives to promote peace and development in Abam.

Prof. Kalu also urged the women and the wider community to continue supporting the administration of Governor Alex Otti, whom he described as committed to repositioning Abia State for excellence.

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Continued on P.2

## Abia, MOUAU Move To Boost Food, Nutrition Security

By Chukwuemeka Egejuru

**I**n a strategic move to strengthen food and nutritional security in Abia State and the wider Southeast Region, the Abia State Government has announced plans to collaborate with the Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umuahia (MOUAU).

The State Commissioner for Agriculture, Dr. Cliff Agbaeze, disclosed this during an official visit to MOUAU's Greenhouse Project on Tomatoes and Peppers recently.

He said the partnership will focus on building the capacities of Farmers and Youths in crop production, particularly tomatoes and peppers, to address persistent shortages in the

region's markets.

Dr. Agbaeze commended the university, led by Prof. Maduebibisi Ofo Iwe for fulfilling its agricultural mandate by bridging the gaps among academics,

research and farmers' needs.

He assured that the state is committed to harnessing the institution's expertise to enhance food production, improve market supply,

and promote agricultural innovation.

The commissioner, who was earlier received by the Director of the university's Agribusiness Incubation Centre (ABIC), Dr. Philips Nto,

### Otti Applauds Tinubu As Abia Secures \$125m IsDB Facility

By Amarachi Uzoukwu

**A**bia State Governor Alex Otti, has hailed the Federal Executive Council's approval of a \$125 million Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) facility for the Abia State Integrated Infrastructure Development Project (ABSIIID), describing it as

"a direct complement to the visionary infrastructural development agenda" of his administration.

The approval, granted at FEC's meeting recently forms part of a \$263.80 million co-financing package aimed at

modernising Abia's road networks, tackling erosion challenges, and revitalising its urban centres.

The financing arrangement comprises \$125 million from the IsDB, \$100 million from the

African Development Bank (AfDB), \$15 million from the Canada-Africa Development Bank, and \$23.80 million in counterpart funding from the Abia State Government.

**EDITORIAL: Rise Of Social Media Fertility 'curses' in Nigeria**

# News

## Abia Govt, MOUAU Move To Boost Food, Nutrition Security

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Meanwhile, the University's Greenhouse Project Supervisor, Prof. Mabel Ifeoma Onwuka, explained that the initiative was designed as a research and training hub under the university's climate-smart agriculture programme.

According to her, the facility is not limited to enhancing food production only, but also to provide hands-on training for students, farmers, and extension workers.

Prof. Onwuka emphasised the nutritional value of tomatoes as a rich source of essential micronutrients, stressing that the project integrates teaching, research, and practical demonstration for sustainable food production.

She noted that the greenhouses operate under an integrated system that

combines organic and inorganic fertilisers with efficient irrigation techniques.

She further highlighted the commitment of MOUAU's Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Iwe, to advancing agricultural expertise, bridging supply gaps, and promoting nationwide food security.

Other dignitaries at the event were; Revd. Father Anokwuru, Special Adviser to THE Governor on Policy and Evaluation, Director, Livestock and Fisheries /CSS - Trained Farmers Mr Victor Obasi and Director of Extension Services, Abia Agricultural Development Programme (ADP), Revd. Johnson Udensi.

## SSG hails Abam Women

Contd from page 1

In her welcome address, the President General of the Inyom Abam Onyerubi Forum, Lady NneOrionaUkeh, described the congress as a symbolic homecoming—a celebration of Abam's rich cultural heritage, the strength and resilience of its women, and a reaffirmation of unity across the clan.

In goodwill messages, the Majority Leader of the Abia State House of Assembly, Hon. Okoro

Uchenna, and the General Manager of the Abia Newspapers and Publishing Corporation, Chief Jones Nnanna Ike, praised the achievements of Abam women and pledged continued support for the forum's objectives.

The event featured cultural displays, lectures, and community-oriented discussions, all aimed at reinforcing unity and sustainable development in Abamland.

## Oluebube Chukwu Receives Award from Rotary Club

By Adindu Stephanie

**T**he Head, Due Process and Public Procurement Bureau, Abia State, Dr. Oluebube A. Chukwu, has been honoured with the Youth Ambassador Award by Rotary Club International.

Dr. Chukwu was conferred with the award during the installation ceremony of the 45th President of the Rotary Club of Umuahia, Rotarian Ifeoma Kelenna-Obonna, held amid pomp and pageantry in Umuahia, Abia State.

According to the Rotary Club, the award celebrates Dr. Chukwu's remarkable contributions to human capacity development, particularly his empowerment programmes for young people and grassroots community service initiatives.

In his acceptance speech, the Isuochi-born technocrat and founder of Oluebube Chukwu Foundation expressed gratitude to the Rotary Club for the honour, pledging to sustain his commitment to humanitarian service and rural development.

Dr. Chukwu also urged young people to support the administration of Governor Alex Otti, describing the governor as "a youth-friendly leader dedicated to transforming Abia State."

Earlier in her valedictory speech, Outgoing Club President, Rotarian Temitope Nnaomah expressed appreciation to members for their cooperation during her tenure, which saw the execution of 32 impactful projects across education, healthcare, and communal hygiene.

Meanwhile, the new President, Rtn Ifeoma Kelenna-Obonna, in her inaugural address, pledged to uphold the ideals of Rotary International and unveiled plans to embark on major capital projects such as borehole installations in rural communities and construction of public toilet facilities in markets.

## Poly Rector, Okoro, Advocates Domestication of AI in Tertiary Institutions

By Okereke Kate

The Rector of Dr. Ogbonnaya Onu Polytechnic, Aba Christopher Kalu Okoro, has called for the widespread domestication of Artificial Intelligence (AI) across tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Speaking at the just concluded South East Zonal Summit of the Nigerian Institute of Management (Chartered), in Umuahia, Okoro explained that AI is the development of computer systems capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as learning, problem-solving, adding that decision-making has become an indispensable tool in today's digital world.

According to him, AI systems leverage algorithms and data to make predictions, classify objects, and generate actionable insights. He stressed that Nigeria's educational institutions must align with global trends by adopting AI in their curricula and operations.

"As an institution, once we have the right framework and policy, we can move in the direction the world is going", he said.

The rector disclosed that from the 2024/2025 academic session, Artificial Intelligence would become a compulsory course in Dr. Ogbonnaya Onu Polytechnic.

"We have fully domesticated AI studies here because our state governor is digitally inclined, and we are expected to align with this vision", he stated.

The rector further disclosed that AI is now integrated into all aspects of the polytechnic's operations, including academic and administrative management, urging other tertiary institutions to embrace AI, noting that it would enhance efficiency, innovation, and competitiveness in education.

Delivering his keynote address, the rector highlighted the importance of AI, stating that it is key for growth

and survival, expressing his institution's readiness to partner with both public and private stakeholders in adopting AI-driven operations.

He emphasized that bodies such as the Nigerian Institute of Management (Chartered), should take the lead in advocating policies for the regulation and integration of AI, stressing that if not properly regulated, could destroy the nation's economy.

The rector further dispelled concerns that AI would make humans redundant, explaining that its domestication is not intended to replace human intelligence or manpower, but rather, to complement and enhance it, ensuring optimal performance and productivity.

## Probing of Emmanuel: A'Ibom House Dismisses Media Reports

From Lovina Emole, Uyo

**T**he Akwa Ibom State House of Assembly has dismissed the media report that it is probing the immediate past Governor of the state, Mr Udom Emmanuel.

There was news report by Leadership Newspaper on Monday, August 11, that former Governor Emmanuel was facing a probe by the House of Assembly.

However, the Deputy Speaker of the State House of Assembly, Hon. Kufre-Abasi Edidem, in a statement on Tuesday described such publications as speculative, false and without any official position or resolution of the House.

Edidem while stating that at no point did the Akwa Ibom State House of Assembly constituted a committee to probe the former governor, said the only committee constituted at Thursday plenary was committee meant to solve the non-payment of factory workers at the Coconut Refinery.

He said, "The attention of the leadership and members of the Akwa Ibom State House of Assembly has been drawn to a report on the Leadership Newspaper of Monday, August 11, 2025, and syndicated on several other media publications that the immediate past Governor, His Excellency, Mr Udom Emmanuel, CO N, is facing a probe by the House of Assembly."

"At no point has the Akwa Ibom State House of Assembly constituted any committee to probe former Governor Udom

Emmanuel, contrary to the report. The publication is speculative, lacks a factual basis, and does not reflect any official position or resolution of the House."

"What transpired in the Akwa Ibom House of Assembly on Thursday August 7, 2025, was that the Honourable Member representing Mkpatehin State Constituency, Hon Uwem Peter Imoh-Ita brought before the House that some employees of the Coconut Plantation who are largely of Mkpatehin origin, therefore his constituents,

allegedly have not been paid for seven months. As a norm in the House, Adhoc committees are usually constituted to investigate the veracity or otherwise, of public complaints. The matter of the St Gabriel's Coconut Oil Factory, being a state owned enterprise, was not an exception. It had nothing to do with the issues of ownership of other companies in operations in the State."

He, therefore called for responsible journalism urging journalists to verify facts before going to the press.

## 2027 Polls: Ohanaeze Youth Council Vows to Reclaim Igbo Political Space

By Charles Ogbonnaya

**T**he Ohanaeze Ndigbo Youth Council (OYC), the apex socio-cultural youth body in Igboland, has announced plans to lead a political renaissance in the 2027 general elections, by retiring what it describes as "expired" and underperforming politicians of Igbo descent.

This declaration was made by the Council's National Publicity Secretary, Comrade Authority Michael Ukpabi, during a courtesy visit to the Deputy Governor of Abia State, Chief Ikechukwu Emetu, at the Government House in Umuahia.

Ukpabi lamented that many current political leaders have failed to represent the interests of Ndigbo effectively, stating that they have outlived their usefulness in the political arena. He emphasized that the OYC, backed by the strength of Igbo youth who constitute over 60 per cent of the population, is prepared to usher in a new generation of competent, visionary leaders.

"We are fully mobilized and have mapped out strategies to ensure that no expired or inactive politician continues to dominate the Igbo political space," Ukpabi asserted.

He reiterated the Council's mission to protect and promote the interests of Igbo youths globally, noting that OYC's leadership is actively reviving its grassroots structures across Abia State to build a formidable political force.

### CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known and addressed as Peculiar Chinyere Dim, now wish to be known and addressed as PECULIAR CHINYERE ONYISHI. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. The general public should please take note.  
**PECULIAR CHINYERE ONYISHI.**

### Correction of Name and Date of Birth

This is to affirm that Obasi Obinna which was wrongly written on my Bank Verification Number (BVN) and Obasi Emmanuel Obinnaya are same person. I now wish to be known and addressed as OBASI EMMANUEL OBINNAYA. My date of birth was wrongly written as 25<sup>th</sup> day of January 1971 instead of 3<sup>rd</sup> day of May 1976. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. Zenith Bank and general public should please take note.  
**MR. OBASI EMMANUEL OBINNAYA.**



## News

# ASEPA Launches Major Sanization, Flood Mitigation Operation In Umuahia

By Charles Ogbonnaya

In response to recent flood warnings issued by the Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NiMet), the Abia State Environmental Protection Agency (ASEPA), Umuahia Zone, has launched an extensive environmental sanitation and drainage dredging campaign across flood-prone areas of the state capital.

The operation, currently underway in Umuahia North and South Local Government Areas, focuses on clearing key waterways and unblocking drainage systems.

Areas already under active intervention include Afarukwu-Aba Road, Ihie Bridge in the Umuntu Autonomous Community,

and Umudere Bridge linking Amakama in the Olokoro Clan.

This proactive initiative comes on the heels of NiMet forecasts listing Abia among states at high risk of flooding due to intensified rainfall associated with climate change. ASEPA's efforts underscore its commitment to disaster prevention through sustainable environmental management and infrastructure maintenance.

During a site inspection, Deputy General Manager of ASEPA, Umuahia Zone, Catechist Jonah Ambrose highlighted the preventive nature of the operation.

"This operation is designed to cushion the impact of potential flooding and avert

disasters before they occur," Ambrose stated.

"We are clearing drainage channels and desilting rivers, including the Ihie River, which has been clogged for years by non-biodegradable waste," he further stated.

He called on residents to desist from indiscriminate waste disposal, especially into drains and water bodies. According to him, much of the debris being removed is plastic waste, which obstructs the natural flow of stormwater.

"We are installing waste receptacles at strategic locations to encourage proper disposal." "Flood prevention is a shared responsibility that requires community cooperation," he added.

Also speaking with the media, ASEPA's Head of

Operations, Mr. Chidiebere Ogbuehi, revealed that the agency handles an estimated 216,000 tons of waste annually. He identified poor waste management as a major driver of environmental degradation in the state.

"To tackle this, ASEPA has introduced a door-to-door waste collection system aimed at promoting a culture of responsible disposal," he said.

The agency's intervention highlights the growing significance of local action in building climate resilience. Abia State's integrated strategy—anchored on infrastructure maintenance, public awareness, and civic engagement—offers a replicable model for other flood-prone regions across Nigeria and beyond.



Chief Dr. Anderson Okoro addressing members of the Abia Arise Movement during the disbursement of financial grants to 40 beneficiaries at European Hall, Ndi Oji Aban Central School, Arochuku.

## 40 Abia Arise Farmers Receive Empowerment Grants From Chief Dr. Anderson Okoro

By Favour Okorie

There was great excitement and joy in Ovuoku Ward as a well-known businessman and philanthropist, Chief Anderson Okoro, gave financial grants to 40 rice farmers who are members of the Abia Arise Movement.

Each farmer received ₦50,000 to support his/her rice farming activities. The event took place at European Hall, Ndi Oji Aban Central School, and was attended by farmers from the seven villages of Ovuoku Ward: Ndi Oji, Atan, Ndi Okorie, Ndi Okereke, Ndi Okwara, Eziafor, and Ahuma Abam.

The support was part of the 2025 Agricultural Empowerment Scheme, a programme that aims to

help local farmers and support the state government's efforts to develop rural communities. Chief Okoro said the grant was his way of supporting Alex Chioma Otti's administration, which has brought positive changes to Abia State in just two years.

Chief Okoro, who is also the CEO of Seed Beverages Limited, praised the governor's work, especially in making rural roads, like the Ozu Abam-Arochuku Road, motorable again.

"This is my way of thanking Governor Otti," Dr. Okoro said. "By helping these farmers, we're also helping to build a better Abia from the grassroots."

He made it clear that the grant is not a loan and doesn't need to be paid back. Instead, it's meant to

help reduce the cost of farming and increase rice production in the area.

Chief Okoro also quoted US President John F. Kennedy, to encourage others to support their communities "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country."

He also thanked another community leader, Chief James Chijioke Jnr (Ike Abam), for his support of Ovuoku through the Unubiko Foundation. He said his own effort is part of a larger goal to improve the lives of people in the area.

The farmers were selected through a fair and transparent process. A local committee, led by Chief Ulu Edu and Elder Kalu Dike Kalu, carried out farm visits and held a raffle draw to choose the beneficiaries. The scheme's Coordinator,

Agwu Chika Uda, said the team made sure only rice farmers benefited from the programme.

"This is a well-timed and practical support," Uda said. "It will not only improve rice production but also encourage more people to see farming as a good source of income."

During the event, local and state leaders praised Chief Okoro for his generosity. The General Manager of Abia Newspapers and Publishing Corporation (ANPC), Chief Jones Ike, described the project as "visionary" and said it should be copied by others.

"Even in hard times, Chief Okoro has shown that giving back is still possible." He is a true son of Ovuoku, and his actions should inspire others," Chief Ike said.

# International Youth Day: Chukwu Urges Nigeria to Prioritize Youth Welfare

By Adindu Stephanie

As the world marks International Youth Day 2025, the Head, Due Process and Public Procurement Bureau in Abia State, Dr. Oluebube A. Chukwu has called for urgent policy action to prioritize youth welfare in Nigeria.

The governor's aide, who disclosed to newsmen in commemoration of 2025 International Youth recently, urged young people to remain resilient and continue driving positive change in their communities.

