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Representative of Kwara State Governor and Secretary to the state government, Prof Mamman Saba Jibril (3rd left); Deputy Chief of Staff, Princess Bukola Babalola (2nd left); Senior Adviser and Counselor to the Governor, Alhaji Saadu Salahu (3rd right); State Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, Mrs Oloruntoyosi Thomas (4th left); her counterpart in the Ministry of Finance, Dr Hauwa Nuru (5th left); Commissioner for Women Affairs, Hon Opeyemi Oluwakemi Afolashade (2nd right); Chairman Lower Niger River Basin Development Authority, Alhaji Abdulateef Gidado Alakawa (right) and Permanent Secretary Ministry of Agriculture, Mrs Funke Sokoya during the flag off of distribution of 100 motorcycles and 5000 enzymes for extension agents and livestock farmers by L-PRES in Ilorin Friday.

PHOTO: KHADIJAT ABUBAKAR

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Naira abuse: EFCC confirms invitation of Okoya's sons for questioning

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has invited two children of billionaire businessman, Chief Razaq Okoya, for questioning over alleged

naira abuse. The EFCC Spokesperson, Mr Dele Oyewale confirmed this to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) on Saturday in Abuja.

"Yes, they have been invited; the two children, Wahab and Raheem Okoya are expected to report to the commission's Lagos office for questioning on Monday.

"They are to report to the Head, Special Operations Team, at the 15A Awolowo Road Office of the commission by 10 am on Monday," he said. NAN reports that the two brothers were sighted in a video flaunting and spraying bundles of

N1,000 notes in a promotional clip for Raheem's new song titled "CreditAlert". In the video, the duo, dressed in white traditional attires, danced while a mobile policeman held stacks of crisp naira notes, which they flung

into the air. The act, perceived by many as disregard for the law, drew condemnation on social media, with some Nigerians expressing doubts about accountability due to their father's influential status.

2 dead after falling into diesel reservoir - LASEMA

The Lagos State Emergency Management Agency (LASEMA) on Saturday confirmed the death of two men who accidentally fell into a diesel reservoir in the Oregun area of the state.

The agency's Permanent Secretary, Dr Olufemi Oke-Osanyintolu, who confirmed this in a statement, said the incident happened at the Ikosi-Oregun Road in Lagos.

"Following distress calls received on the 767 and 112 emergency toll-free lines at 10.37 a.m., LASEMA activated its response team from the Command and Control Centre, Alausa, Ikeja. "Upon arrival at the scene by 10.47 a.m., it was discovered that two adult males had fallen into a diesel reservoir at the above-mentioned location.

"Preliminary investigations revealed that one of the men accidentally fell into the diesel reservoir while working.

"The second adult male, in an attempt to rescue the first, also fell into the reservoir," he said.

He said both victims were in severe conditions and were promptly transported to the hospital by the Lagos State Ambulance Service, after receiving first aid.

"First aid was administered

on the victims immediately after their rescue.

"Both individuals were evacuated and transported to the hospital for further

medical attention.

"Unfortunately, despite all sustained medical efforts, they later died," he said.

He said the incident scene

was being assessed by emergency responders to determine further necessary action in order to prevent similar occurrences," he said.

He added that the incident scene had been secured.

Nigeria's socio-economic woes demand mental health intervention - LP ex-guber candidate

Dr Ronke Ehindero, former gubernatorial candidate of the Labour Party in Kwara State, has called for urgent measures to address the growing mental health crisis in Nigeria.

She highlighted the impact of the nation's socio-economic and security challenges on the mental

well-being of its citizens, with rising cases of depression and anxiety demanding immediate attention.

Speaking at a reception organised at her instance, in commemoration of bagging a Doctorate Degree in Guidance and Counseling from the prestigious Al - Hikmah University, Ilorin, Dr Ehindero emphasised that while religious bodies provide valuable emotional

support, professional counselling is indispensable.

She outlined key recommendations to tackle the crisis, stating, "compensation for religious institutions offering emotional and mental health support.

"Deployment of trained counsellors in workplaces, schools, and other public institutions.

"Attractive remuneration packages to retain qualified counsellors and nationwide initiatives to combat stigma and promote mental health awareness.

"Strong partnerships among governments, NGOs, and religious bodies to develop a sustainable mental health system".

Reflecting on her own experiences, Dr. Ehindero noted the challenges of balancing family, academic pursuits, and public service, emphasising the importance of determination and support from faith and family.

She urged stakeholders to prioritise mental health as a critical component of Nigeria's development strategy.



Major shake-up in Army as new GOCs, PSOs, MNJTF Commander appointed

The Chief of Army Staff, Lt. General Olufemi Oluyede has appointed new General Officers Commanding (GOCs), new Principal Staff Officers (PSOs), new Corps Commanders and a new Commander, Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in a strategic move to enhance operational effectiveness and administrative efficiency.

The newly appointed

GOCs are Major General OT Olatoye from Nigerian Army School of Infantry to Headquarters 82 Division/Joint Task Force (JTF) South East Operation Udoka (OPUK) as GOC 82 Division/Commander JTF OPUK and Maj Gen EF Oyinlola from Department of Military Secretary to Headquarters 3 Division as GOC 3 Division/Commander Operation Safe Haven (OPSH).



Financial expert urges NLC to sensitise members on tax reform bill

Professor of Accounting and Financial Development, Prof. Godwin Oyedokun, has urged the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) to ensure its members understand the basics of the Tax Reform Bill.

Oyedokun, who lectures at Lead City University, Ibadan, gave the advice at a Dialogue on the "Tax Reform Bill" organised by NLC on Saturday.

He said that being knowledgeable would aid

effective advocacy and robust discussion on issues surrounding the bill.

"They should peruse the bill so that when they want to talk to the government, they will talk from the position of knowledge that they are known for.

"Certain provisions of this have been construed out there; and if you have better information about it, you will change your perspective and position at times.

"Take for example, I

can say that today about 95 per cent of people that are commenting on these tax bills have never opened one page of the bill.

"What people rely on is the kinds of social media messages that people are sending here and there," he said.

The professor said that certain parts of the bill were meant to improve the lives of workers, urging NLC to set up a team that would investigate the personal income tax rates.

According to him, the

rate being proposed in the bill is better than what is currently being used.

"So, I charge NLC to go back to their drawing board, put the correct team together to check this as it affects workers," he said.

Oyedokun advised NLC to ensure activism for their demand was peaceful and didn't delay the passage of the bill.

Earlier, NLC President Joe Ajaero urged the government to dialogue with the union on the tax reform bill



Legacy Project 09: Sardaun's Vision Strengthens Rule of Law with State-of-the-Art Courthouse (Page 20)

By SILEP

The construction of the multi-story courthouse in Ilorin, the Kwara State capital, by Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq, the Sardauna of Ilorin, represents a transformative milestone in the state's judiciary and governance. This landmark project not only elevates the status of Ilorin as a centre of legal excellence but also underline the Governor's commitment to advancing the socio-economic and political framework of Kwara State.

Improved Judicial Infrastructure

The multi-story courthouse is a demonstration of the Sardauna's foresight to improve the Infrastructural development of the state's judiciary. The new courthouse promises to provide state-of-the-art facilities that enhance the dispensation of justice. Equipped with spacious courtrooms, judges' chambers, and modern amenities, the building ensures a more conducive environment for judicial officers, legal practitioners, and the general public.

Enhancing Efficient Justice Delivery

One of the most significant benefits of this project is its potential to improve the speed and quality of justice delivery. With multiple courtrooms and cutting-edge technology, the courthouse enables the handling of more cases simultaneously, thereby reducing the backlog of cases that has long plagued the judiciary. Furthermore, the integration of digital tools such as e-filing systems and record management systems enhances transparency and accountability, ensuring that justice is both timely and equitable.

Economic and Social Impact

The construction of the courthouse has also had a ripple effect on the local economy. The project is generating numerous jobs during its construction phase, including opportunities for architects, engineers, builders, and other skilled and unskilled workers. Additionally, the operational phase is expected to create employment opportunities for

administrative staff, security personnel, and maintenance workers.

From a social perspective, the courthouse serves as a symbol of hope and progress for the people of Kwara State. It reinforces public confidence in the judiciary as an independent and impartial arm of government. This increased confidence is likely to encourage businesses and investors, who view a robust legal system as a critical factor in ensuring the security of their investments.

