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WEEKEND



President Tinubu with VP Shettima

Outcry as RMAFC Proposes Salary Hike for Tinubu, Governors, Others

● True leadership demands sacrifice, not enrichment - Experts

● Increase minimum wage, not politicians' salaries - Labour Party

BY AYUBA AHMAD

The Revenue Mobilisation, Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC), the body constitutionally empowered to review and recommend remuneration for political office holders, has disclosed that the Nigerian President

currently earns ₦1.5 million per month, while ministers receive less than ₦1 million. These pay levels have remained unchanged since 2008. RMAFC described the current pay structure as "inadequate, unrealistic, and outdated", especially when compared to salaries of agency heads, Central Bank governors,

and other officials, who reportedly earn many times more. The Commission revealed plans to review the salaries of political office holders in Nigeria. At a press briefing in Abuja on Monday, RMAFC Chairman, Mohammed Shehu, disclosed that President

Bola Tinubu presently earns N1.5m monthly, while ministers receive less than N1m — figures that have remained unchanged since 2008. "You are paying the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria N1.5million a month, with a population of over 200 million people. Everybody believes that it

is a joke," Shehu said. He added, "You cannot pay a minister less than N1million per month since 2008 and expect him to put in his best without necessarily being involved in some other things. You pay either a CBN governor

CONTINUES ON PAGE 3



Accident victim

HEAVY TRUCKS, HEAVY TOLL: THE GROWING MENACE OF TRUCK ACCIDENTS IN NIGERIA

BY SHALOM KASIM

Last Wednesday in Auchi, Edo State, a Dangote cement truck struck a young woman, Ruth Otabor. The tragedy trended nationwide for another reason: she is the sister of Big Brother Naija winner, Phyna.

Surgeons amputated Ruth's leg. The driver, according to eyewitness accounts and early reports, had no valid licence. Dangote quickly pledged to pay medical bills and compensation, but the bigger question has been, who gave an unlicensed driver the keys to a truck fit to carry tonnes-worth of goods?

Repeated Tragedies

The latest official numbers of such actions are blunt: 1,593 Nigerians died in road crashes in just three months (January to March 2025), an 8.3% rise in fatalities compared to Q1 2024. Behind those statistics are patterns such as poorly vetted drivers, lack of enforcement, drug and alcohol use behind the wheel, and the lethal marriage of speed, fatigue, and overloaded vehicles on compromised roads.

Who is to be blamed?

To be clear, the brand on a truck's trailer neither confers guilt nor innocence by itself. In past incidents, local civil society groups have sometimes defended specific fleets or clarified a vehicle's role in crashes, yet no amount of corporate philanthropy or carefully worded press releases can change the baseline truth that the risk profile of large trucks on Nigerian roads is dangerously high. Take, for example, Lagos, where container trucks have repeatedly toppled from bridges or lost braking power on crowded streets.

In January 2023, a container fell from

CONTINUES ON PAGE 3

HERITAGE >>13

THE AGRARIAN SPIRIT AND
VIBRANT CULTURAL IDENTITY OF
THE KAMBARI PEOPLE



OLDIES >>16

HOW I SMOOTHLY COMBINED MARRIAGE
WITH EDUCATION - UNIVERSITY STAFF,
FATIMA ABBAS



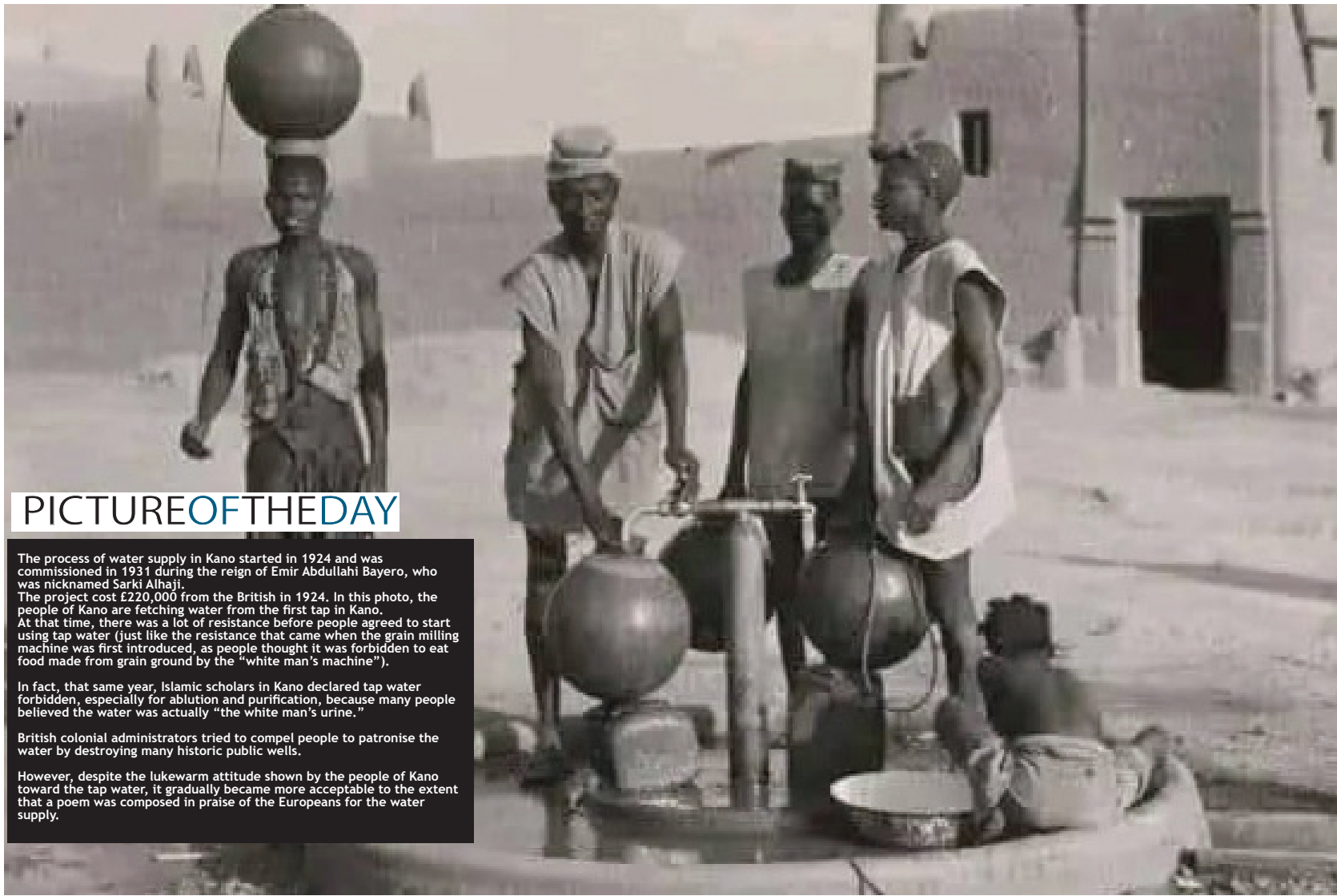
Neptune World

It does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop

Confucius

The children of the poor you fail to train will never let your children have peace

OBAFEMI AWOLOWO



PICTURE OF THE DAY

The process of water supply in Kano started in 1924 and was commissioned in 1931 during the reign of Emir Abdullahi Bayero, who was nicknamed Sarki Alhaji. The project cost £220,000 from the British in 1924. In this photo, the people of Kano are fetching water from the first tap in Kano. At that time, there was a lot of resistance before people agreed to start using tap water (just like the resistance that came when the grain milling machine was first introduced, as people thought it was forbidden to eat food made from grain ground by the "white man's machine").

In fact, that same year, Islamic scholars in Kano declared tap water forbidden, especially for ablution and purification, because many people believed the water was actually "the white man's urine."

British colonial administrators tried to compel people to patronise the water by destroying many historic public wells.

However, despite the lukewarm attitude shown by the people of Kano toward the tap water, it gradually became more acceptable to the extent that a poem was composed in praise of the Europeans for the water supply.

RANDOM FACTS

Imam Ali's Letter to Malik Al Ashtar (3)

Malik_al_Ashtar was one of the especial companions of Imam_Ali a.s and one of the powerful leaders of Iraq. He was one of the commanders of the army of Imam 'Ali (a) who was forethoughtful in politics and strong in battle. He participated in the Battle of Jamal and the Battle of Siffin and eventually he was appointed by Imam 'Ali (pbuh) as governor_ general in Egypt. However, he was martyred before arriving to Egypt. The famous treaty of Malik al-Ashtar is a letter that Imam 'Ali wrote to him while he was in Egypt.

