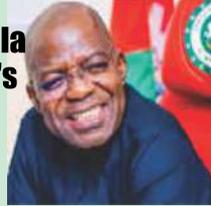




Abia Govt Warns Eze Eule To Stop Parading As Azumini Monarch

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Outdated Curricula Threaten Nigeria's Global Competitiveness - Gov Otte



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Anyaso Empowers Bende Women with Money, Urges PVCs Registration



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NATIONAL Ambassador

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"Uplift the people, project the nation"

February 11, 2026

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MOUAV V-C Highlights Major Achievements, Amid Challenges

By Okereke Kate

The Vice-Chancellor of Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike (MOUAV), Prof. Maduebibisi Ofo Iwe, has outlined major legacy achievements over the past five years as a Vice Chancellor, despite several concerns.

Speaking during an interview, Prof. Iwe said one of his early concerns as Vice-Chancellor was the initial resistance he faced in driving institutional reforms, noting that while not all colleagues aligned with his vision at the onset, the majority eventually understood and embraced the direction of the administration.

According to him, the lowest point of his leadership came on February 6, 2024, when management's efforts to restructure the university for more efficient administration were misunderstood, leading to student opposition.

"That day was our worst moment. All we wanted was a system that would allow the university to run seamlessly, especially in managing students' affairs. Unfortunately, our intentions were misinterpreted, and students were mobilized against the administration", he said.

Despite the setback, the Vice-Chancellor noted that the administration remained focused on its vision of building a stronger and more efficient university system.

On his achievements, Prof. Iwe said his administration successfully repositioned the university towards positive thinking, productive activities and progressive programmes, a vision he said is now widely shared across the institution.

He disclosed that under his leadership, several new academic departments were established, while between eight and ten non-academic directorates inherited at inception were strengthened and properly funded, despite limited financial resources.

The Vice-Chancellor also highlighted significant infrastructural expansion, including the development of a new campus at Olori. He explained that although challenges slowed progress, the campus is expected to witness major transformation in the coming years.



Prof. Iwe

Continued on P.2

2027 Elections:

Outrage As Nigerians Kick Over Partial E-Transmission of Results

By Ekebuisi Precious

As the Nigerian National Assembly adopts a revised position on the electronic transmission of election results, prominent figures and groups across the political and civic spectrum have voiced strong reactions, ranging from outright condemnation to cautious support. This, reflects deep concern over the integrity of the nation's electoral process ahead of

the 2027 general elections.

Major opposition parties, including the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), African Democratic Congress (ADC), and New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP), condemned the Senate's decision to allow electronic transmission only in part, permitting manual transmission via Form EC8A where network issues occur.

In a joint statement, they accused the Senate,

dominated by the All Progressives Congress (APC), of weakening electoral transparency and undermining democratic progress by failing to make real-time electronic transmission mandatory.

The PDP described the move as "shameful and harmful to democratic consolidation", asserting that the majority of Nigerians want credible ballots guaranteed through direct digital reporting from

polling units.

Prominent civil society voices blasted the dual system of electronic and manual result transmission as a loophole that could be exploited to manipulate outcomes.

Former Minister Oby Ezekwesili, labeled the Senate's clause, "an insult on the collective intelligence of Nigerians," arguing it dilutes the transparency gains sought by reform advocates.

Continued on P.2



Abia Civil Servants At The Government House In Umuahia Are In A Jubilant Mood As They Celebrate And Express Heartfelt Appreciation To Governor Dr. Alex Otti For Fulfilling His Promise To Pay Their Annual Leave Allowance

Abia Workers Jubilate As Gov Otte Begins Payment Of Long-Outstanding Leave Allowances

By Amarachi Uzoukwu

Civil servants in the Government House, Umuahia, on Monday broke into songs of jubilation as they celebrated Abia State Governor, Dr Alex Otti, for the commencement of payment of their long-outstanding Annual Leave Allowances.

The workers, who expressed appreciation to Governor Otte, described the development as a fulfilment of the Governor's promise to prioritise workers' welfare and restore dignity to the Abia State Civil Service.

Receiving the jubilant staff on behalf of the Governor, the Chief of Staff to the Governor, Pastor Caleb Ajagba, thanked them for the voluntary and heartfelt show of gratitude.

Pastor Ajagba noted that the workers' gesture would further encourage the governor to deepen his commitment to staff welfare.

"I want to, on behalf of His Excellency, thank each and every one of you this afternoon for finding time to come around to show appreciation to

His Excellency.

"I'm not sure that anyone asked you. Nobody forced you. I was informed this morning that the workforce in Government House are here to thank the governor.

"I want to let you know that what you have done today by showing this level of gratitude without anybody telling you is going to make His Excellency to think of doing more for you", he said.

Continued on P.2

EDITORIAL:

2027 And The Battle For The Ballot

News

Outrage As Nigerians Kick Over Partial E-Transmission of Results

Continued on P.11 Both groups and rights organisations have continued to press for mandatory real-time transmission, warning that retained manual options could erode public trust and fuel electoral disputes.

The backlash has spilled into the streets and organised protests. Peter Obi, a former LP presidential candidate, led demonstrators at the National Assembly, demanding the reinstatement of "real-time" digital result transmission.

The protests, which drew hundreds of supporters, were marked by chants and placards calling for credible elections and uncompromised democracy.

Activists from groups like the Obidient Movement and Connected Advocacy had vowed to sustain pressure, saying that without enforced electronic transmission, election credibility will remain in jeopardy.

Former Rivers State Governor, Rotimi Amaechi, accused the APC of resisting mandatory electronic transmission due to fear of losing elections. He urged opposition parties to unite firmly against the perceived obstruction.

Meanwhile, a member of the Senate Committee on Electoral Matters, Senator Seriake Dickson, has stated that the real-time transmission of election results does not automatically ensure transparent elections in Nigeria.

Dickson made the remarks on Tuesday, where he addressed the ongoing controversy surrounding amendments to the Electoral Act.

The comments come shortly after the Senate, on the same day, amended the Electoral Act to permit the electronic transmission of election results from polling units to the Independent National Electoral Commission's (INEC) Result Viewing Portal (IREV).

The revised provision includes safeguards for technical challenges, stipulating that in cases of communication or network failures, the manually signed and stamped Form EC8A (the physical result sheet) will serve as the primary basis for collation and declaration of results.

The amendment reverses an earlier position by the Upper Chamber and provides a legislative framework to formalize and protect the use of the IREV system, which INEC has implemented through its regulations since the 2023 general elections—even without explicit statutory backing at the time.

A former governor of Bayelsa State, Seriake Dickson emphasized that the focus on the term, "real-time", is misplaced when it comes to achieving genuine transparency.

"The word 'real-time' is not what will give us a transparent election. It gets you the same thing, even though the language it gets you this."

He explained that the practice has already been in effect: "In practice since 2023, INEC by its regulations compels presiding officers and electoral officials to, after the poll has been closed and results entered, take a picture of that result and send it to the IREV."

Dickson further argued that Nigeria is not yet at a stage where full electronic voting can be

conducted directly at polling units, highlighting infrastructural and operational limitations as key constraints.

The Senate's decision to adopt conditional electronic transmission, allowing electronic upload after physical signing but fallback to manual processes in failures, has drawn mixed reactions, with some stakeholders calling for stricter mandatory real-time provisions to enhance credibility, while others view the safeguards as pragmatic given Nigeria's varying network coverage and technical realities.

Other political actors, including leaders of the Action Democratic Party (ADP), echoed calls for compulsory e-transmission, warning that allowing manual alternatives opens the door to unverifiable excuses and widespread disputes.

Some civil society groups had offered cautious praise for the Senate's eventual inclusion of electronic transmission, albeit with conditions.

For instance, the AdvoKC Foundation welcomed the renewed use of electronic processes while acknowledging remaining concerns over how effectively this will curb malpractice.

Overall, the reactions reflect a national debate over electoral integrity, with many Nigerians insisting on real-time e-transmission as essential to restoring faith in the democratic process, while others urge careful calibration of technology and legal safeguards.

APC Governors Are Party Leaders In Their States - President Tinubu

President Bola Tinubu has said that governors elected on the platform of the All Progressives Congress (APC), are the leaders of the party in their states.

He made this known in Jalingo, the capital of Taraba State, during the official welcome of Governor Agbu Kefas into the APC. Vice President Kashim Shettima represented the president at the event.

Governor Kefas recently left the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) to join the APC. At the ceremony, he was presented with the APC flag, showing his new position as the party leader in Taraba State.

Speaking through the vice-president, Tinubu said that by joining the

APC, Kefas now leads the party in the state. He added that this rule applies to all states where the APC has a sitting governor.

The president described Kefas' defection as a big gain for the APC in the North-East. He also encouraged other states in the region, especially Adamawa and Bauchi, to join the ruling party.

Tinubu promised that the Federal Government would support Governor Kefas and his team to bring development to Taraba State. He praised the governor for working to unite the people and use the state's diversity for progress.

He called on the people of Taraba to support the governor so he can succeed. The president

also pledged stronger co-operation with the state, focusing on infrastructure, youth empowerment, and development.

Top government and party officials attended the event. They included the Deputy Senate President, Jibrin Barau, who represented Senate President Godswill Akpabio, and APC National Chairman, Professor Nentawe Goshwe Yilwatda.

Yilwatda described Kefas' move as timely and brave.

In his speech, Governor Kefas said he joined the APC to promote good governance, youth development, better infrastructure, and care for the elderly, not for personal political ambition.

Change of Name

I, formerly known and addressed as Okoro Rose, now wish to be known and addressed as OKEH ROSE ULU. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. The general public should please take note. OKEH ROSE ULU.

Change Of Name/Correction Of Date Of Birth

This is to affirm that Uzokike Amarahi Ijeoma which appeared in my BVN and Ubani Peace Ijeoma is the same person. I now wish to be called UBANI PEACE IJEOMA. My date of birth was wrongly captured as 22nd January 1991 instead of 20th January 1993. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. GTB and the general public should please take note. UBANI PEACE IJEOMA.

Correction Of Name

This is to affirm that ENYAMA COMFORT NKECHINYERE which was wrongly written on my Bank Verification Number (BVN) and my Bank Account with First Bank Nigeria Plc and NYAMA COMFORT NKECHINYERE which appeared on my National Identification Number are same person. I now wish to be known and addressed as INYAMA COMFORT NKECHINYERE. All documents bearing my former names remain valid. The general public should please take note. INYAMA COMFORT NKECHINYERE.

PUBLIC NOTICE

ANNUNIKWU AGRO DEVELOPMENT UNION (AUADU) This is to inform the General Public that The Above Named Union has Applied To The Corporate Affairs Commission For Registration Under Part 27 OF THE Companies And Allied Matters Act 2020.

THE MEMBERS ARE: 1. DR. SAUNDY MALALA, CHAIRMAN 2. DR. CHIEF OLUCHI UBANI, MEMBER AND SECRETARY 3. DR. CHIEF OLUCHI UBANI, MEMBER AND SECRETARY 4. DR. CHIEF OLUCHI UBANI, MEMBER AND SECRETARY

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES 1. To advocate for the development of Unimaukwu Agro Development Union 2. To propagate and coordinate among Unimaukwu Agro Development Union 3. To advocate and coordinate the starting among Unimaukwu Agro Development Union 4. To undertake projects that will improve local amenities.

Any Objections To The Registration Should Be Forwarded To The Registrar, Corporate Affairs Commission Plot 425, Trade Centre, Off Aguiye Street, Victoria Island, Lagos, Within 30 Days Of This Publication.

SIGNED: SECRETARY

PUBLIC NOTICE

PATIENTS ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE FOUNDATION (PHAF) The general public is hereby notified that the above named organization has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) for registration under Part 27 of the Companies and Allied Matters Act 2020.

MEMBERS OF THE TRUSTEE: 1. CHIEF OLUCHI UBANI, CHAIRMAN 2. CHIEF OLUCHI UBANI, CHAIRMAN 3. CHIEF OLUCHI UBANI, CHAIRMAN 4. CHIEF OLUCHI UBANI, CHAIRMAN

AIMS AND OBJECTS: 1. To provide financial and medical services to the poor and needy in the community. 2. To provide financial and medical services to the poor and needy in the community. 3. To provide financial and medical services to the poor and needy in the community. 4. To provide financial and medical services to the poor and needy in the community.

Any Objections To The Registration Should Be Forwarded To The Registrar, Corporate Affairs Commission Plot 425, Trade Centre, Off Aguiye Street, Victoria Island, Lagos, Within 30 Days Of This Publication.

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SIGNED: SECRETARY

Abia Workers Jubilate As Gov Oti Begins Payment Of Leave Allowances

Continued on P.1

The Chief of Staff said that the ongoing transformation across Abia State was in line with Governor Oti's pre-election promises and stressed that the present administration's intervention had been deliberate and people-centred.

"What we are seeing today, all over Abia State, is unprecedented. When His Excellency came in 2023, before his election, he told Abians, please weep no more, because help was on the way.

"Today it's very clear to everyone, even the blind, that help has arrived. And when help comes, you know that help is focused, help is targeted, help never misses the people for whom it is intended," he stated.

According to him, the governor began his intervention in the civil service by clearing salary and pension arrears, culminating in the payment of leave allowances owed for several years.

He further explained that Governor Oti's administration had consistently prioritised transparency and regularity in salary payments.

"What His Excellency has come to do is to restore dignity in the workforce, in the civil service. That's why he started by verifying to know those who are actually supposed to be the civil servants.

"And every 27th of every month, you receive an alert. Since May 2023, he started. The first alert came 27th of June 2023. And that alert has never ceased", he

said. Pastor Ajagba noted that the governor had sustained the payment of the 13th-month salary and ensured Abia State was the first to conclude the implementation of the new minimum wage.

"And everything has progressed. Because he (Gov Oti) came to restore joy and dignity of the Abia State workforce", he stated.

Pastor Ajagba, however, urged the workers to reciprocate the gesture through dedication, professionalism and increased productivity.

Also speaking, the Commissioner for Labour and Productivity, Mr Kingsley Nwokocha, commended the workers for their appreciation and described Governor Oti as a rare gift to Abia State.

Mr Nwokocha assured the workforce that other outstanding welfare issues were already being addressed.

"For the first time in the history of our state, we have a Governor who is worker-friendly. His Excellency, Dr Alex Oti is worker-friendly.

"You talk about your leave allowance, you talk about your promotion, you talk about your GEN 35, everything is in the pipeline.

"I can assure you that we are dealing with the Labour Union, the Trade Union, everybody that has something to do with Labour and the welfare of workers.

"We are very, very serious in making sure that everything that is

due to you, you will receive", he assured.

Earlier, the Director-in-Charge of Government House, Umuahia, Mrs Onyedikachi Ogwo, said the staff gathered to formally convey their appreciation to the governor through the chief of staff.

She thanked the Governor for various welfare packages and approvals that had made their work easier and assured of the workforce's continued loyalty and commitment to the Oti administration.

In her remarks, the Chairman of the Staff Welfare Association of Government House, Comrade Oluchi Ubani, said the payment of the Annual Leave Allowance had brought immense relief to workers.

She noted that the allowance had not been paid for many years and appealed to the Governor to also approve the implementation of staff promotions.

The brief ceremony, marked by songs of jubilation, was attended by the Special Adviser to the Governor on Media and Publicity, Mr Ferdinand Ekeoma; the Special Adviser on Investment Promotion and Public-Private Partnerships, High Chief Green Amankwe; the Senior Special Assistant on Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Mrs Magdalene Ugoanusi; and the Director-General, Strategic Communication, Bureau, Mr Onyebuchi Ememanka alongside other senior government officials.

MOUUA Hosts Inaugural STEM Sisters Programme, Inspires 50 Schoolgirls

By Chukwuemeka Egejuru

Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike (MOUUA), Abia State, recently hosted the maiden edition of the STEM Sisters Inclusion Programme, inspiring 50 girls from five public secondary schools to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

The initiative, organised by the ACS MOUUA International Student Chapter under the leadership of its Faculty Advisor, Dr. Uchechi Bliss Onyedikachi, aimed to bridge the gender gap in STEM by exposing young girls to mentorship, hands-on learning, and career guidance.