Promoting Rule of Law and Good Governance

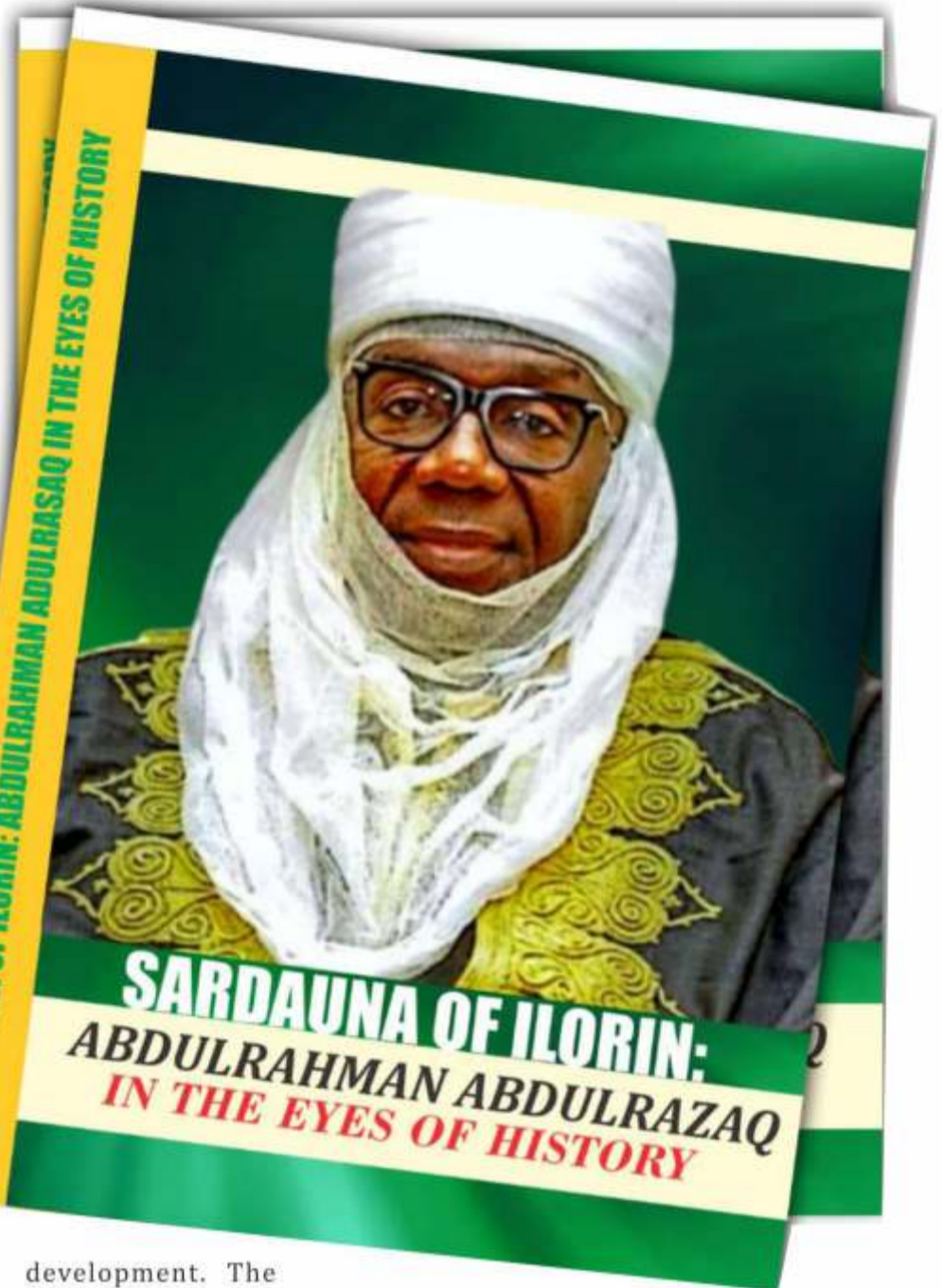
Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq's further investment in judicial infrastructure is a clear demonstration of his commitment to upholding the rule of law. A well-functioning judiciary is pivotal to good governance, as it provides a mechanism for resolving disputes, enforcing laws, and protecting individual rights. By prioritising the judiciary, the Governor emphasises the importance of justice as a cornerstone of democracy and development.

Urban Development and Aesthetic Appeal

The multi-story courthouse which is the foremost in Northern Nigeria, adds to the architectural landscape of Ilorin, contributing to its urban development. Strategically located, the building not only serves a functional purpose but also enhances the aesthetic appeal of the state capital. Its presence reflects the Sardauna's vision of transforming Kwara State into a modern and thriving hub of activity, attracting visitors and investors alike.

Legacy of Leadership

As the Sardauna of Ilorin, Mallam AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq has consistently championed initiatives that facilitates growth and



development. The multi-story courthouse stands as a legacy of his leadership, highlighting his resolve to address the needs of the people while laying a foundation for sustainable progress. This project is a powerful statement of his administration's dedication to creating an equitable society where justice is accessible to all.

Emphatically, the construction of the multi-story courthouse in Ilorin is a landmark achievement for Kwara State under the leadership of Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq. It enhances judicial efficiency, promotes economic growth, and

strengthens the rule of law while contributing to the state's urban and aesthetic development. This initiative exemplifies the Sardauna's visionary leadership and commitment to the well-being of his fellow Kwarans and residents of the state, there by cementing his legacy as a transformative leader in the history of the state of harmony.

COURTESY:- Research, Publication and Documentation Unit, SARDAUNAN ILORIN LEGACY PLATFORM (SILEP): Mentoring, Leadership Development Initiatives

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Investing in the Future: 1,811 New Roles to Boost Education in Kwara State

The AbdulRahman Administration has once again demonstrated its commitment to educational development and youth empowerment by hiring 1,811 new staff members for basic schools across Kwara State. This bold move demonstrates a

proactive strategy to address the critical needs of education while creating socio-economic growth through employment opportunities.

The Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board (KWSUBEB) meticulously executed the

recruitment process, selecting 1,500 teachers, primarily in STEM disciplines, and 311 non-teaching staff from a pool of large number of applicants. This targeted approach not only prioritises quality education but also ensures effective resource allocation in schools within the state's 16 local government areas.

One remarkable feature of this recruitment exercise is its emphasis on inclusivity and sustainability. By giving preference to competent candidates from rural communities, the administration seeks to bridge the gap in manpower distribution, particularly in underserved areas. This strategic alignment ensures that schools in remote locations receive the attention and resources they need, enhancing equitable development across the state.

Moreover, the detailed documentation process reflects the

administration's focus on transparency and accountability. For requiring comprehensive credentials and prioritising local hiring, the government has set a high standard for governance while instilling confidence in its policies.

This initiative aligns with Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq's broader vision of transforming Kwara State through education and job creation. By investing in human capital and prioritising the educational sector, the administration is not only addressing immediate challenges but also laying the foundation for a brighter, more prosperous future.

This landmark effort serves as a reminder of the transformative power of visionary leadership, proving that strategic investments in education and employment can serve as catalysts for long-term socio-economic progress.

Inclusive Development in Action: Gov AbdulRazaq Unveils KWASU Osi Campus

Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq has once again solidified his reputation as a visionary leader with the inauguration of the Osi Campus of Kwara State University (KWASU). This milestone not only reflects his administration's holistic commitment to inclusive development but also reinforces a legacy of ensuring no project is left abandoned.

In a heartfelt address, the Governor emphasised the significance of this achievement, describing it as a lesson in history and a demonstration of strategic planning, prudent resource management, and determination. The Osi and Ilesha Baruba Campuses, initially stalled under a previous administration, have been revitalised to expand access to quality tertiary education, drive regional economic growth, and inspire a sense of belonging among the people of Kwara State.

The completion of these campuses reiterates the administration's broader agenda of creating academic excellence and sustainable development. The state-of-the-art facilities, which include studios, lecture halls, and laboratories, demonstrate a commitment to creating an environment

conducive to learning, innovation, and technical expertise. This is in consonance with the Governor's vision of positioning Kwara State as a hub of creativity and progress.

The Osi Campus, hosting the Faculty of Environmental Sciences, introduces new programmes such as Geography and Remote Sensing, Urban and Regional Planning, and Estate Management, with further expansion planned. The National Universities Commission's approval confirmed the campus's high standards and readiness to shape world-class professionals.

Stakeholders at the event, including traditional rulers, academics, and government officials, lauded the Governor's dedication to education and development. Monarchs from the region praised him as a man of his word, citing numerous other infrastructure projects in Osi and surrounding areas as evidence of his inclusive governance.

The inauguration of the Osi Campus serves as a reassurance of hope and a confirmation of the power of visionary leadership. Addressing historical neglect and enhancing unity through development, Governor AbdulRazaq is not only transforming Kwara State but also leaving a legacy of progress, resilience, and opportunity for future generations.



PHILOSOPHICAL INSIGHT

Wisdom of Alhaji Balarabe Musa: Quotes and Reflections

Alhaji Abdulkadir Balarabe Musa (1936 - 2020) was a Nigerian politician, statesman, and former governor of Kaduna State. He was notable for being the first democratically elected governor in Kaduna State's history, serving from October 1979 to June 1981 during Nigeria's Second Republic. Some of his remarkable quotes, include:

"The primary purpose of leadership is to serve the people, not to exploit them."

Reflection: This quote reflects Balarabe Musa's deep commitment to selfless service. As a principled leader, he consistently emphasised that leadership is a trust, one meant to prioritise the

welfare of the people over personal or political gains. It's a reminder to contemporary leaders to maintain integrity and accountability in governance.

"Without justice, there can be no peace in any society."

Reflection: Justice was a cornerstone of Musa's political philosophy. This quote highlights the vital role of fairness and equity in ensuring societal harmony. It encourages governments and individuals alike to uphold justice as a pathway to sustainable peace and development.

"The struggle for equality is not a one-day fight; it is a lifetime commitment."

Reflection: Musa was a staunch advocate for

equality and social justice. His words underline the continuous effort required to dismantle systemic inequalities. It serves as motivation for activists and reformers to persevere in their pursuit of an equitable society.

"Corruption is the cancer that destroys the soul of a nation."

Reflection: This quote embodies Musa's unwavering stance against corruption. He understood its corrosive effect on development, governance, and public trust. His message calls for collective action to combat corruption at every level of society.

"Leadership is not about titles or positions; it is about actions and results."

Reflection: Musa valued the substance of leadership over its form. This quote challenges leaders to focus on delivering tangible benefits to the people rather than basking in the privileges of office. It inspires accountability and effectiveness.

Alhaji Balarabe Musa's words resonate with timeless wisdom, advocating for justice, equality, and service. His life and quotes continue to inspire a generation committed to building a better, fairer world.

Legacy: Musa was a staunch socialist who believed in wealth redistribution and social justice. Musa is remembered as a symbol of principled leadership and dedication to the welfare of



ordinary Nigerians. Despite his modest personal life, he was deeply committed to challenging systemic oppression and advocating for progressive

reforms. Balarabe Musa passed away on November 11, 2020, but his legacy as an advocate for the marginalized and a principled politician endures.

L-PRES: Kwara flags off distribution of 100 motorcycles, 5000 enzymes to extension agents, farmers

By Zarumi Mashood

Kwara State Government has launched the distribution of at least 100 motorcycles and 5000 enzymes for agric extension agents and livestock farmers.

This is part of the efforts to scale up food production and enhance access to nutritious food in the state, according to the government.

The government also presented one Toyota Hilux to the department of livestock services in the state Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to aid the mobility of its field officers.

Attended by senior government officials and community leaders, the programme was organised by the Ministry under the Livestock Productivity and Resilient Support Project (L-PRES) implementation.

At the flag off ceremony in Ilorin on Friday, Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq said the distribution of vehicles and enzymes underscores the commitment of his administration to food and nutrition security.

He said the initiative aligns with the Renewed Hope Agenda of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to reposition the present and reshape the future of the agricultural sector.

"To stamp out farmers-herders conflicts, we have also constructed various boreholes and rehabilitated some non-functional ones with water troughs along the livestock routes and other strategic places across the state," the Governor said.

Represented by the Secretary to the State Government Prof Mamman Saba Jibril, AbdulRazaq listed other interventions of the government for livestock farmers in the state to include the training of 700 extension agents and farmers on Small Ruminant Production and feed processing for improved utilisation.