Chukwu who also described this year's theme, 'Local Youth Actions for the SDGs and Beyond', as apt, underscored the vital role of young people in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through grassroots innovation and engagement.

He described the Nigerian youth population estimated at over 90 million—as the country's greatest asset, and emphasized that strategic investment in their education, healthcare, mental well-being, and economic empowerment is non-negotiable.

"Our youth must not merely survive they must thrive." "Government and stakeholders must move beyond tokenism to implement tangible, measurable reforms that place young people at the centre of development", he said.

Highlighting the significance of community-based action, Dr. Chukwu lauded youth-led efforts across the country that are translating SDG goals into real-world impact from climate resilience to education and employment.

Dr. Chukwu further implored youth to leverage on Gov. Alex Otti's youth-based programmes like Techrise, Abia Leadership Academy, among others to actualize their dreams.

These, he said are proof that Nigerian youth can turn adversity into opportunity when supported with the right tools and platforms.

While acknowledging persistent challenges such as unemployment, inequality, and inadequate infrastructure, Dr. Chukwu encouraged Nigerian youth not to lose hope.

"Do not be daunted. Your creativity, determination, and passion are the foundation of a better Nigeria," he enjoined.

Dr. Chukwu advocated for several practical steps to harness youth potential to include: establishing youth councils and advisory platforms at local and state levels; supporting youth-led policy dialogues and governance initiatives; expanding access to digital skills training, green economy programmes; entrepreneurship funding, and mentorship opportunities through partnerships with government, civil society, and the private sector.

As Nigeria joins the global community in celebrating International Youth Day, Dr. Chukwu stressed that the moment must go beyond ceremony.

"It's time to match words with action. Prioritizing youth welfare is not just a moral duty—it is a strategic imperative for our nation's future," he maintained.

He further urged Nigerian youth to remain focused, courageous, and committed to excellence.

According to him: "Be bold. Stay resilient. Strive to be your best. And continue building change from the ground up."

## Abia Govt Pledges to Continue Projects That Benefit the People

By Nubueze Ngozi

The Abia State Government has restated its commitment to carrying out projects that will improve the lives of its people.

This assurance was given by the Secretary to the State Government (SSG), Professor Kenneth Kalu, while receiving a delegation from the Nigerian Railway Corporation and Railway Properties Limited who were on a working visit to the state.

Professor Kalu said the government, under Governor Alex Otti, is focused on using public resources for the public good. He added that the administration has launched several people-oriented programmes, including the Abia Leadership Academy to train young people in leadership, integrity, and moral values, as well as major road rehabilitation and school upgrades across the state.

He said the engagement with the Railway team will continue, especially on plans to relocate the Umuahia Railway Station to the proposed new bus terminal.

Also speaking, the Commissioner for Transport, Dr. Chimezie Ukaegbu, thanked the team for choosing to work with Abia State and expressed hope that the partnership would bring positive results.

In his remarks, the Managing Director of Railway Properties Limited, Mr. Timothy Zalanga, said his team is responsible for working with key stakeholders to support the state's relocation project. He assured the government of their full cooperation and praised the Governor for his developmental efforts, saying the project will benefit everyone when completed.

## News

### Religious Leaders Urged To Promote Peace, Unity

By Nneoma Stephanie

**R**eligious leaders have been called upon to use their influence to promote peace, unity, and respect for human rights in society.

Executive Secretary of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Dr. Tony Ojukwu (SAN), made this call in Abuja at a one-day awareness programme organised for religious leaders by the NHRC. The programme focused on peaceful coexistence and the protection of human rights.

Represented by the Head of the NHRC Monitoring Unit, Dr. Benedict Agu Ojukwu noted that religious leaders hold a trusted position in their communities and can help shape moral values and behaviour.

He said the training was designed to help faith leaders understand how human rights principles align with religious teachings and to provide them with tools for conflict resolution and peace building.

"Religious leaders have always played a key role in shaping conscience, promoting unity, and guiding moral values."

"Your teachings can inspire dignity, compassion, and respect for others. In today's world, where conflict and inequality are common, your leadership is crucial in bringing people together and protecting the rights of all," he stated.

Ojukwu explained that the NHRC, established by the amended 2010 Act, works to promote, protect, and enforce the human rights of all Nigerians. He added that the Commission regularly conducts public education campaigns to inform citizens about their rights and responsibilities.

Human rights consultant, Mr. Saka Azimazi, also addressed the gathering, urging religious leaders to avoid extremist positions in their teachings.

"Don't go to the extremes. Stay balanced so your message is clear and people can relate to it," he advised.

Azimazi, speaking on the role of religious leaders in advancing human rights, encouraged them to focus on spreading messages of truth, tolerance, and peaceful coexistence.

"By highlighting shared values found in both religion and human rights, we can build a society where everyone is respected, protected, and able to live in dignity—regardless of their beliefs or background," he said.

### Office Of Head Of Service Provides Financial Support To Workers With Severe Health Challenges

By Ndubueze Ngozi

**T**he Abia State Head of Service, Mr. Benson Ojeikere, has reaffirmed the present administration's commitment to prioritizing the welfare of civil servants in the state.

Ojeikere made this known during the presentation of a cheque to Mrs. Confidence David, a staff member of the Abia State Structures for Signage and Advertisement Agency (ABSSAA), to assist with her medical expenses.

Represented by the Director of Information, Mrs. Adaeze Ralph



Head of Service, Mr. Benson Ojeikere,

Igbokwe, the Head of Service explained that the financial help initiative was designed to provide relief to workers facing severe health challenges, a demonstration of the

government's solidarity with its workforce during difficult times.

He noted that Mrs. David is one of several beneficiaries of the scheme, which has

been implemented in two phases: first during the 2025 Workers' Day celebration, and again to mark the two-year anniversary of the current administration. Ojeikere described

the programme as a humanitarian initiative by the Office of the Head of Service, aimed at complementing the state government's broader efforts to improve the overall well-being of civil servants.

Receiving the cheque on behalf of the beneficiary, the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of ABSSAA, Mrs. Victoria Dibumma Onwubiko, expressed gratitude to the state government for its show of compassion. She described the gesture as laudable and unprecedented, noting that it would boost workers' morale and inspire greater productivity and dedication.

### Flood: Isialangwa North Residents Urged To Adopt Preventive Actions

By Blessing Anienwe

**R**esidents of Isialangwa North have been urged to adopt preventive actions such as avoiding construction on waterways, halting sand mining, stopping deforestation, and properly disposing of waste to reduce the risk of flooding forecasted by the Nigeria Hydrological Services Agency (NIHSA) and the Nigeria Meteorological Agency (NIMET).

Commissioner for Environment, Mr. Philemon Asonye Ogbonna, made this

appeal during a flood sensitisation visit to the local government headquarters in OkpualaNgwa.

Represented by Mr. Chris Ike, Head of Climate Change at the ministry, the team encouraged the formation of community-based flood response committees to facilitate the evacuation of vulnerable groups and help identify safe zones and escape routes.

Chairman of Isialangwa North LGA, Ambassador Innocent

Chidozie Uruakpa, commended Governor Alex Otti for his proactive governance and pledged to cascade the awareness campaign to grassroots communities.

Director-General of the State Orientation Agency, Lady Urennaya Abazie emphasised the need for strict enforcement of sanitation laws and advocated a community-led "see something, say something, do something" approach to flood prevention.

Disaster management experts—including A.C. Onuegbu of NSCDC, Mrs. Happiness Akpulu from Pollution Control, Mr. Joshua Ohabiro of SEMA, and Mr. John Ogbonnaya of the Nigeria Fire Service—offered residents practical emergency tips. They also urged the public to utilize emergency hotlines and familiarize themselves with evacuation maps and safety shelters.

Community leaders Pastor Udochukwu Peters, Chief Sunday Azu, and Chief Godwin Ibediogwu also spoke on the environmental damage caused by human activities. Joint strategies for sustainable community-based solutions were discussed.

The event concluded with the distribution of Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials to reinforce the message and support continued

### Gov Otti Congratulates Oriaku, Others Over Appointments

By Ekebuisi Precious

**G**overnor of Abia State, Dr. Alex Otti, has congratulated Hon. Obinna Oriaku on his appointment as Commissioner representing Abia State in the Federal Character Commission (FCC).

In a message of felicitation issued by his Special Adviser on Media and Publicity, Ferdinand Ekeoma, Governor Otti thanked President Bola Ahmed Tinubu for the appointment and urged

Oriaku to use the position to deliver selfless, people-oriented service to the nation.

"Since the Commission was established to ensure fairness and equity in the distribution of public positions and socio-economic opportunities among the federating units, it is important that appointees are given the support needed to

strengthen our democracy and promote peace, unity, and development", Otti

stated. The governor also extended his congratulations to other



Dr. Alex Otti.

newly appointed commissioners from the South-East: Mr. Peter Eze (Enugu), Hon. Jerry Alagbaoso (Imo), Hon. Nnoli Nkechi Gloria (Anambra), and Barr. Nwokpor Vincent Nduka (Ebonyi). He urged them to justify the confidence reposed in them through their appointments.

Otti assured that his administration would provide necessary support to enable the appointees succeed in their roles.



# Editorial

## Rise Of Social Media Fertility 'cures' In Nigeria

**N**igeria is facing a silent but dangerous health crisis. As the country's economic situation worsens, the cost of accessing professional fertility treatment has reached record highs, forcing many citizens to turn to unregulated, unverified, and often dangerous remedies promoted on social media. This alarming trend, if left unchecked, could lead to a wave of preventable deaths, worsening infertility rates, and a collapse of trust in the country's medical system.

Basic fertility tests – including hormonal profiling, hysterosalpingography (HSG), and transvaginal scans – now cost between N50,000 and N100,000. More advanced treatments such as In Vitro Fertilization (IVF), Intrauterine Insemination (IUI), and surrogacy range from N200,000 to well over N3 million, depending on the location and hospital. For the vast majority of Nigerians, whose incomes have been eroded by inflation and stagnant wages, these figures are prohibitively high.

As a result, desperate couples and individuals, both male and female, are increasingly turning to Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, where self-styled "fertility consultants" offer miracle cures at a fraction of the price. These include herbal concoctions, spice blends, detox teas, and "womb cleansing" products – none of which undergo any form of scientific validation or clinical testing. Consultations are often done via instant messaging, with no physical examination, no laboratory tests, and no understanding of the patient's medical history.

The danger here is twofold. First, patients risk aggravating their existing health conditions, sometimes irreversibly. Infertility is often linked to underlying issues such as blocked fallopian tubes, hormonal imbalances, infections, endometriosis, low sperm count, or systemic illnesses like diabetes and hypertension. Using unverified remedies without proper diagnosis can make these conditions worse. Second, the false sense of security offered by these "cures" delays timely medical intervention, meaning that when patients eventually seek professional help, the damage may be extensive – or fatal.

What makes this even more alarming is the scale of online reach. A single fertility "tip" video can rack up hundreds of thousands of views within days, exposing

vulnerable individuals to dangerous misinformation. Social media algorithms, designed to promote engaging content, inadvertently amplify such videos without fact-checking or health warnings.

This is not a problem that can be solved by medical professionals alone. It demands coordinated action across government agencies, regulatory bodies, and civil society.

We recommend the following urgent measures:

**Subsidize fertility diagnostics and treatment in public hospitals** – The Federal and State Ministries of Health must introduce subsidies for basic fertility investigations, particularly in government-owned facilities. This will reduce the financial barrier that drives patients to unverified sources.

**Strict regulation of online medical content** Agencies such as the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), the Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC), and the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) must monitor and penalize individuals and organizations making false medical claims online.

**Expand health insurance coverage** – The National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) should ensure reproductive health services, including fertility investigations and treatment, are part of both public and private insurance packages.

**Public health campaigns** – The government, in partnership with NGOs and professional medical associations, must run nationwide awareness campaigns to educate the public about the dangers of unverified fertility remedies and highlight safe, affordable alternatives.

**Regulate and standardize herbal medicine** – Traditional medicine is a cultural reality in Nigeria. Rather than dismissing it outright, authorities should create a robust framework to register, test, and monitor herbal remedies to ensure safety and efficacy.

The emotional toll of infertility cannot be overstated. It is not merely a medical condition it carries deep social stigma, marital strain, and psychological trauma. For many couples, the hope of having a child is worth any risk. But hope must not come at the cost of life and health.

In the age of social media, where misinformation spreads faster than truth, Nigeria must act decisively. Affordable, accessible, and safe fertility care is not a luxury it is a public health necessity. Without urgent intervention, more lives will be lost, more families broken, and more trust in our health system eroded.

It is time for government, regulators, and healthcare providers to work hand-in-hand to ensure that every Nigerian who dreams of parenthood has a safe and genuine chance – not a gamble with dangerous online cures.

LETTERS SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO:  
**THE EDITOR**  
**NATIONAL AMBASSADOR**  
**P.M.B 7245, UMUAHIA**  
**E-mail:nationalambassador@gmail.com**

## Exorbitant Housing Demands: Time For A Fair Housing Policy

Dear Editor,

**T**he escalating cost of housing in Nigeria has become one of the most pressing socio-economic challenges facing our nation today. Across major urban centres such as Abuja, Lagos, Port Harcourt, Owerri, Enugu, Aba, Umuahia, Asaba, and even in smaller cities, the price of rent and home ownership has skyrocketed to levels far beyond the reach of the average Nigerian. This situation is rapidly eroding the quality of life for millions of people, particularly low and middle-income earners, who now find decent housing increasingly unaffordable.

The reality on the ground is troubling. In many parts of the country, landlords demand one to two years' rent in advance, coupled with additional payments for caution fees, legal fees, and agency commissions. These demands are often made without proper receipts, accountability, or adherence to any form of regulation. For an economy where the majority of the workforce earns monthly or seasonal income, such conditions are financially crippling. Families are forced to borrow, exhaust savings, or relocate to unsafe and overcrowded neighbourhoods, which in turn leads to health, security, and social problems.

The absence of effective rent control and housing regulation in Nigeria has created a breeding ground for exploitation. While the cost of building materials and construction has risen due to inflation, poor infrastructure, and foreign exchange instability, there is no justification for the arbitrary and sometimes outrageous rental hikes imposed on tenants. In many cases, the increase in rent is not matched by any improvement in facilities or living standards.

This housing crisis is not merely an individual struggle it is a national emergency with serious implications for public welfare and economic stability. A society where a large proportion of citizens cannot afford decent shelter is one that risks deepening inequality, fuelling social unrest, and undermining national cohesion.

The solution requires urgent and deliberate action by both the Federal and State Governments. I strongly recommend the following steps:

- Introduce and enforce rent control legislation that caps annual rent increases within reasonable limits tied to inflation and market realities.
- Ban exploitative rental practices such as demanding multiple years of rent in advance, replacing them with monthly or quarterly payment options that match the income flow of most Nigerians.
- Provide targeted incentives to private developers who invest in low and middle-income housing, such as tax rebates, subsidized land, and access to affordable financing.
- Revive and expand public housing programmes, ensuring transparency in allocation so that the homes reach genuine low-income beneficiaries rather than being cornered by the politically connected.
- Strengthen urban planning and building regulations to encourage safe, affordable, and sustainable housing developments.

The government should also work closely with professional bodies such as the Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers, the Nigerian Society of Engineers, and tenants' associations to develop fair housing policies that balance the interests of landlords and tenants.

Shelter is a basic human necessity and a fundamental right recognised by the United Nations. It is unacceptable for it to remain a privilege reserved only for the wealthy in our society. A responsible and responsive government must ensure that every Nigerian, regardless of income level, has access to safe, decent, and affordable housing.

The time for action is now. Regulating the housing sector will not only ease the financial burden on millions of families but will also contribute to economic growth, social stability, and national peace.