Participating schools included Ndume Otuka, Ibeku High School, Methodist High School Oboro, Awommao Secondary School, and Umudike Community Secondary School.

Speaking at the event, Dr. Onyedikachi emphasised the importance of access and representation in shaping the future of girls in science.

"Talent is everywhere, but access is not. This programme is about ensuring that every girl, regardless of background, sees herself as a scientist, innovator, and leader," she said.

The event featured interactive mentorship sessions, storytelling, and academic activities designed to build confidence and stimulate interest in STEM fields. Student leaders of the ACS chapter, Paul Promise (President) and Chinenye Iheanyi (Vice President), played key roles in coordinating the activities and engaging the participants.

V-C Highlights Achievements

Continued on P.1

On funding, Prof. Iwe revealed that for most of his tenure, the university's annual capital allocation ranged between ₦200 million and ₦300 million, rarely exceeding ₦400 million. He added that although capital allocation increased in 2025 following efforts made in 2024, but disclosed that the institution was yet to receive funds from the new threshold.

He further emphasised major reforms in students' administration, particularly the introduction of biometric registration and comprehensive digital databases, which he said positioned the university ahead of the introduction of the Nigerian Education Loan Fund (NELFUND).

"Today, information about any student is available instantly. We can verify students' status with a click, and this has made processes like NELFUND disbursement seamless," he stated.

Prof. Iwe also listed the full digitization of the bursary department as a major achievement, explaining that it resolved long-standing issues of misplaced records that previously attracted audit queries. He stressed that the reforms eliminated manual bottlenecks and enhanced transparency.

Similarly, he said digital reforms were extended to the university library, transcript processing, and Senate meetings.

According to him, Senate meetings had been conducted electronically since mid-2021, resulting in significant cost savings.

He noted that transcript processing, once a major problem for the university, has now gone fully online, eliminating crowding at the administrative blocks and curbing exploitative practices.

"With everything now online, sanity has returned to the system. People no longer roam around offices looking for files or offering inducements to be attended to," the vice-chancellor said.

Prof. Iwe, however, expressed confidence that the few remaining manual processes would be fully digitized before the end of his tenure, ensuring continuity of the reforms he described as the foundation for a more efficient and transparent university system.

News

Abia Govt Warns Eze Eule To Stop Parading As Azumini Monarch

Akinrujomu Gideon

The Abia State Government has issued a stern warning to the deposed traditional ruler of Azumini-Ndoki Autonomous Community, Ukwa East Local Government Area, HRM Eze (Prof.) Edward Ebere Eule, directing him to immediately stop parading himself as the monarch of the community pending the determination of an appeal before the Court of Appeal.

In a letter referenced MLGCA/CH/S.15/S.7/163 and addressed to Eze Eule and Chief Okoro Egege, the Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs expressed concern that despite his dethronement, the former ruler has allegedly continued to act and present himself as the traditional authority, thereby creating confusion and instability within the leadership and administrative structures of the community.

The statement, signed by Lady Oge Maduka, Permanent Secretary for the Commissioner, stated that the government has officially recognized and is working with the Azumini-Ndoki Interim Administrative Committee chaired by High Chief Ogbo Ubani as the only duly constituted authority in the community for now.

The government recalled that Eze Eule was deposed for actions described as unbecoming of a traditional ruler.

Following his removal, he challenged the decision at the Abia State High Court sitting in Ukwa, which ruled in his favour. However, the Abia State Government has since filed an appeal against that judgment at the Court of Appeal, Owerri Judicial Division, in Suit No. CA/OW/354/2025 – The Governor of Abia State & Ors v. HRM Eze Prof. Edward Ebere Eule. A motion for stay of execution of the High Court judgment is also pending.

According to the Ministry, the appeal renders the matter legally unresolved, and as such, the deposition remains in force pending the final determination of the appellate court. It emphasised that Eze Eule lacks the authority to perform official functions as Traditional Ruler during this period.

The government also nullified the purported appointment of Chief Okoro Egege as Traditional Prime Minister of Azumini-Ndoki, stating that no such recognition can stand while the appeal is pending. Both parties were warned to desist from interfering in the activities of the Interim Administrative Committee.

In a related development, the ministry clarified its position on petitions and counter-petitions arising from the protracted leadership crisis in the community.

In a separate statement signed by Lady Oge Maduka and sighted by newsmen, the Ministry noted that it is deeply concerned about the lingering dispute but is constrained from taking further decisions that may prejudice the issues before the Court of Appeal.

The Ministry stated that it is now functus officio on matters relating to the substantive Ezeship stool and will abide by the final outcome of the appeal.

Addressing allegations contained in a petition dated September 11, 2025 – including claims of conspiracy, threat to life, unlawful seizure of properties, fraudulent activities and the alleged sale of a 500KVA community transformer – the ministry clarified that it lacks jurisdiction over criminal matters. It advised that such allegations fall within the purview of the Nigeria Police Force, where a petition is reportedly pending for investigation and possible prosecution.

To prevent a leadership vacuum, the Abia State Government formally recognized the Interim Administrative Committee of Azumini-Ndoki Autonomous Community, empowering it to oversee the affairs of the community pending further directives.

The committee has been charged to uphold the customs and traditions of the ancient kingdom, adhere strictly to the provisions of the community's constitution, and ensure inclusive governance.

It is also required to submit periodic and quarterly reports of its activities to the Ministry, with a warning that failure to comply will attract appropriate sanctions.

The government urged all stakeholders to maintain the status quo and remain law-abiding, warning that any attempt to disrupt the peace in Azumini-Ndoki Autonomous Community would be met with firm action by the state.



Dr. Chimaobi Desmond Anyaso (Ofuji Ndi Igbo)

Anyaso Hails Ukwa La Ngwa Reception For Governor Otti

An Abia-born business mogul, Dr. Chimaobi Desmond Anyaso (Ofuji Ndi Igbo), has lauded the prestigious grand civic reception of Abia State Governor, Dr. Alex Otti, organized by the Ukwa La Ngwa people, describing it as a "resounding testament to the Governor's giant transformation strides across the length and breadth of Abia State."

Speaking with journalists at the Enyimba International Stadium, Aba, during the event, Dr. Anyaso, a distinguished son of Igbere Ebiri, noted that the reception reflects the people's deep appreciation for Governor Otti's visionary leadership and performance-driven administration.

He emphasised that the governor's policies have profoundly impacted every sector of the state, fostering economic growth, infrastructure development, and improved livelihoods for Abians.

"Governor Otti is truly deserving of the accolades he continues to receive from

Abians," Dr. Anyaso said. "This grand reception is not just a celebration; it is an affirmation of the confidence of the people in his transformative agenda. It also calls for continued support to sustain the gains ahead of the 2027 elections."

In his remarks, Governor Otti thanked the Ukwa La Ngwa people for their warm reception and endorsement.

"You know there is a saying in the Bible that a king is not without honor and respect except among his own kindred. The best reception is the reception from our own people. I want to thank you and the speaker and the team who have pledged to purchase the form for the 2027 election," he stated.

Earlier in his speech, the leader and spokesperson of the Ukwa La Ngwa people, Chief Theo Nkire, described the event as a celebration of a great achiever of the Ukwa Ngwanation.

He highlighted Governor Otti's transformative impact, including the rapid industrialization of Aba, which he said has been elevated from a modest importer town to a world-class industrial hub.

The traditional rulers of the Ukwa La Ngwa Nation honoured the Governor with gifts and publicly declared their unwavering support, declaring that they are not going to "go back to Egypt," a symbolic endorsement of his leadership and developmental strides.

The grand civic reception attracted dignitaries from all walks of life, including traditional rulers, community leaders, professionals, and youth groups, highlighting the broad-based recognition of Governor Otti's achievements and the collective call to sustain his reform agenda for continued progress in Abia State.

Health Professionals Raise Alarm Over Increase In Drug Abuse

By Nzeuzor Jane and Maduadugwo Jane, PH

Health professionals in Rivers State have raised the alarm over the increasing abuse of hard drugs among young people, warning that the trend poses a serious threat to public health, national security, and the future of the country.

In separate interviews with our reporters, medical and mental health experts outlined the dangers of hard drug use, available treatment options, and the critical role parents, communities, and government must play in addressing the growing crisis.

Dr. Nike Bello, a consultant physician at Kendox Medical Services, Port Harcourt, described hard drugs such as cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, tramadol, and codeine as "silent killers," noting that they cause severe damage to vital organs including the brain, heart, liver, and kidneys.

"Many youths believe drugs give them strength or confidence, but medically, they impair memory, trigger mental illness, and can cause sudden death," she said.

According to Dr. Bello, prolonged drug abuse can lead to depression, psychosis, stroke, infertility, and irreversible brain damage. She stressed that addiction should be viewed as a medical condition rather than a moral failure.

"Anyone struggling with addiction should seek professional help immediately. Detoxification,

counseling, and rehabilitation are effective when started early the earlier the intervention, the better the outcome," she explained.

She also urged parents to watch for warning signs such as sudden mood changes, withdrawal from family activities, declining academic performance, and unexplained spending.

"Parents must talk openly with their children about drugs. Silence creates curiosity, and curiosity often leads to experimentation," she warned.

From a psychological perspective, clinical psychologist Mr. Samuel Okorie described drug abuse as a mental and emotional trap. He explained that many youths turn to hard drugs due to peer pressure, stress, unemployment, family challenges, or low self-esteem.

"Drugs promise escape but deliver bondage. Addiction affects judgment, emotions, and behavior. Over time, users lose control of their lives and relationships," he said.

Okorie added that drug abuse is closely linked to crime, violence, suicide, and academic failure. He emphasised that recovery requires counselling, behavioural therapy, support groups, and active family involvement.

"Addiction cannot be treated with punishment alone; it requires understanding, structure, and support," he noted.

He further advised parents to build strong emotional bonds with their children.

"When children feel heard at home, they are less likely to seek comfort in

drugs. Parents should be approachable, not just authoritative," he said.

Also speaking, a public health educator, Mrs. Grace Adeniyi described youth drug abuse as a national emergency and emphasized that prevention is more effective and less costly than rehabilitation.

"We are losing a generation because of poor awareness. Many youths don't even know what they are taking or the long-term effects," she warned.

She highlighted the role of schools, religious institutions, and community leaders in prevention efforts and recommended community-based rehabilitation and peer support programs.

"Recovered addicts should be encouraged to share their stories. Real-life experiences can discourage others and inspire recovery," she said.

Mrs. Adeniyi also advised parents to monitor their children's friends, online activities, and environment, stressing the importance of leading by example.

"A drug-free home sends a strong message," she noted.

She stated that youth drug abuse is both preventable and treatable, calling on the government, parents, schools, religious bodies, and the media to intensify awareness campaigns and support rehabilitation initiatives.

"Our youths are our future. Saving them from drugs is saving the nation," she said.

News

Nigerian Breweries Record Strong Revenue

By Blessing Anienwe

Nigeria's leading listed breweries posted strong results in the first nine months of 2025, earning more than N1.54 trillion from beer and non-alcoholic beverages, even as inflation and production costs increased.

A review of their unaudited financial reports shows that Nigerian Breweries Plc topped the sector with N1.05 trillion in revenue, up from N710.87 billion recorded in the same period of 2024.

The company returned to profitability with a profit after tax of N85.51 billion, compared to a loss of N149.50 billion a year earlier. Earnings per share also improved to 275 kobo, from a loss of 1,455 kobo in 2024.

The company had earlier shown signs of recovery after it returned to profit in the first quarter of 2025, helped by a strong increase in sales.

International Breweries Plc also performed well, as its revenue grew to N472.57 billion from N343.45 billion in 2024. The company made a profit after tax of N57.83 billion, compared to a loss of N112.81 billion the previous year. It also returned to profit

in the second quarter of 2025 due to higher sales and better earnings.

Champion Breweries Plc, recorded revenue of N21.44 billion, an increase from N14.02 billion in 2024. Its profit after tax rose significantly to N2.05 billion, compared to N21.50 million in the previous year.

Overall, Nigerian Breweries Plc contributed the biggest portion of the total industry revenue, showing its strong position in the market and the popularity of its brands.

Industry analysts say the results show that Nigeria's beer market is strong, thanks to wide distribution and steady demand from consumers.

Ayokunle Olubunmi of Agosto & Co. said that even though some people are buying less because of economic challenges, breweries are changing their strategies and investing in better production and efficiency.

However, economist Ayo Teriba, CEO of Economic Associates, cautioned that high sales do not automatically lead to broader economic gains, especially with the current economic challenges facing the country.



■ Green Shuttle

Abia Govt to introduce E-ticketing For Green Shuttle Mass Transit

By Amarachi Uzuokwu

Abia State Government has announced that the Green Shuttle Mass Transit Scheme will fully transition to an Electronic Ticketing System at the conclusion of its ongoing pilot phase, which currently offers free transportation services.

The Commissioner for Information, Prince Okey Kanu, disclosed this while briefing Journalists on the outcomes of the state Executive Council Meeting held recently

and presided over by Governor Alex Otti.

Prince Kanu disclosed that the Electronic Ticketing System would feature "counterless Smart Cards, Prepaid and pay-as-you-go options, real-time transaction recording and a centralised revenue monitoring dashboard".

He described the digital ticketing system as a major shift from cash-based public transport operations which

will eliminate cash handling and the use of conductors.

Prince Kanu explained that the free ride, which will continue until the end of February, would enable operators gather sufficient data for route optimisation ahead of full commercial operations, after which a subsidised fare will be introduced.

The Commissioner added that when fares are introduced, pricing will be regulated by the government and based on distance and prevailing market rates for Tricycles and Mini-buses.

He further pointed out that the Abia State Green Shuttle Mass Transit Scheme will coexist with existing tricycle and mini-bus operators.

Prince Kanu noted that the pilot scheme, which commenced on 24 December 2025, has already attracted significant commuter demand.

According to him, "Between the 24th of December and the 29th of January, the scheme has operated for 497 bus days and transported "a total of 106,116 passengers over a total distance of 74,796.6 km".

"On the average, 14 buses were deployed daily, and each carried approximately 3,034 passengers daily. The pilot rollout has offered the bus operators an idea on the intra city and intercity mobility demands for the bus service.

"The free bus rides, which remove fare barriers, allow demand to be driven primarily by service availability and operational efficiency. The intracity and intercity free rides will continue to the end of February to enable the operators to gather more commuter data and route demands that will go into further planning for the full commencement of the bus services scheme.

"Upon the full commencement of the Mass Transit Services, Abians will be expected to pay a token in order that the Mass Transit scheme is sustained.

"The pricing model will be based on analysis of existing market fares, as involving KeKe and mini-buses. It will also be based on distance rather than based on pricing, and a government-backed fare moderation. There will be electronic ticketing that will regulate cash handling and conductors.

"The scheme will offer commuters options to choose from, in terms of using either the mass transit buses or the Keke and mini-bus services that already exist.

"The whole aim is to totally transform the urban mass transit infrastructure industry while offering Abians a world-class experience in terms of the state-of-the-art bus transit services that will ensure affordability, comfort, and eco-friendly mass transit bus experience", he said.

Prince Kanu, while highlighting progress in the health sector, revealed that Abia State recently earned an excellent rating, following an oversight visit by the House of Representatives Committee on Health, especially for achievements in Primary Healthcare and universal health coverage.

Contributing, the Special Adviser to the Governor on Transportation, Dr Obioma Nwogbo, explained that public sensitization is ongoing to prepare residents for the digital ticketing system, assuring that help will be provided for the elderly and non-digitally savvy.

Dr Nwogbo explained that commuters would be able to load funds through vendors located at bus shelters, adding that the Green Shuttle scheme would operate alongside existing tricycle and mini-bus services, which he described as feeder or paratransit systems.

Also, the Commissioner for Health, Prof Enoch Uche, urged parents to ensure children aged nine months to 14 years receive the Measles and Rubella Vaccine, describing it as safe and life-saving.

Christian Summit In Abia Advocates Godly Nation-building

By Charles Ogbonnaya

A Christian leadership initiative, the Christian Citizenship Summit, convened by Pastor Emmanuel Ihim, is set to hold across major cities in Abia State under the theme "Faith at the Ballot Box: Shaping Nations Through Godly Participation."