"In our efforts to ensure that our livestock farmers have access to quality and timely treatment of their animals, the Ministry of Agriculture has recently commenced statewide mass anthrax vaccination exercises across the 16 local governments of the state," he said.

The Governor commended

the World Bank, Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Islamic Development Bank, and African Development Bank, among other partners, for

supporting the government on the L-PRES Project.

Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development Oloruntoyosi Thomas said the roles of extension agents in

providing support for farmers and improving food security cannot be overemphasised.

He appreciated the Governor for his huge investment in the

agricultural sector.

State Project Coordinator for L-PRES, Mr Olusoji Oyawoye, said the gesture will not only enhance the capacity of the beneficiaries to reach more farmers across remote areas, but will also improve the speed and efficiency with which they can deliver the services.

"This intervention is part of a broader strategy to empower livestock extension workers, build their capacity, and equip them with the tools they need to effectively engage with farmers, support the adoption of best practices, and enhance overall productivity," he said.



Monarch identifies with Gov AbdulRazaq over infrastructure.

A prominent traditional ruler in Kwara South Senatorial District, Oba

Michael Kayode Owolabi has identified with the giant stride of the Governor AbdulRahman

AbdulRazaq in policy making and implementation aimed at ensuring a better life for

Kwara monarch hails Gov over commissioning of KWASU Osi campus

The official commissioning of the Osi campus of Kwara State University (KWASU) in Ekiti Local Government Area of the state by Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq has been described as a demonstration of Governor's giant stride towards bringing the quality and standard education closer to the door steps of the down trodden members of the society regardless of their socio-political differences.

The commendable was contained in a statement jointly signed by the National President of the Osi Welfare Association, Architect Olu-Joseph Taketi and National Publicity Secretary, Otunba Ola Kazeem on behalf of Olosi of Osi and Chairman Ekiti Local Government Traditional Council, Oba Salihu Abdulkareem Adasofegbe Arowobeku l.

The statement, particularly appreciated

the Governor for his physical presence during the commissioning of the Osi KWASU campus.

Oba Arowobeku noted with delight that such development by the present administration would go a long way at fostering national development and empowering the youths.

The Olosi of Osi thanked the Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq for honour done on the community through the establishment of the campus.

He pledged the continuous support of the community to the state government in ensuring the realization of its efforts at changing the narratives of the state for the better.

The 1st class traditional

ruler however applauded the presence of all traditional rulers, legislative and executive arms of government as well as other well-meaning Kwarans among others.

The royal father also used the opportunity to sympathize with Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq, Emir of Ilorin, Alhaji Ibrahim Sulu Gambari, the immediate family and Kwarans in general over the death of Chief of Staff to the Governor, late Prince Mahe Abdulkadir

He prayed to Almighty Allah to grant late Prince Mahe Abdulkadir eternal rest while those who left behind the fortitude to bear the great lost.



Fire razes shops in Kwara market, goods worth millions destroyed

Goods estimated at several millions of naira were on Friday night destroyed in a fire outbreak which occurred at Olusola Saraki Market, Ita-Amo area in Ilorin West Local Government Area of Kwara State.

According to the Kwara State Fire Service, items destroyed in the fire incident included clothing materials, provisions, soft drinks and meat.

The Fire Service in a statement signed by the Principal Fire Officer and Head of Media and Publicity of the state Fire Service, Hassan Adekunle, on Saturday, said seven shops were destroyed out of the 269 shops in the market.

It added that the fire was sparked by a power surge caused by fluctuating supply from the power distribution company.

The statement read, "On Friday, 10 January 2025, at about 21:36 hours, the Kwara State Fire Service received a distress call reporting a fire outbreak at Olusola Saraki Market, Ita-Amo, Ilorin.

"Our firefighters promptly deployed to the scene and discovered multiple shops ablaze in a market comprising 276 shops. Through swift intervention, professionalism, and expertise, our team successfully contained the inferno, limiting the damage to only seven shops and saving 269 others.

"The affected shops included meat vendors, clothing material shops, and provision stores.

"Preliminary investigations revealed that the incident might have been caused by a power surge following the fluctuating power supply from the Ibadan Electricity Distribution Company (IBEDC), as reported by the market's security personnel."

The statement also noted that the Director of the Kwara State Fire Service, Prince Falade John, sympathised with shop owners, and the entire market community.

Falade, while expressing hope that the losses of the traders would be restored in multiple folds, urged everyone to adopt fire safety measures to prevent future occurrences.

FG to utilize Diezani's USD 52.88M loot to fund rural electrification project

From Kayode Lawal, Abuja.

The Nigerian government has said that the USD 52.88M recovered from the former Petroleum Minister, Diezani Allison-Madueke would be used to fund rural Electrification project for rural communities in the country. The utilization of the money on the rural electrification project would be handled by the World Bank on behalf of the country. Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice (AGF) Prince Lateef Fagbemi SAN while shedding light on how the recovered money would be used also revealed that it would be partly used to support "the Rule of Law and Counter-Terrorism Project," through

the International Institute for Justice (IIJ). At the signing of Memorandum of Understanding with the United States of America for the release of the loot, Fagbemi said channelling the money to electricity project would ensure increase in the reliability and availability of renewable energy in Nigeria. The MoU was signed in Abuja by Fagbemi SAN on behalf of the federal government while the American Ambassador to Nigeria, Mr Richard M. Mills, Jr. signed on behalf of his country. Specifically, Fagbemi said "As agreed, USD 50 Million of the repatriated funds, will be utilized through the World Bank, to partly fund the Rural

Electrification Project to increase the reliability and availability of renewable energy in Nigeria. "The balance of USD 2.88 Million will be disbursed as a grant by Nigeria to the International Institute for Justice (IIJ) to support "the Rule of Law and Counter-Terrorism Project," through counter-terrorism capacity building for Criminal Justice Sector Practitioners in East, West, and North Africa. "These projects will no doubt contribute in no small measure to creating the enabling environment for socio-economic growth and development. "Measures have also been put in place to ensure that the repatriated funds are not

only disbursed but also utilized transparently and accountably by the World Bank and IIJ, with periodic reports to be forwarded to Nigeria and the US on the implementation of the projects. "This robust framework will guarantee that the funds are effectively used for the full benefit of the Nigerian people in line with UNCAC and the Global Forum on Asset Recovery (GFAR) principles. "Today, the execution of the Asset Return Agreement between the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the United States of America concretizes the repatriation of approximately USD 52.88 million arising from the forfeiture of the Galactica

assets, linked to the former Petroleum Resources Minister Diezani Allison-Madueke and her associates. "This event is not only a testament to the unwavering commitment of our nations to fight corruption, but also signifies the commitment of the United States of America to facilitating restitution and supporting integrity and accountability in governance. "The collaboration between Nigeria and the United States is underpinned by our shared values and mutual respect, and this has been pivotal in facilitating this agreement. "This partnership highlights the importance of international cooperation in addressing the global scourge of corruption, which is also linked to trans-border crimes.

"It underscores the obligations and commitments enshrined in the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and the Proceeds of Crime (Recovery and Management) Act (POCA), which guide our collective efforts to ensure that stolen assets are returned and used for the benefit of our citizens.

"The Asset Return Agreement being executed today also ensures that the returned assets are applied directly to developmental projects.

"I would like to express our gratitude to the United States Government, for their steadfast support and cooperation in this endeavour. Your commitment to justice and the rule of law has been instrumental in making this agreement a reality.

"However, I implore you to continue to demonstrate the usual cooperation and understanding in other pending cases of repatriation, so that the Agreements in relation thereto can be concluded as soon as possible, as Nigeria is in dire need of these refunds.

"In conclusion, today's signing ceremony is a significant affirmation of the resolve of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, to build a Nigeria that is free from the shackles of corruption, and to ensure available resources are devoted to socio-economic development of our nation.

"It is a clarion call to all stakeholders—both domestic and international—to continue working together to uphold the principles of integrity, transparency, and accountability.

Nigerians grapple with mixed feelings amid economic uncertainty, says ADC ex-guber candidate

A former gubernatorial candidate of the African Democratic Congress (ADC) in Kwara State, Barrister Issa Manzuma has expressed concern over the state of the nation as Nigerians ushered in the new year 2025.

Speaking in Ilorin, Manzuma noted that the mood across the country was marked by mixed feelings of anxiety, confusion, poverty, and diminishing confidence in government at all levels.

He further highlighted the controversial tax reform bill, which has intensified public debate on the economy and exacerbated fears among citizens.

"The Federal Government must urgently adopt a blend of short- and long-term economic policies to address the growing hunger and frustration in the nation," Manzuma advised.

Manzuma who is also a former Chairman of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), Ilorin Branch, lamented the low budgetary allocation to agriculture in the 2025 budget, emphasizing that the sector should have been prioritised as a critical driver for economic recovery and stability.

"Agriculture and measures to stimulate the economy should have been at the forefront, yet the sector's allocation remains unimpressive," he stated.

Manzuma called for immediate action to implement policies that would alleviate economic hardship and restore public confidence in governance.



INEC rejects N40bn budgetary allocation, insists on N126bn fund for elections

From Kayode Lawal, Abuja

The Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, has rejected N40b earmarked for it as 2025 budget estimates.

It tacitly got approval for the N126b it proposed to the National Assembly through its joint committee on INEC and Electoral Matters.

Rejection of the N40b yearly budget envelope for the electoral body was made by its Chairman, Professor Mahmood Yakubu to the joint committee during budget defence session.

The INEC boss in his presentation before the joint committee chaired by Senator Sarafadeen Alli (APC Oyo South) said elections in Nigeria have become huge burden requiring adequate funding.

"Our proposal for the 2025 budget, the provision requires the sum of over N126 billion.

"We have the document that has provided details line by line on how we intended to spend the 126 billion.

"We would like the support of the National Assembly to enable us to achieve our responsibilities in the first line charge and most of these responsibilities are constitutional.

"In a nutshell, the N40billion budget envelope given us for 2025 will not cover 1/3 of projected expenses which totally amounts to over N126billion.

"Aside the off-cycle elections for 21 constituencies to be filled through bye-elections and the Anambra Governorship election this year, personnel cost alone on account of the new minimum wage will eat up the N40billion budgetary envelope", he said.