Part 3
Maintain justice in administration and impose it on your own self and seek the consent of the people for the discontent of the masses sterilizes the contentment of the privileged few and the discontent of the few loses itself in the contentment of the many. Remember the privileged few will not rally round you in moments of difficulty: they will try to side-track justice, they will ask for more than what they deserve and will show no gratitude for favours done to them.

They will feel restive in the face of trials and will offer no regret for their shortcomings. It is the common man who is the strength of the State and Religion. It is he who fights the enemy. So live in close contact with the masses and be mindful

of their welfare.

Keep at a distance one who peers into the weaknesses of others. After all, the masses are not free from weaknesses. It is the duty of the ruler to shield them. Do not bring to light that which is hidden, but try to remove those weaknesses which have been brought to light. God is watchful of everything that is hidden from you, and He alone will deal with it. To the best of your ability cover the weaknesses of the public, and God will cover the weaknesses in you which you are anxious to keep away from their eye. Unloose the tangle of mutual hatred between the public and the administration and remove all those causes which may give rise to strained relations between them. Protect yourself from every such act that may not be quite correct for you. Do not make haste in seeking confirmation of tale-telling, for the tale-teller is a deceitful person appearing in the garb of a friend.

Imam Ali's letter to Malik al-Ashtar (part 2)

Nothing deprives man of divine blessings or excites divine wrath against him more easily than cruelty. Hence it is, that God listens to the voice of the oppressed and waylays the oppressor.



FUN PUZZLE

Find The Hidden Words

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
H	E	L	L	O	K	T	R	Q	N
S	T	A	Y	M	Q	O	U	N	S
S	T	R	O	N	G	S	V	H	P
S	T	A	Y	P	W	F	L	X	U
P	O	S	I	T	I	V	E	B	C
A	N	D	R	X	C	V	Y	G	D
N	E	V	E	R	B	W	Z	E	T
G	I	V	E	U	P	D	I	G	E
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J

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UP&DOWN



Tireless Workers: How bees contribute while alive and after death

Bees, often seen as humble pollinators, are among the most fascinating and essential creatures in the natural world.

Their intricate behaviour, unyielding dedication to their colony, and unique biological traits make them a marvel of nature. From their final moments on flowers to their role in human health even after death, bees inspire awe and gratitude.

As bees age, they make a remarkable decision: they do not return to the hive in the evening. Instead, old bees spend the night resting on flowers, sensing that their time is near. By choosing not to return to the hive, they spare their colony from the burden of caring for them in their final hours. If they survive the night, they resume their duties at sunrise, collecting pollen or nectar for the colony. This selflessness underscores the profound unity within a bee colony.

Bees, like all insects, are cold-blooded, yet their colonies function as warm, dynamic systems. Inside the hive, bees maintain an optimal temperature to protect their young and preserve honey, even during harsh winters.



Rewriting Civilisation: 5,000-Year-Old Inscriptions Unearthed in Iran

In Iran's Halil Roud Valley, archaeologists have uncovered stone and clay tablets bearing primitive symbols nearly 5,000 years old, evidence that could challenge Mesopotamia's claim as the birthplace of writing.

The findings from the ancient Jiroft civilisation suggest that urban life, complex administration, and cultural sophistication may have taken root even before Mesopotamia's rise.

The hills of Konar Sandal, once considered peripheral to the ancient world, reveal treasures of stunning importance. Leading the excavations, archaeologist Youssouf Majidzadeh believes the writing method found here may have spurred early urbanisation and advanced governance.

Initially intended to protect prehistoric necropolises from looting, the digs have uncovered refined artefacts—vases, bowls, and sculptures, some in chlorite—decorated with hard stone and shell inlays.

These works reveal not only technical mastery but also a sophisticated aesthetic.

Weights at the site point to a structured economy with regulated trade, accounting, and possibly an early script.

NEWS

Outcry as RMAFC Proposes Salary Hike for Tinubu, Governors, Others

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

or the DG ten times more than you pay the President. That is just not right. Or you pay him (the head of an agency) twenty times higher than the Attorney-General of the Federation. Salary increase amid hunger, hardship The proposed salary review comes at a fraught economic juncture, where Nigerians face rising poverty, inflation, and an eroded minimum wage. The timing of the proposal has triggered widespread condemnation across political and civic lines. Critics argue that true leadership demands sacrifice, not enrichment. Many point out that politicians already benefit from extensive allowances and perks, and now is not the moment to raise their salaries, but to reduce waste and redirect funds toward citizens' welfare. **Public and Political Backlash** The proposal has provoked strong criticism from opposition parties, civil society groups, and analysts, who argue that increasing politicians' pay



Starving Nigerian children

during economic hardship is tone-deaf and morally questionable. PDP (People's Democratic Party) The PDP called the proposal "insensitive and unconscionable," questioning its timing amid hunger, inflation, and the collapse of the naira. It warned that such a proposal could fuel

public anger. The New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP) described the plan as "insensitive," "reckless," and a misalignment with what's expected of leaders. NNPP pointed to global precedents where leaders took pay cuts during crises, such as New Zealand (20% cut) and Ireland and Greece during their

financial crises. Similarly, the ADC (African Democratic Congress) denounced the move as "tone-deaf," "absurd," and disconnected from citizens struggling with food inflation, fuel costs, and an inadequate N70,000 minimum wage. The political parties urged the government to suspend

the proposal and instead focus on the welfare of ordinary Nigerians. **Labour Party** The Labour Party has equally advised the RMAFC against the planned salary increase for political office holders in the country. The party's interim National Publicity Secretary, Tony Akeni said that the proposed salary increase is unconscionable, especially at this time when Nigeria is passing through economic hardship. The party's spokesman, who described the move as a misadventure, urged RMAFC to retrace its steps in the best interest of the country. According to the Labour Party, rather than increasing political office holders' salaries, the commission should move for an increase in the minimum wage of Nigerian workers from its present #70,000. He quoted the United States Government as recently advocating for improvement in Nigeria's minimum wage. "If a foreign nation could demonstrate such empathy towards our suffering citizens, the RMAFC's

chairman and commission members have no valid excuse not to do more," he said. **ACF (Arewa Consultative Forum)** Reacting to the proposal, the ACF labelled the raise "disappointing, insensitive, and provocative." Noted that over 60% of Nigerians live in multidimensional poverty, and more than 75% survive on meagre incomes. ACF warned that such a proposal could inflame societal tensions. **Economists and Civil Rights Voices** Economist Dr. Samson Simon criticised the proposal, pointing out that lawmakers already earn far above global averages (estimated ₦30 million per month); teachers, nurses, military personnel, and lecturers, not politicians, deserve better pay. Civil rights expert Olu Omotayo deemed the proposal deceptive. He argued that politicians are already overcompensated through allowances, and real savings should come from cutting overheads and allowances, not salaries.

Heavy Trucks, Heavy Toll: The Growing Menace of Truck Accidents in Nigeria

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

a truck on Ojuelegba Bridge, crushing a commercial bus and killing nine, including children. In June 2025, a container truck reportedly lost control near Lagos's Balogun Market, killing two and injuring several. The Guardian used the incident to highlight the city's long-standing but inconsistently enforced truck movement restrictions, noting that daytime bans meant to keep heavy vehicles off crowded corridors are routinely flouted. A month later, agencies impounded at least 10 articulated vehicles violating restrictions on the Third Mainland Bridge. Beyond Lagos, the carnage can be even more dramatic. In January 2025, at Dikko junction near Suleja, a fuel tanker overturned; crowds rushed with buckets to scoop petrol, and a spill ignited, exploding into an inferno that killed at least 70 by initial counts, and later tallies stretched past 90. Nigeria's road-crash data landscape is improving but still fragmented. The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) releases quarterly "Road Transport Data," collating police and FRSC reports. In Q4 2023, NBS recorded 2,717 crashes (up 24.23% from Q3) and 1,323 deaths. By Q1 2025, FRSC reported 2,650 crashes and 1,593 deaths, meaning that more people died per crash than the year before. A cross-section of public-health literature places Nigeria among the countries with very high road-