*Ekebuisi, Precious*  
*Umuahia, Abia State.*

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## Discourse

# Capital Market Insight And Equities Recommendation

Dear Valued Clients,

**T**he Nigerian Equities Market closed its trading session for the weekend Friday, August 8, 2025, with an All Shares Index (ASI) of 145,754.91 points, indicating a 41.61 % gain year - to - date (YTD), with the Market Capitalization at N92.2 trillion reaching 46.92% year - to - date (YTD) growth. The implication of this performance measure is that informed investors tracking equities across the market segments, may possibly have made returns over and above the inflation rate at 22.22% and a return above yields on fixed income instruments such as Federal Government Bonds and treasury Bills, which has hovered between 18% to 22.60% depending on the tenor and particular instrument.

Across market sectors, the Banking and Insurance sectors closed positive at 0.19% and 6.11% respectively. Most Insurance stocks delivered above 50 % gains reflecting sustained investor appetite following the signing of the Nigerian Insurance Industry Reform Act (NIIRA) 2025 by Mr. President, in a policy move expected to upscale activities in the industry, enhance its competitiveness, attract investments and initiate a risk - based capital adequacy framework and recapitalization of the sector.

The Oil and Gas sector gained 0.38%, amid the advantages of the removal of oil subsidy - reflecting increased investment and prospects in the sector. For the Consumer Goods and the Industrial Goods sector, weak investor interest and profit-taking led to a negative performance of -0.02% and -1.54% respectively. The commodities

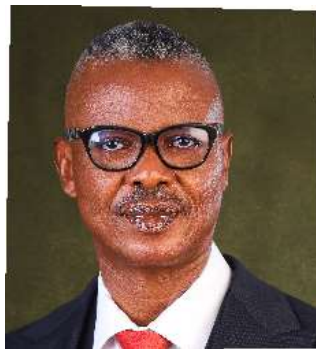
sector remained muted at 0.00%.

Overall, market performance in the week speaks to profit taking, portfolio adjustments and sustained investor interest in the market.

STOCK RECOMMENDATIONS FOR

THE WEEK AUGUST 11 - AUGUST 15,  
2025 STOCK CURRENT EPS

(N) FORECAST EPS  
(N) BV / SHAREP / B RATIO P / E  
RATIO 52 WK HIGH 52 WK  
LOW CURRENT PRICE  
(N) TARGET PRICE



Mr. Christian Isaac Anyalisi

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OUTLOOK FOR THE EQUITIES  
MARKET

Leveraging John Grisham's title  
to one of his novels, this is "a time to kill"  
in the market for informed investors.

The market still provides great opportunities for investors with a long-term investment philosophy, amid possibilities for short-term profit-taking for speculative traders.

Our optimism about opportunities in the Nigerian Capital Market is based on the macro-economic reforms in the country, such as:

- 1 On-going Banking Sector Re-capitalization
- 1 Removal of oil subsidy
- 1 Exchange Rate Unification
- 1 Increasing Foreign Reserves
- 1 Fiscal Reforms (New Tax Laws)
- 1 Insurance Sector Reform
- 1 Re-basing of the Inflation Rate
- 1 Falling Inflation Rate
- 1 Relative Exchange Rate Stability
- 1 Others

However, we advise that, for a balanced portfolio of financial assets, investments in the capital market should cut across equities (Stocks) and fixed income assets, (Bonds, Mutual funds, Exchange Traded Funds, Commercial Papers), following a pattern or ratio which is consistent with the risk-return expectations of an investor. The traditional formula for a balanced portfolio is 60% stocks and 40% bonds or 40% stocks and 60% bonds, depending on the risk appetite and return expectations of an individual investor. This is particularly important for the following reasons:

- 1 Managing Volatility (Changes) in Market Prices of Stocks
- 1 Hedging Against Unfavourable Stock Returns
- 1 Managing Adverse Market Shocks
- 1 Taking Advantage of High-

Interest Rate Regimes

1 Providing Consistent Earnings in the Portfolio through Bonds  
1 Tax Shield Through Investment in Bonds and Treasury Bills  
We emphasize investment decisions based on strong financial fundamental as a matter of professionalism and ethical financial advocacy.

GOING FORWARD - EXPECTATIONS IN THE WEEK AHEAD

We expect the equities market to be characterized by mixed sentiments as long-term investors and dividend-seeking investors, re-align their portfolios to take advantage of interim dividend announcements. Conversely, speculators may leverage the over-bought conditions in the market for a sell-down to mop short-term profits on some equities.

We further expect to see a re-valuation of insurance stocks to find their fair prices. Analysts will go to work figuring out fair prices for these stocks, most of which have risen above 50%, following the President's assent on the new bill. Analysts opinion will result in asset repricing and speculators will commence profit-taking on over-valued stocks. For under-valued assets within this sector, we anticipate renewed investor interest amid spiraling stock prices.

Finally, we expect that the lingering "short-term market correction" is in the offing, ceteris paribus (all other things being equal). However, the correction will not last long, as we are close to the end of Q3/25 (3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 2025), when expectations for new quarterly earnings reports will begin to fuel increased activity levels in the market.

Christian Isaac Anyalisi M.Sc, ACIS, ACIP, ACS, ADC  
(Chartered Stockbroker/Securities Analyst)

## News

# MOU AU Alumni Hosts Lecture on Low-Cost Soap, Bleach Production

By Chukwuemeka Egejuru

**T**he Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike (MOU AU) Alumni Association, Umuahia Chapter, has held another practical lecture on small-scale household chemical production, aimed at equipping individuals with affordable skills for home use and income generation.

The lecture, held at the Kolping Society, Umuahia, Abia State featured Mrs. Benedicta Ihuoma Igboh as the resource person. She delivered a detailed, hands-on presentation on the production of liquid soap and bleach using locally available materials.

Mrs. Igboh noted that liquid soap is an essential household cleaning product and that learning to make it can significantly reduce costs while creating business opportunities. She outlined a step-by-step process for

producing 10 liters of liquid soap, using ingredients such as Nitrosol, SLS, caustic soda, soda ash, texapon, STPP, sulphonic acid, foam booster, fragrance, and coloring.

She stressed the need for clean water, protective gear, and proper mixing techniques to ensure product quality. Participants were also trained on low-cost packaging and marketing strategies, including selling within their immediate network, offering free samples, leveraging social media platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook, and reinvesting profits to grow the business.

In the second session, Mrs. Igboh demonstrated how to make liquid bleach (sodium hypochlorite



Resource person; Mrs Benedicta Igboh.

solution) for domestic and small-scale commercial use. Using chlorine powder, caustic soda, soda ash, and water, she guided attendees through safe preparation, mixing, and storage. She cautioned

against improper handling, stressing the importance of wearing gloves and face masks and never mixing bleach with other chemicals to avoid toxic fumes.

She highlighted that

both liquid soap and bleach can be produced at minimal cost, making them valuable for household use and as profitable small-scale ventures.

Earlier in his opening remark, Chairman of the MOU AU Alumni Association, Umuahia Chapter, Dr. Onyekachi Uwalaka, underscored the importance of practical skills acquisition in tackling Nigeria's economic and social challenges.

He described the training as "a practical demonstration of our mission to translate knowledge into action, and action into sustainable development," adding that Nigeria is "at a crossroads where unemployment, high living costs, and economic uncertainty demand

creative and homegrown solutions."

According to Dr. Uwalaka, equipping citizens with affordable production skills not only meets immediate household needs but also "plants seeds for small-scale entrepreneurship and self-reliance."

"Lectures like this are not just about learning a skill — they are about strengthening the economic backbone of our communities, reducing dependency, and fostering a culture of innovation. The future we dream of will not be built by government alone, but by the collective effort of informed and empowered citizens," he said.

He commended Mrs. Igboh for her dedication to knowledge sharing and urged participants to put their newly acquired skills into practice to improve livelihoods and contribute to local economic growth.



# Focus On Giving Inmates The Vote

By Mahmud Jega

**T**his story that I read in several newspapers and online media about ensuring that inmates in Nigerian prisons exercise the right to vote in elections, left me flabbergasted and perused, to quote my secondary school senior student who was famous for his verbosity. It all started when Controller General of Nigeria Prison [sorry, Correctional] Service, Sylvester Nwakuche, paid a visit to Prof Mahmood Yakubu, Chairman of Independent National Electoral Commission [INEC], in order to lobby for support to ensure the participation of inmates in the country's elections.

Look here, Oga Controller General. You are a very big man; I imagine how many years you must have spent in uniform, trying to make sure that inmates, whether convicts, awaiting trial or even those on death row awaiting execution, remain within the four corners of "correctional" walls. [Pray, what is there to correct for a person who is on death row?] You must have had many sleepless nights and thousands of moments of anxiety and anguish. In Nigeria here, even keeping students in their classrooms is a very big task, so is keeping civil servants on their desks, keeping workers at their work stations, keeping lecturers in lecture halls, keeping policemen in their stations, keeping legislators in their chambers for sittings, or even keeping judges in their court rooms and stopping them from adjourning cases. All those are easier than keeping inmates behind prison walls, taking them to court in Black Maria trucks, guarding them through the long court process, coping with inmates' tricks such as saying they want to go to the toilet, not to talk of guarding the inmates we see being marched along the road, being taken to some houses or offices to sweep the yard or cut the grass.

Oga Controller General, of all the problems you have, is it voting by inmates that is your biggest concern? What about feeding them? In January this year, Federal Government increased the daily feeding allowance of inmates in Nigerian prisons from N750 to N1,125 "in a bid to improve the welfare of those in custody." One thousand one hundred and twenty-five naira a day! How many meals do you give them with that amount? Is it the proverbial three square meals that human beings desire to eat every day? I don't even know who set that benchmark, but it is probably the World Health Organisation [WHO] in league with the Food and Agriculture Organization, FAO, both of them agencies of the United Nations Organisation [UNO].

UN agencies are notoriously unrealistic in all their projections, such as saying a certain percentage of national budgets must be set aside for education, another percentage for health, a certain ratio of doctors to patients, a certain number of hospital bed spaces per 1,000 people, and a certain number of policemen for every one thousand people. By the time you add all the percentages together, it comes to about 300% of national budgets. Is it UN that will give us the money?

Back to our food budget. Oga CG, if you have 1,125 naira to feed a prisoner a day, it comes to N375 per square meal. Even a round meal in Nigeria today costs a heck more than that! Except if you are in Kano. It is only in Kano that you can eat for N300, at least according to the Buhari-era Minister of Agriculture, Sabo Nanono. When people complained about the rising cost of food, he said one can eat a good meal for N300 in Kano. Trust Kanawa; one young man in Kano was seen on social media entering a restaurant. He ate to his fill and when the restaurant owner came for the money, he gave her N300, saying the minister in charge of food security set that benchmark price for eating in Kano. Everyone who has been inside a Nigerian prison came out complaining of poor feeding. Years ago when I visited an inmate in Sokoto prison, he told me that the soup that was served to them, water was on one side and the smattering of soup ingredients congregated in one corner of the bowl. I therefore urge NCS to pack all their inmates to Kano, where a good meal costs N300.

Oga CG, I thought that you were so busy with the issue of prison security and preventing jail breaks that you never thought of voting rights of inmates. In

Nigeria there are two types of security; to keep some people out and to keep some people in. Most of the fences, barbed wires, iron gates, high walls, padlocks, guard dogs, security lights, electric fences, guard towers and armed security men that ring Nigerian houses are meant to keep intruders out. It is only Mr. Nwakuche that installs all of these things in his facilities in order to keep people inside. A man who is so engaged, why should he add to his problems by demanding for the right of inmates to go out on election days to cast a vote, knowing full well that many of them could use that opportunity to sneak away or scale the fences?

I must commend the INEC Chairman for his patience and for sitting down quietly to receive the CG of Correctional Services and listened to his demand. If I had mystic powers to peer into the Chairman's mind, he must have thought, when he heard the visitor was coming, that he was coming to offer help to INEC in the policing of voting stations with thousands of his armed warders and trained sniffer dogs. So far, policemen and Civil Defence people, even with armed soldiers in the background, have been unable to provide adequate security at polling stations and counting centers. Prof Yakubu must have hoped that Correctional Services was coming to offer



Prof Mahmood Yakubu

additional help. But they actually came and added to his problems.

CG sir, a man who is inside a Nigerian prison, whether as a convict or as awaiting trial, who told you that voting is on his mind? His first concern is eating. From what we hear from former inmates, powerful warlord inmates control prison wards and they get to eat the best food, before anyone else can feed. It is not only here in Nigeria, mark you. I once read the memoirs of a Watergate burglar who was an inmate in a California prison. He said on his first day in the cell, food was placed on the table and they were told to go and eat. When he stood up, another inmate pulled his trouser and told him to remain seated. All other inmates remained seated. He said one slim inmate then stood up, went and ate, before the rest of them rushed for the food. He soon found out that the first eater was Jimmy "The Weasel" Fratianno, boss of the Los Angeles Mafia family. All the other inmates in the cell were Mafia enforcers who had been brought there from various prisons to serve as his bodyguards!

After food, an inmate's big concern is personal security. Prisons, deceptively named correctional centers, are very dangerous places despite all the investment in security. Hard drugs, knives, cudgels and all kinds of dangerous objects are routinely smuggled into them, and a guy could get killed for one wrong move. Such wrong moves include resisting sexual molestation, failing to submit to the over

lordship of the cell's kingpin, or even telling other prisoners that you were in there for a small offence such as traffic violation. Many years ago, I read a feature in Daily Times of a man who was sent to Ikoyi Prison in Lagos for crossing the highway. When each inmate in the cell was asked to state his crime, a fellow inmate advised him to say he committed murder. That earned him instant respect within the cell!

The INEC Chairman said during the visit that while the law allows inmates awaiting trial to vote in elections if they are registered voters, the modalities for doing so have to be worked out. He is right. Is it every body that registered to vote who has the chance to vote? What about people in IDP camps? Someone in Zamfara, Katsina, Kebbi, Niger, Kaduna, Benue and Plateau states who was chased out of his village in the middle of the night by bandits, taking along his PVC is the last thing on his mind. Many people arrive at IDP camps with only the cloth on their necks; many are separated from their families. Which voting are they thinking of?

Prof Yakubu mentioned something, that when inmates are allowed to vote, will political parties be allowed to campaign inside the prisons and to post polling agents at voting centers inside prison walls? Imagine a Nigerian politician standing on a podium inside a prison and campaigning! Nigerian politicians are among the cleverest liars on Earth. They instantly know what voters want to hear, and in the case of an inmate, he has no greater wish than to be out of the prison. During the Second Republic, a clever politician in the old Sokoto State was said to have promised voters that he will install a pump that will dish out fura, the staple sorghum drink of Northern Nigeria! A politician campaigning inside a prison will promise a blanket amnesty for all the prisoners, convicts no matter their crimes, those awaiting trial no matter the gravity or even the weight of evidence against them, and he will even offer blanket amnesty to death row inmates!

CG Nwakuche said that there are 81,000 people currently in custody nationwide, 66 per cent of them awaiting trial. That number is more than enough to tilt the outcome in a close local government, legislative or perhaps even a gubernatorial election. In Sokoto State in the 2019 election, the governor was re-elected with a 300 vote margin, so imagine what 81,000 votes will do. Also because voter turnout in Nigerian elections is a historic low. Only 26.72% of voters trooped to the polls for the 2023 presidential elections; now that cost of transport and everything else has quadrupled, how many people do you think will troop out in future elections? Inmates, however, will have a greater motivation to vote than free people. At least they will breathe fresh air, and they will also be transported free to polling stations, inside Black Maria trucks.

Even those of us who are not [yet] inside prisons, how eager are we to vote in elections? Please CG, concentrate on other problems and forget about making inmates to vote.

Culled from ThisDay Newspaper

**After food, an inmate's big concern is personal security. Prisons, deceptively named correctional centers, are very dangerous places despite all the investment in security. Hard drugs, knives, cudgels and all kinds of dangerous objects are routinely smuggled into them, and a guy could get killed for one wrong move.**



## FG Appoints New Boards for NCC, USPF

**P**resident Bola Ahmed Tinubu has approved new appointments to the boards of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) and the Universal Service Provision Fund (USPF), two key agencies under the Ministry of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy.

According to a statement issued on recently by his Special Adviser on Information and Strategy, Bayo Onanuga, Idris Olorunnimbe has been named Chairman of the NCC, while Dr. Aminu Waida retains his position as Executive Vice Chairman/Chief Executive Officer, a role confirmed by the Senate in November 2023 following his nomination in October 2023.