He added that the inadequacy of the N40billion budget envelope made the

electoral body to get intervention funds of N10.5billion for Edo and Ondo elections in 2024 and another N500million for bye-elections on affected constituencies in 2024.

Apparently convinced by the proposal of INEC, members of the joint

committee one after the other assured the electoral body that the proposed sum shall be appropriated for in the 2025 budget.

Specifically, Senator Ireti Kingibe (LP FCT) said "the situation at hand is not about looking for the N126billion

for INEC in 2025 fiscal year but providing it".

The joint committee thereafter went into closed door session with the INEC Chairman and the Federal Commissioners on how to source for the fund and appropriate it in the 2025 budget.

Wilson Bako calls for urgent action to alleviate Nigerians' hardships



Former Vice President of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) North Central Zone, Chief Wilson Bako, has described the year 2024 as a challenging period for Nigerians, expressing belief that no right-thinking person would wish for a repeat of the sad condition afflicting the nation.

In his message for the

new year, Bako called on the government at all levels to rise to the challenges faced by Nigerians, particularly those who have endured hardship through no fault of their own.

He demanded the immediate restoration of the fuel subsidy as a critical step in alleviating the suffering of the population.

Bako also urged the government to open the nation's borders to

facilitate the importation of essential goods and services, while prioritising the security of citizens.

He highlighted the alarming situation in several states, including Borno, Sokoto, Niger, Katsina, and Zamfara, where bandits have taken control of local government areas, disrupting trade and movement.

Bako emphasized the urgent need for the creation of employment opportunities to address the growing insecurity posed by the increasing number of unemployed graduates.

He also referenced the optimistic statement by the National Chairman of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), who claimed that the policies of President Tinubu would begin to show results in 2025, reducing the current hardships to a minimum.

As the nation looks ahead to the promises of change in 2025, Bako called for peace and unity, urging Nigerians to embrace peaceful coexistence and support one another as the country works towards a better future.

Alaafin-designate: Oyo kingmakers reject Owoade's appointment

Kingmakers in Oyo Town rejected Gov. Seyi Makinde's appointment of Prince Abimbola Owoade as the new Alaafin of Oyo.

The kingmakers, in a letter signed by their legal representative, Adekunle Sobalolu, and addressed to the state governor, declared the appointment of Owoade as null and void; illegal and unlawful.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) recalls the Oyo State Government had earlier on Friday announced Owoade as the Alaafin-elect.

The kingmakers claimed they never recommended Owoade to the state government at any time.

They insisted the only person they recommended on Sept. 30, 2022, by the majority of the kingmakers' lawful votes as the next Alaafin, was Prince Lukman Gbadegesin.

NAN reports that five kingmakers are objecting to the governor's appointment of the Alaafin-elect.

The five kingmakers are the Bashorun of Oyo, High Chief Yusuf Layinka; the Lagunna of Oyo, High Chief Wakeel Oyedepo, and the Akinniku of Oyo, High Chief Hamzat Yusuf.

The two others are Chief Wahab Oyetunji, the warrant chief standing in for Asipa of Oyo, and Chief Gbadebo Mufutau, the warrant chief standing in for Alapinni of Oyo.

"Prince Lukman Adelodun Gbadegesin, having obtained the majority of votes of the kingmakers present, was deemed appointed and his name was forwarded to Your Excellency as the candidate appointed by the kingmakers as Alaafin of Oyo for your approval, which you refused to approve for no disclosed reason at all.

"The kingmakers thereafter filed an action to stop Your Excellency from truncating the process, which culminated in the present appeal at the Court of Appeal," they said.

They noted they were surprised the government claimed in its announcement that Owoade's selection was made after wide consultation and divination. "We must emphatically state that the Alaafin is not chosen by consultation or divination but in strict compliance with the Registered Alaafin of Oyo Chieftaincy Declaration of 1967.

"This codifies the native law and custom governing the

selection process for the vacant stool of the Alaafin.

"Under the Registered Alaafin of Oyo Chieftaincy Declaration of 1967, it is only the Bashorun of Oyo, the head of the Oyomesi and Kingmakers, that can summon a meeting of the kingmakers for the purpose of selecting a candidate to fill the vacant stool of the Alaafin of Oyo.

"In this instance, the Bashorun did not summon any such meeting, nor was there any meeting

convened in the Alaafin's palace, as custom demands, where the said Prince Abimbola Akeem Owoade was selected or appointed as the new Alaafin," they said.

The kingmakers said the meeting held at the Governor's office or elsewhere on Thursday to select the governor's preferred candidate was unlawful and illegal.

"It is not the duty of the governor to convene the meeting of few kingmakers

and emergency warrant chiefs to select or appoint a new Alaafin on the 9th of January 2025 and hurriedly approve the appointment on the 10th of January 2025," said the kingmakers. They, however, said they had appealed to sons and daughters of Oyo Kingdom to remain calm as they intended to challenge the action in court.

TDF lauds Nasarawagov for changing stance on tax reforms

The Democratic Front (TDF) has thrown its weight behind the latest position of Nasarawa State Governor, Abdullahi Sule, on President Bola Tinubu's tax reform bills currently before the National Assembly.

In a statement at the weekend signed by Malam Danjuma Muhammad, its Chairman and Chief Wale Adedayo, Secretary, the group described the governor's change of position as a good development.

The group said it agreed with the view expressed by Sule on a Television programme that the initial opposition from the northern state governors against the tax reform was propelled by a lack of understanding of the bill.

"This, for us, is a welcome development, especially as it came in the wake of continuous stakeholder engagement by the chairman of the Presidential Committee on Fiscal Policy and Tax Reform, Mr Taiwo Oyedele.

"We, therefore, commend Governor Abdullahi Sule, who is also the chairman of the North Central Governors Forum, for his remarkable show of maturity, understanding and statesmanship in disembarking from his earlier stance against the bills, by openly expressing support for their passage.

"And we also call on all his colleagues in the Northern Governors Forum to join him in encouraging the National Assembly to pass all four tax reform bills without much ado," said TDF.

The group restated that the tax bills were designed by President Tinubu to usher in a progressive national tax system that would meet the economic

and political aspirations of Nigerians in the emerging globaleconomy.

"We salute the courage displayed by the President for encouraging the true spirit of democracy and freedom of expression among Nigerians in the heat of discussions around the tax reform in the wake of the unwarranted controversy.

"We appreciate the continuous efforts, sacrifices and commitment by both the Chairman of the Presidential

Committee and the Chairman of the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Zach Adedeji, to enlighten Nigerians on the objectives of the tax reform. "It is, however, important to posit once again that there is no aspect of the tax reform bills that is prejudicial to the economic interest of Northern Nigeria or any part of the country as argued by mischief makers," said the group.

Ododo creates Ministry of Livestock Development

Gov Ahmed Ododo of Kogi has approved the establishment of Ministry of Livestock Development in the state.

This is contained in a statement by the Secretary to the Government of Kogi State, Dr Folashade Ayoade in Lokoja at the weekend.

Ayoade explained that the decision which was with immediate effect was aimed at enhancing livestock management in the state in line with the Renewed Hope Agenda of President Bola Tinubu.

She emphasized that the initiative was aimed at addressing critical livestock issues and supporting sustainable development in Kogi's Agricultural sector.

"The ministry is expected to enhance productivity and improve economic

opportunities for farmers and livestock stakeholders.

"It will be recalled that the Nigerian Veterinary Medical Association (NVMA), Kogi chapter, in July 2024, called for establishment of the ministry in the state.

"The Chairman, Kogi chapter of NVMA, Dr Tolu Omotugba, urged Ododo to consider the appointment of a credible Veterinarian as Commissioner when the proposed ministry is created.

"Also, during the flag off ceremony to commence implementation of Private Veterinary Practice (PVP) programme in December, Omotugba urged Ododo to domesticate ministry to help consolidate on the gains of livestock production and resilience support when the project ends."



Gov Ododo

Emirate Chief advises indigenes on peaceful coexistence

The Galadima Ngeri, Alhaji Ibrahim Bolaji Galadima has called on indigenes of Ilorin Emirate to always be peaceful in the conduct and place community development above personal gains to ensure overall development of the community.

Alhaji Ibrahim Bolaji Galadima made the call in Ilorin while speaking during the presentation of certificate of commendation to some indigenes of the Galadima family in recognition of their contributions to his turbaning as the 12th Galadima Ngeri.

The programme was organized by the Galadima Ngeri Descendants Development Forum under the chairmanship of Alhaji Jimoh Kamido Galadima.

The Galadima Ngeri noted that no meaningful development could take place in any rancorous environments.

He stressed the need for sons and daughters of the community to unite among themselves and avoid any act of division in the interest of overall development of the

community.

He however, solicited the cooperation and support of the people of the community in order to achieve the set goals of moving the community forward.

He appreciated all sons and daughters of the Galadima family for the confidence reposed on him, assuring that he would not betray the trust.

Many sons and daughters of the Galadima family were presented with the certificate of commendation for their outstanding dedication and valuable contribution for the successful remodeling of the Galadima Ngeri's Fada and the turbaning ceremony of the 12th Galadima Ngeri of Ilorin.

The chairman of Galadima Ngeri Descendants Development Forum, Alhaji Jimoh Kamido Galadima, said the programme was to appreciate all those that have contributed in one way or the other to the successful turbaning of the new traditional chief, as well as remodeling of his mini-palace.

He called on all the indigenes of the community to support the new Galadima Ngeri in its efforts to move the community forward.



Corps member trains, donates sewing machines to displaced Plateau girls

Miss Elizabeth Paul, Corps Member serving with Corner Stone Academy, Miango in Bassa Local Government Area (LGA) of Plateau, has trained and donated sewing machines to some girls displaced by the recent attacks in the area.

Speaking during the donation of the items at the weekend in Miango, Paul said that the gesture was supported by the International Committee on Nigeria (ICON), a Non-Governmental Organisation.

She said that the beneficiaries were largely young girls displaced by the series of the attacks in the community, adding that some of them lost their parents during the incidents.

She further said that the initiative was designed to empower the beneficiaries with skills and improve their livelihoods.

Paul also said that the beneficiaries were trained for six months in tailoring.

"I choose to embark on this project after listening to few stories of how these girls became school drop outs due to the tragedies that claimed the lives of their parents.

"The death of their parents made them drop out of school because there was no one to sponsor them to continue their academic journey.