traffic fatality risk, often above 30 deaths per 100,000 people, though precise cross-country comparisons vary by methodology and under-reporting. The World Bank and WHO series track mortality from road injuries but caution about data limitations; nonetheless, Nigeria consistently appears in the global high-risk band. **Poor Enforcement** Then comes the licence problem: rules exist, but enforcement barely does. Nigeria has a structured system for licensing commercial drivers, with the Federal Road Safety Corps setting minimum standards, testing, and age thresholds. For commercial heavy-duty drivers, FRSC documentation outlines a minimum age of 26 and a staged Commercial Driver's Licence (CDL) progression, which, on paper, is a robust filter to keep inexperienced and immature drivers out of the cabs of 30-ton rigs. In practice, however, loopholes swallow the rules. Corruption, middlemen, and weak identity verification let unqualified drivers buy their way into the system. Vehicle owners sometimes hand over keys to whoever will keep the trucks moving. **A Call for Action** The Auchi case has revived calls to audit fleets and re-verify drivers, one by one, before they return to the road. The National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) has

demanding tri-partite actions: compulsory fresh training and licensing under FRSC supervision; mandatory NDLEA drug testing for all fleet drivers; and a high-level interface to craft a binding safety framework. To be fair, not all fleets are complacent. Dangote Cement launched a dedicated driving academy in partnership with FRSC, touting structured training, simulator time, and defensive-driving modules. In 2023, 50 "special truck drivers," including women, graduated from the academy, yet the dissonance between polished training centres and videos of crash scenes still shows how reforms on paper have not saturated the market. Thousands of trucks on our highways are owned by smaller contractors, sub-hauliers, or informal "attached" drivers who operate outside the walls of any academy. Underage drivers behind multi-axle trucks remain a stubborn, if under-quantified, problem. Police and traffic agencies periodically parade teenage drivers or barely-adult men arrested behind the wheel of articulated vehicles, usually after the chaos has already unfolded. Multiple episodic reports appear in local media and agency feeds; the practice persists because enforcement is sporadic. Lagos has tried to choke off risk by limiting when and where trucks can move, but compliance is inconsistent, and exceptions multiply. If the laws



say drivers must be older, tested, and certified, why do minors or unlicensed men keep showing up in cab seats? Simple: because enforcement is not designed to catch them before the crash. Roadside spot checks often focus on papers; fake papers pass. Identity checks are cursory. Fleet owners outsource responsibility to contractors, and everyone assumes the next person checked. **Substance Abuse** Substance abuse among professional drivers is a global safety risk, and Nigeria is no exception. Studies among commercial drivers report high prevalence of psychoactive substance use such as stimulants to fight fatigue and opioids and alcohol to numb aches. While many studies focus on

bus and taxi drivers, the patterns translate to long-haul trucking, where schedules are punishing and incentives reward speed over safety. A 2021 research on Nigerian long-distance truck drivers has documented the use of cough syrups, analgesics, including tramadol, cannabis, amphetamines, and tranquillisers. Other studies and reviews corroborate the link between abnormal driver behaviour and crashes in truck cohorts internationally. The supply side is relentless. NDLEA regularly intercepts truckloads of opioids moving along the very highways truckers ply. In September 2024, for instance, operatives seized a truck bearing 2.49 million tramadol tablets and capsules on the Gombe-Bauchi Expressway. If 2024 sounds like a long time ago, just two weeks

ago, NDLEA announced more major seizures, part of a drumbeat of enforcement that confirms the scale of availability. In the wake of the Auchi crash, corporate representatives stood beside hospital beds and made promises. It matters. Medical bills bankrupt families, and early compensation can determine whether a survivor walks with a prosthesis or is confined by poverty. However, real corporate leadership is less about cheques after and more about decisions before, starting with refusing to hire anyone under 26 for heavy rigs (the FRSC baseline), re-testing every driver annually, installing telematics and fatigue alarms, monitoring speed and hard-braking in real time, and firing contractors who run illegal sub-fleets of barely maintained trucks.

NEWS

BY SALIM SANI



Doctors

Saudi doctors perform open-heart surgery in Kano

The King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KSrelief) says it has concluded its voluntary medical outreach for open-heart surgery and cardiac catheterisation in Kano. The five-day campaign, which ran from August 18 to 22, brought together a 25-member team of skilled Saudi medical volunteers who performed dozens of complex procedures. The project in Kano was part of KSrelief's broader global programme of voluntary medical interventions, which has had significant impacts in many countries. In a statement on Friday, the centre said Saudi Arabia, through KSrelief, has been leading the

delivery of critical medical interventions and aid to vulnerable communities worldwide. In Yemen, the centre's teams performed dozens of open-heart surgeries and over 140 cardiac catheterisations in Mukalla. Also in Tanzania, KSrelief specialists performed paediatric open-heart surgeries for children who otherwise lacked access to advanced cardiac care. In Mauritania, the centre pioneered 37 minimally invasive laparoscopic heart surgeries, a rare and costly procedure in many parts of Africa. According to the statement, similar missions have been conducted in Indonesia, where open-heart surgeries were performed in Medan.

Other countries are Uzbekistan, where more than 80 procedures were carried out in Tashkent, and Tajikistan, where the centre's volunteers completed 15 open-heart surgeries and over 130 catheterisations in Dushanbe earlier this year. Officials from KSrelief said the initiative underscores Saudi Arabia's commitment to providing critical healthcare to vulnerable communities worldwide. They said the projects were designed to alleviate suffering, provide quality healthcare at no cost to patients, and demonstrate the Kingdom's readiness to support communities in need across continents.

Parents urged to check undergraduate's loan status to avoid double payments

Dr Helen Nsirim, an official of the Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation, has cautioned parents against making double payments of tuition fees for their undergraduate children. Nsirim, who is the Information and Public Relations Officer at the Federal Information Centre, Port Harcourt, made the remark in an interview with newsmen on Friday. She advised parents to first verify the list of the Nigerian Education Loan Fund (NELFUND) beneficiaries before paying the tuition to avoid being extorted by the wards. According to her, investigations have shown that some students who accessed the NELFUND loan deliberately concealed the information from their parents to collect tuition fees from them. "This is a wrong approach, especially in these difficult

times when many parents are struggling financially. "The Federal Government established the loan scheme to ease the burden of tuition on both parents and students," she said. Nsirim urged NELFUND to enhance transparency by publishing the list of loan beneficiaries annually, through universities, national newspapers, and its official social media platforms. She explained that such measures would empower parents to confirm their children's loan status and prevent unnecessary financial strain. She added that the student loan body also had the responsibility of ensuring proper sensitisation. Nsirim said that although the National Orientation Agency (NOA) had been active in sensitising the public, parents must also take the initiative.



Students

She further advised parents to stay informed about student loan programmes and explore available opportunities to reduce their financial burden. "Instead of spending time on social media following

trends and gossip, parents should check what NELFUND is doing and encourage their children to apply if eligible," she said. NELFUND was established to provide financial loan support to Nigerian students in tertiary institutions to improve access to higher education.

CDS did not call for Nigerians to bear arms – DHQ

The Defence Headquarters has clarified that the Chief of Defence Staff, Gen. Christopher Musa, did not at any point call for citizens to bear arms or engage in unlawful possession of firearms. Musa had in an interview on Channels Television on Thursday, asked Nigerians to acquire basic combat and self-defence skills as a means of survival in an insecure environment.

In a statement on Friday, the Director of Defence Information, Brig. Gen. I Tukur Gusau, said the CDS only encouraged Nigerians to acquire basic survival and self-protection skills such as driving, swimming, taekwondo, judo and boxing. The statement partly read, "The Defence Headquarters has noted with concern deliberate attempts to misrepresent comments by the Chief of Defence Staff, General Christopher Gwabin Musa, during a Channels Television interview on Thursday evening 20 August 2025.

"In that interview, the CDS encouraged Nigerians to develop basic survival and self-protection skills—likening such training to widely accepted life skills such as driving, taekwondo, judo and swimming, boxing amongst others. "For the avoidance of doubt, the CDS did not call for citizens to bear arms or to engage in unlawful possession of firearms. He is fully aware of Nigerian laws prohibiting the unauthorised carrying of weapons.

"His message was intended to promote personal resilience, situational awareness and lawful preparedness—not to encourage illegal activity. Gusau said the Nigerian Armed Forces and other security agencies were recording successes in ongoing operations against insecurity, assuring that the safety of citizens remained a top priority.



Gen. Musa

OUR HEART

Vast development potential of the North-East region

For many outside the North-East, the picture that comes to mind at the mention of the zone is that of displaced families and children out of school. Largely accurate as this image might appear, it however, risks freezing the North-East in a single narrative of crisis. Thus eclipsing the immense opportunities simmering just beneath the surface.