Olorunnimbe, a former member of the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) Board, chaired its Stakeholder and Governance Committee, where he championed youth employment and entrepreneurship initiatives.

The NCC board also includes Abraham Oshidami (Executive Commissioner, Technical Services) and Rimini Makama (Executive Commissioner, Stakeholder Management), alongside Hajia Maryam Bayi, Col. Abdulwahab Lawal (ret'd), Senator Lekan Mustafa, Chris Okorie, and Princess Oforitsenere Emiko. The board is supported by a secretary.

In a related move, Tinubu also reconstituted the board of the Universal Service Provision Fund (USPF), with Dr. Bosun Tijani, Minister of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy, as Chairman, and Olorunnimbe as Vice Chairman.

Other USPF board members include Oshidami and Makama, along with Aliyu Edogi Aliyu (Federal Ministry of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy), Joseph B. Faluyi (Federal Ministry of Finance), Auwal Mohammed (Federal Ministry of Budget and National Planning), Uzoma Dozie, Peter Bankole, Abayomi Anthony Okanlawon, and Gafar Oluwasangun Quadri. The board's secretary will also serve as a member.

The USPF, established to expand access to information and communication technologies in rural, unserved, and underserved areas, is tasked with bridging Nigeria's digital divide. With the new board in place, the Fund is expected to accelerate progress toward achieving nationwide ICT inclusion.

## Tinubu Backs NDLEA With 46 New Vehicles To Boost War On Drug Abuse

**P**resident Bola Tinubu has reaffirmed his administration's commitment to strengthening the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) in its fight against drug abuse and trafficking.

Speaking at the commissioning of 46 new operational vehicles for the NDLEA Headquarters in Abuja recently, the National Security Adviser (NSA), Mallam Nuhu Ribadu, described the agency as a strategic pillar in Nigeria's security architecture.

He said the vehicles comprising 38 SUVs for zonal, strategic, and state commands, and 10 sedan cars for directorates would enhance NDLEA's mobility, improve nationwide coverage, and ensure traffickers are swiftly intercepted.

"Without the mobility to reach danger points, intercept traffickers, and deploy resources where needed, our fight is severely constrained. Drug trafficking fuels insecurity, insurgency, and criminal gangs across Nigeria," Ribadu stated.

He credited the President's Renewed Hope Agenda for prioritising drug control as a national security pillar, citing increased funding, inter-agency cooperation, and



President Bola Tinubu.

policy alignment as key enablers of the NDLEA's progress.

NDLEA Chairman, Brig. Gen. Mohamed Buba Marwa (ret'd), described the commissioning as a milestone in the agency's modernization drive, thanking President Tinubu for fiscal support.

Highlighting the link between drug abuse and crime, Marwa revealed that in the past two years the NDLEA had arrested 40,887 drug offenders, including 45 drug barons, seized over 5.5 million kg of assorted drugs, destroyed 704,445 hectares of cannabis farms, secured 8,682 convictions with asset forfeitures to the Federal Government, treated and rehabilitated 24,173 drug users across 30 rehab

centres under the War Against Drug Abuse (WADA) campaign.

Attorney-General of the Federation, Lateef Fagbemi, SAN; Chief of Defence Staff, Gen. Christopher Musa; and Director-General, Bureau of Public Procurement, Dr. Adebowale Adedokun, all commended the NDLEA's results-driven leadership and operational efficiency.

The event concluded with the decoration of 15 newly promoted Commanders of Narcotics as Assistant Commanders General of Narcotics (ACGN).

Conducted 8,698 sensitisation activities

## IGP, Yaradua Confer On Electoral Reform Bill For Security Personnel Early Voting

**I**nspector-General of Police Kayode Egbetokun recently met with Senator Abdul-Azeez Yaradua at Force Headquarters, Abuja, to discuss provisions of the proposed Electoral Reform Bill, which seeks to introduce early voting for police officers and other security personnel deployed on election duty.

Senator Yaradua, accompanied by a delegation including Samson Itodo, Executive Director of Yiaga Africa, and Cynthia Mbamalu, Director of Programmes at Yiaga Africa, presented the draft bill to the IGP for review, requesting professional input to ensure the legislation reflects operational realities while safeguarding electoral integrity.

Itodo commended the police for improved electoral security in recent off-cycle elections in Edo and Ondo States, crediting proactive strategies for peaceful and credible polls. He also lauded Egbetokun's reform-focused leadership and recent awards.

In response, the IGP thanked Senator Yaradua and Yiaga Africa for their advocacy, reaffirming the police commitment to working with stakeholders to secure fair and transparent elections.

Flanked by Deputy Inspectors-General of Police, Egbetokun stressed that collaboration between law enforcement and civil society is vital for credible electoral reforms.

## News

By Blessing Anienwe

**T**he Abia State Government, through its Ministry of Environment and the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), has taken its 2025 Flood Preparedness and Mitigation Sensitization Campaign to Bende Local Government Area.

Speaking at the event held at the Bende Council Hall, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry and Team Lead, Mr. Ikechukwu Oriuwa, emphasized the importance of equipping communities with

## Abia Govt Intensifies Flood Preparedness Campaign in Bende LGA

practical knowledge to mitigate the impact of flooding as forecasted by the Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NiMet).

He reiterated the government's commitment to reaching all 17 LGAs in the state and urged traditional rulers to champion the campaign at the grassroots level.

Mayor of Bende LGA, Deacon Uwabunkeonye Bassey, praised the

initiative and noted that Governor Alex Otti has directed immediate intervention measures, including the construction of roads and drainages to improve accessibility during the rainy season.

Representing SEMA, the agency's Public Relations Officer, Kalu Chinyere, highlighted the role of early warning systems in disaster risk reduction and encouraged residents to

report flood incidents promptly.

Officials from key agencies also addressed the gathering. Mrs. Happiness Akpulonu, HOD Pollution Control, Alphonsus Onuegbu of the NSCDC, and Chimaroke Ufomadu of the Nigerian Red Cross Society warned against environmental practices like building on waterways and indiscriminate waste disposal. They noted that

enforcement of the amended 2004 Environmental Law is being strengthened through media campaigns.

Expert presentations by Prof. Ljeomalheukwumere, SSA to the Governor on Environment, and Mr. Chris Ike, Director of Climate Change, highlighted tree planting as a vital ecological buffer against flooding.

Chairman of the

Council of Traditional Rulers, HRH Eze Uchendu Okorie, commended the government's proactive approach and pledged the co-operation of royal fathers. He also raised concerns over deforestation and the cutting down of economic trees.

The sensitization campaign continues across other LGAs as the state steps up efforts to mitigate the effects of anticipated flooding in 2025.



## Family Matters

By Okechukwu Ubani

**M**en cry too — even if the tears never roll down their cheeks.

Many men are taught from childhood to be strong, to "man up," and to hide their emotions. As a result, they often bottle up pain, frustration, and sadness. You may never see them weep, but don't mistake silence for strength. The tears they don't shed often come out as anger, silence, frustration, or even aggression.

This doesn't mean those reactions are acceptable — especially when they hurt others — but it does mean there's something deeper going on. Behind the tough face is a heart that can be hurting deeply.

**Men Also Need Love and Support**

As a wife, girlfriend, sister, or friend, it's important to know that men need affection too. They just don't always know how to ask for it. They may act like they don't care, but they long for peace, love, understanding, and someone who believes in them.

Sometimes, what looks like moodiness or coldness is really just a cry for support — a need to be reminded that they are enough, even when life is hard.

**What Can Break a Man**

Few things damage a man's confidence more than lack of money, or the inability to perform sexually — whether it's difficulty getting his wife pregnant or struggling with intimacy.

These things go straight to the core of a man's self-esteem. If he feels like he can't provide or satisfy his partner, he starts to feel like a failure — even if he never says a word. His heart can be breaking quietly while he smiles on the outside.

This is why mocking him, comparing him to others, or making fun of his struggles is incredibly hurtful. He may not cry in front of you — but he's

bleeding inside.

Stay with Him Through the Storm

If you're with a man who is hardworking, responsible, and full of potential — but just going through a hard time — don't give up on him. Don't leave him for a man who has money today but no real values or vision.

Support your man now, and you'll be shocked how much he'll cherish you when his breakthrough comes. Loyalty during hardship creates unbreakable bonds.

**Intimacy Needs Grace, Not Shame**

Many men struggle with issues in the bedroom, and one of the most painful ones is premature ejaculation or low performance. They feel embarrassed, helpless, and ashamed — even if they never admit it.

As a partner, you have the power to help him heal or make things worse. Don't laugh at him or complain bitterly. Instead, have honest and gentle conversations.



Look for solutions together. Read, research, seek help if needed.

Love covers shame. Let your intimacy be a place of healing, not humiliation.

**Don't Betray or Belittle Him**

Never beg other men for money behind your man's back. It doesn't just hurt him — it humiliates him deeply.

And never, ever sleep with another man for money or favors. That kind of betrayal cuts deeper than any knife. It can crush a man's soul and destroy his trust in women forever. To him, it's worse than death.

**Words Can Wound Too**

Men are not immune to hurtful words. In fact, a woman's words can either build him up or destroy him. Constant insults, disrespect, and nagging can damage his sense of self and push him into silence or anger.

Yes, men must learn to control themselves, but partners must also learn not to provoke with careless or cruel words. If you're too angry to speak respectfully, take a moment to cool off. Don't let your tongue become a weapon.

To Every Man Reading This Violence is never the answer. No matter how hurt or angry you are, do not raise your hand on a woman. It is not strength. It is not manhood. It's weakness in disguise.

Get help. Talk to someone. Find ways to express your pain that don't involve destruction. You don't have to carry the weight alone.

Men are human. They hurt, they struggle, they cry even if they don't show it. Behind many cold stares and silent moods is a man battling fears, pressure, and unspoken pain. When you choose to love and understand that man, you don't just make him better, you build a stronger relationship and a happier home.

Start today. Be patient. Be kind. Be present.

You'll be amazed at what love, support, and understanding can do — not just for him, but for both of you.

## Religion

## Engaging The Mystery Of Tithing For Financial Fortune!

By Bishop David Oyedepo

**F**rom scriptures, we understand that God's prosperity plan is a covenant, not a promise; that is, we cannot fast or pray our way into it. There is a part we must play before we can commit God to do His part. Therefore, until our part of the covenant is fulfilled, we cannot commit God to bless us. As it is written, *But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day (Deuteronomy 8:18).* From the above scripture, God has a covenant in place that empowers us into realms of financial fortune. It is not the doctrine of a church but His covenant.

Also, note that God's covenant of financial prosperity is as binding as His covenant of day and night (Genesis 8:22; Jeremiah 33:20-21). As long as the covenant of the day and night is in place, God's covenant of abundance remains in force. It is, therefore, an ever reliable and dependable covenant. We must understand that the giving covenant is as much a New Testament phenomenon as it is the Old Testament covenant. As it is written, *Now ye Philipians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:15, 19).* But giving does not only meet our financial needs, it meets all other needs. While the giving covenant has so many channels such as worship offering, giving to the poor, giving to parents etc, we discover that the anchor channel of this covenant is TITHING.

**What Then, Is Tithe?**

Tithe is the tenth of our increase or income. It is our covenant acknowledgment of God's blessings in

our lives that entitles us to continuous flow of same (Malachi 3:10). Tithe is also God's portion that makes the remainder meaningful. It is tithe that gives value to other avenue of giving. When we stop tithing, we stop the flow of God's blessings. This is why we must understand that tithing is not a church doctrine; it is a law of the Kingdom that launches the believer into realms of financial fortune.

Tithing is God's principal term of the covenant of abundance (Malachi 3:8-11). It is the law of the Spirit that launches us into realms of financial fortune, which is part of the provisions of redemption (2 Corinthians 8:9). Thus, tithing is ordained to make rich and grant us access to our wealthy place in Christ (Psalm 66:10-12; Proverbs 3:9, 10). We can therefore conclude that tithing is a Kingdom mystery that confers us with mastery over finances. It is a covenant obligation for everyone that desires to step into his/her wealthy place in Christ. It is our only guarantee to step into the realms of financial fortune; there is no shortcut.

**Other Fringe Benefits That Accompany Tithing**  
**Averts All Curses, Spells and Enchantments:** Tithing averts the curse of the Lord. It is written, *Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation (Malachi 3:9).* Why? Because the curse of the Lord is in the house of a thief (Zechariah 5:4). The tithe belongs to God and refusing to tithe is viewed as robbery in scriptures. Furthermore, every tither is blessed of the Lord and therefore becomes, 'uncurseable' (Numbers 23:8).

**Protects us Against the Assault of the Devourer:** It stops the devourer from attacking our health, families, businesses, career etc (Malachi 3:10-11). Tithers are entitled to health and vitality.

**Empowers us to live a Debt-free Life:** Borrowing may not be a sin, but it is definitely a weight. Tithing is the cheapest way to lay aside indebtedness. With blessings which we do not have enough room to receive being

released to us through tithing, there can be no place for borrowing (Malachi 3:10).

**Divine Ideas:** From the windows of heaven, what we have pouring out is rain, which is a symbol of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and its mission among others is to make us of quick understanding (Malachi 3:10-18). This gives us access to divine ideas so that we begin to think at God's own frequency and command same order of results accordingly. For instance, Abraham the tither pioneered the first cattle ranch business (Genesis 13:1-3). Isaac pioneered the first irrigation farming in scriptures and Jacob the tither pioneered the first animal husbandry business according to Bible history. All tithers have free access to divine ideas that lead the way to their blessings.

**Guarantees Long Life:** Abraham the tither died at 175 (Genesis 25:7), Isaac at 180 (Genesis 35:28) and Jacob was 147 years old (Genesis 47:28). Also, John D. Rockefeller, who started tithing from his first pay cheque and kept at it, became the 1st American Billionaire in history. He had 41 years added to his years after he was told by the doctors that he would not see his 52nd birthday, but he lived to be 93! Tithing entitles us to long life.

In conclusion, all our covenant fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, were tithers and they gained access to their wealthy places in life (Genesis 14:19-20, 28:22). Furthermore, redemption connects us to the Abrahamic order of blessings and as a seed of Abraham, every believer is ordained to be a blessing to the world (Galatians 3:29; John 8:39). Although a great future awaits us, we must tithe our way into it like our covenant fathers did. All we need is to receive grace for consistency in our tithing. Tithing will always make a clear difference among believers. This means that financial fortune is impossible without tithing however you must be born again. Are you born again? If you are not, this is an opportunity to do so. Simply say the following prayer: *Lord Jesus, I come to You today. I am a sinner. Forgive me of my sins. Cleanse me with Your precious Blood. Today, I accept You as my Lord and personal Saviour. Thank You, Jesus, for saving me! Now, I know I am born again!*

For further reading, please get my books: *Understanding*



## Photos Speak



Dr. Alex Otti, OFR, seated at the centre in a red chair, attentively listens to the Executive Secretary and CEO of the Nigerian Shippers' Council, Dr. Akutah Pius Ukeyima, MON (left), along with members of his delegation during their recent courtesy visit to the governor recently.



Governor Alex Otti (fifth from right) and Sir Emeka Offor (5th from left) pose alongside members of his delegation during a recent courtesy visit by the top management team of Interstate Electricity to the Governor.



The General Manager, Abia Newspapers and Publishing Corporation (ANPC) (2<sup>nd</sup> Right) a well-known businessman and philanthropist, Chief Dr Anderson Okoro (3<sup>rd</sup> Left) among others during the financial grant event for members of the Abia Arise Movement, held at the European Hall in Ndi Oji Abam Central School, Abam, Arochukuwu, recently.



The SSG, Kenneth Kalu (2<sup>nd</sup> right), the President and Chairman of Council of the Nigerian Institute of Management, Commodore Abimbola Ayola (Retd.), (2<sup>nd</sup> left), among other leadership of the institute during a courtesy visit to the Governor, recently.