The summit started in Umuahia at the Michael Okpara Auditorium from February 6-7, 2026. It will continue in Aba on February 13-14, 2026, at the ECWA Church, opposite Ogbonnaya Onu Polytechnic, and conclude in Ohafia from February 20-21, 2026, at the Presbyterian Church, Elu Ohafia.

The event is expected to draw Christian leaders, professionals, youths, and citizens concerned about moral leadership and national transformation. Distinguished clerics scheduled to grace the summit include Most Rev. Dr. Isaac Nwaobia, Most Rev. Raphael Opoko, and Most Rev. Michael Kalu Ukpokong, alongside other respected ministers of the gospel in Abia State.

Speaking on the vision behind the summit, Pastor Ihim described Christian Citizenship as a faith-driven, non-partisan movement committed to rebuilding moral foundations, strengthening institutions, resisting corruption, upholding human dignity, and stewarding national destiny with integrity.

"Christian Citizenship prioritizes

truth over falsehood, justice over injustice, service over exploitation, competence over mediocrity, and the common good over elite capture," he said, citing John 8:32, which teaches that truth brings freedom.

According to the convener, the movement does not assess leadership on the basis of political parties, ethnicity, or denominational affiliation. Instead, it asks critical moral questions: Who protects human dignity? Who promotes justice and equity? Who governs competently? Who alleviates suffering rather than weaponizing poverty?

Quoting Matthew 7:16, Pastor Ihim stressed that leadership must be judged by its fruits, noting that this biblical standard applies to individuals, governments, political parties, and public policies alike.

He warned that when leaders normalize suffering, silence dissent, entrench corruption, and criminalize accountability, governance transcends politics and becomes a moral failure. Citing Proverbs 14:34, he emphasized that "righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."

Pastor Ihim expressed deep concern over Nigeria's current challenges including insecurity, terrorism, economic hardship, and widespread poverty – describing the situation as an existential crisis driven by systemic injustice and elite capture.

While reaffirming that Christian Citizenship remains non-partisan, he clarified that it is not neutral in the face of injustice, corruption, incompetence, or cruelty in governance. "We will take clear positions in support of leadership that liberates rather than enslaves," he said.

The summit will also emphasize the biblical mandate of disciplining nations, not just individuals, as outlined in Matthew 28:18-20. Pastor Ihim explained that the concept of "nations" encompasses tribes, races, institutions, and societal structures, underscoring the church's responsibility to influence every sphere of society with godly values.

Describing Christian Citizenship as a fire-fueled, action-oriented movement, he said it seeks to equip believers to live out their dual citizenship heavenly and earthly by serving as effective ambassadors of Christ in governance, professional life, and the public square.

"The church must rise to its calling as the light and salt of the world," "We will speak truth to power, expose evil even when it is popular, educate consciences rather than manipulate emotions, and stand with the people, not with cabals, he added."

The Christian Citizenship Summit is expected to spark renewed Christian engagement toward ethical leadership, justice, and human flourishing in Nigeria

Editorial

2027 And The Battle For The Ballot

As Nigeria inches toward the 2027 general elections, the controversy surrounding the National Assembly's revised position on electronic transmission of results has once again exposed the fragile state of public trust in the country's electoral system. What should have been a straightforward legislative clarification has evolved into a national debate on transparency, credibility, and the future of democracy.

The Senate's decision to formalize electronic transmission of results to the Independent National Electoral Commission's (INEC) Result Viewing Portal (IReV), while allowing manual transmission through Form EC8A in cases of network failure, has drawn sharp and divergent reactions. Opposition parties—including the PDP, ADC, and NNPP, have condemned the conditional approach, arguing that anything short of mandatory real-time electronic transmission creates loopholes for manipulation. Civil society voices and youth movements have echoed these concerns, warning that a dual system could undermine electoral integrity.

On the other hand, lawmakers such as Senator Seriake Dickson have urged caution against over-romanticizing the term "real-time." He argues that transparency does not rest solely on speed of upload but on the credibility of the process itself. According to him, since 2023, presiding officers have already been mandated by INEC regulations to upload photographs of signed result sheets to IReV after polls close. The new amendment, he contends, merely gives legislative backing to an existing administrative practice while acknowledging infrastructural limitations.

Both sides raise valid concerns. The opposition is correct that Nigeria's electoral history is marred by disputes arising during collation stages, where manual processes have often been vulnerable to interference. Real-time electronic transmission from polling units was widely promoted as a technological safeguard against such manipulation. Any perceived dilution of that safeguard understandably triggers suspicion, especially in a politically polarized climate.

However, it is equally important to confront Nigeria's infrastructural realities. Network coverage across rural communities remains inconsistent. Power supply challenges persist. Full electronic voting, where ballots are cast and counted digitally at polling units—is still beyond the country's current technical and logistical capacity. To legislate an inflexible system without adequate infrastructure could lead to operational chaos, mass disenfranchisement, or legal crises.

The real issue, therefore, is not whether electronic transmission should exist; it should. The issue is how to design a system that maximizes transparency while accounting for technological limitations without creating avenues for abuse.

The Federal Government must prioritize rapid expansion of digital and telecommunications infrastructure, particularly in underserved rural areas. If electronic transmission is to be meaningful in 2027, network blind spots must be significantly reduced. This requires coordinated investment involving the Ministry of Communications, private telecom providers, and regulatory agencies.

INEC must be empowered financially and institutionally to deploy secure, tested, and independently audited transmission technology well ahead of the elections. Pilot simulations, stress tests, and public demonstrations of the system's resilience would go a long way in building confidence. Transparency in procurement processes and cybersecurity safeguards is equally critical.

The National Assembly should refine the amendment to eliminate ambiguity. While fallback provisions for genuine technical failures are pragmatic, they must be tightly defined. Clear thresholds for what constitutes "network failure," mandatory documentation of such failures, and immediate public disclosure mechanisms can prevent the fallback option from becoming a blanket excuse.

Political parties must commit to issue-based engagement rather than incendiary rhetoric. Mobilizing protests is a legitimate democratic right, but sustained dialogue with lawmakers and INEC may yield more durable solutions. Electoral reform should not become another arena for partisan brinkmanship.

Civil society organizations and observer groups also have a vital role. Their responsibility extends beyond criticism to constructive oversight—monitoring implementation timelines, conducting voter education, and ensuring citizens understand how results transmission works. Public trust thrives on clarity.

Ultimately, technology alone cannot guarantee credible elections. Integrity depends on the character of institutions and the people who run them. Electronic transmission is a tool not a magic wand. Without accountability, transparency, and enforcement of electoral offenses, even the most sophisticated system can be undermined.

Nigeria cannot afford another cycle of disputed mandates and post-election litigation that drags on for months. The cost to national cohesion and economic stability is too high. The debate unfolding now should be seen not as a crisis, but as an opportunity—a chance to fix vulnerabilities before they metastasize into full-blown legitimacy disputes in 2027.

Our position is that the Federal Government, the National Assembly, INEC, political parties, civil society, and the telecommunications sector must treat this moment with urgency and sincerity. Electoral credibility is not the property of any party; it is the foundation of the Republic.

If Nigeria gets the transmission architecture right; legally, technologically, and institutionally, 2027 could mark a turning point toward deeper democratic consolidation. If it gets it wrong, the consequences may reverberate far beyond a single election cycle.

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

Sustaining Commitment To The Rubella Vaccine Rollout

Dear Editor,

May I use your widely read medium to commend the Federal Government and health authorities for the ongoing rollout of the rubella vaccine and to urge all critical stakeholders to remain steadfastly committed to its full implementation in order to achieve its intended public health objectives.

Rubella, often perceived as a mild childhood illness, poses devastating consequences when contracted by pregnant women, especially during the first trimester. Congenital Rubella Syndrome (CRS) can result in miscarriage, stillbirth, deafness, blindness, heart defects, and lifelong developmental challenges. For many families, these outcomes are not just medical conditions but permanent emotional and economic burdens. The introduction and expansion of the rubella vaccine into Nigeria's immunisation schedule therefore represent a proactive and lifesaving intervention.

The gains of a successful rubella vaccination programme are immense.

It significantly reduces infant mortality and lifelong disabilities associated with CRS. By preventing infection at the source, the country safeguards thousands of newborns from avoidable complications.

It strengthens Nigeria's broader routine immunisation framework. Integrating the rubella vaccine, often combined with measles, improves overall vaccine coverage, enhances cold-chain systems, and builds institutional capacity within primary healthcare structures.

The economic benefits cannot be overstated. Preventing congenital disabilities reduces long-term healthcare costs, special education needs, and lost productivity. A healthier child population translates into a more productive future workforce. Public health investments of this nature are not mere expenditures; they are strategic national development tools.

However, the success of this initiative depends not only on policy declarations but on sustained commitment and coordinated action. The Federal Government must ensure consistent funding, adequate vaccine supply, and effective distribution logistics, particularly to rural and underserved communities. State governments and local authorities must intensify community engagement, addressing misinformation and vaccine hesitancy through trusted traditional rulers, religious leaders, and grassroots health workers.

Equally important is transparency and accountability. Monitoring coverage rates, publishing data, and responding swiftly to implementation gaps will strengthen public trust. Development partners and civil society organisations also have a vital role to play in advocacy, education, and independent oversight to ensure that no child is left behind.

Public awareness campaigns must emphasize that vaccination is not only an individual protective measure but a collective responsibility. Herd immunity protects pregnant women and vulnerable populations who may not be able to receive certain vaccines. When communities embrace immunisation, they create a shield of protection around their most vulnerable members.

Nigeria has made commendable progress in combating polio and expanding routine immunisation in recent years. The rubella vaccine rollout offers another opportunity to demonstrate that with political will, stakeholder collaboration, and community participation, preventable diseases can be drastically reduced.

I therefore call on the Federal Government, health agencies, legislators, traditional institutions, faith-based organisations, and citizens to treat the rubella vaccination programme as a national priority. Sustained commitment today will yield healthier generations tomorrow. The measure of our collective resolve will be seen not merely in policy statements but in the healthy smiles of children spared from preventable suffering.

Okenwa Adaku Jane
Umuahia, Abia State.

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Abuja Digest

with Sophina Ovuike
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INEC Conducts Mock Accreditation Ahead of FCT Area Council Polls

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has announced plans to conduct a mock accreditation and results upload exercise ahead of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Area Council elections scheduled for Saturday, February 21, 2026.

In a statement signed by the Resident Electoral Commissioner (REC) for the FCT, the Commission disclosed that the mock exercise will hold this Saturday, February 7, 2026, across 289 selected polling units within the territory. The exercise is expected to run between 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

According to INEC, the mock accreditation is designed to test the functionality of the voter accreditation process and the electronic transmission of results, with a view to ensuring a seamless and credible Area Council election.

"The exercise will enable the Commission to fine-tune its preparations and address any technical or operational challenges ahead of the main poll," the statement said.

INEC urged registered voters in the selected polling units to participate actively in the exercise by turning up with their Permanent Voter Cards (PVCs), noting that their cooperation would contribute significantly to the success of the forthcoming elections.

The Commission added that the full list of polling units designated for the mock exercise has been published on its official website for public information.

Reaffirming its commitment to electoral integrity, INEC assured residents of the FCT of its readiness to conduct a fair, and credible Area Council election on February 21, 2026.

Meanwhile, the Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission, Prof. Joash Amupitan, is currently holding a high-level security meeting with members of the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES).

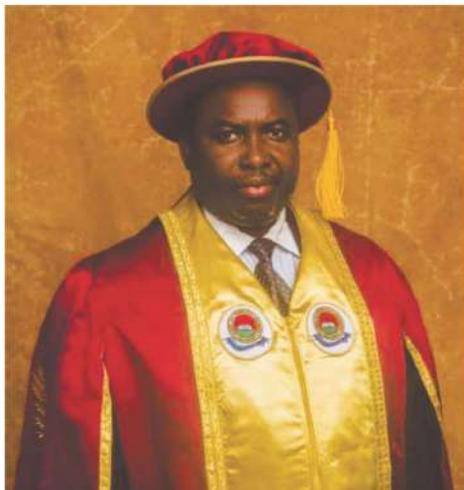
INEC explained that the meeting marks the climax of a series of engagements with key stakeholders aimed at strengthening security arrangements for upcoming elections, including the FCT Area Council polls and the Ekiti State governorship election slated for June.

Speaking at the meeting, Prof. Amupitan said the engagement was intended to brief security agencies on the electoral timetable and to fine-tune security strategies to guarantee the safety of voters, election officials, and sensitive election materials.

The meeting is being attended by representatives of major security institutions, including the Inspector-General of Police, Kayode Egbetokun, and the National Security Adviser (NSA), Mallam Nuhu Ribadu.

The INEC Chairman further charged security agencies to intensify efforts to curb vote buying and selling and to ensure strict enforcement of electoral laws before, during, and after the elections.

INEC reiterated its resolve to work closely with security agencies and other stakeholders to deliver elections that reflect the will of the people and strengthen Nigeria's democratic process.



Tinubu Hosts US AFRICOM Commander At Aso Rock

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has received a high-level military delegation from the United States at the Presidential Villa, Abuja, in a move seen as part of ongoing efforts to strengthen bilateral security cooperation between both countries.

The delegation was led by the Commander of the United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM), General Dagvin R. Anderson, and was accompanied by the Chargé d'Affaires of the United States Embassy in Nigeria, Mr. Keith Heffern, along with other senior officials.

The meeting, which took place at the State House, was attended by the National Security Adviser (NSA), Mallam Nuhu Ribadu, as well as Nigeria's service chiefs.

Details of the



President Bola Ahmed Tinubu

engagement were contained in a statement issued on Sunday by the Special Assistant to the President on Social Media, Mr. Dada Olusegun.

According to the statement, "President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, alongside his National Security Adviser, Nuhu Ribadu, and service

chiefs, received in a audience the Commander of the United States Africa Command, General Dagvin Anderson, his team, and the Chargé d'Affaires of the U.S. Embassy in Nigeria, Keith Heffern, at the State House, Abuja."

Although the discussions were held behind closed doors, findings revealed that the visit is connected to

expanding security collaboration between Nigeria and the United States, particularly in the areas of counter-terrorism and regional stability.

The visit also comes on the heels of reports that the United States recently deployed a small contingent of troops to Nigeria on February 3, marking the first official U.S. military presence in the country since airstrikes were carried out against terrorist targets on Christmas Day 2025.

Observers said the meeting underscores the Tinubu administration's commitment to deepening international partnerships aimed at addressing Nigeria's security challenges and promoting peace across the region.

Obi Leads Protest at National Assembly Over Electoral Act Amendment

Former Anambra State Governor and Labour Party presidential candidate in the 2023 general election, Mr. Peter Obi, has recently joined scores of Nigerian youths and civil society groups at the National Assembly in Abuja to protest the Senate's stance on electronic transmission of election results.

The demonstration, tagged "Occupy National Assembly," was organised by pro-democracy activists and youth-led organisations demanding that lawmakers reconsider their decision to reject a clause mandating electronic transmission of results in the Electoral Act Amendment Bill.

Addressing protesters at the entrance of the National Assembly

Complex, Obi criticised the Senate's position, describing it as a setback to electoral transparency and democratic progress.

"Allow the election to go through the normal process. Whatever the outcome is, we will accept it. Why introduce confusion after the process?" Obi said, urging lawmakers to prioritise the integrity of the electoral system.

He argued that rejecting electronic transmission of results could erode public confidence in the nation's electoral process, particularly ahead of future elections. According to him, transparent and credible elections are essential to sustaining Nigeria's democracy and strengthening citizens' trust in governance.

The protesters, who gathered early in the morning, carried placards and chanted slogans calling for the restoration of mandatory electronic transmission of election results. They maintained that technology-driven result transmission is critical to reducing electoral manipulation and ensuring greater accountability.

Participants at the rally included members of various civil society organisations, women's groups, youth movements and some members of the opposition African Democratic Congress (ADC).

Security was visibly heightened around the National Assembly Complex, with personnel from the Nigeria Police

Force, Nigerian Army and the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) deployed at strategic locations to maintain order. Despite the heavy presence of security operatives, the protest remained peaceful.

The protest follows the Senate's recent passage of the Electoral Act Amendment Bill, during which lawmakers voted against making electronic transmission of election results compulsory. The decision has continued to generate debate and criticism from opposition figures and civic groups who insist that electronic transmission is key to improving transparency, credibility and public trust in Nigeria's elections.