Across Borno, Yobe, Adamawa, Bauchi, Taraba, and Gombe, there exists a vast untapped wealth of creativity, agricultural, and intellectual energy, yet the region seems to be asleep to them. This laxity has, among others, resulted in the loss of jobs and skills that could transform the futures of millions of youths.

It reinforces stereotypes that the North-East is a “burden” rather than a contributor to Nigeria’s progress, and it leaves an entire region of over 56 million people underutilised. But it does not have to stay this way. The North-East is not a wasteland. If only attention were focused on three key areas: culture, agriculture, and education.

Nigeria’s creative economy is booming nationally, yet the North-East, with its wealth of cultural heritage, is largely absent from the story. A recent report by the Federal Ministry of Art, Culture, and Creative Economy notes that the sector already employs over 4 million Nigerians and has the capacity to double that in less than a decade. Lagos, Abuja, and even Jos have positioned themselves as hubs of music, film, and fashion. But in the North-East, there are few platforms for creatives to thrive.

The North-East is not a cultural desert. Far from it. The Kanuri oral tradition, for example, is among the richest in Africa, yet, it is either under-documented or confined to local consumption. Unlike Lagos, where Nollywood feeds global audiences, or Kano, whose Kannywood industry has carved a niche across West Africa, the North-East’s cultural heritage has not been structured into a viable economy.

The absence of creative festivals is also telling. Lagos hosts the Lagos Book and Art Festival, Abuja hosts the International Film Festival, and Enugu draws crowds through the, “Life In My City Art Festival”. Semblance of such festivals in the North-East exists mostly in the form of cultural carnivals tied to religious or political calendars, often lacking the commercial and artistic infrastructure to propel careers.

Globally, according to UNESCO, the creative industries generate over \$2.25 trillion annually and employ nearly 30 million people. In Nigeria, where youth unemployment is one of the highest in Africa, the creative sector offers an alternative pathway. The North-East’s neglect of this sector translates into a weakened regional identity.

The barriers holding back creativity in the North-East are both structural and psychological. Security challenges are the major disincentive. Insurgency has disrupted cultural spaces and gatherings and forced many artists to relocate. But even where security has improved, investment has not followed.

In the agriculture and food production sector, few regions in Nigeria are as naturally endowed as the North-East. Taraba’s fertile plains, Yobe and Adamawa’s cattle-rich grasslands, Borno’s fisheries along Lake Chad, and the Gombe, Bauchi’s vast arable lands made for the region’s historic identity as the nation’s food basket. The legacy is still visible today with bubbling daily and weekly markets. Nigeria spends billions annually on food imports, everything from rice to wheat to dairy, despite its fertile regions. The North-East could significantly close that gap. Yobe alone has thousands of hectares suited for wheat production, yet the bulk of wheat consumed in Nigeria is imported. In Borno, dried fish from Lakes Chad and Alau has long fed markets as far away as Sudan, Ghana and Cameroon. But decades of underinvestment and environmental decline have reduced this trade.

Agricultural experts argue that the North-East has the comparative advantage to feed itself and also supply surplus to the rest of Nigeria and even for export. Yet, what we see instead is underutilisation. Poor irrigation

systems leave vast lands fallow during the dry season. Lack of mechanisation means farm yields are very low. On average, Nigerian farmers harvest less than two tons of maize per hectare, compared to more than eight tons in the USA. This gap exists essentially due to the institutional or, systemic neglect.

Indeed, the insurgency in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa has displaced thousands of farmers and made rural lands unsafe. Even where farmers return, fear of attacks limits expansion. Roads linking villages to cities are in disrepair, making it expensive to move goods. Lack of silos and cold storage leads to immense post-harvest losses.

Agri-tech, ranging from drones for mapping to mobile platforms for market access, is almost nonexistent in the North-East. There is the rapidly evolving disinterest amongst the young population in farming and agriculture as viable and respectable ventures. The averagely educated young Northerner dreams of city jobs, not farming, thereby leaving ageing parents to tend the land. And when these aged parents die, what happens?

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has warned that food insecurity in Nigeria is most acute in the

North-East, where millions are at risk of hunger due to displacement and poor productivity. Ironically, this hunger exists in a region that could be a breadbasket. Investing in agriculture could reverse this paradox. Mechanised farming, irrigation, and value-chain development would create millions of jobs in farming, storage, processing, and transport. For a region struggling with youth unemployment, agriculture could be the engine of stability. Technology could be the game-changer. Across Africa, startups are reimagining farming: apps that connect farmers to buyers, drones that monitor fields, solar-powered irrigation, and mobile credit platforms. In Kenya, M-Farm links farmers directly to markets via SMS.

In Nigeria, ThriveAgric has mobilised youth to finance smallholder farmers. Yet, in the North-East, such innovations are still alien. Imagine if Taraba farmers could use drones to detect pests early, or if Bauchi herders tracked cattle via GPS to prevent theft. Imagine an Adamawa tomato-processing plant that turned surplus into paste and reduced imports.

Low literacy rate is another bane of development in the North-East region.

In Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (the BAY states), about two million children are currently out of school, a figure flagged by UNICEF in late 2024, alongside the revelation that only 29% of schools in the zone have teachers who meet minimum qualification standards.

The human reality inside that statistic is that for many households, especially those displaced by conflict, schooling has become episodic. UNICEF’s broader education brief reinforces the geographic pattern of deprivation: female primary net attendance in the North-East hovers around 47.7%, meaning more than half of girls are not in school. Fresh humanitarian reporting this year sharpened the urgency: 4.9 million children across the North-East face acute needs amid funding shortfalls, with schooling disruptions compounding nutrition and protection risks.

The knowledge economy feeds on foundational literacy and numeracy, and then on higher-order skills. When the foundation is weak, the entire ladder is correspondingly weak. Nigeria’s national system is itself strained. The UNESCO and World Bank series consistently track pupil-teacher ratios and completion rates below global peers, but, the North-East sits at the sharpest edge of that strain.

Now, to our tertiary institutions. Any regional revival will rise or fall on whether its tertiary institutions can become magnets that attract talent, secure research grants, spin out startups, and stabilise a pipeline of skilled teachers and technologists. Here, the North-East’s flagship should be the University of Maiduguri, UNIMAID, now Muhammadu Buhari University.

It is large, storied, and has stayed open through insurgency, but when you look at how global and national ranking systems currently “see” UNIMAID, the sobering picture is that visibility and performance metrics lag the country’s front-runners. In EduRank’s 2025 compilation, the University of Maiduguri is ranked 28th in Nigeria and 4,319th globally.

The case for waking up is overwhelming. Start at the base of the pyramid: bring those two million BAY-state children back to school. That is exactly what UNICEF’s 2024–2025 programme with the Global Partnership for Education (Accelerated Funding) is designed to do.

The data is unambiguous: where attendance and qualified teacher coverage rise, learning outcomes follow, and where girls’ attendance (which is currently below 50% in the North-East) improves, household income, health indices and intergenerational schooling improve too.

Crucially, the university story is inseparable from the basic-education story. You cannot fill labs if secondary schools do not deliver the mathematics and language proficiency to get students through the door. That is why the BAY-states out-of-school number is an investment risk metric. Every child not in school today is a missing technician, coder, agronomist, or teacher five to ten years from now.