"To enable them put food on their tables and engage in meaningful venture, I decided to share my tailoring knowledge with them.



The gradund, Dr. Ronke Ehindero and her husband, Dr. Comrade Kayode Ehindero.

Dr. Ronke Ehindero: A Scholar, Entrepreneur, Beacon of Community Progress

Dr. (Mrs.) Elizabeth Ronke Ehindero who recently bagged Doctorate to (PhD) in Guidance and Counselling from the prestigious Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin, is an exceptional individual, a trailblazer in academia, entrepreneurship, and community leadership. The proud daughter of the Alalade family of Ilemona, Oyun Local Government Area, Kwara State, Nigeria, and wife of a distinguished labour leader, Dr. Comrade David Kayode Ehindero, stands as a paragon of dedication, resilience, and service to humanity.

Academic Excellence

Her illustrious academic journey began at Ekiti State University, where she earned her first degree. She further honed her intellectual pursuits at the National Open University of Nigeria, obtaining her Master's Degree, before crowning her academic endeavours with a Doctorate in Philosophy from Al-Hikmah University. Her pursuit of knowledge exemplifies her pivotal commitment to excellence.

Entrepreneurial Prowess

As a visionary entrepreneur, Dr. Ehindero is the founder and driving force behind Flourish Trade Ventures, a thriving enterprise that reflects her innovation and business acumen. Her expertise and leadership also shine through her role as the Director of Enlightenment at The

Nigerian Workforce Strategy and Enlightenment Centre (NIWOSEC).

Contributions to Education

Dr. Ehindero's passion for education is evident in her active participation on various school management councils, including Faith Academy, where she has chaired the Parent Teachers Association and served on the Management Council. She also contributes to the development of young minds as a council member of the Calvary Group of Schools.

Community Leadership

As a committed community leader, Dr. Ehindero has served as President of the Ilemona Elites Association, championing development initiatives for her hometown. She also leads the Honourable Women Association, a social group enhancing

leadership development and empowerment.

Political Engagement

Dr. Ehindero's commitment to societal progress extends to the political arena, where she made her mark as the Labour Party Governorship Candidate in the 2023 Kwara State election. Her foray into politics reflects her dedication to advancing equity and good governance.

Faith and Family

A woman of deep faith and integrity, Dr. Ehindero serves as a Deaconess in her church, embodying Christian values in her personal and professional life. She is a devoted wife to Dr. David Kayode Ehindero and a loving mother to their three children: King David, Queen-Davina, and Princess Victoria.

Legacy of Inspiration

As well wishers continued to celebrate Dr. Elizabeth Ronke Ehindero's outstanding academic achievement, they are also proud of honouring her remarkable contributions to education, business, community leadership, and family. To many, She is a shining example of what it means to lead with purpose, passion, and perseverance. Undoubtedly, she is well-deserved of profound recognition of her achievements and contributions to progress of the society. Her legacy will meaningfully inspire generations to come.





Mai NASARA Education Support Foundation presents scholarship to less privileged

By Zarumi Moshood

A Non-Governmental Organization, Mai NASARA Education Support Foundation has officially launched its scholarship programme.

The scholarship programme was aimed at assisting the orphans and less privileged students in ensuring that they have access to quality education and empowering them to become responsible citizens of the country.

The event which took place at Local Government Education & Social Welfare Department in Kaiama,

marked by tears of joy and gratitude from the beneficiaries.

No fewer than 25 orphans and less privileged students benefitted from the gesture.

The scholarship programme was at the instance of the founder of the foundation, Hon. Ahmad Muhammad.

The scholarship initiative is designed to provide financial support for academic needs, thereby fostering educational growth, community service, and empowerment among the youth. It also reflects the

foundation's unwavering commitment to bridging the gap in access to education for vulnerable groups within the community.

Speaking during the presentation to the beneficiaries, Hon. Ahmad Muhammad, said the vision of the foundation was to empower future leaders who would make a positive impact in the community.

"We believe that education is the key to unlocking the potential of our youth, and we are committed to assisting orphans and less privileged students to foot all their

educational bills and expenses until they become successful in their various careers", he said.

He added that the foundation's mission was to complement the efforts of the Executive Governor of Kwara State, Mallam AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq in making education accessible and comfortable for the less privileged.

"We are completing the efforts of the Executive Governor of Kwara State to make education easy and comfortable for the less privileged", he said.

Hon Ahmad Muhammad who is the Dan-Masani Gwanabe, also commended Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq for his tireless efforts in transforming the educational sector in the

state.

He noted with delight that the recent national debate competition where Kwara took the lead, was a living witness to the Governor's commitment to qualitative education.

"Our sincere appreciation goes to His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Kwara State, Mallam AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq CON for his unwavering commitment to the development education sector.

"I also commend the Executive Chairman of Kaiama Local Government Council for starting his administration with significant impact and development in projects. Your leadership has set a high standard for us to follow".

While congratulating the scholarship award winners, he advised them to conduct themselves in a manner that will enable them to overcome the challenges ahead.

"Remember that this scholarship is not only a privilege but also a responsibility to make a positive impact in our community".

Hon Ahmad Muhammad also expressed his gratitude to the schools that aided in the selection process, as well as the Emir of Kaiama, His Royal Highness, Alhaji Muazu S Omar Bagidi Ki Yar'u IV, for his presence and support.

"To the staff and advisory committee of the Mai NASARA Educational Support Foundation, I commend your efforts in making this program a reality. Your dedication and hard work have been instrumental in our success.

"As we embark on this 10-year journey, I urge you all to support us with your prayers and encouragement. We cannot do this alone, and we rely on the generosity of donors and partners to help us achieve our goals. I appeal to you to join us in this mission to empower the next generation of leaders".

The occasion was graced by prominent dignitaries, including the Emirate Council led by the Waziri of Kaiama, Alhaji Adamu Gene; the Local Government Legislative Council led by Speaker Rt. Engr. Abdulkabir Haliru; HOD Education Hajia Aisha Mohammed and NULGE Chairman Hon. Shuaibu Haliru.

Also in attendance were Education Secretary Mallam Mohammad Abdulkareem; former NUT Chairman Hon. Alhaji Abubakar Musa Shamaki; PTA Chairman Alhaji Usman Jimoh, the Shantali of Kaiama; school principals, parents of beneficiaries and representatives from the DSS and NSCDC.





Open-Defecation-Free: RUWASSA sensitises LG chairmen, DPMs

By Zarumi Moshood

The Kwara State Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (RUWASSA) has organized a one-day workshop on eradication of open defecation, with a call of local chairmen to be up and doing in ensuring the actualization of free open defecation in their respective councils.

The programme which was tagged "One-day Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Workshop", had all the 16 local government chairmen, Directors of Personnel Management among other stakeholders in attendance.

Declaring the workshop open, the state Commissioner for Water Resources, Hon Usman Lade, described open defecation as not only a challenge to the environment, but a threat to human health, dignity and respect.

"Health they say is wealth. It can only be wealth if the necessary things required to keep the environment clean are put in place.

"It is on the basis of this that we felt obliged as a government to come up with the best way possible to engage the critical stakeholders at the 16 local government areas in the state".

Represented by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry, Mrs. Christiana Omolola Ashonibare, Lade said the programme was aimed at sensitising the local government chairmen as he implored them to do the same for their people at their various localities.

"The Local Government administration is the most closest to the grassroots, hence the need for the state government to come up with a programme of this nature".

The Commissioner

recalled that the state government had officially launched the campaign on the eradication of open defecation at the three senatorial districts of this state some time ago. "This is a clear demonstration of the state government commitment to the exercise which was a huge success in the state.

"As a follow-up to this, the state government has recently certified some communities in Kwara South as open defecation free and to be specific the event took place at Iloffa, the headquarters of Oke-Ero Local Government".

He implored the council chairmen and DPMs to devise the means of complementing the state government efforts in ensuring free open defecation across the state.

He noted that the state

government had embarked on various programmes and sensitization across all the local government areas to achieve a healthier Kwara, noting that the government remains committed to the well being of its citizen and would not leave any stone unturned in addressing their health challenges.

In her remarks, the State Commissioner for Health, Dr Aminah Ahmed El-Imam represented by the Director of Pharmaceutical Services, Pharmacist Barakat Olanrewaju noted that open defecation remains a menace with serious health and environmental and social economic consequences.

She mentioned water, sanitation and hygiene as some of the key ingredients of a healthy living.

The Commissioner charged the local government chairmen to establish the water, sanitation and hygiene department at their respective council levels, describing the step as a proactive measure towards preventing waterborne and other preventable diseases.

The General Manager of RUWASSA, Mr. Olorunfemi Oladipo, who commended Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq for giving priority to the health of the

citizen, noted that the workshop was imperative to deliberate on critical issues affecting public health, dignity and sustainable development.

Oladipo stated that the Agency has made significant strides towards ending open defecation through collaborative effort with the Federal Ministry of Water Resources, UNICEF and other development partners which includes Community-led Total Sanitation, Monitoring and Evaluation, Provision of Smart Toilets, WASH facilities in critical communities and funding support.

He said all the efforts contributed to the state ranking, noting that six communities in Oke Ero local government have been certified open defecation-free through RUWASSA interventions, noting that the Agency was not relenting in its efforts to meet the 2030 sustainable development goals through expansion of sanitation infrastructure, behavioral change and hygiene promotion, policy and regulations enforcement and

sustainability through partnership.

"Open defecation is a solvable problem if we act decisively. With the commitment of His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Kwara State and the support of our partners, Kwara State is on track to achieving an open-defecation-free status.

"Let us renew our resolve to scale up interventions, enforce policies, and mobilize communities to create a cleaner, healthier, and more dignified Kwara State. Together, we can rewrite our history and secure a better future for all", Oladipo submitted.

At the technical session, the workshop featured Professor Henry Olawale Sawyer on the topic "Declaration of state of Emergency in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene WASH Sector and Flag-off of Clean Kwara Campaign by the Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq Administration" and Mr Ajide Sunday on "The composition of LGA WASH Department, Legal Backing, their roles and responsibilities".

Dr Khadijat Kamaldeen also spoke on the topic "Importance of WASH Department to the overall Health and well being of Kwarans".

Professor Henry Olawale commended the achievements recorded by the State in the UNICEF ranking, attributing this to efforts injected by the Governor and concerned agencies.