Abia State
Electricity Regulatory Authority
(ASERA)

ORDER NO. ASERA/ORDER/001/2026

ORDER OF THE ABIA STATE ELECTRICITY REGULATORY AUTHORITY ON THE REGULATION AND UNDERTAKING OF ELECTRICITY ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE ABIA STATE ELECTRICITY MARKET

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 In exercise of the powers conferred by the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended), the Electricity Act 2023 (as amended), and Section 16(1) of the Abia State Electricity Law 2025 ("the Law"), which vests the Abia State Electricity Regulatory Authority ("the Authority") with responsibility for the regulation of intra-state electricity activities within Abia State, the Authority hereby issues this Order on the regulation and undertaking of electricity activities within the Abia State Electricity Market.

1.2 Pursuant to the aforementioned statutory provisions, the Authority is empowered to assume and exercise all regulatory powers, rights and functions previously performed by the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission in respect of electricity undertakings operating within Abia State, in accordance with the Electricity Act, 2023 and the Abia State Electricity Law, 2025.

1.3 This Order follows the conclusion of the transition process for the transfer of regulatory oversight of the Abia State Electricity Market from the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission to the Authority. The transition period commenced on 25 June 2025 and expired on 24 December 2025, in accordance with Section 230(3) of the Electricity Act, 2023 and relevant communication issued by the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission.

2. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

2.1 The purpose of this Order is to notify stakeholders of the completion of the Transfer of and assumption of regulatory oversight over the Abia State Electricity Market by the Abia State Electricity Regulatory Authority with effect from 24 December 2025.

2.2 The Order further notifies stakeholders, operators and licensees of the need to regularise their operations in Abia State.

2.3 Section 38(1) of the Abia State Electricity Law, 2025 provides that, subject to the provisions of the Law, no person shall construct, own, operate or otherwise engage in any undertaking relating to:

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|---|
| a) electricity generation; | b) electricity transmission; | c) electricity distribution and supply; |
| d) electricity trading; | e) system operations; | f) meter manufacturing; or |
| g) such other electricity related activities as the Authority may specify from time to time, except under and in accordance with a licence or permit issued by the Authority. | | |

2.4 Section 38(2) of the Law further provides that an application for a licence shall be made to the Authority in such form and manner as may be prescribed by regulations made pursuant to the Law and shall be accompanied by the prescribed documentation and applicable fees.

2.5 Sections 102(1) and (2) of the Law provide that any person or entity that undertakes electricity generation, transmission, distribution or supply without the requisite licence commits an offence and is liable upon conviction to a fine not exceeding Twenty Million Naira and a daily fine of up to One Hundred and Fifty Thousand Naira for each day the contravention continues. In addition, the Authority is empowered to issue cease and desist orders, temporarily take over the undertaking, direct the offender to apply for the appropriate licence on specified terms, and take such further steps as may be necessary to prevent continuation or recurrence of the contravention.

2.6 Section 115(1)(a) of the Law provides that all licences, permits, approvals, orders, directives, codes, standards and subsidiary instruments issued by the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission under the Electricity Act and applicable to intra state electricity activities in Abia State immediately prior to the commencement of the Law shall continue to have effect pending the full assumption of regulatory responsibility by the Authority.

2.7 Section 115(1)(b) of the Law further provides that any cause of action or legal proceedings existing or pending before the commencement of the Law shall continue to be enforceable in the same manner as if the Law had not been enacted. 2.8 Section 115(1)(c) of the Law establishes the Authority as the successor regulator in respect of intra state electricity regulation within Abia State, and provides that all rights, obligations and references previously vested in or made to the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission in respect of such activities shall, to the extent applicable, be deemed to refer to the Authority

3. ORDERS

3.1 Undertaking of Regulated Activities

3.1.1 No person or entity shall undertake any regulated electricity activity within the Abia State Electricity Market except under and in accordance with a valid licence or permit issued by the Authority. The existence of any licence or authorisation issued by another body shall not constitute a defence under the Abia State Electricity Law.

3.1.2 Any person or entity currently undertaking regulated electricity activities within Abia State without the requisite licence or permit issued by the Authority is hereby directed to:

- immediately cease the undertaking of such regulated activities
- submit an application for the appropriate licence to the Authority without delay; and
- comply fully with the provisions of the Abia State Electricity Law and all applicable regulatory instruments.

3.1.3 In accordance with Section 102 of the Abia State Electricity Law 2025, failure to comply with the provisions of this Order shall expose the defaulting person or entity to prosecution and the imposition of statutory penalties, including fines and daily penalties for continuing contravention

3.1.4 Any person or entity in doubt as to whether an activity constitutes a regulated undertaking under the Law is advised to seek formal clarification from the Authority prior to commencing such activity.

4. ENFORCEMENT

4.1 The Authority shall enforce compliance with the Abia State Electricity Law and all regulatory instruments preserved by this Order and may take such regulatory, administrative or enforcement actions as are necessary to ensure adherence by licensees and other market participants.

5. EFFECTIVE DATE

5.1 This Order shall take effect immediately upon issuance and shall remain in force until amended or revoked by the Authority.

5.2 Any enquiries relating to this Order may be directed to the Authority through its official email address: info.asera@abiastate.gov.ng , and website www.asera.abiastate.gov.ng

Dated this 2nd day of February 2026

Emeka Onyegbule
Chairman/Chief Executive Officer

Iguwo Ukwu
Executive Director, Legal & Regulatory

Feature

Container-Content Relationships: Why Location Does Not Define Performance in Governance – Abia State Context

By JU Ogboma

In governance, symbolism often competes with substance. Government houses, official residences, and capital cities are imbued with history and meaning, and they serve as visible markers of authority. Yet, an overemphasis on where governance occurs can distract from the more consequential question of how well governance is performed.

The recent controversy in Abia State, where former governors have reportedly threatened legal action over Governor Alex Otti's decision to function substantially from Nvosi rather than the Umuahia Government House, has reopened a long-standing debate in public administration: does physical location define performance, legitimacy, or legality in governance?

This brief argues that it does not. Drawing from constitutional principles, public administration theory, and emerging governance indicators in Abia State, it contends that leadership performance should be assessed by outcomes, institutional reforms, and service delivery, but not by the address from which executive duties are discharged.

Container vs Content: A Governance Lens

The container represents the physical and symbolic spaces of governance: government houses, offices, and administrative headquarters. These spaces provide continuity, visibility, and ceremonial legitimacy.

The content, however, is the substance of governance: policy decisions, institutional coordination, fiscal management, transparency, and impact on citizens' lives.

Effective governance depends on content.

Containers may house power, but they do not exercise it. History shows that governments frequently operate from alternative locations during transitions, renovations, emergencies, or security concerns without losing authority or effectiveness.

Legal and Constitutional Perspective

A critical issue in the Abia debate is legality. Nigeria's 1999 Constitution (as amended) does not prescribe a mandatory physical location from which a governor must perform executive functions daily. Section 176 establishes the office of the Governor, while Sections 191-193 outline executive authority, delegation, and administration, but none condition the exercise of power on residence or continuous physical presence in a particular government house.

What the Constitution requires is:

- + A valid electoral mandate
- + Oath of office
- + Adherence to constitutional processes
- + Governance through duly constituted institutions

As long as executive actions like appointments, approvals, policies, and directives are lawful and channelled through recognised institutions of state, their validity does not hinge on geography.

Even within Nigeria's federal practice, presidents, governors, and ministers routinely conduct official business from alternative locations: private residences, official lodges, or temporary offices. Courts have consistently prioritised authority and due process over physical setting.

Therefore, legal arguments centred solely on location risk are weak unless they can demonstrate constitutional breach,

exclusion of institutions, or denial of access to governance.

Abia State: Shifting the Focus to Performance

Rather than reducing governance to symbolism, public discourse in Abia State should interrogate performance indicators. Since 2023, public narratives around Abia governance have increasingly focused on:

- Fiscal discipline and transparency: Reduction in wasteful spending, improved salary and pension payments, and clearer public finance communication.
- Infrastructure rehabilitation: Visible road reconstruction projects, particularly in Aba and Umuahia, addressing years of urban decay.
- Public sector reforms: Renewed emphasis on accountability, verification exercises, and institutional clean-up.
- Ease of doing business: Renewed engagement with traders, SMEs, and industrial clusters in Aba, Nigeria's historic manufacturing hub.

These indicators, whether one agrees with their pace or scale, are the appropriate metrics for assessing governance effectiveness. None is inherently dependent on a governor's physical base of operation.

Symbolism vs Development Outcomes

The Umuahia Government House carries symbolic importance as the administrative heart of Abia State. However, symbolism should reinforce governance, not replace it. When debates over buildings eclipse discussions about roads, schools, healthcare, jobs, and security, governance becomes performative.

Policy history is replete with examples where leaders occupied prestigious offices

while institutions decayed. Conversely, reform-minded administrations have delivered impact despite operating from modest or unconventional settings.

In this light, insisting that effectiveness flows from physical presence risks mistaking form for function.

Risks of Over-Politicising Location

An excessive fixation on location poses several risks:

- + Diverts public attention from substantive policy outcomes
- + Encourages legal theatrics over governance improvement
- + Reinforces elite competition over symbols rather than service delivery
- + Undermines adaptive governance in evolving urban and administrative contexts

For a state seeking recovery, investment, and public trust, these distractions are costly.

However, physical location may support administrative convenience, but it does not confer legitimacy on its own. Governance legitimacy is earned daily through decisions and outcomes.

Conclusion: Reframing the Debate

The Abia State controversy offers a teachable moment. Governance should not be reduced to architecture or geography. While government houses matter symbolically, they do not deliver development.

The container-content framework reminds us that performance lives in systems, policies, and accountability and not buildings. If Abia State is to move forward, public discourse must pivot from where the governor sits to what the government delivers.

Ultimately, history will judge leadership not by the coordinates of power, but by the quality of governance it produced.

Abia on the move...

JU Ogboma. A Proud son of Umungalagu Nvosi and Public Analyst

Opinion

Towards 2027: The Futile Gathering Of Vultures In Abia State

By David Chukwu

The political atmosphere in Abia has been heated up following a recent gathering of the political buccaneers who seem bent on returning the state on the path of infamy and perdition after Governor Alex Otti has taken it to higher developmental pedestal in less than three years. These wolves led by former governors of the state, Orji Uzor Kalu and Theodore Orji, who met under the banner of APC Stakeholders at the Umuahia residence of Theodore Orji vowed to reclaim Abia from Otti.

Orji Kalu boasted that he would win the state for his party come 2027. He went further to downplay the matchless performance of Otti by shamelessly claiming that the beautiful roads that Otti, had delivered in all parts of Abia were done by him, Orji Kalu, adding that what Otti was doing was just mere painting of the roads built by his administration between 1999 and 2007. Nothing could be further from the truth!

Orji Kalu's outburst has predictably provoked outrage amongst the people of Abia State who saw through the ruinous 24 years of the combined PDP-led administrations of Orji Kalu, Theodore Orji and Okezie Ikpeazu.

Those were the years of the locust in which the state was looted to the ground with no modicum of infrastructural development to show for it. Those were the years of fetish, diabolical and occultic practices in which only those initiated into the Okija shrines held power for themselves and their families and small circle of cronies, court jesters and sycophants. The state was left to lie prostrate, and the two major cities of Umuahia and Aba were abandoned and allowed to be overtaken

by mountains of garbage. Abia State, under the watch of these men, was rated nationally as the most underdeveloped in the entire Federation.

But in just two and half years, Otti has changed the face of Abia for good. The state has witnessed an unprecedented transformation never seen since its creation in 1991. Otti has returned Aba to its former glory through the incredible works he has done in the areas of urban renewal and massive reconstruction of the terrible roads in the Enyimba city, including the strategic Port Harcourt Road that was criminally abandoned for 24 years by the vultures that gathered at Ochenodo's residence in Umuahia when they held sway in the state.

Otti has similarly brought his Midas touch to Umuahia, the state capital. The town is completely transformed and now wears a look that befits a capital city of its status. Prior to Otti's intervention, Umuahia was basically provincial and rural in character. A recent visit to Umuahia shows a city with expanded roads adorned with functional traffic lights and modern bus

In 2027, the votes will count in Aba. The good people of Abia who are impressed with the sterling performance of Otti would return him with an overwhelming mandate and resist any attempt by any person or group of persons to rig elections in the state.

stops. Otti has also completed an ultra-modern Central Transport Terminal in Umuahia, the first of its kind in the state. The terminal, which is integrated into the existing railway lines in the town comes with a modern escalator, which helps to quicken the movement of passengers and their goods. The same facility is being replicated in Aba, with a similar proposal for Ohafia.

Last December, the governor introduced electric buses to ply designated routes within Umuahia, Aba, Ohafia and other parts of the state. Abians have been enjoying free rides inside these luxury buses during the Yuletide and the New Year, courtesy of Otti's gesture of goodwill. The people of Abia are full of praise for Otti, whom they have sworn to return to the Government House in 2027 in reciprocation for the great work he is doing in the state. This is what has made the buccaneers jittery and agnostic.

In 2027, the votes will count in Aba. The good people of Abia who are impressed with the sterling performance of Otti would return him with an overwhelming mandate and resist any attempt by any person or group of persons to rig elections in the state.

What this means is that the political career of Orji Kalu and his co-travellers are heading for the rocks. The people of Abia North, who never voted for him in the last election, are standing ready to retire Kalu to his Igbere village. Invoking President Tinubu's name, as he is wont to do, is not going to help him.

Abia people had a raw deal in the hands of Kalu and the other visionless leaders during their wasteful years in power. They are not ready to return to the path of infamy. It is Otti all the way till 2031.

Chukwu, a Political Analyst, writes from Aba.

Religion

Walking In Wisdom For Financial Dominion!

By Bishop David Oyedepo

Today, we shall focus on: Walking in Wisdom for Financial Dominion!

From scriptures, we understand that wisdom is the custodian of wealth. As it is written: Riches and honour are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver. I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment: That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures (Proverbs 8:18-21). That is why, 'the wiser the wealthier' is a common trend in scriptures as exemplified in the following examples:

Abraham: He was a man who walked with God and the Bible says he that walks with the wise shall be wise (Genesis 17:1; Proverbs 13:20). He was a wise and wealthy man and the Bible records that he was very rich in cattle, silver and gold and the Lord blessed him in all things (Genesis 13:2, 24:1).

David: He was said to be as wise as an angel. As a result of his level of wisdom, David commanded financial dominion and he lived in

the realm of over and above (2 Samuel 14:20; 1 Chronicles 29:3-6).

Solomon: He was the wisest in Bible history and also the wealthiest (1 Kings 3:12-13). Solomon loved the Lord and He lavished him with the Spirit of wisdom as he requested, thereby making him wiser and wealthier than all men in his days (1 Kings 4:22-28). Remember, the all wise God is the custodian of the wealth of the whole universe. As it is written: The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts (Haggai 2:8; see also Jude 1:25; Psalm 24:1).

From all the above, it is evident that it takes wisdom to walk in the realm of wealth. Wisdom here connotes putting God's Word to work in our lives (Matthew 7:24-25). This implies that wisdom is simply applied knowledge. That is, to be knowledge deficient is to be wisdom deficient. Therefore, craving for knowledge is the highway to wisdom (Proverbs 4:7). For instance, we understand that giving is God's wisdom that launches us into realms of financial fortune. It is written: Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and

running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again (Luke 6:38). Many people are frustrated because they don't understand the wisdom of God behind giving and receiving. It is important to know that there is a time lag between our giving and receiving, just like in sowing and reaping (Mark 4:26-28; John

any given goal. It is therefore not enough to be giving; we must know how to give acceptably so that our giving will not be wasted.

What is the Biblical Wisdom for Acceptable Giving?

We Must Give in Faith: For it is written: By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain... But without

purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:6-7).

We Must Give Willingly: The Bible says: For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not (2 Corinthians 8:12). We must not give under pressure, or we miss our rewards.

We Must Give in Love: Our giving to God and the poor must be love motivated. It is written: And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing (1 Corinthians 13:3).