Governor Alex Otti, OFR (10th right), in a group photograph with the Executive Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of the Nigerian Shippers' Council, Dr. Akutah Pius Ukeyima, MON (9th left), alongside members of his delegation and senior government officials, during a recent courtesy visit by the Council to the Governor's office.



The General Manager Abia Newspapers and Publishing Corporation, (Hon. Jones Nnanna Ike (left), The majority leader, Abia State House of Assembly, Hon. Uchenna Okoro (2<sup>nd</sup> left), The SSG, Prof Kenneth Kalu, (Middle); Rector Ogbonnaya Onu Polytechnic, Engr. Christopher Okoro (2<sup>nd</sup> right) and the woman leader Lnyom Abam (right), during the 2025 General Congress of the Inyom Abam Onyereubi Development Union (Home And Abroad), held at Atani Abam, Arochukuwu Local Government Area, recently.



A cross-section of beneficiaries during the financial grant event for members of the Abia Arise Movement, held at the European Hall in Ndi Oji Abam Central School.



Ukwa East LGA Chairman, Hon. Chibunna Akara, accompanied by some of his delegates, addressing a cross-section of Oganihu Azumini women as a special guest during their annual August meeting, held recently.

Photos By Chukwu Chidiebere



## Fashion Tips

with  
Chibuike Sandra

# Fashion Mistakes Every Elegant Lady Should Avoid

**F**ashion isn't about cramming your closet with every trendy piece in the market; it's about knowing what to wear, how to wear it, and when to wear it.

Looking back at my old photos, I sometimes cringe at my past fashion choices. They make me laugh now, but I'm grateful my style has matured. Nobody gets it right all the time—celebrities and top stylists included. Still, there are certain fashion missteps every elegant woman should avoid.

Here are ten of the most common, and how to steer clear of them:



### 1. Revealing Too Much

Walking the streets in what was once considered underwear—such as bum shorts, slip-shorts, or bra tops—doesn't scream elegance. Certain parts of the body are meant to remain private, yet total concealment can also be awkward. Striking a balance is key. A dress that is too short and tight will rarely look classy, but a subtle leg slit or an open-back gown can create a sophisticated allure.



### 2. Wearing the Wrong Size

Ill-fitting clothes—whether too tight or too baggy—never flatter the figure. Tight skirts or trousers can create an unflattering "muffin top," while oversized pieces can overwhelm your frame. Remember: you should wear the clothes, not the other way around.

### 3. Not Evolving

Fashion repeats itself, but your style should evolve. Being stuck in one era for life can make your look dated. Maintain your unique sense of style, but adapt it with modern touches.

### 4. Trying Too Hard or Being Too Trendy

Wearing every hot trend at once, or overloading on bling, often distracts from the outfit itself. Choose trends that suit your personality, age, and body shape. Balance is essential—pair timeless pieces with select modern elements for a thoughtful, refined look.

### 5. Wearing the Wrong Undergarments

Just because they're hidden doesn't mean they don't matter. Ill-chosen underwear can ruin an outfit—think visible panty lines under a fitted dress or bright straps showing through sheer fabric. Invest in quality strapless bras, seamless panties, and shapewear when needed.



### 6. Ignoring the Occasion

Being underdressed or overdressed can make you feel awkward and self-conscious. When in doubt, confirm the dress code. If you must guess, lean slightly towards overdressing—it shows respect for the event.

### 7. Dressing for Social Media

Shopping purely for likes and online engagement can strip your style of authenticity. Focus less on what will trend on Instagram and more on building a wardrobe that serves your real life and reflects your true personality.

### 8. Ignoring Your Body Type

Style begins with self-awareness. Wear what highlights your best features. For example, midi skirts should fall just below the knee or at three-quarters length—not at the widest part of your calf. Cropped trousers look best above the ankle, especially when paired with heels if you're petite.



### 9. Neglecting the Details

Small oversights can ruin a polished look. Worn-out heels, dangling threads, or sticking labels all cheapen your appearance. Keep your shoes in good repair and your clothes neatly finished.

### 10. Dressing for Others Instead of Yourself

The most important rule: dress to please yourself, not to impress men, compete with women, or fit in with a crowd. True elegance comes from confidence, self-love, and authenticity.

Final Word:

Fashion is a language—and your style speaks volumes before you say a word. The most beautiful accessory an elegant woman can own is confidence, paired with the grace to hold her head high.

## News

### Abia Govt Moves To Complete Abandoned IDP Hostel In Ubakala

By Ndubueze Ngozi

**T**he Abia State Government has taken steps to complete the long-abandoned hostel project at the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) Camp in Mgarakuma, Ubakala.

The project has been officially handed over to Jalingo Construction Limited, with a clear directive to complete it within three months.

Speaking at the handover ceremony, the Executive Secretary of the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), Dr. Sunny Jackson, said the project comes at a critical time, especially with the increasing threat of flooding due to climate change.

Dr. Jackson noted that Governor Alex Otti's administration has given SEMA the full support needed to deliver results. He urged the contractor to stick to the agreed terms and assured that the completed hostel would provide much-needed shelter and support for displaced people during emergencies.

Also speaking, the Chief Mr. Chigbundu Emelogo, Administrative Officer of the Presidential Committee on Flood Relief and Rehabilitation, formally reassigned the abandoned structure to the new contractor on behalf of the federal government. He said both federal and state governments are working together to ensure important relief projects like this one are completed and put to proper use.

In his response, Mr. Amobi Ebokan, who represented Jalingo Construction Limited, thanked the government for the opportunity. He promised to move to the site immediately and deliver a high-quality project within the given time.

The event ended with the official signing of the handover certificate, marking the start of a new chapter for the long-neglected facility.

### Amuvi Health Centre Gets Solar Power Boost

By Chibunna Ikeokwu

**T**he wife of the Abia State Governor, Mrs. Priscilla Otti, has officially reopened the renovated Amuvi Primary Healthcare Centre in Arochuku Local Government Area.

The facility now runs on a newly installed 2kw solar power system, aimed at improving healthcare services in the community. The solar installation was made possible through a partnership between Rachisols Foundation and Tudu Energy.

Mrs. Otti thanked the partners for supporting the state government's efforts to strengthen the health sector. She described the solar system as a major step toward saving lives, ensuring that patients no longer suffer due to power outages in primary health centres.

She also encouraged residents to make good use of the upgraded facility. During her visit, she repeated her call for six months of paid maternity leave for nursing mothers and three weeks of paternity leave for fathers so they can support their wives during childbirth and recovery.

Dr. Kalu Ulu Kalu of the Abia Primary Healthcare Development Agency said the goal of the Otti administration is to make quality healthcare affordable and accessible to everyone in the state, no matter their background.

Speaking at the event, Commissioner for Health, Prof. Enoch Ogbonnaya Uche, said the project shows that Governor Otti is fulfilling his promises. He revealed that the state government has already paid its share of funding to ensure all primary healthcare centres in Abia will be powered by solar energy.

Also present was the Commissioner for Women Affairs, Dr. Maureen Aghukwa, who praised the governor's people-centered approach to governance. She urged the Amuvi Community to take ownership of the facility and protect it from vandalism.

Mr. Tuoye Dudu, speaking on behalf of Tudu Energy and Rachisols Foundation, said their decision to support the project was inspired by the good leadership of Governor Alex Otti.



Cross-section of Executive Officers of the Nigerian Institute of Building, Abia State Chapter, during a recent press conference in Umuahia.

### Institute Moves To Forestall Building Collapses In Abia

By Okereke Kate

**T**he Abia State Chapter of the Nigerian Institute of Building, has moved to forestall incessant building collapses in the State.

In a press briefing held at the NUJ Secretariat, Umuahia, the Institute harped on the need for professional builders to be used in all building construction, to put an end to the frequent building collapses in the state.

Speaking, the Abia State Chairman of the Nigerian Institute of Building, Chinedu Nwanosike, said the cause of building collapse is negligence on the part of developers, adding that if professional builders are employed, the issue of building collapse would be forestalled.

He decried the non implementation of the building code and other Laws guiding town planning, while advocating for builders to handle building projects in Abia State.

Addressing the topic, "Abating the Recurring Incidences of Building Collapse in Abia State: Who is Responsible", the Practice Committee Chairman, Council of Registered Builders, Wisdom Okoro, said their aim is to let Nigerians know that building collapse can be mitigated and reduced to the barest minimum.

Giving background into the construction industry, Okoro said the industry is broadly divided into the infrastructure or the civil construction work, which specializes on the construction of dams, railways, and other major infrastructure, and the building construction, which involves residential, commercial, and public structures.

He said while civil construction is typically managed by civil engineers, building projects involve a

network of seven key professions, such as, architects, town planners, quantity surveyors, estate surveyors and valuers, land surveyors and geoinformatics experts, engineers, and builders.

The practice committee chairman, noted that within the engineering, civil engineering plays the most direct role in building safety, working closely with geotechnical and structural engineering. "In the case of high-rise projects, geotechnical engineers perform soil analysis, which structural engineers use to design safe and stable frameworks. Structural engineers provide the bones of a building, while electrical and mechanical engineers handle wiring, piping, and other systems".

Crucially, Okoro added that the construction manager for any building project under Nigeria's 2006 National Building Code, is a registered builder. He said the code which was jointly formulated by the seven professional bodies, assigns builders the sole responsibility of managing the building production process and supervising craftsmen and artisans.

"This role, is not to be shared", he explained.

He disclosed that the builder is meant to be on site from start to finish, serving as the production manager.

Speaking on the dangers of unqualified construction work, Okoro pointed that building collapses often stem from two main causes, natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis and tremors, and the unnatural or man-made failures, such as collapses, that are entirely preventable.

He stressed that the most common and troubling is the building collapses, disclosing the readiness of the Nigerian Institute of Building to nip the bud future occurrences in

Abia State.

As part of measures to abate building collapses in the state, Okoro called on the government to give a decree to stop all building projects above bungalow, until the owners produce the builders undertaking the building project, and added that Town Planning Authorities should ask developers to produce the contractor who is handling their building processes, to get attestation and approval before the starting of any building.

He said government must enforce the building code to ensure every project is done the right way and also place a penalty on anyone whose building may collapse, as a result of not following the code of the seven profession of the building construction industry.

In addition, Okoro said it is not the responsibility of site engineers to handle building projects, disclosing that any site engineer caught handling building projects, be jailed.

He commended the Governor of the State, Dr Alex Otti for making Abia better, with improved road infrastructure, remodelled schools and hospitals, but lamented how the building construction industry is left to suffer in the hands of quacks.

Okoro further called on the government to sanitize the building industry, same way he has sanitized the education, health, and other sectors of the state.

On his part, the Registrar of the Nigerian Institute of Building, John Ugwoeri, called for stricter enforcement of existing laws such as the Nigerian Urban and Regional Planning Law. He said that building approvals should only be granted by relevant agencies, including Town Planning Authorities, before any construction work begins.

Ugwoeri accused some of these authorities of contributing to the problem of building collapses in the

country. According to him, the agencies tasked with controlling building activities often, focus more on collecting fees than ensuring the quality of work.

He said the Abia governor should extend his reform efforts to sanitizing town planning authorities in the state.

Also speaking, a Fellow of the institute, Orji Nwankwo, emphasised that the builder is the only professional among the seven professions that is legally empowered and recognized under the National Building Code to manage building process from start to finish.

"Builders are well-trained and qualified to handle construction. They should be given the opportunity to lead project", he stated.

Fielding questions from Journalists, the building construction experts, also reaffirmed their commitment to eliminating quackery in the construction sector.

They highlighted their role in formulating the 2006 National Building Code, which clearly outlines the responsibilities of the seven building professions.

The institute further criticized the practice of appointing site engineers to oversee building projects, insisting that such a role does not exist under the law for building works.

"By law, site engineers are meant for roads, water, dams, and railway projects and not buildings. For buildings, the correct professionals are structural engineers or geotechnical engineers, working alongside registered builders".

They added that employing a builder does not increase project costs but instead helps reduce expenses by minimizing material waste, calling on Abians to employ the services of a professional builder.



# News

## Umuahia South Partners ATPN For Cultural Festival

By Okereke Kate and Charles Ogbonnaya

The Umuahia South Local Government Area, in collaboration with the Association of Tourism Practitioners of Nigeria (ATPN), is set to host the 2025 Umuahia South Cultural Festival/Face of Umuahia South.

The two-day event, which is aimed at showcasing the rich cultural heritage and traditions of Umuahia South, would take place on December 28 and 29, 2025 at the council headquarters.

Addressing newsmen in Umuahia, the Vice-President of the Association of Tourism Practitioners of Nigeria, South East Zone, Amb Onyekachi Atulomah Loveday, explained that the event is basically to unveil cultural traditions that Umuahia South is known for, including food, dance and traditional attire.

According to the Tourism Ambassador, the festival would also feature a beauty pageant to present young women who are not only physically attractive but also intelligent, morally sound, and capable of representing the state in larger pageantry competitions. She noted that the first of its kind initiative is being organized by the Mayor of Umuahia South Council, Engr. Chinedu Enwereuzo.

Revealing details of the event, Amb Loveday disclosed that since it's a two-day event, the first day would be a road show to intimate Abians and all lovers of culture about the event, while the Face of Umuahia South Pageant would cap the day.

She said the second day would be the cultural festival, where everyone would appear in their traditional outfits, including visitors and invited guests.

The ATPN vice president also revealed that there are plans to extend the cultural event to all 17 Local government areas of the state, with Umuahia South as the pioneer host, since she is from there.

She added that the Face of Umuahia South Beauty pageant would attract a registration fee of (N2,000) only, with juicy prizes to be won.

"First prize winner will go home with the (N500,000), while the first runner up, (N400,000), and second runner up, (N300,000), as well as, other consolation prizes".

While calling for partnerships, from the government, companies and good spirited individuals, Amb. Loveday reiterated that the event was not partisan, therefore, everyone across the different political platforms can attend, stressing that culture does not recognize political affiliations.

She also appealed to

## August Meeting: Mrs. Ogeh Advises Oganihu Umuenyere Azumini To Always Be Positive In Community

By Okere Ugochinyere

The Oganihu Umuenyere Azumini has celebrated its 2025 August Meeting, marking a week-long programme, filled with activities that strengthened unity, showcased cultural heritage, and inspired the women of Azumini to greater heights.

The celebration kicked off with a solemn prayer session, followed by a spirited football competition, a colourful match past, and several other engaging activities that drew members from within Nigeria and abroad.

In her address, the President of Oganihu Umuenyere Azumini, Mrs. Eziuche Ada Ogeh, expressed heartfelt gratitude to God Almighty for granting them the privilege to celebrate the event. She also extended her appreciation to all who honoured the invitation to be part of the occasion.

Speaking on the theme of the year's meeting, "Seizing the Moment," Mrs. Ogeh encouraged everyone to be intentional about making the most of opportunities that come their way.

"Seizing the moment means grabbing opportunities towards doing things that are unique and meaningful. If there is anything good one needs to do, they shouldn't hesitate to seize the moment", she stressed.

"Do not shy away from grabbing the opportunity else your heart will be surrounded with emptiness and regret", she stated.

She, however, urged members both at home and abroad, to continue believing in the association's leadership.

"Our home and abroad members, I entreat you to maintain your confidence in the current leadership of Oganihu Umuenyere Azumini. We are soaring higher by God's grace", she assured.

Mrs. Ogeh also expressed gratitude to the men for their continued encouragement and partnership in the group's projects.

"I will not fail to appreciate our loving husbands who are readily available to give due support and proffer useful advice whenever necessary. We are humbled by this act and cannot thank you enough for your understanding", she further stated.

Highlighting the association's achievements over the past two years, she outlined several milestones, including: The affiliation of the Igban na Madu Women with Oganihu Umuenyere Azumini; Sustaining cordial relations with the interim administrative committee; Production of building blocks for the commencement of the Skill Acquisition Center project; Campaigns to discourage indecent dressing among young women.

She inspired Azumini



A cross-section of Oganihu Azumini women during their annual August meeting, themed 'Seizing the Moment,' held at Oganihu Hall, Azumini ukwa east LGA recently.

women to be seen as role models across other communities.