The Kwara State Government, under the visionary leadership of Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq, declared a State of Emergency in the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) sector in 2020 and launched the "Clean Kwara Campaign". This campaign highlighted the collective commitment to achieving open-defecation-free (ODF) status and improving the well-being of the people.

According to UNICEF, over 122 million people in West and Central Africa practice open defecation with Nigeria ranking second globally with 47 million cases.





Unlocking youth potential for Nigeria's development

By Franca Ofili

In a nation as vibrant as Nigeria, young people hold the key to a brighter future. With over 60 per cent of the population under 25, Nigeria boasts one of the largest youth demographics globally.

This presents a tremendous opportunity for national growth and development.

However, analysts argue that unlocking this potential requires more than traditional education; it calls for life skills, quality education, and community engagement.

Although Nigeria has abundant resources, many young people face many challenges.

Poverty, limited access to quality education, unemployment, and a lack of mentorship hinder their progress.

According to UNICEF, nearly 10.5 million Nigerian children are out of school, the highest globally.

For those in school, rote memorisation dominates the curriculum, leaving students without the critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving skills required for modern life.

In addition, societal issues such as substance abuse, peer pressure, and inadequate social support systems further exacerbate the situation.

These challenges reveal the need for a comprehensive strategy that goes beyond academics to foster personal growth and community involvement.

For instance, Dr Femi Oritsejafor, an

education policy expert, has emphasised the importance of transforming Nigeria's education system.

"The future of Nigeria depends on fostering creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills.

"This shift is crucial for equipping young people to thrive in a competitive global economy," he noted.

According to Oritsejafor, life skills education offers a powerful solution.

"These skills, ranging from self-awareness and emotional regulation to communication and resilience, enable individuals to make informed decisions and build healthy relationships.

"For instance, programmes like the Mind Builders Initiative in Lagos integrate life skills workshops into school curricula, helping students address real-world challenges and make ethical decisions".

Similarly, psychologist and behavioural expert Mr Adebayo Jamiyu noted the importance of empathy, emotional intelligence, and communication.

"Incorporating life skills education into the national curriculum will ensure young Nigerians become well-rounded, socially responsible individuals," he said.

A 2022 ActionAid Nigeria report supports this, showing that life skills education enhances employability and reduces youth involvement in crime by fostering responsibility and self-reliance.

Moreover, community engagement plays a vital role in unlocking youth potential.

Initiatives such as the Youth for Community Impact Project in Kano empower young people to lead campaigns on sanitation, environmental conservation, and health awareness.

Social development expert Dr Emmanuel Mailafia asserts that community projects provide young people with a sense of purpose and ownership while fostering

leadership and problem-solving skills.

Additionally, mentorship initiatives like those run by the Tony Elumelu Foundation provide young Nigerians with career guidance, entrepreneurial training, and life planning.

These programmes demonstrate that investing in youth yields significant returns, including poverty reduction, improved literacy, and increased innovation.

To address decades of youth neglect, the Minister of Youth Development, Mr Ayodele Olawande, recently unveiled a comprehensive roadmap to empower young Nigerians.

"It's time for the youth to progress after being overlooked for over 40 years," he declared, commending President Bola Tinubu for appointing a youth to head the ministry.

According to Olawande, key initiatives under this roadmap include the Youth Bank, Youth Trust Fund, Nigerian Youth Academy, and the One Youth, Two Skills programme.

"The Nigerian Youth Academy, launching in January, will offer online learning opportunities in multiple languages, bridging gaps between urban and rural areas.

"The government also plans to establish greenhouses in every local government to promote entrepreneurship.

"Every community has unique resources, and we're harnessing them to drive economic growth," he added.

Furthermore, the Youth Activities Dashboard, an interactive platform designed to track youth empowerment initiatives, aims to enhance transparency and provide young Nigerians with direct access to government programmes.

The Federal Government's National Youth Skills Programme (NYSP), launched in 2024, aims to reduce youth unemployment by 20 per cent and increase youth-led enterprises by 50 per cent within five years.

With 110 billion Naira allocated, the programme provides grants, loans, and mentorship for youth-led businesses in sectors such as agriculture, renewable energy, and digital technology.

Dr Jamila Ibrahim, former Minister of Youth Development, highlighted the inclusivity of these programmes.

"Fifty per cent of participants will be female, with pathways for young women to excel in technology, healthcare, and entrepreneurship.

"Persons with disabilities will also have full access to training," she explained.

As part of the Renewed Hope Agenda, these initiatives aim to equip five million Nigerian youth with employable skills, fostering a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship.

However, analysts argue that sustainable impact requires collaboration among the government, private sector, and international organisations.

Programmes like UNICEF's U-Report and Teach for Nigeria are already improving teacher quality and curriculum delivery in underserved communities.

Ultimately, unlocking Nigeria's youth potential demands a collective effort from parents, educators, policymakers, and community leaders.

Stakeholders believe that life skills education, combined with active community engagement, provides a robust framework for tackling systemic challenges and empowering the next generation.

With the right investments, Nigeria can transform its young people into a demographic dividend, paving the way for a prosperous and sustainable future.

****Ofili writes for News Agency of Nigeria**





Signs of lack of respect in a relationship

Signs of lack of respect in a relationship can be a worrying indicator for the future of any romantic partnership. That's because a relationship cannot survive on love alone. A passionate, whirlwind romance can bring two people together. But it takes trust and mutual respect to build lasting relationships. In their absence, even the strongest connection can come undone sooner or later.

Does that mean when respect is lost in a relationship there is no hope? Well, not necessarily. If you and your partner can recognize this worrying tendency for what it is and take measures to rein it in, it is possible to turn things around. For that, you need to recognize that you're dealing with disrespect in a relationship.

Let's look at how disrespect in a relationship becomes apparent, why respect in a relationship is important, and

how to deal with disrespect in a relationship.

Respect is defined as a "feeling of deep admiration for someone". So, naturally, disrespect in a relationship would be the exact opposite of it. But when it comes to human relationships, pinpointing what is admiration and what is not isn't easy. Does admiration, and by extension, respect in a relationship mean subjugation? Or one partner being subservient to the other? By that measure, does standing up for yourself amount to disrespect in a relationship? No, no, and no.

Disrespect in a relationship can be accurately described as operating from a place of total disregard for a partner's feelings, emotions, needs, and aspirations, and not attaching any importance to what your partner seeks or expects from you. Dealing with disrespect in a

relationship doesn't just mean putting up with a partner who abuses you verbally or doesn't fulfill your emotional needs.

An exasperated rolling of the eyes, making insensitive jokes or remarks, using cutting sarcasm to pull a partner down, taunts, lack of support, and patronizing behavior are all among signs of lack of respect in a relationship. In short, if one partner treats the other in a way that they would never stand for, it can be considered disrespectful behavior.

The Importance Of Respect In A Relationship

Before we get into the signs of lack of respect in a relationship, we must first understand its importance. Without overstating its value, we can confidently say respect might just be a differentiating factor

between a relationship that encourages growth and one that ends up suffocating you. For greater clarity on what that means, let's take a look at the importance of respect in a relationship, and what it'll help you achieve:

Signs Of Lack Of Respect In A Relationship

When couples talk about their relationship problems, a lack of respect features as a common lament. Though it is not considered as detrimental to a relationship as infidelity or abuse, dealing with disrespect in a relationship can chip away at your bond slowly but surely.

Have you ever felt slighted or insulted by your partner's actions? Have their words left you feeling crushed and hurt? These feelings are certainly a manifestation of disrespect. However, identifying such behavior for what it is can be hard. That's why we bring you these 21 clear signs of lack of respect in a relationship so that you can identify the red flags and take corrective measures before it is too late:

Your partner doesn't

make time for you

As romantic partners get caught up in the rigamarole of mundane routines, a few spells where you both feel distant and out of touch are normal. However, if your partner just doesn't make the effort to make time for you, it can be because they don't respect and value you enough. Is your partner always busy on the phone or too busy doing their own thing to connect with you? These tendencies can be among the common signs of a disrespectful husband, wife, or partner. In a healthy relationship, partners do their best not to let gadgets pull them apart.

No regard for personal space

On the other end of the spectrum of disrespect is a tendency to overwhelm one's partner so much that their personal space and freedom become non-existent. Picking up a fight or getting into an argument if a partner wants to spend an evening with friends or is too busy to make it home for dinner can leave you feeling, "My partner/wife/husband disrespects me." And you're not wrong in thinking so.

Denying a person the agency to make decisions for themselves and an overwhelming need to control every aspect of a partner's life amount to belittling in a relationship. When there are signs of lack of respect in a marriage or a relationship, partners don't trust each other to make the right decisions, this can trigger a tendency to smother and suffocate one another.

Not consulting each other
What are the signs your wife doesn't respect you or your husband or partner is disrespectful? If this question has been on your mind, pay attention. If you

and your partner don't feel the need to consult each other before making decisions big or small, it's a manifestation of the fact that you don't value each other's opinions very much. In a steady, long-term relationship or marriage, this can be a damaging effect of lack of respect.

You feel unheard belittling in a relationship Not being heard amounts to belittling in a relationship

It's one thing if your mindless banter doesn't register with your partner. But if you're telling them something significant and they're only half-present in the conversation, it is one of the most glaring signs of a disrespectful husband/wife/partner. Being a good listener is an important element of being a better partner for a better relationship. If your partner cannot give you their undivided attention in the moments you most need it, it speaks volumes about how valuable you are to them.

Your relationship is riddled with lies

Honesty is the hallmark of a healthy relationship. By extension, lies and dishonesty in a relationship are indicators of trouble. If you have caught your partner out on a lie more often than not or are guilty of not being truthful to them, count it as one of the signs of no respect in a marriage or relationship. Whether these are 'harmless' white lies or something more serious, the fact that either of you feels that your partner doesn't deserve the truth reflects a fundamental lack of mutual respect.

You're not their priority
Prioritizing your partner is not just a sign of love but also of the respect you have for them. It is also a key element of building a balanced relationship. By putting them first, you are letting the other person know that you value them. If your partner doesn't treat you as a priority in their life, it means that the virtue of respect is missing from your relationship.



Prophet urges Christmas to always allow love, peace reign in their lives

Christian faithfuls have been advised to allow love, peace and unity be paramount in their lives.