We Must Give Honourably: It is not every seed that God receives, He receives only honourable seeds. We must understand that what is considered honourable for one is considered dishonourable for another. Therefore, we must give what is honourable at our level per time (Malachi 1:6-8; Proverbs 3:9-10; 1 Samuel 2:30).

We Must Give Sacrificially: Anytime we offer our seed, we must let it bear a cost on us. For

instance, David purposed not to offer burnt offerings to God, which cost him nothing. After he offered his 'costly' seed, the Lord was entreated for the land and the plague was stayed from Israel (2 Samuel 24:24-25).

We Must Give Tirelessly: This is because we can only reap our harvest in due season if we faint not (Galatians 6:9).

In conclusion, it is important for us to know how God blesses, because He does not only call us to give, we are to expect His blessings in return. Remember, we are ordained to walk in financial dominion and Jesus died, among other things, to connect us with the blessings of Abraham, which includes financial fortune (Genesis 13:2; Isaiah 51:1-3). However, this is made possible when you are a bonafide child of God.

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 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!

We Must Give in Love: Our giving to God and the poor must be love motivated.

12:24). This time lag calls for patience for anyone who desires to walk in financial dominion. But, it is not enough to commit to giving; it must be done the Bible way because the labour of the foolish wearies every one of them, because he lacks the 'KNOW-HOW' (Ecclesiastes 10:15). This is because wisdom is the know-how in the pursuit of

faith it is impossible to please him... (Hebrew 11:4-6). Therefore, it takes faith for our seed to be acceptable.

We Must Give Cheerfully: As it is written: But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he

Family Matters

By Pastor Faith Oyedepo

God is specially interested in your marriage and family. He has made everything available for you to enjoy, including a successful home (1 Timothy 6:17). It is God's desire that His children have the best on earth and in life. God desires your marriage to be peaceful and fulfilling. Family games.

But, God's intent for your marriage can only be actualised when you keep yourself pure. Purity entails a state of not being contaminated with anything that pollutes you spirit, soul and body. To be pure means to be without evil or sin. The Bible says: Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled... (Hebrews 13:4). The word 'undefiled' there simply means kept pure. You must, therefore, ensure that you keep the marriage bed pure to enjoy the honour in marriage.

You may ask, how possible can this be? You must understand that if this was impossible, God won't tell you to do it. Purity is not restricted to an age grade or gender or a specific period of time. It is required that every child of God walk in purity at all times. As the Bible says: The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good (Proverbs 15:3).

As singles, to enjoy honour in your marriage, you must lay a good foundation for it by keeping yourself pure. Parents, begin to train your children against pre-marital sex. It does not matter whether it is acceptable in the society or not. If you say, well, God will forgive me after doing it, what about the scar? Remember the Bible says: What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may

God's Ultimate Desire For Your Family (1)

abound? (Romans 6:1)

The truth is: Sex is the seal of the marriage covenant. Any sexual relationship engaged in outside marriage, breaks the seal and attracts God's punishment. Therefore, you must never get yourself involved in it. However, if you have already defiled the bed, God is always merciful and faithful to forgive if you ask Him sincerely (Psalm 86:5; 1 John 1:9).

Many people get emotionally distorted when they defile the marriage bed to the extent that it disturbs their marital life. You can save your marriage from torments by keeping your life pure. When you defile the marriage bed, you are behaving like a beast and whatever happens to a beast can happen to you at any time. Therefore, you must make a change in the right direction in the name of Jesus Christ!

Give no room to the devil if your soul is actually precious to you. When you get into defiling the marriage bed, whether you are single or married, it is because your soul is not precious to you.

God made man with certain physiological and emotional needs and marriage provides the best fulfilment for them. Physiologically, man needs sex. It is part of his physical nature, and the satisfaction of that urge is permitted only within the parameters of marriage. God

honours the physical union of a man and his wife by ensuring that they find fulfilment in each other. This is why He frowns at adultery and fornication. 1 Corinthians 7:2 says: Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.

This is not to say that young men and women should rush into marriage just for the sole aim of satisfying their sexual urge. That would make them nothing but bedmates. The love and excitement in such a relationship never last and that is not God's plan or purpose for marriage. As a single man or lady, you are expected to control your urge until you locate a suitable partner with whom you are ready to spend the rest of your life with and are legally married to. The truth is: if you cannot tame your sexual drive while single, you probably will not be able to exercise control even when you are married. Flaunting God's purpose in this area of marriage can be very costly to your home and destiny. Therefore, don't do it! Gift baskets

Refuse to fall victim, if you truly value your glorious destiny. Don't say you want to earn yourself a living by whoremongering because God will judge those who do that. Stop it! Don't wait for the fire of God to come upon you, plead for His mercy, call upon Him now that He is ready to hear you. The Bible says: I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that

ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service (Romans 12:1). In other words, the presentation of your body unto the Almighty God as a living sacrifice is your reasonable service unto God. Any service done unto God without your body being a living sacrifice is not acceptable. It does not matter what you do and the volume of money you give in church every day. If your body is not kept pure, that service is not acceptable unto God. Whether single or married, illicit sexual affairs render your service to God un-rewardable and will deprive you of enjoying the honour He has destined for you in marriage.

God is much more interested in your person than your money or what you can do. When your person is acceptable unto God, then your service will become acceptable. Receive grace to practice the Word of God so that you can truly enjoy the honour destined for you in marriage in Jesus' name!

If you are not born again and you want to accept Jesus as your Lord and personal Saviour, then say this prayer in faith: Dear Lord Jesus Christ, I come to You today. I am a sinner. Forgive me my sins and cleanse me with Your Blood. I accept You as my Lord and personal Saviour. Make me a child of God today. Thank You for delivering me from sin and satan to serve the living God and thank You for accepting me into Your Kingdom.

Congratulations! If you prayed this simple prayer of faith with me, you are now born again and a child of God. He loves you and will never leave you. Read your Bible daily, obey God's Word and seek Christian fellowship (John 14:21). Gift baskets

With this, you are guaranteed all-round rest and peace in Jesus' Name!

Photos Speak



L-R: Sen. Repr. Abia South, Sen. Enyinnaya Abaribe and Gov Alex Otti of Abia, during the grand civic reception organised for the Gov of Abia State by the people of Ukwa La Ngwa at the Enyimba Int'l Stadium, Aba.



L-R: Rear Admiral Abdullahi Ahmed, Commandant (Head) of the National Defence College (NDC) Abuja, Nigeria and Gov Alex Otti of Abia, as Gov Otti of Abia delivered a lecture at National Defense College, Abuja.



L-R: Chief of Staff to Abia Gov, Pastor Caleb Ajagba Ph.D, Member Repr. Isialangwa North/South Fedr. Const, Hon. Ginger Onwusibe, Gov Alex Otti of Abia, National Secretary, Labour Party, Sen Darlington Nwokocha, Member Repr. Aba North/South Fedr. Const, Hon Alex Mascot Ikwechek and CEO, Masters Energy, Dr. Uche Ogah, during the grand civic reception organised for the Gov of Abia by the people of Ukwa La Ngwa at the Enyimba Int'l Stadium, Aba.



L-R: Governor Alex Otti of Abia State and Senior Pastor of the Chapel Of Answers Int'l Church, Aba, Pastor Chibueze S. J. Okezie, as Abia Gov, Dr. Otti worshipped with Christian faithful at the Chapel of Answers Annual Special Service Programme hosted by the Senior Pastor of the Chapel Of Answers Int'l Church, Pastor Chibueze S. J. Okezie, at the famous CS Park, Aba.



Governor Alex Otti of Abia State being prayed for by the Traditional Rulers of Ukwa La Ngwa, during the grand civic reception organised in his honour by the people of Ukwa La Ngwa at the Enyimba Int'l Stadium, Aba.



L-R: Gov. Charles Soludo of Anambra State, Gov Peter Mbah of Enugu, and Gov. Alex Otti of Abia, as the Vice President, Sen. Shettima officially declared open the South East Vision 2025 (SEV2025) Regional Stakeholder Forum organised by the SEDC, at the In'l Conference Centre, ICC, Enugu.



L-R: Interim National Chairperson of the Labour Party (LP), Sen. Nenadi Usman and Abia State Gov, Dr. Alex Otti, during a high-level meeting of Labour Party National Executive Committee (NEC) and Interim National Committee chaired by Abia Gov, Dr. Alex Otti, in Abuja.



L-R: Gov Peter Mbah of Enugu, Gov. Alex Otti of Abia, Chairman, South East Development Commission, SEDC, Chief Emeka Nwaogu, and SSA to Abia Gov, Hon. Acho Obioma, as the Vice President, Sen. Shettima officially declared open the South East Vision 2025 (SEV2025) Regional Stakeholder Forum organised by the SEDC, at the In'l Conference Centre, ICC, Enugu.

Photos by: Chukwu Chidiebere

Photos Speak



R-L: Gov. Francis Nwifuru of Ebonyi, Gov Peter Mbah of Enugu, Vice President of Nigeria, Sen. Kashim Shettima and Gov. Alex Otti of Abia while MD/CEO, South East Dev. Commission, SEDC, Hon. Mark Okoye have a hand shake with Enugu Gov, as the Vice President, Sen. Shettima officially declared open the South East Vision 2025 (SEV2025) Regional Stakeholder Forum organised by the SEDC, at the In'1 Conference Centre, ICC, Enugu.



Abia State Gov, Dr. Alex Otti being welcomed by the Management of National Defence College, Abuja while Rear Admiral Abdullahi Ahmed, Commandant, National Defence College (NDC) Abuja watches, as he delivered a lecture at National Defence College, Abuja



L,-R: Gov Alex Otti of Abia and Speaker, Abia House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Emmanuel Emeruwa, as Abia Gov, Dr. Otti worshipped with Christian faithful at the Chapel of Answers Annual Special Service Programme hosted by the Senior Pastor of the Chapel Of Answers Int'l Church, Pastor Chibueze S. J. Okezie, at the famous CS Park, Aba.



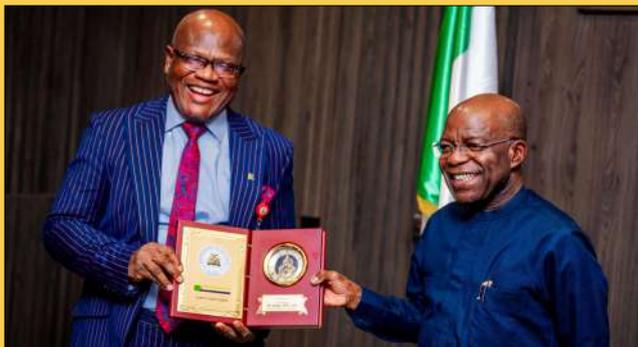
Abia Gov, Dr. Alex Otti receiving salute from the Soldiers while Rear Admiral Abdullahi Ahmed, Commandant, National Defence College (NDC) Abuja, watches, as he delivered a lecture at National Defence College, Abuja.



R-L: SA to Abia Gov on Media and Publicity, Mr Ferdinand Ekeoma, DG, Abia State Strategic Communications Bureau, Sir Onyebuchi Ememanka, Chief of Staff to Abia Gov, Pastor Caleb Ajagba Ph.D and others, as Civil servants in Abia Govt House Umuahia celebrated Abia Gov. Dr Alex Otti for fulfilling his promise by commencing the payment of their Annual Leave Allowance



Chief of Staff to Abia Gov, Pastor Caleb Ajagba Ph.D (1st R) addressing Civil Servants in Govt House, as Civil servants in Abia Govt House Umuahia celebrated Abia Gov. Dr Alex Otti for fulfilling his promise by commencing the payment of their Annual Leave Allowance.



L-R: The President and Chairman of the Council of the Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN), Prof. Pius Olarenwaju and Gov Alex Otti of Abia State, as Chairman, Council of the Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN) led members of the institute to pay a visit to Gov Otti in his office.



Gov Alex Otti of Abia State (c) pose with The President and Chairman of the Council of the Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN), Prof. Pius Olarenwaju (9th R), Abia State Commission for Agriculture, Hon. Cliff Agbaeze (2nd R) and others, as Chairman, Council of the Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN) led members of the institute to pay a visit to Gov Otti in his office.



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News

Community Leaders Call For Tighter Regulations On Commercial Motorcycles In Umuahia

By *Onwuka Lovina*

Community leaders in Abia State have urged authorities to increase oversight of the rapidly growing commercial motorcycle sector in Umuahia's suburbs, citing concerns over safety, regulation, and social issues.

Publisher of Rising Sun Newspapers, Sir Joshua Nnayerugo Ogbonna raised the alarm during a public discussion on security, youth livelihoods, and community responsibility in Umuahia.

He noted that many newcomers are entering the commercial motorcycle business, locally known as *okada*, in areas like Olokoro, Nkwoegwu, and Ndume, which are experiencing rapid residential and institutional growth.

"When any sector grows this quickly, proper identification, registration, and monitoring become important for public safety," Ogbonna said, emphasizing the need for authorities to distinguish legitimate operators from potential offenders.

The concerns come as commercial motorcycles continue to fill transport gaps in areas with limited public transit. While restricted in the city centre, *okada* remains a vital means of transport in suburban and semi-rural districts.

Security analysts attribute the growth of the sector to nationwide unemployment and urban expansion, pushing workers into informal sectors.

Abia State officials acknowledged that oversight has struggled to keep pace with population movement and economic change.

Ogbonna urged security agencies to strengthen routine checks and collaborate with community-based vigilance groups, while promoting accountability and discipline among operators. He also called for renewed investment in vocational skills, small businesses, and entrepreneurship to address youth unemployment and economic pressures.

The call for regulation came as Abia State authorities reviewed transport policies and security coordination in urban and peri-urban areas to manage growth and maintain order.

The outcome of these discussions is expected to shape the future of transport, security, and opportunity in Umuahia's expanding suburbs.

Army 14 Brigade, Abia Police Command Strengthen Collaboration Against Crime

By *Stephanie Adindu*

The Nigerian Army's 14 Brigade, Ohafia, and the Abia State Police Command have reaffirmed their commitment to sustained collaboration in the fight against criminality in the state.

The Commander of 14 Brigade, Brigadier-General A.M. Dikko, gave the assurance during a familiarisation visit to the Abia State Police Command Headquarters in Umuahia on February 10, 2026.

Brig. Gen. Dikko commended the Police Command for its efforts in maintaining law and order, noting that the existing working relationship between the Army and the Police has significantly contributed to the relative peace currently enjoyed in Abia State.

He called for continued synergy between the two security agencies, stressing that effective collaboration remains key to addressing security challenges and safeguarding lives and property.

Receiving the Brigade Commander, the Commissioner of Police, Abia State Command, Danladi Isa, alongside members of his management team, described the military as a critical partner in the fight against crime in the state.

CP Isa characterised the relationship between the army and the police as cordial and productive, emphasising that both agencies operate within clearly defined constitutional roles without rivalry.

He reiterated the Police Command's commitment to sustained inter-agency co-operation to ensure the safety and security of residents across the state.

2027 Polls: Chukwu Advises Stakeholders On Voter Registration

By *Akinrujomu Gideon*

Ahead of the 2027 general elections, the Senior Special Assistant (SSA) to the Governor on Due Process and Procurement, Abia State, Dr. Oluebube A. Chukwu, has urged stakeholders in Umunneochi Local Government Area to adopt strategic measures to boost voter registration during the ongoing Continuous Voter Registration (CVR) exercise.

Dr. Chukwu made the call during a strategic stakeholders' meeting held at the Umunneochi LGA Council Headquarters in Nkwoagu, Ikuochi.

The meeting brought together key community leaders, traditional rulers, religious heads, and representatives of town unions to deliberate on practical steps to ensure that eligible residents take advantage of the registration window to obtain their Permanent Voter Cards (PVCs).

Speaking at the event, Dr.



Dr. Oluebube A. Chukwu

Chukwu emphasised the importance of voter registration as a fundamental civic responsibility and a cornerstone of credible electoral participation.

He urged all stakeholders to actively engage their communities in creating awareness and mobilizing residents to register.

Following deliberations, the stakeholders unanimously adopted a comprehensive sensitization plan targeting key community segments. The plan involves sending formal letters to religious leaders, traditional rulers, and town unions to secure their co-operation and active involvement. Additionally, town

criers will be deployed across various communities to reach grassroots residents, including those in hard-to-reach areas.