"Other communities are emulating us, they call us to know how we achieved all these. It is the Lord's doing. We have been charged to move forward with 'Obu Oli', she added.

Mrs. Ogeh also highlighted pressing challenges facing the association to include; the completion of the Skill Acquisition Centre, installation of a borehole at the proposed site, acquisition of a new generator to replace the aging one, and provision of financial support for women to start small-scale businesses.

"I pray for safety for all those who graced the occasion", she prayed.

In his goodwill message, the Executive Chairman, Ukwu East Local Government Area, Hon. Chibunna Akara, commended the president and the planning committee for organizing an August Meeting "worthy of emulation" and praised their vision and organization.

The mayor encouraged the women to remain steadfast in their good works and to keep contributing meaningfully to the growth and development of the community. He assured them that his administration remains firmly committed to carrying them along in every initiative and programme, emphasizing that their voices, concerns, and ideas will always be given due attention and respect.

The Chairman on the occasion, Chief Chidi Ogbulu, commended the women, expressing deep admiration for their remarkable unity, steadfast commitment, and the spirit of love that binds them together. He noted that such virtues are the foundation for lasting progress in the community.

The Councilor representing Azumini Ward Hon. Bright Ekeke, while addressing the women, expressed how proud he was of their efforts and contributions to the development of the community. He also

conveyed deep gratitude for their immense support. He reiterated his appreciation and pledged his support in line with the theme of the event.

"I assure you all of my co-operation and collaboration going forward as I look forward to your continued support for the administration of the Executive Chairman, Hon. Chibunna Akara and Dr. Alex Otti," he said.

He prayed for their good health and longevity, asking God to continually guide and position them for greater positivity and impact.

In their speeches, the President of the Azumini Welfare Association (AWA), Mr. Azu Nwankwo, the Onyenwehu, UhuNta, Hon. OgoUban and the SECLOG, Ukwu East Local Government Area, Pastor Iheanyi Adindu, poured encomium on the women of Azumini for the zeal, unity, and tireless commitment they demonstrated towards the successful hosting of the 2025 Azumini August Meeting. They noted that the women's efforts had not only ensured the smooth execution of the programme but had also showcased the spirit of co-operation and resilience for which the community is known, while expressing deep appreciation.

They encouraged all members of the community to continue working together in the same spirit, never relenting in their drive to achieve greater milestones for Azumini and to sustain the legacy of excellence for which the August Meeting has come to be celebrated.

A special health talk on "Breast Cancer", delivered by Lolo Nnenna Ododo, reminded women of the critical importance of regular breast screening, timely medical check-ups, and the health benefits of exclusive breastfeeding for no less than six months.

In appreciation to the health talk presentation, the former deputy T.C chairman, Ukwu East L.G.A., Hon. Lady Cecilia

Okere, commended the presenter for an educative speech, while encouraging women to make it a habit to check their health regularly.

Women should always enable to go for check-up weekly as it will go a long way in accessing their health status", she urged.

Cultural preservation was also a major talking point at the gathering. Lady Nneoma Emuchay, appealed to Azumini women not to let their dialect fade away.

"These days, women married into Azumini speak the dialect better. I urge you to imbibe it and make it compulsory for your children as well", she said, further urging women not to allow the culture of the land to die off.

In support, Lady Stella Igboke thanked God for the life of Lady Emuchay, describing her as a woman whom God has used to sustain Azumini's traditions over the years. She also applauded Umuenyere Azumini for its discipline and consistency.

"Azumini, known for their mgbede dance, ikoro and culture, must ensure that the culture lives on", she reminded.

One of the distinguished awardees, Emeka Ogeh, in his remarks, expressed profound appreciation to the Oganihu Women for bestowing on him the prestigious title of "Worthy Son." He described the honour as both humbling and inspiring, noting that it serves as a renewed call to service.

Ogeh assured the gathering that he would remain steadfast in contributing meaningfully to the growth and success of the present administration.

He further pledged to work tirelessly towards the advancement, unity, and overall well-being of all Azumini indigenes, affirming that the progress of his people will always be at the heart of his endeavours.

The 2025 August Meeting concluded with

colourful highlights, including the mgbede dance, old school songs, the official launch of the Oganihu Project, foundation laying of the skill acquisition centre, the presentation of awards to distinguished personalities, among others.

The awardees include: Senator Enyinnaya Abaribe; Emeka Ogeh - Worthy Son; Hon. Dakuku Peterside - Grand Patron; Sir Eluwa Ebbis - Worthy Daughter; Chidi Precious Ogolo - Noble Son; Mrs. Ugwu Emuchay - Nwanyiejiagamba.

her vote of thanks, the Chairman of the Planning Committee, Mrs. Leticia Obianyi, expressed profound gratitude to all dignitaries, guests, and members of the community who graced the 2025 Azumini August Meeting.

She acknowledged the sacrifices, moral support, and various contributions both big and small that ensured the success of the programme.

Mrs. Obianyi also extended heartfelt appreciation to individuals, groups, and well-wishers who, in one way or the other, offered their resources, time, and prayers towards the event. She prayed for God's abundant blessings, protection, and continued favour upon all who played a role in making the celebration a memorable and impactful one.

Present during the event include, Hon. Sam Okere, Chief of Staff to the Ukwu East Mayor, Hon. Charles Ukaegbu, Majority Leader, Legislative Council; Hon. Hon. Obioma Nwaulu, Supervisor for Works; Mr Chinedu Ekeke, Chairman Azumini Youth, among others.

The event left a lasting impression of unity, culture, and purposeful action among the Azumini women.

## Feature

# The Pre-2027 : Party Gold Rush

By Dakuku Peterside,

**T**he 2027 general elections are fast approaching, and Nigeria's political landscape is undergoing a rapid transformation. New acronyms, and freshly minted party logos are emerging, promising a new era of renewal and liberation. To the casual observer, this may seem like democracy in full bloom—citizens exercising their right to association, political diversity flourishing, and the marketplace of ideas expanding. However, beneath this surface, a more urgent reality is unfolding. The current rush to establish new parties is less about ideological conviction or grassroots movements and more about strategic positioning, bargaining leverage, and transactional gain.

It is the paradox of Nigerian politics: proliferation as a sign of vitality, proliferation as a symptom of democratic fragility. With 2027 on the horizon, the political air is electric, not with fresh ideas, but with a gold rush to create new political parties. Supporters call it the flowering of democracy. But scratch the surface and you see something else: opportunism dressed as pluralism. This is not just politics—it is political merchandising. Parties are being set up like small businesses, complete with negotiation value, resale potential, and short-term profit models. Today, Nigeria has 19 registered political parties, one of countries with the highest no of registered political parties in the world behind India (2500) and Brazil (35) and more than Indonesia (18).

History serves as a cautionary tale in this context. Whenever Nigeria has embraced multi-party politics, the electoral battlefield has eventually narrowed to a contest between two main poles. In the early 1990s, General Ibrahim Babangida's political transition programme deliberately engineered a two-party structure by decreeing the creation of the National Republican Convention (NRC) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP). His justification was rooted in the observation—controversial but not entirely unfounded—that Nigeria's political psychology tends to gravitate toward two dominant camps, thereby simplifying voter choice and fostering more stable governance. Pro-democracy activists condemned the move as state-engineered politics, but over time, the pattern became embedded.

When Nigeria returned to civilian rule in 1999, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) emerged as the dominant force, facing off against the All People's Party (APP) and the Alliance for Democracy (AD) coalition. The 2003 and 2007 elections pitted the PDP against the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP); in 2011, the PDP contended with both the ANPP and the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC). By 2015, the formation of the All Progressives Congress (APC)—a coalition of the CPC, ANPP, Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), and a faction of the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA)—restored the two-bloc dynamic. This 'two-bloc dynamic' refers to the situation where most of the political power is concentrated within two main parties, leading to a less diverse and competitive political landscape. Even when dozens of smaller parties appeared on the ballot, the real contest was still a battle of two heavyweights.

And yet, here we are again, with Nigeria's Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) registering nineteen parties but facing an avalanche of new applications—110 by late June 2025, swelling to at least 122 by early July. This surge is striking, especially considering that after the 2019 general elections, INEC deregistered seventy-four parties for failing to meet constitutional performance requirements, a decision upheld by the Supreme Court in 2021. That landmark ruling underscored that party registration is not a perpetual license; it is a privilege conditioned on meeting electoral benchmarks, such as a minimum vote share and representation across the federation. The surge in party formation could potentially lead to a more complex and fragmented electoral

process, making it harder for voters to make informed decisions and for smaller parties to gain traction.

So, what explains the surge in the formation of new parties now? The reasons are not mysterious. Money is the bluntest answer, but it is braided with other motives. For some, creating a party is a strategic move to position themselves for negotiations with larger parties—trading endorsements, securing "alliances," and even extracting concessions like campaign funding or political appointments. Others set up "friendly" parties designed to dilute opposition votes in targeted constituencies, often indirectly benefiting the ruling party. Some political entrepreneurs build parties as personal vehicles for regional ambitions or as escape routes from established parties where rival factions have captured the leadership. Some are escape pods for politicians frozen out of the ruling APC's machinery. There is also a genuine democratic impulse among certain groups to create platforms for neglected ideas or underrepresented constituencies. But the transactional motive often eclipses these idealistic efforts, leaving most new parties as temporary instruments rather than enduring institutions.

policy vision. On election day, their presence on the ballot can be more of a distraction than a contribution, and after the polls close, many vanish from public life until the next cycle of political registration. This is not democracy—it is ballot clutter.

This is not uniquely Nigerian. In India, a few thousand registered parties exist, yet only a fraction of them are active or competitive at the state or national level. Brazil, notorious for its highly fragmented legislature, has struggled with unstable coalitions and governance deadlock; even now, it is reducing the number of effective parties. Indonesia allows many parties to register but imposes a parliamentary threshold—currently four per cent of the national vote—to limit legislative fragmentation. These examples, along with others from around the world, suggest that plurality can work, but only when paired with guardrails: stringent conditions for registration, clear criteria for participation, performance-based retention, and an electoral culture that rewards sustained engagement over fleeting visibility.

Nigeria already has a version of this in



President Bola Tinubu.

**Democracy is a contest of ideas, discipline, and trust. If the 2027 rush is allowed to run unchecked, we will end up with the worst of both worlds — a crowded ballot and an empty choice.**

The democratic consequences of this kind of proliferation are profound. On the one hand, political pluralism is a constitutional right and an essential feature of democracy. On the other hand, too many weak, poorly organised parties can fragment the opposition, confuse voters, and degrade the quality of political competition. Many of these micro-parties lack ward-level presence, a consistent membership drive, and ideological coherence. Their manifestos are often generic, interchangeable documents crafted to meet registration requirements rather than to present a distinct

place, courtesy of INEC's power to deregister. We deregistered seventy-four parties in 2020 for failing to meet performance standards, and five years later, we are sprinting back to the same cliff. Yet loopholes remain especially, and the process is reactive rather than proactive. Registration conditionalities are lax. This is where both INEC and the ruling APC must shoulder greater responsibility. The need for electoral reform is urgent, and it is time for all stakeholders to act.

For INEC, the task is to strengthen its oversight by tightening membership verification, enhancing financial transparency, and expanding its geographic spread requirements, as well as introducing periodic revalidation between election cycles. For the ruling party, the challenge lies in upholding political ethics: resisting the temptation to exploit party proliferation to splinter the opposition for short-term gain. A strong ruling party in a democracy wins competitive elections, not one that manipulates the field to run unopposed. Strong democracy requires a credible opposition, not a scattering of paper platforms that cannot even win a ward councillor seat.

Here is the truth: this system needs reform. Reform doesn't mean closing democratic space, but making it meaningful and orderly. Democracy must balance full freedom of association with the need for order. While freedom encourages many parties, order requires limiting their number to a manageable level.

For example, Nigeria could require parties to have active structures in two-thirds of states, a verifiable membership, and annual audited financials. Parties failing to win National Assembly seats in two consecutive elections could lose registration.

The message to new parties is clear: prove you're more than just a logo and acronym. Build lasting movements—organize locally, offer real policies alternatives, and stay engaged between elections.

Democracy is a contest of ideas, discipline, and trust. If the 2027 rush is allowed to run unchecked, we will end up with the worst of both worlds — a crowded ballot and an empty choice. Mergers should be incentivised through streamlined legal processes and possibly electoral benefits, such as ballot priority or increased public funding. At the same time, independent candidates should be allowed more room to compete, ensuring that reform does not entrench an exclusive two-party cartel.

Ultimately, the deeper issue here is the erosion of public trust. Nigerians have no inherent hostility to new political formations; what they distrust are political outfits that emerge in the months leading up to an election, strike opaque deals, and disappear without a trace. Politicians must resist the temptation to treat politics as a seasonal business opportunity and instead invest in it as a long-term public service.

As 2027 approaches, Nigeria stands at a familiar but critical juncture. The country can indulge the frenzy—rolling out yet another logo, staging yet another press conference, promising yet another "structure" that exists mainly on paper. Or it can seize this moment to rethink how political competition is structured: open but disciplined, plural but purposeful, competitive but coherent. Fewer parties will not automatically make Nigeria's democracy healthier. But better parties—rooted in communities, committed to clear policies, and resilient beyond election season—just might. And that is a choice within reach, if those who hold the levers of power are willing to leave the system stronger than they found it.





# ABIA STATE OIL PRODUCING AREAS DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION ASOPADEC

ASO/P.R. S/IT/VOL 2/102

11TH August, 2025

## INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION AND TENDER

The Abia State Oil Producing Areas Development Commission (ASOPADEC) in collaboration with Ministry of Power and Public Utilities hereby call for bids for pre-qualification and tender from competent, reputable and interested contractors for the Rehabilitation of 31 Communities Transformer Substations, High Tension Overhead Transmission Line and Low-Tension Overhead Line at Ukwa West Local Government Area of Abia State.

### SCOPE OF WORK

LOT 1: Rehabilitation of 31 Communities Transformer Substations.

LOT 2: High Tension Overhead Transmission Line.

LOT 3: Low Tension Overhead Line.

### TENDER / REQUIREMENT

Prospective tenders are required to submit their bid containing the underlisted documents in clearly marked envelop to the office of the General Manager within two weeks from this publication. They are:

- Certificate of Registration with Corporate Affairs Commission.
- Certificate of Registration with Abia State Ministry of Work as a contractor.
- Evidence of three years company's tax clearance certificate.
- Evidence of Financial Capability (Bank recommendation).
- Evidence of Technical Capability (Similar Job done).
- Company profile.

### TENDER PROCEDURE

Tenders are required to Pay a non-refundable processing fee of Thirty Thousand Naira (N30,000.00) in cash to the Planning Research and Statistics Department and obtain receipt. The unpriced bill of Engineering Measurement, Evaluation and Drawing are obtainable from the office of the Director of Works Department, upon the presentation of evidence of tender.

Completed tender should be sealed in an envelope and plainly marked on the top of the right-hand side "Rehabilitation of 31 communities Transformer Substations. High Tension Overhead Transmission Line and Low-Tension Overhead Line at Ukwa West Local Government Area of Abia State" to indicate the project being tendered for to the office of the General Manager of ASOPADEC, before 12 noon on the day of the close of tender.

Closing date for the submission of the tender is 2 weeks from the date of this publication and the opening of the tender follows immediately in the conference hall of the Commission.

*Signed:*  
*Management*

## Opinion

### Sir Oko Chukwu's Resignation from Abia PDP and the Questions It Raises

*By Okechukwu Ubani*

The recent resignation of Rt. Hon. Sir Ude Oko Chukwu, former Deputy Governor of Abia State, has sent shockwaves through the political landscape of the state. His unexpected decision to leave the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) a party he has served for over two decades has sparked widespread speculation and concern about the future of the PDP in Abia.

#### A Longtime Loyalist Bows Out

Sir Oko Chukwu is not just any politician. He served for eight years as a member of Abia State House of Assembly, four years as speaker of Abia State house of assembly and eight years as Deputy Governor. His long-standing service and loyalty to the PDP made him one of its most prominent and respected leaders, especially in Abia North Senatorial Zone and his hometown, Nkporo in Ohafia Local Government Area.