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- Adamu Nasiru - Reporter
- Abba Nasiru - Reporter
- Yahaya Ahmed Goni - Reporter
- Ibrahim Yahaya - Reporter
- Maryam Saleh Isa - Intern
- Haruna Ibrahim - Intern
- Mbamah Jessica Chinelo - Intern
- Mbamah Susan Onyinyechi - Intern
- Lilian Hosea - Head of Admin
- Mercy Adaje - Office Assistant
- Adayi Juliet - Graphic Designer
- Zarah Ahmed- Marketer
- Aisha Shuaibu - Office Assistant (Yobe)
- Dauda Muhammad - Security (Yobe)



Beneficiaries

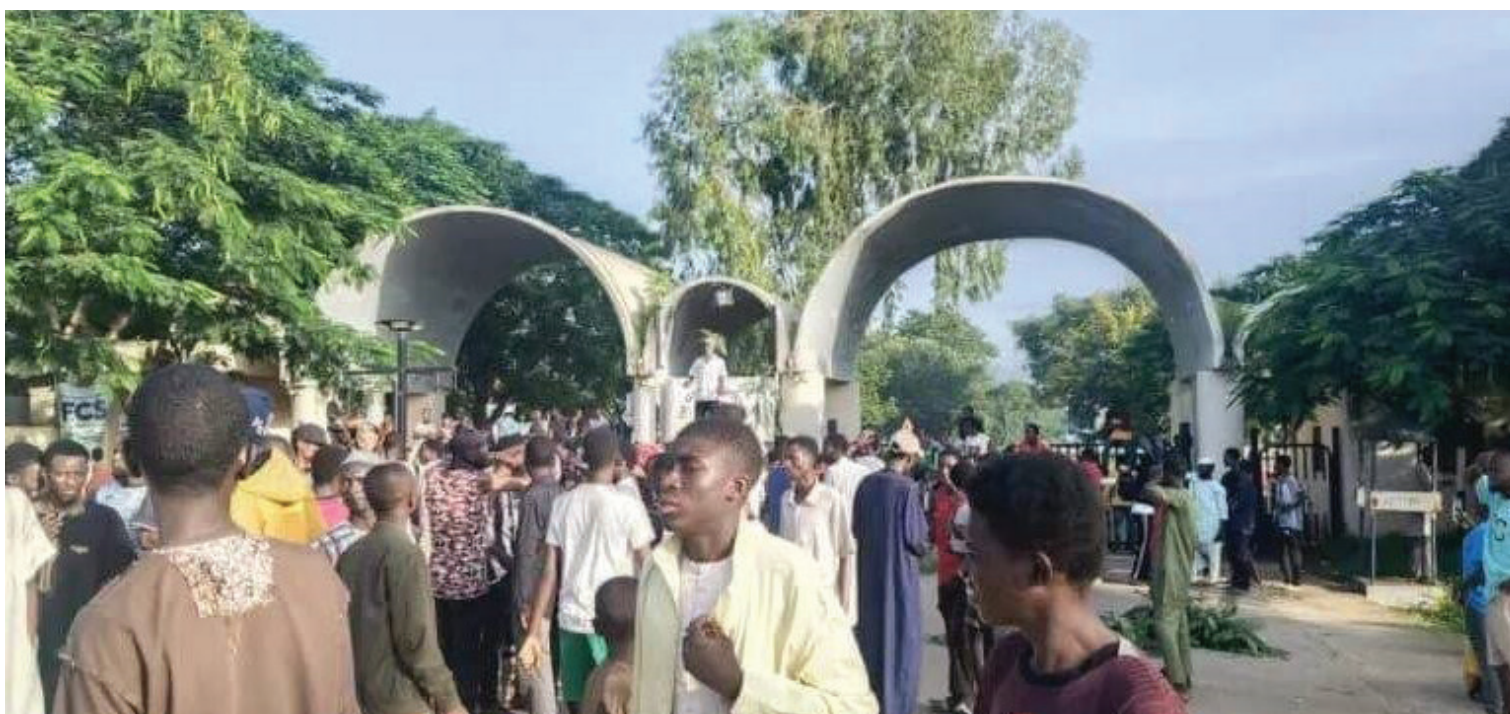
NEDC distributes relief items to people with disabilities in Borno

The North East Development Commission (NEDC) has distributed essential food and non-food items to families, especially persons with disabilities in Maiduguri, Borno State. The distribution was led by the NEDC Borno

State Coordinator, Engineer Mohammed Umar, on behalf of the Commission's Managing Director/CEO, Mohammed Goni Alkali. Speaking at the event, Engineer Umar noted that the community of persons with disabilities was among the hardest hit

by the perennial floods. "About 50 per cent of their members were affected by the floods. We felt it was important to reach out to them because they are among the most vulnerable and in need of support. "We conducted an inventory and identified 706 members, all of whom are persons living with disabilities," he said.

He further reaffirmed the commission's commitment to supporting the welfare of all people in the region, with particular focus on the most vulnerable groups. Each beneficiary received a 25kg bag of rice, a 10kg bag of sugar, a gallon of vegetable oil, a carton of pasta and noodles, as well as a rubber mat and a blanket.



Students

Robbers attack students in Bauchi polytechnic, kill one, injure many

Armed robbers have attacked students of the Abubakar Tatari Ali Polytechnic in Bauchi State, barely two weeks after the Federal Polytechnic Bauchi was hit by a similar incident. The dawn attack occurred

around 3am on Friday, when three armed robbers broke into an off-campus student lodge housing two occupants. During the struggle with attackers, one of the students, identified as Samuel Mbami, an ND2 Mass Communication

student, was stabbed in the stomach and later died after losing excessive blood. A statement signed by the Students' Union Government (SUG), Usman Aliyu, condemned the attack on students, describing it as tragic

and senseless.

The union demanded a thorough investigation and called on the authorities to beef up security on campus and in the surrounding communities to prevent recurrence.

The union also urged students to remain calm and prioritise their safety.

How female trader, Ngozi, trafficked 14 Adamawa children to Anambra

The Adamawa State Government has rescued and reunited 12 trafficked minors, aged 4-9, with their families after they were abducted and taken to Anambra State.

The Deputy Governor, Professor Kaletapwa Farauta, disclosed this to journalists during the official handing over of the children to their parents on Wednesday at her office in Yola.

Farauta described the gathering as a "mixed feeling of sadness and joy," noting that the incident was a tragic one that had befallen the state.

She explained that upon receiving an intelligence report, the government, in collaboration with the police, DSS and civil defence, launched a joint operation to track down the traffickers.

According to her, the operation led to the arrest of the ring leader, a middle-aged woman of Igbo extraction identified as Ngozi Abdulwahab.

Farauta said the victims were sold for amounts ranging between N800,000 and N1.7 million per child.

She added that the suspect operated a small provision shop at Jambutu Ward, Yola North LGA, where she used snacks and gifts to lure unsuspecting children.

She said the state government had already put in place aggressive measures to dismantle the trafficking network and prosecute the perpetrators.

The rescued children had been in the custody of the state government for the past month, receiving medical care and undergoing rehabilitation.

To cushion the effect of the reunion and support the families, the state government provided N100,000, as well as food and non-food items, to each household.

It also announced that the Ministry of Women Affairs, in collaboration with the welfare departments of the respective LGAs, would carry out routine follow-ups to monitor the children's upkeep and reintegration.



Victims

NORTH-EAST

BY GIFT LUCKSON
GIFTLUCKSON@NEPTUNEPRIME.COM.NG

Boko Haram kills military, police officers in Borno



Terrorists

Four security personnel, including members of the military and police, have been killed in a deadly ambush by suspected Boko Haram insurgents in Borno State. The incident has heightened fears of renewed attacks in farming communities across the state. The attack occurred on

Monday morning when security operatives were providing protection for local farmers on their way to their farmlands on the outskirts of the state capital. According to eyewitnesses and security sources, the insurgents, riding motorcycles and some on foot, advanced stealthily before engaging the security

escort team in a fierce gun battle. "They opened fire without warning. Four security personnel were killed instantly, and several farmers were abducted, including women and young girls," a local source revealed. Though the exact number of abducted farmers

remains unclear, residents said many people were injured while fleeing for safety, with some collapsing into the hands of the insurgents. Confirming the incident, Borno Police Public Relations Officer, Kenneth Daso, said: "The late mobile police officer and the soldier involved in the attack were under the Northeast Joint Taskforce Operation Hadin Kai. As such, I cannot comment further on the development." The Theatre Command of Operation Hadin Kai had yet to issue an official statement as of press time. This latest attack underscores the persistent threat posed by Boko Haram and its splinter factions in Borno, despite years of military offensives aimed at neutralising the group. The insurgents, notorious for targeting vulnerable farmers and rural dwellers, have often launched attacks to cut off food supplies and assert control over remote communities.

Lamido of Adamawa approves 2,000 hectares for modern agricultural hub



Lamido

In a significant move to boost food security and youth employment, the Lamido of Adamawa has approved the allocation of 2,000 hectares of fertile land for the establishment of a modern agricultural hub in Adamawa State. The initiative is reportedly part of the Agro-Climatic Resilience in Semi-Arid Landscapes (ACReSAL) project, which will be spearheaded by Business Development Managers Consultancy Services (BDMCs) in collaboration with the Adamawa Emirate Council and the Adamawa State Government. Unveiled during a meeting at the Lamido's palace, the agricultural hub was reportedly designed to be a fully integrated agribusiness platform.