The stakeholders expressed optimism that the co-ordinated approach, combined with Dr. Chukwu's mobilization efforts, would significantly increase voter registration figures in Umunneochi and strengthen civic participation ahead of the 2027 elections.

A key highlight of the meeting was the mobilization of funds by Dr. Chukwu to facilitate the transportation of residents from hinterland communities to Local Government Areas where INEC registration agents are stationed.

This initiative is aimed at enhancing voter enrollment and ensuring that eligible voters from remote areas can access registration points efficiently.

The meeting also highlighted the community's collective commitment to ensuring that every eligible voter is duly registered and empowered to exercise their constitutional right to vote.

Anyaso Empowers Bende Women with Money, Urges PVCs Registration

By *Stephanie Adindu*

Abia-born businessman and philanthropist, Dr. Chimaobi Desmond Anyaso, popularly known as Ofuji, has empowered over 100 women petty traders across Bende Federal Constituency of Abia State, with ₦200,000 each, to strengthen their businesses amid prevailing economic challenges.

The empowerment programme, held in Igbere, Bende Local Government Area, saw beneficiaries receive millions of naira in total support aimed at boosting small-scale enterprises and improving household incomes.

Represented at the event by the Chairman, Board of Trustees of the Chima Anyaso Foundation, Ezeogo Emeka Onuoha, Dr. Anyaso said the intervention was designed to cushion the effects of economic hardship on families and promote grassroots economic stability.

"This financial assistance is intended to enhance your businesses and support your families. We urge every recipient to utilize these funds judiciously to ensure long-term sustainability," Onuoha said on his behalf.

Dr. Anyaso noted that the initiative aligns with ongoing efforts by the Abia State Governor, Dr. Alex Otti, to reform critical sectors of the state's economy and improve the welfare of citizens.

He called on Abians, Igbos and Nigerians at large to obtain their Permanent Voter Cards (PVCs), stressing that sustained participation in the electoral process is vital to consolidating good governance.

According to him, active civic engagement through voting would help sustain Governor Otti's reforms in critical sectors and ensure continuity of policies geared towards economic revitalisation and institutional strengthening.

In his remarks, the Bende

PDP LGA Chairman, Chief Ihechi Phillips, commended the Chima Anyaso Foundation for what he described as tangible grassroots support, contrasting it with "empty promises" often associated with political actors.

The event attracted a cross-section of political stakeholders and community leaders, including representatives from the ADC, APC, Labour Party, PDP and YPP, in what observers described as a

rare demonstration of unity in the constituency.

Among dignitaries present were, a PDP chieftain, Pastor Okechukwu Dike who described the empowerment as timely and impactful, and Women Leader of the Ofuji Movement, Lolo Arisa Okparigbo who reaffirmed the commitment of women in the area to supporting developmental initiatives.

The outreach marked the

second major empowerment programme by the Chima Anyaso Foundation in 2026.

On New Year's Day, the foundation distributed ₦500,000 and ₦250,000 respectively to selected youths and distinguished individuals across Bende, further reinforcing its commitment to grassroots development and economic inclusion.

ACS Holds Capacity-Building Scheme

By *Chukwuemeka Egejuru*

The American Chemical Society (ACS), Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike (MOU/UAU) Student Chapter, has successfully hosted its maiden two-day capacity-building programme, empowering about 150 students with essential skills in academic development, career readiness, digital communication and personal productivity.

The event attracted undergraduate and postgraduate students, faculty members and invited facilitators.

Strong participation, hands-on sessions and positive feedback underscored the programme's impact, while further strengthening the visibility and relevance of the ACS Student Chapter within the university community.

Speaking at the event, the Faculty Advisor of the ACS MOU/UAU Chapter, Dr. Uchechi Bliss Onyedikachi, presented a comprehensive overview of the American Chemical Society, highlighting its mission, vision and global influence.

She emphasized the benefits of active ACS membership, including access to scholarships, grants, research resources, leadership opportunities and international professional networks, urging students to leverage ACS platforms to enhance their academic profiles, research exposure and global engagement.

In a separate session entitled, "Time Management: Mastering Purposeful Productivity," Dr. Onyedikachi equipped participants with practical strategies for effective time utilization.

She distinguished between mere busyness and true productivity, introducing tools such as the Eisenhower Matrix, Time Blocking, SMART Goals, the Pomodoro Technique and the 80/20 Rule. Through guided exercises, including time audits and goal breakdowns, participants were shown how to better align daily activities with long-term academic and career objectives.

Earlier, in her welcome remarks, the Head

of the Department of Chemistry, Dr. Okenwa Uchenna Igwe, urged students to prioritize continuous professional development, scientific excellence and active participation in initiatives that prepare them for competitive academic and career pathways.

Meanwhile, a technical session featuring a practical workshop on CV Writing and Career Development, facilitated by Dr. Augustine Igbuzulike, trained participants on developing compelling and competitive curricula vitae. The session emphasized effective presentation of academic achievements, research experience and leadership roles, while also guiding students on tailoring their CVs for scholarships, internships, research placements and conference participation.

The programme also featured a hands-on workshop on Digital Skills for Science Communication, co-facilitated by Dr. Uchechi Bliss Onyedikachi and Mr. Dubem Obiora. Participants learned effective slide design, poster development and research presentation techniques, and were introduced to digital tools such as Canva, PowerPoint, Prezi, CapCut and InShot for creating engaging scientific content. Practical activities included the creation of short presentations and science explainer videos, followed by peer review and feedback.

The event ended with a session on ACS Opportunities and Motivation, during which participants were further enlightened on available scholarships, grants, internships and leadership pathways within the ACS. Students were encouraged to remain active in ACS programmes, build professional networks and position themselves for global scientific engagement.

Overall, the two-day programme significantly improved participants' skills in CV writing, scientific and digital communication, research presentation, time management and personal productivity. The initiative positioned the ACS MOU/UAU Student Chapter as a growing hub for leadership development, scientific excellence and career readiness, reaffirming its commitment to empowering students for success within and beyond the university.

News

Governor Otti's Wife Empowers Savivors Of Female Genital Mutilation With Cash Donations

By Chibunna Ikeokwu

In a seminar marking the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) this February, the wife of Abia State Governor, Mrs. Priscilla Otti, empowered five survivors of FGM with cash donations and urged the Nigerian government to establish measures to prohibit the harmful practice nationwide.

Speaking at the International Conference Centre in Umuahia, Mrs. Otti condemned FGM as a violation of the rights of girls and women, highlighting its severe

health impacts, including pain, trauma, infections, childbirth complications, and long-lasting psychological effects.

She asserted, "FGM provides no medical benefits, it does not enhance childbirth safety, and it is not endorsed by any religion. Culture should protect life and dignity; any practice that harms girls and violates their bodily autonomy is an act of violence."

Mrs. Otti noted that the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act has been enacted in Abia State, classifying FGM as a criminal offense.

However, she emphasized that laws alone cannot eliminate violence, adding that effective implementation, education, reporting, and enforcement are vital and crucial to ensure the menace.

In her address, the Commissioner for Women Affairs, Dr. Maureen Aghukwa, expressed the emotional trauma and potential fatal consequences of FGM.

Represented by the Senior Special Assistant to the Governor on Women Affairs, Mrs. Chinenye Nwaka, affirmed the government's commitment to protecting

girls' rights and eradicating FGM by 2030.

Experts, including Mrs. Onyinyechi Nwosu of the Child Protection Network, Chidimma Alozie of FIDA, Naomi Chinyere of Caritas Nigeria and Dr. Ngozi Okechukwu, echoed the need for collective action from stakeholders, traditional leaders, and faith-based organizations to enhance campaigns aimed at eliminating this harmful practice.

They reaffirmed that legislation alone is insufficient and called for sustained commitment and investment to effect the needed change.

OACF Extends Sanitation Exercise To 4 New Local Govt Councils

By Chukwuemeka Egejuru

Oluebube A. Chukwu Foundation (OACF) has extended its humanitarian sanitation campaign to four newly inaugurated local government areas in Abia State, reinforcing its commitment to complementing government efforts toward a cleaner and healthier environment.

OACF, founded by the Senior Special Assistant (SSA) to the Abia State Governor on Due Process and Public Procurement, Dr. Oluebube Chukwu, carried out the exercise across Umunneochi, Isuikwuato, Ohafia, Arochukwu and Bende LGAs, drawing commendable participation from residents.

In Umunneochi LGA, 79 persons participated in the clean-up exercise held at Zone 1, Orié Ngodo Market Square. The Ward Coordinator, Onyerisara Kingsley, who supervised the activity, applauded the turnout and emphasized the importance of collective responsibility in maintaining a clean environment.

At Isuikwuato LGA, the OACF LGA Manager, Mr. Anyachi Ndubuisi, led the sanitation exercise at Orié Ahaba Market in Imenyi Ward 1, with the support of the Ward Coordinator, Mr. Sunday Udensi, who mobilized 24 participants.

Speaking at the event, former Community Chairman of Amahia/Amogudu, Chief Ekeh Achobandu, expressed appreciation to Dr. Oluebube Chukwu for what he described as a thoughtful initiative benefiting the grassroots.

Also speaking, the Coach of Golden Kingsley Azuogu FC Ahaba commended the Foundation and pledged continued support to sustain the sanitation culture in the community.

In Ohafia LGA, the exercise was coordinated by the OACF LGA Manager, Mr. Nwoke Okorie, at the Amamba Public Toilet/Dump Site, Amogudu Ward, Abiriba. A total of 46 persons took part in the clean-up, with coordination at the ward level by Prince Iroegbu Nwojo. Participants stressed the need for regular sanitation to prevent environmental hazards and protect public health.

Similarly, in Arochukwu LGA, 54 residents participated in the sanitation exercise held at Isu Ward under the leadership of the OACF LGA Manager, Mr. Uyor Enyinnaya, alongside the Ward Coordinator, Mr. Sunday Kalu. They commended community members for their active involvement and urged them to sustain the initiative.

In Bende LGA, the sanitation activity took place at Etiulo Primary School, Bende, with 17 participants mobilized by the Ward Coordinator, Mr. Benjamin Nwankwo, under the supervision of the OACF LGA Manager, Mr. Evans Godswill. The coordinators expressed optimism that participation would increase in subsequent exercises.

Notably, Ohafia, Bende, Isuikwuato and Arochukwu LGAs are newly inaugurated chapters of the Foundation and this marked their first official participation in the sanitation programme.

In their separate remarks, the LGA Managers – Mr. Anyachi Ndubuisi (Isuikwuato), Mr. Nwoke Okorie (Ohafia), Mr. Uyor Enyinnaya (Arochukwu) and Mr. Evans Godswill (Bende) – commended the Founder of OACF, Dr. Oluebube Chukwu, for his vision to complement government efforts toward ensuring a healthy and sustainable environment.

They noted that his commitment and passion for community development and humanitarian service remain a source of inspiration to them and others.

The coordinators described the sanitation initiative as a strategic intervention that promotes public health, environmental sustainability and civic responsibility. They further urged residents across the LGAs to embrace and sustain regular clean-up exercises, stressing that a clean environment is fundamental to community development and improved quality of life.

The foundation reaffirmed its resolve to continue supporting government policies through impactful grassroots humanitarian programmes across Abia State.



Participants at the seminar marking the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation at the International Conference Center, Umuahia.

Acting Secretary To Abia Govt Commends Retired Staff

By Ndubueze Ngozi

The Acting Secretary to the State Government (SSG), Dr. Emmanuel Meribole, has commended retired staff of the Office of the SSG for their dedication, commitment and selfless service to Abia State over the years.

Dr. Meribole gave the commendation during a send-off ceremony organised by the Office in honour of the retirees, where he described their contributions as invaluable to the growth, stability and effective functioning of government.

He thanked the staff on behalf of Governor

Alex Otti, noting that the governor had continued to provide an enabling environment for public servants to improve service delivery across the State.

The Acting SSG assured the retirees of God's providence, protection and guidance as they transit into a new phase of life.

He encouraged them to remain active after retirement by maintaining social connections, engaging in regular physical exercise and undertaking routine medical check-ups to sustain good health.

Dr. Meribole thanked the retirees for honouring the invitation and prayed for continued success,

fulfilment and sound health in their post-service lives.

In his remarks, the Permanent Secretary in the Office of the SSG, Dr. Godwin Okezu, expressed appreciation to the Acting SSG for approving the ceremony and lauded the retirees for their years of committed and meritorious service to Abia State.

Responding on behalf of the retirees, the Director of Finance, Dr. Emeka Ikwuagwu, thanked God for the opportunity to serve and expressed gratitude to the Acting SSG and management of the office for the honour accorded them.

He also commended the Governor, for making retirement rewarding through the prompt payment of pensions, while advising serving officers to adequately prepare for retirement, describing it as an inevitable phase of life.

In separate remarks, staff of the office, including Mr. Onyekachi Wachuku, Ms. Nnena Chekwas, Mrs. Chiwe Iheadindu and Mrs. Glory Ikeanyi, appreciated the leadership for creating an opportunity to celebrate the retirees and offered prayers for their continued well-being.

The highlight of the event was the presentation of gifts to the retirees.

Local Government News

Obingwa Council Inaugurates Peace Panel

The Obingwa Local Government Area, Abia State has inaugurated a Mediation and Peace Panel Committee to help resolve disputes and promote peace at the grassroots level. The initiative is aimed at reducing conflict in communities and encouraging dialogue as a better alternative to violence and prolonged court cases.

The committee was approved by the Governor of Abia State, Dr. Alex Otti, and established through the Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs. It forms part of the state government's wider strategy to strengthen peacebuilding, social harmony, and effective local governance across Abia State.

The committee was officially inaugurated by the Executive Chairman of Obingwa LGA, Hon. Maxwell C. Nwadike, who described the panel as a timely intervention to address rising disputes at the community level. He noted that peaceful resolution of conflicts is essential for development and unity in Obingwa communities.

The Mediation and Peace Panel will serve as an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) body within the local government.

It is made up of experienced professionals and respected community leaders drawn from different sectors, ensuring fairness, balance, and credibility in its operations. Members of the panel include: Mr. Innocent Isikaku, Chairman;

Amb. E. L. O. Amalaha, Secretary;
Eze Emerole, Legal Counsel;
Elder Chris Okeorji,

Complaint Unit Officer;
Enyinnaya Nwaubani, Administrative Officer;
HRH Eze C. Nwokenne Traditional Ruler;

HRH Eze (Engr.) V. A. Nwobia Traditional Ruler.

The committee is mandated to handle a wide range of disputes, including family and domestic matters, land and boundary issues, community disagreements such as kingship stool matters, landlord and tenant disputes, as well as minor commercial and interpersonal conflicts. Its goal is to ensure that disputes are resolved quickly and fairly without unnecessary tension.

All cases brought before the panel will be treated with strict confidentiality. The services of the committee will be free of charge, and emphasis will be placed on dialogue, understanding, and mutual agreement between parties.

The panel's tenure takes immediate effect and will run for one year, subject to review and possible renewal based on performance.

It will sit twice weekly at the Obingwa Local Government Headquarters and will receive full administrative and logistical support from the government to enable it function effectively.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Hon. Nwadike expressed strong confidence in the ability of the committee members to deliver on their mandate.

He urged residents of Obingwa to take advantage of the panel and embrace peaceful dialogue as the best way to resolve disputes and maintain lasting peace in their communities.



Members of the Peace Panel Committee inaugurated by the Executive Chairman of Obingwa LGA, aimed at strengthening local conflict resolution, promoting peacebuilding, and enhancing grassroots governance

Abia Labour Party Moves For Action

The Executive Mayor of Umuahia South Local Government Area, Hon. Chinedu Enwereuzo, joined party leaders and supporters at the grand finale of the Labour Party statewide sensitization and political mobilization rally held in Bende Local Government Area.

The rally was organized by the State Working Committee (SWC) of the Labour Party and brought together members from all the 17 Local Government Areas of Abia State.

The event was aimed at strengthening party unity, mobilizing supporters, and showing solidarity for the administration of Governor Alex Otti, in recognition of his achievements across the state.