In a letter dated August 5, 2025, and addressed to the chairman of his ward—Ndi Elu Ward in Nkporo—Sir Oko Chukwu announced his resignation from the PDP, citing personal reasons. He described the move as a "difficult but necessary" decision. The party officially acknowledged his resignation two days later, on August 7, effectively confirming the end of an era.

#### A Shocking Move with Big Implications

Sir Oko Chukwu's resignation is more than just one man leaving a political party. It marks the end of a long and influential chapter in Abia PDP's leadership. Many within the party and the wider public see it as a serious political event that could lead to major changes in Abia politics.

Political observers note that his departure could cause a ripple effect, especially in the northern part of the state where he holds significant influence. Already, discussions are growing about what this means for the PDP's strength and unity moving forward.

#### What Could Be Next for Sir Oko Chukwu?

So far, Sir Oko Chukwu has not officially declared his next political move. However, strong speculations suggest that he may be considering a run for the House of Representatives in 2027 possibly under the banner of another political party.

If this happens, it could shift political power away from the PDP in key areas, especially in Ohafia and the larger Abia North Senatorial Zone. This would create serious challenges for the PDP as it prepares for the next general elections.

#### A Party at a Crossroads

Within the PDP, reactions have been mixed. Some members see his exit as a major setback. A party official from Ohafia, who preferred to remain anonymous, said:

"We respect his decision, but losing him is a big blow. He was one of the pillars of our party." He further said that this is the time for us to go back to the drawing to replan ourselves to prevent another big exit.

Others, however, have taken a more understanding approach—praising Sir Oko Chukwu for his years of service and wishing him well, regardless of what comes next.

Still, the concerns remain. Will his departure inspire more defections? Can the PDP regroup and remain a dominant force in Abia State? Or is this the beginning of a shift in political loyalty and power?

#### Political Realignment Ahead of 2027?

Across Nigeria, politicians are already positioning themselves for the 2027 general elections. Some analysts believe Sir Oko Chukwu's resignation may be part of a broader political realignment in Abia State.

As the race for 2027 begins to take shape, political parties will be seeking strong candidates with name recognition, grassroots support, and political experience. Sir Oko Chukwu checks all those boxes. If he joins another party, he could become a key player and possibly attract other loyalists to follow him.

#### Silence, Speculations, and Strategy

Interestingly, Sir Oko Chukwu has remained silent about his political plans. Aside from thanking the PDP for the platform it gave him over the years, he has not revealed his next step.

Will he return to contest in 2027? Will he join a rival party? Or is he stepping back from active politics? No one knows for sure. But many believe his silence is strategic and that he is far from done.

#### The Road Ahead for Abia Politics

What is clear is that his resignation will have lasting effects. With the next elections just two years away, his actions and those of others who may follow him could reshape party alliances, voter behavior, and campaign strategies.

As political watchers look on, the PDP in Abia must now do some soul-searching. Rebuilding trust, strengthening its base, and preventing further exits should become top priorities for them.

For Sir Ude Oko Chukwu, his future remains uncertain, but one thing is sure: his exit has left a gap in the PDP and opened a new chapter in Abia's ever-evolving political story.

## News

### Abia LG Service Commission Holds Two-Day Workshop

By Ekebuisi Precious

**T**he Abia State Local Government Service Commission has held a two-day capacity-building workshop aimed at strengthening financial prudence and accountability in the local government system.

The training, themed "The Imperative of Effective Financial Management in the Local Government Service," was held at the Bishop Anthony Nwedo Pastoral Complex Umuahia Abia State and brought together Heads of Service and Directors from the 17 local government areas of the state.

Declaring the workshop open, the Chairman of the Commission, Elder James Nwokochah, represented by the Commissioner 1 in charge of Training, Chief Jerry Uzosike, underscored the importance of the exercise in re-strategizing participants, particularly those serving as bank signatories in their respective councils.

He reiterated that the present administration has zero tolerance for corruption, financial misconduct, and mismanagement of public funds, urging participants to embrace the training as a vital tool for enhancing service delivery.

Meanwhile, the Permanent Secretary of the Commission, Dr. Ezinne Judith Ngwakwe, commended the initiative and encouraged attendees to take the programme seriously.

She stressed that effective financial management was critical to promoting transparency, accountability, and prudent expenditure of public resources.

Ngwakwe also lauded Governor Dr. Alex Chioma Otti for his unwavering commitment to workers' welfare and his support for reforms in the local government system.

The workshop featured presentations from seasoned resource persons, including Chief Kalu Agwu Kalu, Mr. Vincent China, Mr. Chiukpai Okwara, and several Directors from the Commission, who shared insights on modern financial management practices and regulatory compliance.

The event forms part of the Commission's broader agenda to equip local government officials with the skills and ethics necessary to safeguard public funds and improve grassroots governance.



Elder James Nwokochah

### Otti Applauds Tinubu As Abia Secures \$125m IsDB Facility

Continued from page 1

While the AfDB and Canada - Africa Development Bank agreements have been finalised — with the AfDB loan signed earlier this year, the IsDB facility is considered essential to unlocking the full funding for the project, given the integrated structure of the financing.

Under the IsDB-backed component, the project will deliver approximately 126 kilometres of road network in Aba and 35.57 kilometres in Umuahia, including a link road between the two cities, alongside critical erosion control works.

According to the Abia State Government, once completed, the project will: reduce travel time in Abia's busiest corridors, create over 3,000 jobs for local residents, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve access to social services and attract private sector investment.

Governor Otti in a



Governor Alex Otti (left) shares a warm handshake with President Bola Tinubu recently.

press statement signed by his Chief Press Secretary, Ukoha Njoku Ukoha, expressed gratitude to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu "for his trust and pragmatic leadership", the National Assembly "for approving the borrowing plan", and the Honourable Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Mr Wale Edun, "for his leadership in concluding the financing process".

He also thanked the Secretary to the

Government of the Federation, the Attorney General of the Federation, and the Vice President of the IsDB, Dr Mansur Muhktar, "who not only reached out in November 2023, but saw to it that internal approvals were received on the request for the facility", as well as other stakeholders involved.

"This landmark project will complement my administration's ongoing infrastructural development initiatives, aimed at modernising Abia's transportation network, revitalising

urban centres, and positioning the State as a hub for sustainable economic growth", Gov Otti said.

The project will be executed through the State Ministry of Works under the supervision of a State Steering Committee, which will guide the State Project Implementation Unit (SPIU) and other stakeholders. Procurement for the IsDB-financed components will follow the Bank's guidelines, with payments made directly to contractors and consultants.

### Gov Otti Flags Off Abia Leadership Academy Bootcamp

By Charles Ogbonnaya

**T**he Abia State Government has launched the Abia Leadership Academy Bootcamp, reaffirming its commitment to nurturing a new generation of visionary leaders through mentorship, value reorientation, and capacity building.

Declaring the programme open at Government College, Umuahia, Governor Alex Otti, represented by his Deputy, Engr. Ikechukwu Emetu, described the initiative as "a seed-planting exercise and an investment in the future leaders of Abia, Nigeria, and the world."

Targeting teenagers and young adults aged 16 to 20, the bootcamp aims to equip participants with leadership skills, strong personal values, and problem-solving abilities.

"In Abia, our vision is to raise young people who are not just future leaders in theory, but active leaders in practice today," Otti said. "We want you to be problem-solvers in your schools, innovators in your communities, and ambassadors of good governance

wherever you go."

He urged participants to take the programme seriously, stressing that leadership begins with personal values and character. "At 16 to 20 years old, your character and vision are like wet cement—what you allow to be written on it now will remain for a long time," he noted.

The governor also encouraged self-reliance as a pathway to societal contribution. "One of the greatest gifts you can give yourself is the ability to stand on your own feet," he said.

Earlier, Secretary to the State Government and Chairman of the Organising Committee, Prof. Kenneth Kanu, described the Leadership Academy as a platform for raising empathetic leaders capable of making decisions that positively impact society.

Other speakers—including the Commissioner for Information and Culture, Prince Okey Kanu; Commissioner for Industry and SME, Mazi Mike Akpara; and Civil Service Commission Chairman, Pastor Eno Jerry Eze—urged participants to adopt a positive mindset, choose their

circles wisely, and fully engage in the training.

Lead Consultant of the Abia Leadership Academy, Mr. Johnson Abbally, credited Governor Otti's vision for making the initiative possible, noting its goal to produce global leaders capable of redefining governance in Nigeria.

Speaking with newsmen shortly after the event, the Head of the Due Process and Public Procurement Bureau, Abia State, Dr. Oluebube Chukwu, commended the State Government for the initiative, insisting it will go a long way in giving young people the right direction, engaging them constructively, and nipping crime in the bud.

The bootcamp will feature several days of workshops, mentorship sessions, and practical exercises designed to nurture responsible, resilient, and innovative leaders ready to make meaningful contributions to society.





**Joseph Jacob**  
Joseph JACOB01914  
070361698671

## Creative Writers Hangout

### Uche and the Sword (5)

**C**an you write and recite the ABCD?"

"Yessenor."

"OK tear out a piece of paper and write it while I get my books from the other class."

Uche felt a bit happy, for the first time in a long time someone have asked him to do what he was confident of doing.

Sandra took her seat, allowing three desks between them and started reading her books. Uche finished in less than five minutes but was shy to tell Sandra.

"You've not finished?" Sandra asked one hour later. It was then that Uche said he had finished.

Sandra came over to Uche's desk and sat beside him. Uche was nervous having the senior prefect sitting beside him, a female for that matter.

When she saw how neat and eligible Uche wrote the alphabet Sandra felt very happy. She realized that Uche was not as slow witted as she had thought.

"Now, Uche point at each letter and call it aloud."

Uche started, pointing the letters with his fidgeting fingers and calling them from A to Z without a mistake.

Sandra felt elated again. She pointed at A and asked, "What is this?"

"It is A", Uche replied.

"Good, now, it is pronounced Ah, say it," Uche repeated severally.

"Now, let's take B."

Uche repeated the sound severally. "Let's combine both letters", Sandra wrote BA and asked Uche to call them. Uche started calling them but separately, "B Ah"

"Uche, listen, you must pronounce them together. You must not break in between those two letters nor bring in another sound. Say BA". Sandra pronounced and Uche repeated after her severally.

"What if we add A" Sandra said as she wrote A+BA. Uche quickly called ABA and smiled happily, remembering that his late brother lived in ABA.

Sandra taught him few more words and faced her book while Uche practiced on his own. From time to time Sandra looked in and offered assistance.

It was at about 5 pm that they started trekking home. Uche knew that beating was awaiting him but the joy of being able to pronounce words like ABA, CAR, CAP, HAT, BAG, made him not to worry about what awaits him at home.

Sandra dominated the conversation as Uche was timid and was finding it difficult to express himself in good English.

"Here is my house so where do you live?" Sandra asked. Uche looked at the giant black gate and nodded.

"Down, down, No 197 Eket Street."

"See you tomorrow." Sandra waved and walked towards their house. Uche was very happy, he thought about those few words he could pronounce and decided to restudy them at home. He turned to see if he could see Sandra once more but she was gone. He shook his head in admiration of Sandra. "She's very beautiful", he thought, "She's neatly dressed and gentle".

Uche fondled his hand into his bag and brought out the piece of paper Sandra had written on during the study. He smelt the paper to perceive more of Sandra's perfume.

He wished that his mother had given birth to a daughter that had all Sandra's qualities, "Chai!", he exclaimed, "I for no day this condition wey everybody dey laf me", he soliloquized.

Some weeks later Sandra and Nkeiru were strolling during break when Uche walked up to them.

"This naughty boy is coming towards us", Nkeiru said and laughed

scornfully.

Uche heard her and turned to walk away, but Sandra called him.

"Uche", when he turned she continued, "Come, I know you want to seeme."

Uche smiled and went to her ignoring Nkeiru's contemptuous glare.

"Senior, I don talk with sir Godwin", Uche said shyly.

"And what did he say?"

"Him say no problem. So, I go dey go training only for Mondays and Fridays".

It was Sandra who told Uche to ask their coach, Mr. Godwin to let him come to training only on those two days so that he could have more time for his after school classes with Sandra. She would be using Mondays and Fridays exclusively for her own studies.

"OK, See you", Sandra replied.

"Thank you senior", Uche said and ran into the field to join his classmates in the match they had against the JSS 2 students.

"Sandra, what are you doing with that moron?", Nkeiru asked with a complete disdain on her face.

"Nkeiru, he's not a moron, moreover he's my friend..."

"Are you crazy?", Nkeiru burst into laughter and went ahead, "Look at how dirty he is with eczema all over his body."

Sandra felt hurt in her heart but managed to be expressionless as she said, "That does not disqualify him from being my friend".

Nkeiru continued laughing annoyingly. Sandra tactfully changed the subject, "How are you preparing for the exams?"

"I'm already prepared Sandra. Bet me, I'll make the best result", Nkeiru boasted.

"I've not been seeing you reading, I wonder what gives you confidence".

"If you're interested you can come on board".

"How do I come on board?"

"Very simple, bring one hundred thousand naira..."

"Ah! Nkeiru, that amount is outrageous, besides my stepmother will never let my father give me such an amount of money".

"Then forget about it. Excuse me".

Sandra was stunned as Nkeiru walked out on her. Sandra had always felt that there were no other means to success except through hard work, but what was Nkeiru urging her to come on into?

Meanwhile Uche was in goal for the JSS 1 students, who were leading the JSS 2 students by a lone goal. With two minutes to the end of the break, Uche and his classmates knew that they were about to cause an upset.

Uche caught a ball, kicked it out and turned left to spit. He saw Sandra standing with her hands crossed. As their eyes met Sandra smiled and started walking towards the JSS 3 class.

Uche turned to face the match only to see the ball rolling into his net. The JSS 2 students celebrated their last minute equalizer while Uche received the blame from his classmates for letting in the goal.

"What were you looking at?" was the question everyone asked him.

Uche had no answer but apologies. "I beg make una forgive me na mistake, even Stanley Nwabali dey make mistake".

"But, you were looking at something else", Uzo insisted as they picked their uniforms and sandals heaped behind the

net.

"Uzo no vex, thank God say we draw. Tomorrow we go win them."

In the class that afternoon, while other students talked about the match and how they would have won, Uche was busy slowly reading his textbook and jotting difficult words.

During Sandra's lesson with Uche, later that day, she helped him pronounce those difficult words. "Senior Sandra, you say yesterday one word fit mean many things, so na how we go fit know the meaning of words?"

Sandra dipped her hand into her bag and brought out a pocket size Oxford Dictionary, "What is this?"

"Them dey call am dic- something like that."

"You tried. It is called a dictionary. It is one of the tools you must use effectively if you would understand English. It performs various duties. One, it helps you to know the meaning of words. Two, it tells you what other meaning a word has, just as the question you asked. Three, it shows you the correct way to spell and pronounce words. A dictionary also gives you the other forms a word can appear."

"I no understand that last one", Uche complained.

"For example, we have beauty and beautiful, joy and joyful. What of danger?"

Uche smiled as the answer seemed very simple. He answered, "Danger is dangerous."

Sandra laughed until tears rolled down her cheeks. Uche became ashamed and Sandra noticed. "Uche, I'm sorry for the way I laughed. It's just that I could not hold myself. Now let's use the dictionary." She opened the dictionary to the entry and pointed at it. "After danger this next thing you're seeing is the transcription, that is how it should be pronounced. This 'n' after the transcript is noun. It means that danger is a noun. By the way what is a noun?"

"A noun is a name of a thing, animal, place or person." Uche answered not sure of his answer but smiled when Sandra nodded.

"Good", Sandra commended him and points to the dictionary. "These are they various meaning of danger. Look at this words written boldly."

Uche looked at the words closely. After some attempts he pronounced them, "Dangerous and dangerously."

"Is there any dangerous?"

"No"

"You see why I laughed the way I did when you said dangerous? So you can't say the form of a word by the form of other words. The dictionary will help you to know other forms of a word."

Uche nodded his head severally as he appreciated the new things he had just learnt.