It will cover all facets of agriculture from cultivation and processing to packaging, export, and training. The project is projected to generate over 10,000 direct and indirect jobs for youths across the state. Speaking, the Chairman of the Board of Directors at BDMCs-Nigeria, Abubakar Umar Al-Umar, lauded the Lamido for his visionary support of the project, stating that the hub will focus on cultivating high-demand crops such as yellow maize, sesame seeds, ginger, turmeric, soybeans, and hibiscus. He also confirmed plans for livestock and fisheries operations, including goat farming, poultry farming, milk production, fish production, cow fattening, and animal

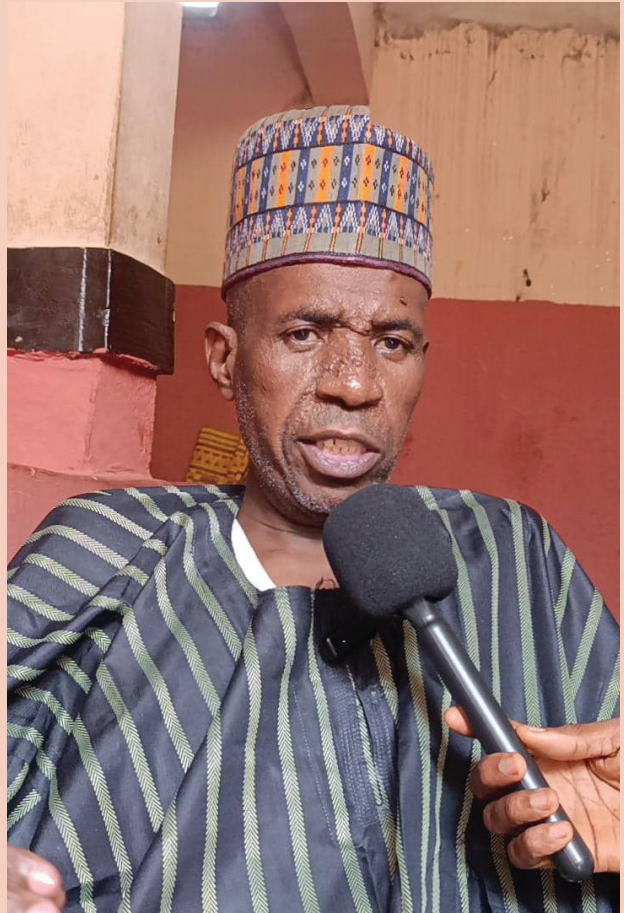
husbandry. "BDMCs, in partnership with the Adamawa Emirate Council, is developing this agricultural hub on the 2,000 hectares of fertile land generously provided by His Royal Highness. This land has been surveyed and confirmed highly suitable for the project," he said. Representing the Lamido, Emirate Secretary Umar Yahaya affirmed the council's continued support for initiatives aimed at driving development and ensuring food security in Adamawa. Chief Peter Alex Olayinka, Vice Chairman of BDMCs, described the project as a groundbreaking \$80 million investment backed by American financiers and supported with machinery from

Chinese partners. He emphasised its potential to boost local agricultural production, increase internally generated revenue, and serve as a national model for agribusiness expansion, with Osun and Delta States identified for future rollout. "This hub will not only transform agriculture in Adamawa but also serve as a national training and innovation centre," Olayinka said. Ali Abdulkareem, Chief Operating Officer of BDMCs, and Mujaheed Abubakar, Protocol and Communication Officer, outlined plans for year-round farming through river dredging and the use of advanced techniques, including crop sensing and greenhouse cultivation. The hub, according to them, will also host a Tropical Institute of Agriculture, which will train young people from all 36 states in crop specialisation and agribusiness management. "Trainees will receive hands-on experience, financial support, and guaranteed production offtake for export. This will encourage self-sufficiency and boost Nigeria's agricultural exports," they noted. Infrastructure development at the hub will include an Agro-City featuring an Administrative Complex, Hostels, a Farm Market Square, a 3-Star Hotel, an Aquatic Farm Restaurant, and even a Helipad to facilitate investor access. Anchored by Sterling Bank and Keystone Bank Ltd, the Adamawa State Agricultural Hub, said it is positioned to become a flagship model for modern agriculture in Nigeria fusing tradition, innovation, and youth empowerment.

Kannywood actor, Nata'ala, appreciates Gov. Buni, reveals cause of illness

Kannywood actor Malam Mato Na Mato, known as Malam Nata'ala from the popular TV series "Dadin Kowa", has expressed deep gratitude to Yobe State Governor Dr. Mai Mala Buni for his financial support. The governor donated N2 million to help with the actor's medical treatment. Nata'ala also thanked other Yobe State politicians who have provided assistance. The actor, who is battling a severe illness, recently opened up about his health challenges in an interview with *Neptune Prime* following growing concerns on social media. "It's cancer that I'm suffering from," he revealed. "Last year, I had surgery at the Yobe State University Teaching Hospital, but unfortunately, the cancer wasn't completely removed. Later, my stomach began to swell again." He explained that he has been referred to Malam Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital and the University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital, where he is currently receiving treatment. "Thankfully, the cancer specialist at Maiduguri placed me on an

injection treatment that costs ₦250,000 per month, and I need to take it for six months," he added. Due to the high cost of treatment, Nata'ala made an appeal: "This treatment is very expensive. Anyone whom God touches to assist me can contact me through my phone number or account details." He also extended his appreciation to his colleagues in the Kannywood industry, stating they have been very supportive. "They've been giving me different forms of assistance, and I pray Allah rewards them abundantly," he said. However, he distanced himself from an individual who circulated his photo online while criticising Kannywood actors for allegedly not helping him. "That person acted on his own without confirming facts. He should seek forgiveness from Kannywood members," he said. Malam Nata'ala concluded by thanking his fans for their prayers, saying, "It's through their prayers that I continue to see signs of recovery."



Nata'ala

CUSTOMS & NEMA

BY MARYAM SULAIMAN
MaryamSulaiman@neptuneprime.com.ng

Customs, NES strengthen ties to promote economic development

The Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) and the Nigerian Economic Society (NES) are set to deepen their collaboration to drive national economic growth ahead of the Society's Annual Conference, scheduled for 8-11 September 2025 in Abuja.

National President Professor Adeola Adenikinju led a delegation comprising members of the Governing Council and the FCT Chapter Chairman on a courtesy visit to the Comptroller-General of Customs (CGC), Adawale Adeniyi, at the Service's headquarters in Abuja on Wednesday, 13 August 2025. Emphasising the need for stronger collaboration to advance Nigeria's development agenda, the CGC said, "While the NES provides evidence-based economic research and policy recommendations, the NCS plays a pivotal role in trade facilitation, revenue generation, and the enforcement of fiscal policies that directly shape the economy."

He underscored the importance of aligning economic research with the operational realities at Nigeria's borders to foster policy efficiency and enhance the nation's trade competitiveness. Professor Adenikinju formally



Customs CG

invited the CGC to participate in the forthcoming conference, noting that his insights would be invaluable to deliberations on economic transformation. He highlighted that Customs' unique access to data on trade patterns, revenue

trends, and cross-border economic activity positions it as a crucial partner in shaping sound economic policies. The NES President also announced the Comptroller-General's nomination for the

2025 Distinguished Public Service Award (DPSNES), one of the Society's highest honours. The nomination recognises his leadership in modernising Customs operations, boosting revenue collection, and

implementing innovative trade facilitation measures that have strengthened Nigeria's economic stability and growth. According to the NES, the award celebrates public servants whose work has

tangibly advanced the nation's economic development objectives. The Comptroller-General's nomination, they said, reflects the transformative impact of ongoing reforms under the current Customs leadership.

NEMA confirms 21 communities submerged by floods in Yobe

The National Emergency Management Agency on Sunday confirmed that 21 communities across five wards of the Potiskum Local Government Area were affected by the heavy rainfall that led to flooding on Friday in Yobe State.

Giving an update on the flood response in Potiskum, NEMA said there was a joint swift intervention with the Yobe State Emergency Management Agency and other humanitarian partners. The agency added that the joint response team remains on the ground conducting detailed assessments of the situation.

"As floodwaters continue to recede, many of the affected families have regained access to their homes and are working to salvage items left behind. However, the displacement situation remains significant, with a large number of households impacted across several communities.

"Preliminary validation indicates that 21 communities across five wards of Potiskum Local Government Area were affected by the flood.