The advise was given by the General Apostle Prophet R.A. Olubuse of the C&S Sure Foundation, ASA Dam Road, Ilorin

Speaking at his 80th birthday celebration recently, the General Apostle said for people to live happily, they must live together in peace, love, harmony and mutual understanding.

He also urged all and sundry to be constant and diligent in prayer and the service of God.

He prayed for Nigeria and urged parents to always

ensure that they closely monitor activities of their wards and always caution and counsel them when the need arises.

General Apostle Olubuse expressed gratitude to God for sparing his life to witness his 80th birthday in good health and sound mind.

He urged youths to shun drug abuse and other anti social vices so that they could live as useful members of the society.

Those who witnessed the birthday parlay described Prophet Olubuse as a loving Drg and caring disciplinarian who live in the way of the Lord and always enjoin his congregation to follow suit.



Cleric urges Nigerians to prioritise goal-setting in 2025

Pastor Gabriel Aboderin, a Regional Superintendent in Christ Apostolic Church (CAC), has urged Nigerians to prioritise goal-setting in 2025.

Aboderin, in charge of CAC,



Medalyese Region, made this statement in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Abuja.

He emphasised that goal-setting was critical to achieving success in life.

He further encouraged Christians to pursue their goals with determination in 2025, regardless of any obstacles they might encounter.

"What believers should have in mind is that goal-setting is important, because without a goal, achievement becomes a mirage.

"Goal-setting helps them prioritise how they use their time, resources, and the types of relationships they build with their neighbours," he

said.

Aboderin reminded Christians that when setting goals, they must pursue them vigorously, in spite of any challenges.

He emphasised that resilience and determination were key components of goal achievement, as obstacles were inevitable.

He also urged Christians not to lose hope due to the challenges and hardships faced in 2024, but instead to keep their faith alive for a better 2025.

"No one enjoyed the hardships of last year. However, Nigerians should remain hopeful that 2025 will be better.

"What happened last year was not unique to Nigeria; it

was a global trend. But with hope in God, everything will improve."

Aboderin advised that those enduring hardships should remember that where there is a will, there is always a way.

He said that with our cooperation and resilience, we could minimise hardship and even eradicate it in 2025 if we had the will.

He also urged governments at all levels to heed the cries of the people and to continue enhancing efforts to alleviate the hardships faced by citizens.

"While we know that the government is not solely responsible for the challenges, its efforts can be strengthened to ensure that the hopes and aspirations of the people are not dashed," Aboderin added.

Theme: "Let the people praise thee o God"

(Psalm 67:5-7)

Glory be to God for witnessing another Universal Week of Prayer organised by the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN). It is an annual programme in which all Christian denominations are expected to come together in unity of faith.

Jesus Christ in His prayer for the Church said "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee, Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (John 17:11). In compliance with the above instruction, the different Churches in the Mainline, African Independent Churches and Pentecostal Churches annually meet at the neighbourhood groups in every Local Government in the Federation to worship glorify the Lord. The new year is committed unto Lord in what is nationally known as "Universal Week of Prayer".

The theme of prayer for the year 2025 is "Let the people praise thee o God" (Psalm 67:5-7). In Kwara State, the leadership of the State CAN is being led by the Rt. Rev. Dr. STG Adewole (Chairman), Apostle Barrister Shina Isaac Ibiyemi (Secretary).

Ilorin South Local Government for instance is ably led by Senior Apostle Prince Of

O. Popoola as Coordinator and Revd. Dr. Kayode Owoeye as Secretary. In Fate/Tanke neighbourhood, the Chairman, Pastor Osho should be commended for the orderly one week progresses were done. The week of prayer started on Monday at UMCA Church, Oke-odo, Tuesday, 7th January, 2025 it was held at Mount Olives Anglican Church, Pipeline road, Wednesday, C.A.C. Salvation Centre, Thursday, Our Mother of Perceptual Catholic Church, Saturday, Foursquare Gospel Church. The grand finale is holding at St. Barnabas Cathedral Church, Sabo-oke on Sunday, 12th January, 2025 at 3.00pm. The latter is the Mother Church for all Churches in Ilorin metropolis. It was founded in 1910.

To be continued

Continued from last Edition

If we are going to enjoy seasons of double grace, it can only come through Jesus Christ. Grace and truth come through Jesus Christ.

God told the children of Israel, "And I will give your pastors (leaders, rulers/shepherds) according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding" (Jer. 3:15 KJV). We are supposed to be fed with knowledge and understanding. Why is this important? People are destroyed for lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6). They go into captivity because of ignorance (Isaiah 5:13). God does not want you to miss your own shower of blessings during the seasons of double grace. We shall be looking at some things as the Lord lays it in our heart.

What is grace? The word translated **grace** in the Bible is from both Hebrew and Greek. We must know what we are to expect when we talk of grace. From the Hebrew word **khen** translated grace - means kindness, charity, favour,

LIVING LETTERS
With
Pastor Dr. Mrs. M. O. Agboola
08035782368

WELCOME TO THIS NEW YEAR-2025

graciousness (Prov. 1:8 -9, 22:11). This means you have entered the season when you will enjoy kindness, graciousness, love, favour, not as a reward for anything that you have done. It will come to you freely.

The word grace is first found in Gen. 6:9. "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord". The result of this grace - kindness, favour - is the preservation of Noah's family when the earth was wiped away by flood. God preserved Noah, his three sons, his wife and the three wives of his sons - making 8 persons. God wants to preserve members of your

family this year wherever they are found. I am talking of physical and spiritual preservation. God instructed Noah to build an ark because rain was coming. As at that time it has never rained on earth. Noah obeyed God and made the ark. It took him many years to build the ark. He worked on it and built. Noah both **believed** and **obeyed** God. Today, we are not talking of the ark made of gopher wood. We are talking of the new ark of safety - the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible clearly tells us that the Name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous run to it and are safe (Prov. 18:10). God wants

to preserve every member of your family this year. Just introduce Jesus to them. God will do the rest. He will save all of you from physical and spiritual harm. He will provide for you. Don't miss it, beloved enjoy this seasons of double grace in Jesus name. Amen.

2025 SEASONS OF DOUBLE GRACE - II

Grace means kindness, charity, favour etc. Grace is said to be unmerited favour. Why was Noah singled out for grace? We see that this kindness or charity or favour is not earned. It is not labored for. You don't work for it. You can never earn it. Everyone who is born again is enjoying this grace already. We are justified by grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (Rom. 3:24). Noah enjoyed grace because of who he was, not what he did.

How do I know? The Bible says so in Gen 6:9. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. He walked with God.

Noah was obedient that

To be continued

The Living Church
With Reverend
Dr. Idowu Ibitoye
08032381615

SILENCING THE GRASSHOPPER MENTALITY

PREAMBLE
"...then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, we should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it" (Num. 13:30)

INTRODUCTION
Welcome to the new year. Surely it shall be a year of greater blessings in all ramifications. To advance in this year, you must rise to silence every grasshopper mentality in your life. Indeed, Israelites had a lot of experiences during their wilderness journey. Also, God may allow believers to have some experiences on the pilgrimage journey. However, any grasshopper mindset must be put off and you should focus on the promise land.

- WHAT IS GRASSHOPPER MENTALITY**
- 1. It is the spirit (personal) of limitation** - when no one is limiting you but you are limiting yourself with a parochial mentality and archaic mindset.
 - 2. Fear of moving forward** - when you surround yourself with series of fear and you are unable to move to the next level of your glory, "Then the Lord said to Moses why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move forward" (Ex. 14:15). Never allow any fear to peg you down, release yourself and move on
 - 3. Low self-esteem** - when you begin to look down on yourself and inferiority complex begins to set in. always remembers that you are wonderfully made in the image of God (Ps. 139:14-15). Build yourself-esteem and believe in yourself.
 - 4. It is narrow minded thinking** - never think narrowly. Do have an objective mind and think beyond now. Think about tomorrow and have a bigger picture of your future.

To be continued



Kwara state Commissioner for Works and Transport, Hon. Abdulqowi Olododo is a year plus, Congratulations.



The Galadima Ngeri, Alhaji Ibrahim Bolaji Galadima (right), presenting certificate of commendation to Dr Zainab Bola Balogun at a get-together organized by Galadima Ngeri Descendants Development Forum, Ilorin.



Congratulations to Comrade AbdulRazaq Ahmed Abiodun, Chairman of NUPPPROW, as he bagged Master's Degree during the recent Al - Hikmah University's Convocation ceremony held at the institution in Ilorin.



The Galadima Ngeri, Alhaji Ibrahim Bolaji Galadima (3rd left) with eminent sons and daughter of Galadima family at a get-together organized by Galadima Ngeri Descendants Development Forum in Ilorin.



Khadijat Oyefunke Ibrahim is a year older. Congratulations.



The Founder, Kayode Adamolekun Foundation (KAF), Engineer Kayode Adamolekun (middle), and members of the foundation during the foundation visit to NDLEA headquarters, Ekiti State command.... Friday.



Hurray: Hameedah Modupeoluwa Ismail is a year older. Congratulations.



Hanifat Bello is a year Older. Congratulations

THE HERALD ON SUNDAY SPORTS

Sardauna U-16 Football Cup, 1m cash up for grabs

The stage is set for teams from the 16 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Kwara State to compete for a N1 million prize pool at the maiden Sardauna U-16 Football Cup.

The tournament is scheduled to hold from January 27 to February 5, 2025, at the Kwara State Stadium Complex, Ilorin.

The competition, organized by Ultimate Sports Consult in partnership with the Kwara State Sports Commission, aims to honor Governor

AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq for his outstanding contributions to sports development since assuming office five years ago.

Speaking at the unveiling of the trophies and draws, Alhaji AbdulRazaq Owolabi Wopa, CEO of Ultimate Sports Consult, expressed commitment to making the competition an annual event.

He assured that adequate medical and security measures are in place to ensure a smooth and hitch-free tournament.

He noted that apart from the cash prizes for the top three teams of N500,000 for the first, N300,000 for second and N200,000 third respectively as individual awards like Most Valuable Player (MVP), Highest Goal Scorer and Best Goalkeeper will be presented.

The Sardauna U-16 Football Cup is a platform to discover young talents across Kwara State while fostering unity and sportsmanship among the Local governments.