"A dictionary can also give you the antonyms and the synonyms of a word."

Uche raised his eyebrows in confusion. Those two words were too big for him to understand. Sandra nodded and explained further, "Antonyms means opposite of the word while Synonyms means having the same meaning. But Mrs. Osuka taught us that no two English words mean exactly the same thing. That is why in exams you'll see similar in meaning not the same in meaning."

Uche was greatly enjoying that day's lesson as he was learning new things. Sandra flipped through the dictionary looking for where she would use to

buttress her point.

"OK, Uche look at this word, REPRESS. What is this after the definition?"

"It is SYN."

"That is the shortened form of synonym. What did I say synonym is?"

Uche scratched his head not wanting to disappoint Sandra. He looked at the ceiling, "It is oppo-"

"No!" Sandra cuts in.

"Senior the two of them dey confuse me. I know say one na opposite the other na similar. But, I no know which one be which."

Sandra smiled and tapped Uche's shoulder consolingly. Her patience had made Uche relaxed, which in turn made him learn fast. "I understand how you feel. This is what you will do. One begins with 'A' that is Antonyms, the other begins with 'S', Synonyms."

Uche nodded to show that he was following.

"Just know that the one that begins with 'S' is similar..."

"OK, s goes with s." Uche chipped in.

"Yes," Sandra nodded.

"So the one that starts with 'A', is the opposite," Uche said happily.

"Good! Now that you've understood what I mean, what does synonym mean?"

"S" he said thoughtfully, "Yes similar."

"Correct! Now look at the SYN in the dictionary. Pronounce the word beside it."

"C-o-n-t-r-o-l, Control."

"So it means that control is similar to-?"

"Repress" Uche completed.

"Fine", Sandra flipped through the dictionary and found another example, "Uche look at this entry, 'Tall'. You see this OPP, It means opposite and the word there is what?"

"Short."

"Fine. I know you've understood what I mean." Uche nodded. Sandra went on, "Bigger dictionary can do more than I have told you. Whenever you want to check a word come and borrow my dictionary."

"Thank you senior. I get another problem."

"What is it?"

"Sometimes, I go get watin I won say for mind, But I no go know how I go take talk am."

"Your problem is you don't have enough vocabularies to express yourself. The best way to solve the problem is by reading a lot. When you read and find a new word write it down. Then come and use my dictionary to find the meaning. You will also need to find its synonym and antonym, if it has. If you continue that way, you will know many words."

"Thank you senior."

"I'll want you to do something for me."

"Na watin be that, senior?"

"I want you to stop speaking Pidgin English, speak good English."

"I go try."

*Sandra has turned Uche's condition around. But more challenges awaits them. Don't miss our next publication.*

### AUTHOR OF THE WEEK



### Bai T. Moore

**M**oore was born in Dimah, a traditional Gola village on the Monrovia-Tubmanburg highway as Bai Tamia Johnson Moore on October 12, 1916.

He studied at local schools and travelled to the United Kingdom for hid college education, where he studied Agriculture in Virginia Union University.

He returned to Liberia in 1941 to take up a post in the national civil service. He was also deeply interested in Liberian culture and society. He co-authored the Liberian poetry collection, Echoes from the Valley: Being Odes and Other Poems published in 1947 with Roland T. Dempster and T.H. Carey.

He was nominated to work for UNESCO on its Liberia desk. In 1957, he headed the government's Fundamental Education project, designed to bring education and information to rural parts of the country.

Moore had continued his writing. In 1968 he published his first novella, *Murder in the Cassava Patch*, based on actual events. It was highly popular, securing Moore's reputation as Liberia's best-known writer. His book's success helped Moore maintain his public position through some of the most turbulent years of Liberia's history. Under the government of President Samuel Doe, Moore was appointed Minister for Cultural Affairs and Tourism. He held this position at the time of his sudden death at the age of seventy-one.

After a state funeral at the Centennial Memorial Pavilion, attended by cultural troupes from the Dey, Gola, Vai, Kpelle, Gbandi and Gio tribes, Bai T. Moore was laid to rest in his native Dimah. Liberian politician and author, Wilton Sankawulo wrote: "The best tribute we can pay to the memory of Bai Tee is making our culture part of our daily life, for culturally we are dressed in borrowed robes. Unless we replace these alien garments with ones of our own making, we will continue failing in all our attempts to build a society that can meet our needs and aspirations".

## Foreign

### US Warships Sail Near Disputed Shoal Following Collision Involving Chinese Vessels

A U.S. Navy guided-missile destroyer conducted a Freedom of Navigation Operation (FONOP) near the disputed Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea on Wednesday—just two days after two Chinese military vessels collided while pursuing a Philippine Coast Guard ship in nearby waters.

The presence of the U.S. warship prompted China's military to accuse Washington of violating its territorial sovereignty. However, the U.S. Navy asserted its legal right to operate in the area.

"USS Higgins (DDG 76) asserted navigational rights and freedoms in the South China Sea near Scarborough Reef, consistent with international law," said Lt. Sarah Merrill, spokesperson for the U.S. Navy's 7th Fleet, in a statement to CNN.

Scarborough Shoal is claimed by China, the Philippines, and Taiwan. Located about 140 miles (222 kilometers) west of the Philippine island of Luzon, the shoal lies within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Despite this, China has effectively controlled the uninhabited reef since 2012 through the near-constant presence of its coast guard, according to the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative.

China and Taiwan both require prior notification for warships transiting their claimed territorial waters around the shoal—an action the U.S. deems a violation of international law, which guarantees the right of "innocent passage" for foreign vessels.

### Putin Suggests US And Russia Could Strike Nuclear Arms Deal As He Praises Trump's Peace Efforts

Russian President Vladimir Putin praised the Trump administration's "energetic" efforts to stop the war in Ukraine and hinted that Moscow and Washington could strike a deal on nuclear arms control during their summit recently.

In his first public comments since US President Donald Trump announced the Alaska summit, Putin chaired a meeting of senior Russian officials at the Kremlin to brief them on the state of play in negotiations with the US on Ukraine.

"The current American administration... is making, in my opinion, quite energetic and sincere efforts to stop the hostilities, stop the crisis and reach agreements that are of interest to all parties



Russian President Vladimir Putin.

involved in this conflict," Putin said.

In his brief remarks, Putin said the summit with the US aims to "create long-term conditions for peace between our countries, as well as in Europe, and in the world as a whole."

He suggested this broader peace can be

achieved if, in the "next stages" of discussions with the US, "we reach agreements in the area of control over strategic offensive weapons."

The US and Russia agreed to limit their arsenals of nuclear arms under the New START treaty, which came into

force in 2011. Under the agreement, both countries had seven years to meet defined limits on the number of deployed intercontinental-range nuclear weapons they can have. The treaty, however, is due to expire in February 2026.

In a sign of unease between the two countries, Trump this month said he ordered two nuclear submarines to be strategically positioned near Russia, in response to what he said were "highly provocative" remarks by Dmitry Medvedev, Russia's former president and the current deputy chairman of its Security Council.

Medvedev is prone to erratic outbursts on social media – often raising the specter of nuclear conflict – but Trump said he made the decision "in case these these foolish and inflammatory statements are more than just that.

## Entertainment

### Davido Ties The Knot! Miami Nights, Afrobeat's Delight

Davido's Miami wedding to Chioma in 2025 was a grand affair that captured the hearts of many. Here are some highlights.

The wedding ceremony, held on August 10, 2025, in Miami, with a star-studded guest list, including Aliko Dangote, Osun State Governor Ademola Adeleke, and former Senate President Bukola Saraki. The ceremony featured emotional moments, including Davido's heartfelt vows, where he referred to Chioma as "my peace, my home".

Davido performed during the reception, thrilling guests and prompting Chioma to join him on the dance floor. D'banj also gave a thrilling performance at the event.

Chioma's wedding gown was a custom couture piece with intricate hand-beading and subtle nods to Nigerian cultural motifs. Davido's tuxedo was a Savile Row creation, perfectly tailored and paired with custom-made shoes from a Lagos luxury cobbler.

#### GIFTS AND GESTURES:

Davido surprised Chioma with a \$300,000 Richard



Mille wristwatch as a wedding gift.

The hashtag #Chivido2025 trended on Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok, with over 3 million tweets in 24 hours. Fans and followers praised the couple's love story, fashion sense, and the grand celebration. Wedding Details.

The Miami wedding reportedly cost around \$3.7 million and featured grand gestures, including a Richard Miller diamond-



encrusted watch gifted to Chioma, valued at over \$1 million.

The wedding followed a private registry event in 2023 and a traditional wedding in Lagos in 2024.

They made their first public appearance as husband and wife in Miami.

The moment @davido surprised Chioma @thechefchi with a \$300K+ Richard Mille watch, personally presented by Benny Da Jeweler. A luxury gift for a luxury bride. These Davido no go kill us with different surprises



## Sporting Ambassador

**AMBASSADOR**  
With Jacob Joseph

# Nigerian Premier Football League and the CHAN Debacle



Coach Eric Chelle shouting instructions to his boys

After the Super Falcons and D'Tigress were warmly received and handsomely rewarded by the president for winning the Women's African Cup of Nations and the Women's Afrobasket, Nigerians felt that the home-based Super Eagles would

penalty.

The second half saw Nigeria down and out with Abdel Raouf Yagoub scoring a brace to make the score line very embarrassing.

Nigeria's head coach Eric Chelle summarized his team's performance thus; "I am

lapses that the league cannot be on TV. One cannot easily access facts and figures on the league easily as it is done in other leagues. No wonder many fans prefer to follow European clubs as they can get information quickly. Some Nigerian clubs do not have websites while others do not update their websites.

Remuneration of players is nothing to write home about and it is often not paid as and when due. There are often reports of players and managers being owed by clubs. Most of these debts are not later paid.

Standard of facilities in our league is not encouraging. That explains why most of the stadia that host Premier League matches cannot host competitions organized by the Confederation of African Football CAF and the Federation of International

Football Association FIFA matches. How can a player perform excellently in substandard facilities?

Another challenge is the tactical capabilities of our coaches. It takes a combination of a good teacher and a good student to excel in an examination. Similarly, it takes a competent coach and good players to build a solid team.

Truth be told, many of our coaches are yearning to attend coaching courses, but the little money they are paid cannot let them pay for such courses not to talk of light tickets. For the sake of

are not sure of their safety. Clubs whose fans engage in violence are giving a slap on the wrist. Therefore, the win-at-home syndrome has persisted and fans turn to violence when a referee's call did not go their way or when their team lose. Consequently, true champions do not emerge and our so called champions cannot put up a strong fight in the continent.

Discovering young football talents has been identified as one of the keys to building a viable football club. Unfortunately, most Nigerian clubs do not have a serious youth team for discovering



Nigeria lost to Senegal



Sudan outplayed Nigeria

be motivated to win the ongoing African Nations Championship. Unfortunately, they were eliminated just after two matches.

They were placed in Group D against defending champions, Senegal, Sudan and Congo. Despite having 58% of possession in their opening match Christian Gomis scored a 75<sup>th</sup> minute goal to give Senegal a lone goal victory. This result made Nigeria's second game against Sudan a must win, but it turned out to be a humiliation, with Sudan recording a 4-0 victory.

Leonard Ngenge's own goal gave the Sudanese the lead in the 25<sup>th</sup> minute. Instead of equalizing the home-based Super Eagles conceded a second goal through Wali Al-Din Khedr 44<sup>th</sup> minute

disappointed by this match. It is the worst game I've overseen from the dugout as coach."

Having lost two matches, their last match against Congo became inconsequential as the Super Eagles were already eliminated.

If a premise is faulty, the conclusion must be faulty. Since this competition is meant for players playing their trade in their home country, it is important we look at the Nigerian Premier League.

It is an undisputed fact that the organization of the Nigerian Premier League is below par. Calendars are not strictly followed as there are often a lot of postponements as regards the commencement of every season. It is also a sign of organizational

our league, the League Management Company and the Nigerian Football Federation should assist our coaches to get constant trainings. They can do this by providing needed logistics for such courses to be held in Nigeria and subsidize it so that our coaches can afford them.

Crowd violence is another monster killing our league. Families cannot go to match venues to watch matches as they

and nurturing young talents to stardom. With all these problems the aim of every Nigerian footballer is to play in Europe where they will have a perfect environment to thrive. Consequently, the Nigerian Premier League is stripped of talents that would have made the league thick and produce players who will be part of the home-based Super Eagles that can compete favourably at the CHAN.



A team in disarray

## Abia To Host Int'l Para-Badminton Championships

By Amarachi Uzoukwu & Charles Ogbonnaya

**P**reparations are in full swing for Abia State's Maiden Para Badminton International Conference Centre, Umuahia, the Deputy Governor Engr Ikechukwu

inspire, and excel on the global stage," he added.

The Deputy Governor highlighted the economic and social benefits of hosting the tournaments, pointing out that it would foster increased activity in the hospitality, tourism, and transport sectors, as well as the inspiration to Abia youths.

He called on the public, government institutions, sponsors, and the media to support the events fully and help project a positive image of Abia State.

Engr Emetu encouraged the athletes to exhibit the spirit of sportsmanship and to compete with fairness, discipline, and respect for one another throughout the championships.

Also speaking, the Commissioner for Youth and Sports Development, Sir Nwaobilor Ananaba, disclosed that the State Government has released funds for the successful hosting of the championship games.

Sir Ananaba expressed

gratitude to Governor Otti for also approving the purchase of a specialised mobility bus for Abia athletes to enhance their transportation and accessibility during competitions.

He also lauded the Governor for the procurement of cutting-edge para-badminton maintenance equipment, the first of its kind in Africa, thereby setting a new benchmark for sports development on the continent.

In his remarks via Zoom, the National President of the Badminton Federation of Nigeria, Mr Francis Orbih, expressed gratitude to Governor Otti for his commitment and "huge support" towards the development of sports, particularly para-badminton.

He revealed that the State Governor had sponsored the State's contingent to the World Para-Badminton Championships and assured that the country's

governing body would provide full support towards the successful organisation of the championship.

Earlier in his address, the National Coordinator for Para-Badminton and 2nd Vice President of the Badminton Federation of Nigeria (BFN), Mr Ekeoma Samuel, thanked the State Governor for his support and keen interest in sports development, which has enabled the State to host various sporting events.

"We wish to use this opportunity to inform the world that we are fully prepared to host the first-ever Para-Badminton Games in Umuahia.

"This sporting event will be the first of its kind to be hosted in the State. We have secured the hosting rights from both international governing bodies, the Badminton World Federation and the Badminton Confederation of Africa", he said.



Abia State Deputy Governor Engr Ikechukwu Emetu speaking during the revealing



Abia State Commissioner for Youth and Sports Development, Sir Nwaobilor Ananaba, speaking during the revealing

### Championships

scheduled to take place from 30 September to 12 October 2025 in Umuahia, the State Capital.

The two globally sanctioned tournaments, endorsed by the Badminton World Federation (BWF) and the Badminton Confederation of Africa (BCA), are expected to attract officials and sports enthusiasts from across Africa and around the world, with participation from 20 countries and over 224 internationally based athletes.

The event organised by the Badminton Federation of Nigeria and the Abia State Badminton Association, in collaboration with the Abia State Government and the Ministry of Sports, is expected to enhance Abia's reputation as an emerging destination for global sports and set a new benchmark for para sports hosting in Nigeria and Africa.

Unveiling the Media and Marketing Reveal of the inaugural Abia Para Badminton International

Emetu underscored that Abia has made history as the first Nigerian state to host the global para badminton events.

Engr Emetu who also serves as Chairman of the Main Organising Committee for the Abia Para Badminton Championships 2025, described the events as a turning point in the state's sports development and a celebration of inclusion, resilience and international cooperation..

"Hosting these championships is more than a sporting achievement. It is a statement of our capacity, our hospitality, and our vision", the Deputy Governor said.

He lauded the Governor Alex Otti led administration for prioritizing inclusive development and youth empowerment through sports.

"This initiative reflects our belief that talent knows no physical limitation. Every athlete deserves the chance to compete,



Badminton court