"These include Old Prison, Filin Mashe, Unguwar Makafi, Unguwar Jaje Bakin Kwari, Afghanistan, Tsangaya, Karofi, Bayan Garejin Dan Juma, Jigawa (Behind NTA), Makarahuta, Tandari, Nahuta, Rugan Fulani, Ramin Kasa, Uganda (Behind New Prison), Gadan Talakawa Arikime, Yindiski (Bayan Stadium), Unguwar Wazam Dan Fulani, Yandiksi Ganuwa, Filin Allah, and Helma Saleh/Kukuwale. "Currently, 102 households (612 individuals) remain camped at Sabon Gari Primary School in Potiskum," it said.

NEMA noted that the households were displaced from Bayan Garejin Dan Juma (56 households), Afghanistan (21 households) and Unguwar Wanzam Dan Fulani (25 households).

NEMA commended the Yobe State Government, through SEMA, for providing immediate relief items including food, shelter and hygiene materials (mats, mosquito nets, blankets, buckets, kettles), as well as medical support through YEMABUS and Primary Health Care teams.



Flooding hits Yobe communities

"Food supplies are being provided for displaced households, while arrangements are being made to reintegrate the 102 camped households into host communities.

"The joint response team continues to identify gaps in humanitarian needs to guide further intervention by the Federal Government, development partners, and humanitarian actors. Efforts

are ongoing to facilitate the safe and early return of internally displaced persons once conditions are conducive.

"NEMA, working closely with the Yobe State Government

and partners, reaffirms its commitment to timely relief, coordination, and sustained recovery support for all households affected by the Potiskum flood disaster," the agency added.

PRIME PHOTOS

By Maryam Umar
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The Mercedes Benz in which former Nigerian Head of State, General Murtala Ramat Muhammed, was assassinated along with his ADC and driver on Friday, February 13, 1976, is well preserved at the National Museum in Onikan, Lagos. The car remains visibly riddled with bullet holes and still bears the blood stains



A picture taken on 25th of March, 1807. It was the beginning of colonialism in Nigeria. Foreign Influence began when an act of parliament was passed to abolish slavery in the British Empire, which resulted in the collapse of African slave trade



Pangolins are the only mammals in the world completely covered in scales, a feature that helps to keep them safe. When threatened, they roll up into an impenetrable ball that even tigers can't bite through



In 2017, a delegate from West Papua attended the UN in New York sporting a niki, a traditional penal cover of the New Guinea Highlands, reaffirming its cultural identity in one of the most formal diplomatic stages in the world

PRIME10MENT

BY ALIYU ASKIRA

Burna Boy sets new record with 7 Billboard Hot 100 entries

Grammy-winning Nigerian singer Damini Ogulu, popularly known as Burna Boy, has become the first African artist to record seven entries on the US Billboard Hot 100 chart. The feat was achieved on Tuesday when his collaboration with American rapper Gunna, WGFT, debuted at number 96 on the Hot 100. Reports show that Burna Boy is also the first African artist to debut a song on the chart for five consecutive years between 2021 and 2025. He first appeared on the Hot 100 in 2021 with *Loved By You*, a collaboration with Canadian pop star Justin Bieber. In 2022, he made his first solo entry with *Last Last*, which peaked at number 44. Burna Boy also holds the record for the most entries by an African artist on the UK Singles Chart with 26 songs and the Canadian Hot 100 with 11 songs.



Burna Boy

New reality show, Big Brain Naija, to debut in October

Big Brain Naija (#BB9JA), a reality TV show geared towards discovering, showcasing and celebrating creative talents, will debut in Nigeria.

The News Agency of Nigeria reports that the show is organised by Big Brain Productions in Collaboration with DAAR Communications Plc.

The organisers said at a news conference and partnership signing agreement on Thursday in Abuja, that the show will be staged in the Federal Capital Territory.

They said the reality show, scheduled to hit screens across Nigeria from October, will be aired on Africa Independent Television.

Chief Executive Officer, Big Brain Productions, Mr Kel Ameobi, said the initiative was to celebrate the ingenuity and passion of Nigerian youths.

According to him, the show is conceived to promote national harmony, besides its entertainment value.

He said, "Big Brain Naija show was created with a simple but very powerful vision: to



Big Brain Naija

build a reality TV show where intelligence meets entertainment. "For too long, we've seen and we have also heard our airwaves filled up with entertainment that promotes all sorts of things, very unspeakable things, "We've watched as youths on different platforms fight and entertain us with emptiness, whereas the brightest amongst us have no stage to shine.

"Big Brain Naija is not a show of noise but of ideas. It's not a house of immorality but a stage for innovation, to celebrate ideas, creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. Chief Executive Officer, DAAR Communications Plc, Mr Marcel Anyalechi, lauded the initiative, saying it would create a desired impact in the entertainment industry as it blends creativity

and innovation.

"I commend you so much for taking this project to this stage, and for us at DAAR Communications Plc, we express our total commitment to this project.

"We are glad that we are part of the project, and we are going to use all our media platforms to promote it to the Nigerian public, Africans and the rest of the world.

"I congratulate you on this initiative, and I believe that at the end of season one or two of this project, it will bring smiles to the faces of Nigerians," he said. Earlier, Chief Operating Officer, Big Brain Naija, Ossai Ilome, said season one of the show will bring 37 contestants from the 36 states of the federation, including the FCT.

He said, among other innovations, the show will be anchored by AI-powered judges, making it the first of its kind in Africa.

According to him, the winner of the show will go home with N30 million and a car as the grand prize.

I am innocent of Mohbad's death - Naira Marley

Nigerian artiste, Azeez Fashola, popularly known as Naira Marley, has denied claims linking him to the death of his former signee, Ilerioluwa Aloba, also called Mohbad.

Marley, in a video posted on the Marlian Music YouTube channel on Tuesday night, said he neither bullied nor killed the late artiste, whose death in September 2023 sparked protests across Nigeria and beyond.

He said, "I'm doing this video today for my whole Marlians around the world, the ones that stood by me when it was peak, especially the ones that are like 'Naira Marley might have bullied him, but he didn't kill him.' No, I didn't bully him, and I didn't kill him."

Speaking further, Marley referenced his personal journey since returning to Nigeria in 2018, his arrest by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) in 2019, and the rapid growth of his music career.

He also narrated how his popularity made it difficult for him to live in Nigeria despite having family in the UK.

On the controversies surrounding Mohbad before his death, Marley said, "Even after the NDLEA issue, the attempted suicide, the fight with his former manager, the law suit to the distributor, the termination letter, the situation with him and Sam Larry, even after all of this, Mohbad still told people he wanted to come and apologise, but I didn't know he was gonna die. If I knew, I would have probably let him come, but it was just too much for me at that point."

Marley also maintained that he was out of the country when Mohbad



Naira Marley

died.

He said, "I was not in Nigeria. I went to Amsterdam. I will show you a video with the time and date. My main reason for travelling out of Nigeria was to spend time with my kids. As you can see, I surprised them nicely."

He recalled the moment he first

heard about Mohbad's death, saying, "As soon as they brought the fish someone said that Mohbad is dead. I looked at him and said It's a lie. He wants to blow again. I can see on Instagram that Instablog is saying that Mohbad died of an ear infection. Twitter, boom boom boom, Naira Marley, finally you've

killed him."

The singer's statement comes months after the Lagos State Directorate of Public Prosecutions cleared him, music promoter Samson Eletu, also known as Sam Larry, and Owodunni Ibrahim, also known as Primeboy, of any involvement in Mohbad's death.

NEPTUNE PRIME BUSINESS

MARKET SURVEY



Prices of grains drop as cost of beans, other items record sharp increase

BY KASIM ISA MUHAMMAD,
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A wave of relief swept through Dawasa town in Nangere Local Government Area of Yobe State this week as grain prices, which had been on a steep rise for months, showed a noticeable decline.

Traders and consumers at the Dawasa market told *Neptune Prime* that the drop was long overdue, given the economic hardship families have endured in recent months.

According to the latest market figures gathered on 22 August, 2025, maize now sells between N35,000 and N37,000.

Millet, a key staple grain, is priced between N33,000 and N43,000 depending on quality. Sorghum, a cereal widely consumed across the north reduced to N22,000 and N27,000.

For beans, the market still reflects relatively high costs: white beans are pegged at N75,000 to N84,000, while red beans sell between N81,000 and N85,000.

Groundnut prices remain high at N130,000 to N135,000 per bag, although melon, rice, and pepper recorded modest adjustments.

Speaking to *Neptune Prime*, Malam Lawan Ibrahim, a maize farmer from nearby

Nangere, expressed cautious optimism.