Magaji christens Football as the King of Sports

The game of football has been described as the "King of Sports," renowned for its role in solidifying and unifying countries across the globe.

This declaration was made by the Executive Chairman of the Kwara State Sports Commission, Mallam Bola Magaji, on Friday during the official unveiling of the Sardauna of Ilorin U-16 Football Competition.

Magaji highlighted that the

investments by the administration of Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq serve as a testament to the numerous grassroots sports programs being organized across the state.

He noted that the U-16 football competition, organized by Ultimate Sports Consult in collaboration with the Kwara State Sports Commission, is reminiscent of the 1981 state sports festival, which included areas like

Okene, Kaabah, and Lokoja when they were part of Kwara State.

This competition aims to accelerate the development of football and other sporting activities at the grassroots level," Magaji said.

During the event, the Sports Commission also made a formal request to the Chairman of the Local Government Council to provide office to for the commission to post its post officers to represent the it across various locations, further strengthening sports development efforts.

EPL: David Moyes returns to Everton as manager

Scottish manager David Moyes has returned as Everton manager following Sean Dyche's sacking, the Premier League club announced yesterday.

"David is widely recognised

as one of the Premier League's most experienced and accomplished managers, having led Everton for more than 500 matches from 2002 to 2013," a statement on the club's website read.

Everton had sacked Dyche on Thursday following a poor run of form, with only one win from their last 11 games, leaving the team just one point above the Premier League relegation zone.

The club also announced that former player Leighton Baines and captain Seamus Coleman to take charge of the FA Cup clash against Peterborough on Thursday evening.

The Toffees currently sit 16th in the Premier League and failed to register a shot on target during Saturday's 1-0 loss to Bournemouth—their eighth league defeat of the season. Everton have also failed to score in eight of their last 10 games.

Dyche was appointed as Everton manager in January 2023 and managed to secure Premier League survival with a final-day victory over Bournemouth.

The 53-year-old also kept Everton in the top flight last season despite the club being deducted eight points due to breaches of the Premier League's Profitability and Sustainability Rules.



Unveiling Sardauna of Ilorin Cup in pix



CHAMPIONSHIP DRAWS & FIXTURES			
GROUP 'A'		GROUP 'B'	
1	IREPODUN L.G TEAM	1	ILORIN SOUTH L.G TEAM
2	ILORIN EAST L.G TEAM	2	KAIAMA L.G TEAM
3	BARUTEN L.G TEAM	3	OKE-ERO L.G TEAM
4	ASA L.G TEAM	4	ILORIN WEST L.G TEAM
GROUP 'C'		GROUP 'D'	
1	OYUN L.G TEAM	1	PATIGI L.G TEAM
2	EDU L.G TEAM	2	OFFA L.G TEAM
3	IFELODUN L.G TEAM	3	ISIN L.G TEAM
4	EKITI L.G TEAM	4	MORO L.G TEAM

"The struggle for equality is not a one-day fight; it is a lifetime commitment."

Alhaji Balarabe Musa

Page 4

Barcelona eye Manchester United's Rashford

England and Manchester United forward, Marcus Rashford has caught the eyes of Barcelona football club as the Catalan giants have reportedly entered the race to secure his services on a loan deal during the January transfer window.

According to football journalist Fabrizio Romano's post on X on Friday, the 27-year-old forward has been surplus to requirement since Ruben Amorim took the helm of affairs at Manchester United even as he made it known in a recent interview of his intention to take on a new challenge this winter.

Marcus Rashford hinted at a possible departure from Manchester United, admitting that he is prepared for a new chapter in his career.

The Catalan giants are said to have initiated contact with Rashford's representatives to signal their intent.

The English forward has also been linked with other top clubs, including AC Milan, Borussia Dortmund, Juventus, Arsenal, and West Ham, in recent weeks.

A significant hurdle for potential suitors, however, is Rashford's staggering wages. The England international reportedly earns over €350,000 per week at Manchester United, presenting a considerable financial challenge for any club hoping to secure his services.



Ancelotti confirms triple injury boost ahead Barcelona clash

Real Madrid has received a triple injury boost ahead of their Spanish Super Cup final against Barcelona on Sunday.

The trio of Jude Bellingham, Luka Modric and Aurelien Tchouameni are all expected to be fit for the game in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

This was confirmed by manager Carlo Ancelotti, speaking ahead of the game with their LaLiga rivals.

"Jude Bellingham is fit and ready for the final, he has recovered well. Same for Modric and Tchouameni," Ancelotti said.

"He is very important because he is on a good run. He is a player who has made the difference at the moment."

Modric took part in yesterday's training session after overcoming a viral infection.



Sardauna of Ilorin Cup unveiled

By Yusuf Feruke

A call has gone to the 16 Local governments in the state to establish sport offices in their areas.

Making the call yesterday at the unveiling and fixtures draw of the first edition of Sardauna of Ilorin football Cup, the Executive Chairman of the Kwara state Sports Commission,

Sadiq eyes new fortunes in Valencia

Nigerian striker Umar Sadiq is hoping to revive his career at Valencia - his 12th club in 11 years - ahead of his league debut for the club in their clash against Sevilla yesterday.

Sadiq made his first appearance for Los Che in their 2-0 Copa del Rey victory over Eldense on Tuesday.

The 27-year-old, who joined Los Che on loan from Real Sociedad last weekend, impressed manager Carlos Corberán during his 32-minute cameo, registering two shots on target and boasting a 100 per cent success rate in tackles and aerial duels.

As Mogaji calls for establishment of sports office in Local govts

Coach Bola Mogaji said if that is done the Sports Commission will send its coaches down to assist grassroots sports development.

He recalled the olden days when coaches were posted to the local governments sports offices where himself and others have served before with their professional imputes.

Mogaji praised the organizers of the competition for putting it together to honour the Sadauna of Ilorin, the Governor of Kwara state, Mallam AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq.

While appreciating the organizers, he particularly hailed the Commissioner for local government and the Chairmen of the 16 Local governments who are the sponsors of the competition for making it a reality.

Going down memory lane, he recalled that the last time the state witnessed something like this was 1982 when the state held the sports festival.

He commented Alhaji Owolabi Agbaji Wopa, the brain behind the competition for bringing up the competition which involves all the

local governments as it reminds us of the past.

Speaking further, the Executive Chairman described football as the King of sports and a unifying factor that brings all together irrespective, ethnicity, religion and group adding that there is no better way to celebrate an icon than sports.

FA Cup: Arteta hails Amorim's away records ahead of Man United clash

The FA Cup third-round clash between Arsenal and Manchester United holds today.

This is as Mikel Arteta weekend hailed the achievements of opposing manager, Ruben Amorim, who has made waves since taking charge in November 2024.

With results like a win at Manchester City and a 2-2 draw at Anfield, Amorim's side has caught Arteta's attention.

"When you look especially at the big teams [they've played], how they perform and the results that they've got, it's very impressive," Arteta remarked in his pre-match press conference.

A statement retrieved from the Arsenal website yesterday morning revealed this.

"I know him well, I followed him a lot when he was in Portugal, and there is a big reason why he is where he is at the moment, and he deserves to be there," he said.

For Arteta, the FA Cup holds a special place in his career.

The competition gave him his first major trophy as a player in 2014 and later as Arsenal's manager in 2020, when the Gunners defeated Chelsea 2-1 at Wembley.

Despite recent struggles to progress beyond the fourth round, Arteta is determined to secure a record 15th FA Cup title for Arsenal, starting with Sunday's high-stakes match.

Yobo, Martins tip Osimhen for United move

Former Super Eagles captain Joseph Yobo and ex-international Obafemi Martins have backed Victor Osimhen to join Manchester United, insisting the striker would thrive at Old Trafford.

Speaking to AfricaFoot, Martins expressed confidence in Osimhen's ability to transform United's attacking prowess if a transfer materialises.

"If he comes into this team, everything changes, especially in terms of the way they score goals," Martins said. "He has speed and power, but also finishing. He is one of the best finishers in Europe, and he has proven it in successive seasons."

The 2023 CAF African Footballer of The Year, who is currently on loan at Turkish giants Galatasaray from Napoli, has attracted interest from several top clubs following his impressive form that has seen him net 13 goals in 16 appearances.

Yobo also believes a move to United would be perfect for the striker, who helped Napoli claim their first Serie A title in 33 years last season.

"For me, it's a no-brainer. Victor and Manchester United are a perfect fit, and there's no doubt he would thrive if they signed him," Yobo told Africafoot.

"Even though they're struggling in transition, Manchester United remains one of the top three clubs in the world, and that's not going to change anytime soon."

The former Everton defender also praised United's new manager, Rúben Amorim, urging Osimhen to consider the offer seriously.

"Their project is exciting, and they have a new coach in Amorim, who is one of the best in his generation. If Amorim wants Victor Osimhen to be one of the leaders of this project in transition, he shouldn't think twice. He should take it," Yobo added.

Earlier reports suggested Napoli's sporting director, Giovanni Manna, had discussions with Osimhen regarding a potential move to Manchester, with the Italian club reportedly including a €90m release clause in his contract.



FA Cup: Bartlett backs United to beat Arsenal

Former Premier League forward Shaun Bartlett is anticipating a surprise result when Arsenal face-off with Manchester United in arguably the tie of the third round in the FA Cup.

The South African ex-footballer, who played for Charlton Athletic in the Premier League, expects United to progress to the next round despite their struggles this season.

"This game is lined up for a surprise result, and I feel United will sneak a win this weekend," Bartlett told Showmax this week.

The game, slated for the Emirates Stadium on Sunday, will be shown live on Showmax Premier League at 5pm.

Bartlett says Ruben Amorim's men can take plenty of encouragement from their game against Liverpool when they head to the Emirates this weekend.

Benzema names best football team in the world

Former France striker, Karim Benzema, has claimed Real Madrid is the best club in the world.

Benzema stated this during an interview with Marca.

The 37-year-old, who is currently playing for Al-Ittihad, was with Madrid for 14 years.

During that spell, Benzema won five Champions League titles, four La Liga titles and one Ballon d'Or in 2022.

Benzema is also Real Madrid's second all-time leading scorer with 354 goals and 165 assists in 648 matches in all competitions.

"I'm sure this year it will be proven again that Real Madrid is the best club in the world," he said.

"They can win big titles once again."

Benzema was also spoken about the possibility of a return to the Bernabeu before retirement.