Hon. Enwereuzo's presence at the rally showed the commitment of Umuahia South Local Government Area to the Labour Party and its readiness for future political activities. It also reflected a shared determination among party leaders and supporters to protect the mandate of the present administration.

The rally attracted stakeholders, party leaders, youth leaders, women groups, and enthusiastic supporters from different local

government areas, especially Bende LGA. The gathering served as a platform to raise political awareness and remind the people that the administration of Governor Otti remains focused on delivering good governance and development to Abia State.

The Umuahia South Mayor was accompanied by his Deputy, Hon. Enyinnaya Nnaemeka Nwosu; the Secretary to

the Local Government, Chief Iroabuchi James Chikezie; the Chief of Staff, Chief Callistus Alozie Agomuo, the Abia Arise Umuahia South LGA Coordinator, Dennis Anokwuru; representatives of the Abia Orientation Agency, Umuahia South Chapter, led by Hon. Vera Onwughara Ihuoma; supervisory councillors; and other key officials and staff from the Office of the Executive Mayor.

At the end of the rally, party members reaffirmed their unity, loyalty, and support for Governor Otti's administration.

They pledged to work together to protect the mandate of the government and to promote sustainable development, transparency, and people-focused governance in line with the "New Abia" vision.

Ugwunagbo Ugoezes Welcome Lady Wagbara As Chairperson

The Ugoezes of Ugwunagbo Local Government Area have formally received the Wife of the Executive Mayor, Lady Ifeoma Iheanacho Wagbara, as the Chairperson of Ugwunagbo Local Government Area.

Her formal introduction followed the official handover by the former Acting Chairperson, marking the beginning of her leadership role.

The colourful ceremony was held at the Ugwunagbo LGA Conference Hall and drew women from all the wards of the local government area.

The gathering served as a platform to promote unity, inclusion, and a shared vision among women, while strengthening cooperation and understanding across communities in Ugwunagbo.

The Ugoezes expressed great joy and unity as they formally welcomed Lady Ifeoma Iheanacho Wagbara as the substantive Chairperson. They pledged their full support and cooperation, promising to work closely with her to improve the welfare of women, strengthen family values, and support community and social development throughout the local government area.

The event also highlighted the

fulfillment of campaign promises made by the Executive Mayor of Ugwunagbo LGA, Hon. Chiemela Iheanacho Wagbara, particularly in the area of women empowerment. His administration demonstrated a people-oriented approach by providing uniforms, wrappers, and other support items to women. This gesture was widely appreciated and helped to strengthen trust and confidence in grassroots governance.

In addition, the programme featured a measles vaccination sensitization session aimed at educating women on the importance of immunization, maternal health, and child care. The session encouraged mothers to ensure their children are fully vaccinated in order to prevent avoidable diseases and promote healthy families.

In her acceptance speech, Lady Wagbara expressed deep gratitude to the Ugoezes for the warm reception and support shown to her.

She reaffirmed her commitment to inclusive leadership, women empowerment, and peaceful collaboration across all wards of Ugwunagbo Local Government Area.

News

Abia Partners Body On Digital Healthcare Service

By Favour Okorie

The Abia State Government has partnered with the Save a Life Programme to improve healthcare services and expand Universal Health Coverage (UHC) through digital technology.

The partnership was announced after a high-level meeting held recently at the Abia State Ministry of Health in Umuahia.

The meeting was attended by the Chairman of the Save a Life Program, Dr. Richard Okoye, and senior officials of the Ministry of Health.

Speaking at the meeting, the Commissioner for Health, Professor Enoch Ogbonnaya Uche, said the partnership reflects the commitment of the state government to ensure that quality healthcare reaches all parts of Abia State, especially rural and underserved communities. He said the use of digital technology will help make healthcare services more inclusive and affordable.

Professor Uche added that the state is focused on building a digital health system that meets global standards. He noted that Abia State has continued to show leadership in healthcare reforms and good governance.

Dr. Richard Okoye, in his remarks, thanked the Abia State Government for supporting the Save a Life Program. He explained that the program uses technology to improve access to healthcare, strengthen service delivery, and connect more people to essential health services, particularly in rural areas.

Also speaking, the Chief Information Officer at Government House said Abia State already has the digital infrastructure needed to support universal health coverage. He described the system as strong and flexible enough to support a modern healthcare system.

As part of the partnership, officials from the Ministry of Health and the Save a Life Programme visited two Primary Healthcare Centres selected for the pilot phase of the project.

The centres are Umudike Primary Healthcare Centre in Ikwuano Local Government Area and Umuenyere Alayi Primary Healthcare Centre in Bende Local Government Area.

The partnership is seen as an important step in Abia State's efforts to improve healthcare delivery. It highlights the government's plan to use technology and partnerships to provide efficient, accessible, and people-centred healthcare for residents of the state.

Outdated Curricula Threaten Nigeria's Global Competitiveness - Gov Otti

By Amarachi Uzoukwu

Abia State Governor, Dr Alex Otti, has stressed the need for urgent curriculum reform in Nigeria's education system, warning that outdated academic content cannot prepare students for a technology-driven global economy.

Governor Otti made this known recently while receiving the President of the Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN), Prof. Pius Olarenwaju, and members of the Institute at his office in Nvosi, Isiala Ngwa South Local Government Area.

The governor who commended the Institute for updating its curriculum, said Abia State was willing to adopt CIBN's framework across its tertiary institutions.

He noted that emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, robotics and 3D printing had reshaped the global economy, making curriculum reform critical.

"I want to congratulate you for the changes that you have also made, particularly in your curriculum. You'll find that the world keeps changing every day.

"So if you have curricula that were drafted in 2004, and then this is 2026, you'll be teaching people from the 21st century.

"So that's also what we are



Abia State Governor, Dr Alex Otti

doing here, but the most important job for us in the educational sector is curricula.

"Then what are you teaching them is also as important, because today we talk about artificial intelligence, robotics, 3D printing and then you are still struggling with the knowledge of yesteryears.

"So I am happy that you have done that and if we have an opportunity to have a look at what you did.

"We also want to domesticate it in the institutions here, at Abia State University, Uturu and Ogbonnaya Onu Polytechnic,

Aba, even the Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike.

"We don't believe in reinventing the wheel, therefore, if you have solved the problem, we just take the solution and that is important", Governor Otti added.

The governor also highlighted reforms in the state's education sector, including free and compulsory education, which he said had led to over a 100 per cent increase in school

enrolment.

He disclosed that his government had recruited 5,394 teachers and was currently employing an additional 4,000 from over 29,000 applicants, stressing that the process was strictly merit-based.

According to the governor, continuous learning remains essential to personal and societal development.

He reaffirmed his administration's

commitment to sustained development and stronger collaboration with the CIBN.

Earlier, Prof. Olarenwaju said CIBN remained committed to youth development through curriculum reform, digitalised examinations and initiatives such as the Generation Next programme and the Legacy Project, which involves the construction of modern lecture theatres in tertiary institutions nationwide.

Prof. Olarenwaju called for deeper collaboration between CIBN and the Abia State Government in areas such as infrastructure development, financial literacy, financial inclusion and completion of the Institute's state office.

He announced CIBN's involvement in a national programme to train 10 million women and youths on financial inclusion.

"I was in Aso Rock with the vice president of this country, and the institute was one of those institutes that was appointed to train ten million women and youth on financial inclusion.

"We are intentional about this and we will go ahead to do this", he said.

Prof. Olarenwaju also disclosed plans to address the "Japa syndrome" through targeted training and upskilling programmes aimed at retaining talent within the country.

He commended Governor Otti's leadership and recalled that CIBN's request for land to establish a state office in 2023 was approved within one year, describing it as evidence of governance driven by action.

The CIBN President further lauded the present administration's achievements, citing reported improvements in economic growth, poverty reduction, job creation, healthcare delivery, education, security and infrastructure.

He described the governor as a goodwill ambassador of the Institute and disclosed plans to organise an event to honour outstanding former bank chief executives, inviting Otti to attend.

A'Court Upholds Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan's Suspension

From Sphina Ovuike, Abuja

The Court of Appeal, Abuja Division, has affirmed the suspension of the senator representing Kogi Central, Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan, ruling that the Senate acted within its constitutional and procedural powers.

In a unanimous judgment delivered by Justice Abba Bello Mohammed, the appellate court held that the Senate possesses the authority to discipline any member found to have breached its rules in order to maintain order during proceedings.

The court ruled that Senator Akpoti-Uduaghan's fundamental rights were not violated, contrary to her claims. It stated that under Section 66(4) of the Senate Standing Rules, the upper legislative chamber is empowered to invoke disciplinary measures against erring members.

The case stemmed from an incident on February 20, 2025, during which the Senate President reallocated a seat to the Kogi Central lawmaker.

The court held that the senator was wrong to refuse compliance with the directive. It further noted that her claim of not receiving prior notice of the seat change was untenable, as there is no provision in the Senate rules mandating prior notification before such adjustments are made.

According to the judgment, upon being informed of the seat reassignment, Senator Akpoti-Uduaghan ought to have complied immediately. The court affirmed that the Senate was justified in invoking Order Six, Rule Two of its Standing Rules following

her persistent refusal to obey the directive.

The appellate court also observed that her refusal to appear before the Senate Committee on Ethics, Privileges and Public Petitions further weakened her case.

On the issue of jurisdiction, the Court of Appeal held that the Federal High Court ought to have declined jurisdiction in the matter, having found that the Senate acted within the framework of its internal rules, which permit it to discipline its members.

The court equally dismissed her claim that her suspension violated an earlier order made by Justice Obiora Egwuatu. It noted that Justice Egwuatu had recused himself from the case and that proceedings commenced afresh before Justice Binta Nyako. Consequently, any previous order made by Justice Egwuatu was no longer subsisting.

However, the appellate court faulted the contempt proceedings initiated against Senator Akpoti-Uduaghan and the N5 million fine imposed on her by Justice Nyako.

The court held that the trial court's failure to serve Forms 48 and 49 – mandatory preconditions in contempt proceedings – was a fundamental procedural flaw.

As a result, the Court of Appeal set aside the contempt charge and nullified the N5 million fine imposed on the senator.

The judgment effectively upholds the Senate's disciplinary action while relieving the lawmaker of the financial penalty arising from the contempt proceedings.

Joseph Jacob

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Creative Writers Hangout

Dear Step-mother (1)

Sandra ran toward the burning house. Thick smoke billowed from the building, and the smell of burning flesh hung heavily in the air. There were wailings and confusion everywhere.

A classmate grabbed her arm. "Sandra, Uche is inside the house..."

Without thinking, Sandra broke free and ran into the fire, ignoring the desperate shouts of people warning her not to go in. "Uche!" she screamed.

Her voice echoed, but only the crackling of flames answered her.

Then she saw him. Uche stood behind a broken door, his shirt already in flames. "Sandra!" he cried. "I can't get out!"

She did not hesitate. She ran straight into the fire. Her gown caught fire instantly. She felt the heat—real heat—the kind that burns skin and sends fear rushing through the heart.

Minutes later, Sandra stumbled out of the house with Uche slung over her shoulder. Both of them were burning. As she laid him on the ground, she lost her balance and fell. An old woman rushed forward with a big white paint bucket filled with water and poured it over them.

Cold water crashed over Sandra's body. She jumped up from sleep with a loud gasp.

Standing over her was her stepmother, Adaku, glaring angrily. Sandra looked around and realized her body was soaked, her bed drenched, and water flowing toward her books. She bent quickly to save them, but Adaku smashed the plastic bucket on her head. It split into two, the handle breaking off.

Sandra held her head with both hands and used her leg to push her books away from the water spreading across the tiled floor.

"Come on, get into the kitchen!" Adaku snarled. "Do you expect me to cook for you?"

Adaku expected—no, wanted—Sandra to fight back. When she saw that Sandra remained calm, her anger deepened. She stormed out and called her husband, Felix. He came and flogged Sandra with his belt, chasing her into the kitchen.

Sandra was left alone, cooking rice, stew, fried chicken, and plantain. Her whole body ached, but she kept cooking.

"Please, come and help me," Sandra said softly as she peeped into the living room, calling her twin stepbrothers.

"Go back into the kitchen!" Adaku shouted. "Don't go anywhere. Sit here and watch movies," she told her sons.

Sandra returned to the kitchen and finished everything alone.

After cooking, she reported to Adaku, who came and shared the food. Sandra was given the smallest portion—no chicken, no plantain.

Yet she smiled, thanked them, and returned the plate quietly.

That night, Sandra slept on the floor because her bed was soaked. She felt miserable, but she encouraged herself.

If Uche can endure all the wickedness from his uncle's wife, why won't I endure mine? she thought. She braced herself for the hard times ahead until Adaku returned to school.

The more Adaku tried to hurt her,

the stronger Sandra became.

One morning, Adaku woke up early and cooked spaghetti and fried eggs, making sure nothing was left for Sandra. After eating, they relaxed in the parlor watching movies.

Sandra woke up and cleaned the house, washed the utensils, and finished around 11:30 a.m. By then she felt dizzy. When she opened the pot used for the spaghetti and found it empty, hot tears filled her eyes. She swallowed her pain and went to the parlor. "Mummy, please, where is my breakfast?"

Adaku glared at her. "Do I look like your dead mother? Go to her grave and ask her what to eat. I'm responsible only for my sons and husband."

When Sandra remained silent, Adaku



shouted, "Get out, witch! Do you want to kill me the way you killed your mother?"

Sandra walked into the kitchen crying. She soaked garri and took it as her brunch.

Later that evening, Felix returned home. Adaku told him lies that Sandra had done nothing all day except eat.

Sandra came out to greet him. Instead of responding, he asked angrily, "Why did you leave all the work for your mother?"

"That's not true, daddy," Sandra protested.

"You mean your mother is lying?"

"Daddy, have I ever lied to you? She's turning us against each other."

Adaku cut in, "If you can't discipline her, I will."

"It hasn't gotten to that, my angel," Felix said before turning to Sandra, "If you disrespect your stepmother, you're disrespecting me."

Sandra knelt down, tears rolling down her cheeks.

"Daddy, I have never disrespected you. Your wife is my mother. But—"

"But what?" Adaku shouted. "Emotional blackmailer!"

"I'm not blackmailing anyone."

"Shut up!" Felix yelled. "If this happens again, I will disown you."

Sandra ran to her room, threw herself on the bed, and cried herself to sleep.

Hunger woke her several times that night. Eventually, she sneaked to the kitchen and drank garri without sugar.

The next morning, she cleaned the compound, disposed of the waste, and cleaned the parlor and her room before approaching Adaku, who was in her bedroom watching movie with her phone.

"Mummy, can I come in?"

"Come in if you like."

Sandra knelt, "Please forgive me. You're the only mother I have."

"I am not your mother," Adaku said coldly. "I have only two sons. My daughter is in my womb."

Sandra swallowed hard, "My mother is dead. By marrying my father, you became my mother."

"I don't wish to inherit you," Adaku replied. "I hate you."

Sandra struggled to stay calm. "I just want us to live with less friction. I don't want my father to disown me and throw me out of this house. Please, be a little accommodating and patient with me like you used to be when you were courting my dad. I believe our relationship can be as good as it was then, when you used to buy me ice cream and take me to your house to spend the weekend."

Adaku paused the movie as their eyes met and held on for some seconds before Sandra blinks and bowed her head. She tried to analyse what she saw in her stepmother's eyes. They were cold and indifferent.

"I've heard you. But, try to erase whatever relationship I had with you before I married your dad. They were preliminary to marriage. One does not

go back to read the title page of a book having read three chapters into the book. I read the first chapter when I married your dad and read the second chapter when I gave birth to my twin boys. My baby girl, my only daughter will be here early next year. So forget about the preliminary pages. I have gone past those pages long ago."

"I understand you. Your words are loud and clear. Please be patient with me. After my WAEC, I will leave."

"I've heard you", Adaku said and made a long sigh.

"I'm done with my morning chores. What should I do now?"

"Go and boil yam and prepare egg sauce."

Sandra left.

"The stupid girl is even planning to complete her secondary education in this house. You don't know my plans for you", Adaku soliloquized, clicked her finger and made a long sigh.

As usual, Sandra was given the smallest portion yet she thanked her.

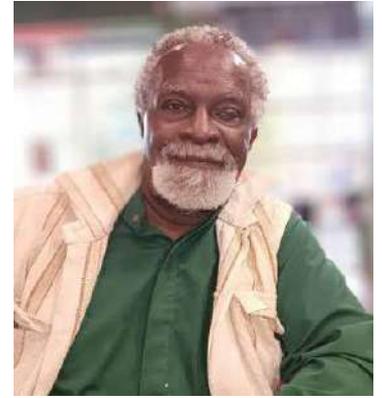
Later, Adaku and her sons went to the War Museum. Sandra stayed back to study as Adaku refused to take her along.

Then—Tap... tap... tap... a soft knock at the gate.

Sandra opened it slowly.

Who is at the door? Is the person for good or bad? Find out in our next publication.

Author Of The Week Syl Cheney-Coker



Syl Cheney-Coker is one of Sierra Leone's most celebrated literary figures, widely respected for the depth, beauty, and emotional honesty of his writing. Born on May 24, 1945, in Freetown, he grew up in a society shaped by colonial influence, cultural diversity, and social inequality. These early experiences deeply influenced his worldview and later became central themes in his poetry and prose. From a young age, Cheney-Coker showed a strong interest in literature, particularly in how language could be used to express identity, suffering, and hope.

He received his early education in Sierra Leone before traveling abroad for further studies. Cheney-Coker studied in the United States, where he was exposed to global literary traditions and intellectual movements, especially African-American and postcolonial thought. This period helped refine his literary voice and broaden his understanding of race, power, and displacement.

Living outside Africa also strengthened his emotional connection to the continent, which became a recurring subject in his work. Cheney-Coker is best known as a poet, and his poetry is often described as lyrical, complex, and deeply philosophical. His poems explore themes such as exile, African identity, love, memory, loss, and political struggle. He writes with a strong sense of history, drawing from African oral traditions while also using modern poetic techniques. His language is rich with imagery and symbolism, making his work both intellectually demanding and emotionally powerful.

One of his most notable poetry collections is *The Graveyard Also Has Teeth*, which reflects on human suffering, injustice, and the emotional scars left by African political violence. In this and other works, Cheney-Coker does not shy away from confronting them with honesty and artistic courage. His poetry often feels personal, yet it speaks to collective African experiences, especially those shaped by colonialism and post-independence challenges.

In addition to poetry, Cheney-Coker has also written novels, with *The Last Harmattan of Alusine Dunbar* being his most famous. This novel blends political satire, realism, and African storytelling traditions to explore corruption, leadership, and moral decay in postcolonial Africa. Through fictional characters and symbolic settings, he critiques political systems while also reflecting on the psychological effects of power on individuals and society.

Cheney-Coker's work is known for its strong sense of place. Freetown, in particular, appears repeatedly in his writing, almost as a living character. He portrays the city with affection and criticism, capturing both its beauty and its struggles. His writing preserves cultural memory, documenting social realities that might otherwise be forgotten or ignored.

Beyond writing, Syl Cheney-Coker has played an important role as an academic and cultural voice. He has taught literature in universities and contributed to intellectual discussions on African identity and postcolonial literature. Through teaching and public engagement, he has influenced younger generations of writers and scholars, encouraging them to use literature as a tool for self-expression and social reflection.

CITATIONS INSPIRANTES

"You know you've read a good book when you turn the last pages and feel a little as if you have lost a friend."

- Paul Sweeney, a Scottish author and politician..

Entertainment

With Akinrujumu Gideon Oluwatobi



Olusegun Oludotun Imoceni Ujah Idibia Wizkid- Ayodeji Ibrahim Balogun Ransome-kuti

Box Office Wars: Ini Edo Acknowledges Overambition Lauds Colleagues' Success

Nollywood actress Ini Edo has praised her colleagues Funke Akindele and Toyin Abraham for their record-breaking box office successes during the December 2025 cinema race. Ini Edo described the actresses as industry titans whose level of commitment, strategising, and marketing is on a different level. She knew it was overambitious of her to think she could run this whole December race, but she and her coconut head



Iniobong Edo Ekin Olufunke Ayotunde Akindele Toyin Abraham Ajeyemi

Lessons From A Legend: 2baba's Journey To Self-Discovery And Musical Greatness

2Baba has been speaking his mind lately. In a recent interview, he talked about past mistakes he wishes he could change, the London incident with his wife Natasha, and the Fela-Wizkid debate, he said there are many things he wishes he could do better, and that he's not perfect, also talked about how he reacted badly during the London incident, saying he was angry at the time.

On the Fela-Wizkid debate, 2Baba thinks it's ridiculous to compare the two. He believes Fela was a legend who can't be compared to anyone, and that Wizkid is a great artist in his own right who shouldn't be compared to someone from a different era, he also said that Burna Boy is currently at the top of his game, and that he would love to collaborate with Ayra Starr.

always follow their gut and do what they please. Funke Akindele's Behind The Scenes made history as the first Nollywood film to cross the N1 billion mark on the N2 billion mark at the January 26, 2026, becoming the fourth highest-grossing Toyin Abraham's Nollywood movie of all time.

Birthday Felicitations



Michael Lambert Oludare

To His Excellency, Dr. Alex Chioma Otti, OFR Executive Governor of Abia State. On the occasion of your birthday this February, I extend my sincere congratulations and warm best wishes to His Excellency, Dr. Alex Chioma Otti, OFR, the Executive Governor of Abia State.

Your Excellency's commitment to purposeful leadership, fiscal discipline, and good governance has continued to inspire confidence and renewed hope among the people of Abia State. Your dedication to public

service and the pursuit of sustainable development remains commendable and worthy of recognition.

As you celebrate another year of life, may God grant you continued good health, wisdom, and strength to lead with excellence. May your tenure be marked by lasting achievements and enduring progress for Abia State and its people. Please accept my heartfelt felicitations and best wishes for many more years of impactful service.

Signed: Ludar Lambert

Foreign News

Boat Mishap: Two Nigerians Rescued And Others Feared Dead Off Libya Coast - International Organization For Migration (Iom)

At least 53 migrants are reported dead or missing after a rubber boat capsized off the coast of Libya, two Nigerian women were rescued by Libyan authorities, but they lost loved ones - one lost her husband and the other lost her two babies, the boat was carrying 55 African migrants and departed from Libya's western town of Zawiya before capsizing north of the town of Zuwara, this incident brings the



number of migrants reported dead or missing in 2026 to at least 484. In 2025, more than 1,300 migrants were reported dead or missing on the same route. Human traffickers are taking advantage of migrants,

US, Armenia Sign \$9b Nuclear Energy Deal, Marking Shift From Russian Dependence

The United States and Armenia have signed a joint statement on cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy, marking a significant shift from Armenia's reliance on Russia, the agreement, known as the 123 Agreement, enables the U.S. to license nuclear technology and equipment exports to Armenia, potentially totaling \$9 billion, this development marks a new era in Armenia-U.S. energy relations, tempting Armenia away from its heavy dependency on Russian energy.

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and U.S. Vice President JD Vance formalized the deal during Vance's visit to Armenia, marking a significant step in nuclear collaboration between the two nations, the partnership is expected to pave the way for advancements in nuclear technology and



Sporting Ambassador

AMBASSADOR
With Jacob Joseph



Transfers: Nigerians On The Move

The January transfer window has closed across Europe's major leagues, and **Sporting Ambassador** reviews some Nigerian players who switched clubs during the mid-season market.

Ademola Lookman

The 2024 African Footballer of the Year made a bold move from Atalanta to Atlético Madrid. The Nigerian forward had established himself as an attacking stalwart in Serie A, highlighted by his famous performance in the 2024 Europa League final, where his hat-trick gave his side a 3-0 victory over Bayer Leverkusen.

Atlético are widely regarded as one of Europe's most tactically demanding clubs, and there were concerns about whether Lookman would adapt quickly. However, he has already hit the ground running in Madrid, registering a goal and an assist on his debut.

Chibuike Nwaiwu

Defender Chibuike Nwaiwu has completed his transfer to Turkish Super Lig side

Joe Aribio

Joe Aribio joined Leicester City on loan from Southampton. The move is motivated by his desire for regular football, and the Foxes, who are pushing for a return to the Premier League, represent an ideal platform for him at this stage of his career.

Leonard Ngenge

Leonard Ngenge has joined the Leeds United Academy after signing a contract until the end of the 2026/27 season. The centre-back arrived from Nigerian Premier League side Remo Stars, where he made seven appearances this season. He has already earned two senior caps for Nigeria, making his debut against Senegal last year before also featuring against Sudan.

Rafiu Durosinmi

Nigerian forward Rafiu Durosinmi has left Viktoria Plzeň for Pisa in a deal worth €9 million, potentially rising to €11 million with add-ons. The contract will keep him in Italy until 2030. He



February 11, 2026

FRANK MEETS FRANK:
Coventry manager, Frank Lampard .
Frank Onyeka meets



Trabzonspor from Austrian outfit Wolfsberger AC. The 22-year-old joins in a deal valued at €6 million, including performance-related bonuses.

Frank Onyeka

Championship leaders Coventry City have signed Brentford midfielder Frank Onyeka on loan for the remainder of the season. The deal will become permanent if the Sky Blues secure promotion to the Premier League. Onyeka, 28, joined Brentford from Midtjylland in 2021 and has made 87 appearances for the Bees, scoring once. He has featured six times in the Premier League this season, all as a substitute, and started for Nigeria in their AFCON semi-final penalty shoot-out defeat to Morocco.

made an instant impact by scoring a dramatic late equaliser on his debut as Pisa held Atalanta to a 1-1 draw in Serie A.

Sadiq Umar

The Kaduna-born striker appears to be enjoying life in Spain and has opted to remain there after moving from Real Sociedad to Valencia. The transfer is expected to help him regain his goalscoring rhythm following an injury-hit season. Valencia are hoping his presence will boost their fortunes as they battle relegation, currently sitting 17th in La Liga.

Sani Suleiman

Sani Suleiman joined Bundesliga side RB Leipzig on a contract running until June 2031, moving from Slovak club Trenčín for a reported fee of €5 million,

which could increase to €6 million with add-ons. He becomes the most expensive transfer in Trenčín's history and the fourth most expensive in the Slovak league.

Terem Moffi

The Nigerian striker left OGC Nice, where he endured a challenging spell, to join FC Porto on loan with an option to make the move permanent. The Portuguese giants offer a competitive, results-driven environment and a clearer pathway to silverware. Moffi's main task is to rediscover his scoring form and work his way back into contention, both at Porto and with the Super Eagles.

Tochukwu Nnadi

Fresh from featuring for Nigeria at the recently concluded AFCON, Tochukwu Nnadi completed a major transfer from Zulte Waregem to Olympique de Marseille for a reported fee of €6 million. He replaced Paul Onuachu in the 76th minute of Nigeria's 3-1 victory over Uganda in their final group match. Nnadi will need to adapt quickly to the demands of French football if he is to secure a regular starting role.

Uchenna Ogundu

From Turkey to Germany, Nigerian striker Uchenna Ogundu has moved from Alanyaspor to FC Augsburg. The versatile attacker, known for his pace, will wear the number 39 shirt, with reports suggesting a fee between €4.5 million and €6.5 million.

Victor Moses

FC Kaisar of Kazakhstan have signed former Super Eagles winger Victor Moses, who had been without a club since leaving Luton Town in the summer. The Premier League winner with Chelsea has now represented 11 clubs in his

career and is expected to bring his wealth of experience to a Kaisar side placed 11th in the 14-team Kazakh Premier League.

William Troost-Ekong

The former Super Eagles captain, who announced his retirement from international football shortly before AFCON,

moved from Al-Khlood of Saudi Arabia to Al-Ahli of Qatar. After winning the Best Player award at the 2023 AFCON, where Nigeria finished runners-up, Troost-Ekong has continued to establish himself as a reliable defensive stalwart and is expected to bring organisation and solidity to his new club.



Ademola lookman in action for Atletico Madrid

NATIONAL Ambassador

"Uplift the people, project the nation"

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President of the Nigerian Shooting Federation, Commodore Mohammed S. Shettima, (5th right) Director of Sports, Obioma George (4th right) with other officials during the final.

2026 WAFCON Title Defense: Super Falcons Gear Up

By Regina Nneoma Onoh

The Super Falcons of Nigeria are expected to open their camp on February 20 in Abuja in preparation for their 2026 Women Africa Cup of Nations title defense.

The final draw for the 2026 WAFCON was held at the Prince Moulay Abdellah Sports Complex in Rabat on January 15 and the Super Falcons were drawn in Group C alongside the Copper Queens of Zambia, the Cleopatras of Egypt and debutants, the Scorchers of Malawi.

Nigeria will commence their title defense against the Malawians on March 18, before they confront their biggest group rivals, the Copper Queens of Zambia three days later. They will conclude their group matches against Egypt on March 24.

The Copper Queens of Zambia are the biggest threats to Nigeria in this group. Although Nigeria dominated them in the past, in recent times Zambia have shown that they have the firepower to hurt the Super Falcons. In the group stage of the 2014 and 2018 editions, Nigeria thrashed Zambia 6-0 and 4-0 respectively. But, the Copper Queens had their pound of flesh after defeating the Super Falcons by a lone goal in the third-place match of the 2022 edition. In the last edition, Nigeria responded emphatically,



Super Falcons of Nigeria

thrashed Zambia 5-0 in the quarter-finals.

The Cleopatras of Egypt are no match for the Super Falcons. Their only WAFCON meeting was a group stage encounter in the 1998 edition which ended in a 6-0 victory for the West African giants.

In Group A, host, Atlas Lionesses of Morocco will take on the Fennecs of Algeria, the Teranga Lionesses of Senegal and the Harambee Starlets of Kenya.

Bayana Bayana of South Africa will battle the West African duo Ivory Coast and the Ladies Stallions of Burkina Faso alongside the Twiga Stars of Tanzania in Group B.

Group D will see Black Queens of Ghana, Indomitable Lionesses of Cameroon, the Female Eagles of Mali and Cape Verde battle for supremacy.

The Super Falcons have claimed 10 of the previous 13 editions. They have dominated the WAFCON breaking and setting records that may not be surpassed for decades to come. Nigeria hosted the inaugural edition of the African Women Championship in 1998 and defeated the Black Queens of Ghana 2-0 courtesy of a goal in each half by Nkiru Okosieme and Stella Chinyere Mbachu at the Gateway Stadium Ijebu Ode on March 17 and April 3, 2026.

"Embrace Shooting As A Sport" -NSF President Urges Nigerian Youths

By Joseph Jacob

Nigerian youths have been called upon to embrace shooting as a sport. This call was made by the President of the Nigerian Shooting Federation, Commodore Mohammed S. Shettima, during the closing ceremony of the 1st Abia State South East Shooting Seminar and Championship at the Umuahia Township Stadium.

"When people hear shooting, they often think it's about killing. Shooting, like archery, is just a sport. We want to provide this opportunity especially to our brothers and sisters at

the grassroots, so that in the near future we will have young Nigerians representing the country at the Olympics."

Commodore Shettima heaped praises on the Abia State Governor, Dr. Alex Otti, for making the first

zonal shooting tournament since he became president of the association a huge success.

Furthermore, he thanked the Abia State Commissioner for Sports and Youth Development, Sir Nwaobilor Ananaba; she Abia State Director of Sports, Comrade Obioma George; and the Governor, Dr. Alex Otti, the state will vie for laurels in national competitions as well as the South East

represented the award of medals and certificates to participants, as well as demonstrative shooting by dignitaries, officials, and special athletes.

A total of 173 shooters drawn from the five South East states and the 17 local government areas of Abia State participated in the week-long competition.

Abia State came first in the overall medals table followed by Enugu while Imo State came third.



President of the Nigerian Shooting Federation, Commodore Mohammed S. Shettima, speaking with the press.

SUDOKU
Puzzle By Prince Blessing Lazarus

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	3		4			6	5
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		6	4				2

All you have to do is fill the grid in such away that every 3x3 box and row and column, contains the numbers 1-9.

In Our Next Publication:

Why are Nigerian referees conspicuously missing from recent AFCON and the World Cup? The Chairman of the Abia State Football Referees Council, Elder Ogunta Matador Nwogu, breaks his silence in an exclusive and explosive interview that exposes the truth behind the controversy. This is one interview you can't afford to miss.