"We thank Allah for this small relief. In the last two months, maize rose beyond N40,000, and many families could no longer afford it. Now that the prices have dropped, we are hoping it continues."

"But as farmers, our fear is whether these fluctuations will discourage us from planting next season if we cannot predict the market."

At the grain section of Dawasa Market, Hajiya Hauwa Ali, a food vendor, welcomed the development.

"My customers are mostly women who buy small measures of millet and sorghum. Before, I would hear them complain and sometimes walk away because they could not afford even two mudus."

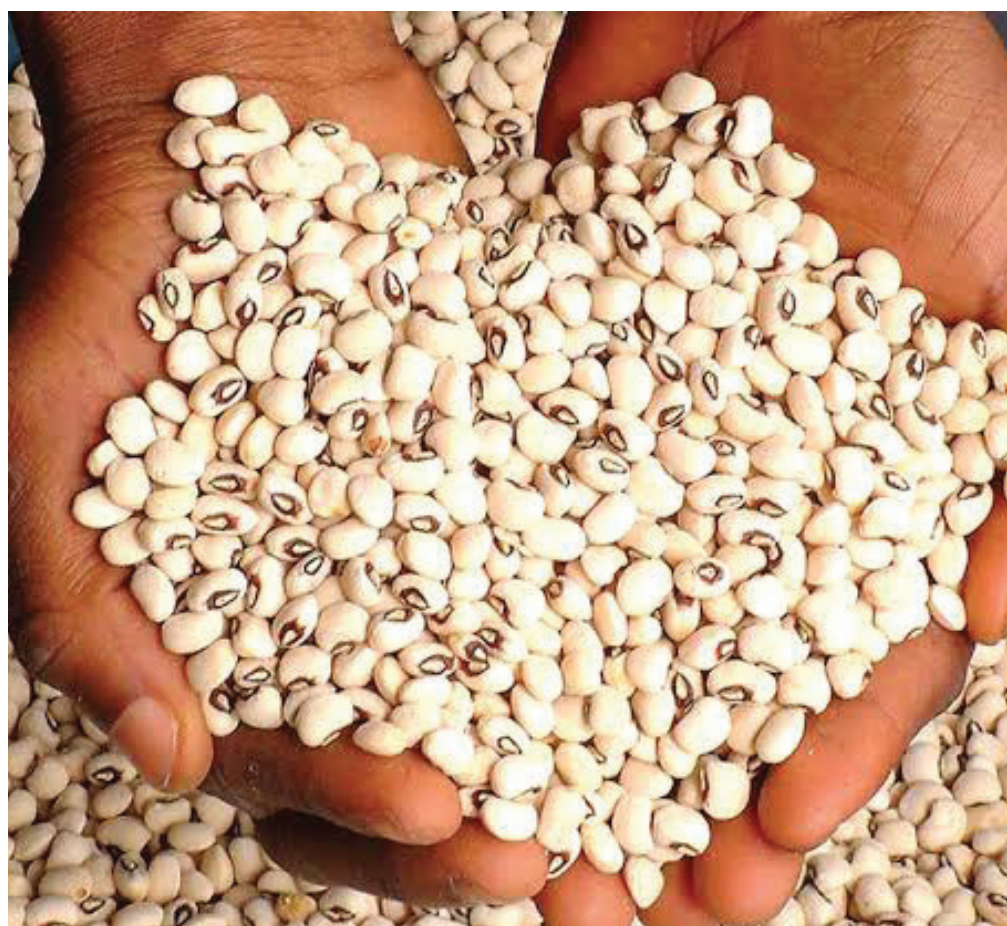
"Now, with this new price, they can buy and still save a little for pepper or oil. It has reduced quarrels and sadness in the market."

A youth leader, Bala Musa, told our correspondent that the high cost of red beans remains a concern, "Beans are the backbone of many households here. White beans and red beans are still expensive. We cannot rejoice fully until beans become affordable, because they are the food of both the rich and poor."

Market traders, however, explained that several factors influenced the current drop in grain prices.

Another trader, Aisha Musa, who sells melon and groundnut, said not all commodities enjoyed the same relief.

Groundnut is still very high, between N130,000 and N135,000. People complain, but we buy at high prices from farmers, so we cannot sell cheaply. It is only melon that has different types, with some cheaper variants going for N33,000 to N35,000."



MILESTONE

BY MARYAM SULAIMAN

MaryamSulaiman@neptuneprime.com.ng

Young tailor breaks Guinness World Record for longest sleeves on one rope

27-year-old Nigerian designer from Onitsha, Anambra State, Samuel Chinecherem Ezech, has set a remarkable world record after creating a robe with sleeves measuring 51.20 metres (167.97 ft) which was recognised as the longest sleeves on a garment by Guinness World Records.

To put the achievement in perspective, the sleeves are longer than the height of the Statue of Liberty (46.5 m; 152.5 ft) and exceed the length of an Olympic-size swimming pool (50 m; 164 ft). Samuel says his attempt was aimed at creating a landmark piece in fashion.

"I wish to take it on a tour to display it in different countries and cities to show the world what it looks like," he explained.

Samuel, a tailor and fashion designer who is also a student at Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, completed the robe in less than four hours. But the journey was anything but smooth. On the day of the attempt, his sewing machine broke down.

"The needle broke after hitting a hard part of the material and I realised I didn't have any spares," he recalled.

Switching to a backup machine didn't help — that needle snapped too. "At this point, I felt like crying," Samuel confessed. "I called the attention of my supervisor and he sent someone to fetch a pack of needles. After some minutes I got a new pack, I installed it and continued."

Funding the project was another challenge. Samuel struggled to secure sponsorship and ended up covering 70% of the costs himself. The garment required 62 yards of jampard material, two yards for the body and 60 yards for the record-breaking sleeves.

Samuel began sewing as an apprentice during secondary school and went on to launch his own clothing line, Eco Collection World of Beauty, in 2020. For him, the record attempt was both a personal challenge and a statement of ambition.



Ezech

Nigerian photojournalist, Aisha Rabo, clinches 3rd place at African Empire Reality TV show



Rabo

Nigerian photojournalist Aishatu Shateema Bukar, widely known as Aisha Rabo, has emerged as the 3rd Runner-Up in the recent African Empire Reality TV Show Season 3 – Heroes Edition.

The show ran from July 29 to August 20, 2025.

With a career in journalism spanning over a decade, Rabo has built an impressive resume. A native of Bauchi State, she currently works as a Defence Correspondent for OurNigeria News Magazine & OurNigeriaTV24.

Her past roles include working as a Reporter and Marketer with Neptune Prime Online Newspaper and as a Public Relations Assistant at the Real Estate Developers Association of Nigeria (REDAN).

Her performance on the reality show highlighted her charisma and her ability to connect and inspire people outside of journalism.

This achievement adds to her list of accomplishments, which includes winning the 17th edition of the Master at Photos Contest in April 2025 and representing Nigeria at the Africa Security Watch Conference in The Gambia in 2022.

Reflecting on her journey, Aisha Rabo expressed her thanks to her supporters, stating, "This platform has given me a new opportunity to inspire others. Becoming 3rd Runner-Up is not just my win—it is for everyone who believed in me."

Her story is a testament to her passion, resilience, and excellence. From her roots in Bauchi to her success as an internationally recognised journalist and now a reality TV finalist, Aisha Rabo continues to demonstrate that African women can break barriers and achieve global recognition.

HERITAGE

BY SALIM SANI

The agrarian spirit and vibrant cultural identity of the Kambari people

The Kambari are a people whose traditions are firmly rooted in the land that nourishes them and whose stories whisper the echoes of a proud past. Though small in number, they boast a vibrant cultural identity often overlooked in Nigeria's larger tapestry.

Kambari History

The Kambari, also known as Kamberi or Ashingin, are primarily located in Niger and Kebbi States, with smaller presences in Kwara, Sokoto, Nasarawa, and Zamfara. Their communities are mostly rural and dispersed.

Linguistically, the Kambari languages belong to the Kainji branch of the larger Benue-Congo family, and are grouped into at least three dialect clusters; Tsishingini, Tsikimba, and Cishingini, with variations that are not always mutually intelligible. Their origins remain partly vague, though some narratives suggest a connection to migrations from Bornu over a century ago.

Traditions and Ceremonies

Kambari cultural life is rich in ritual and expression. For instance, traditional marriage ceremonies are communal, marked by the slaughter of goats or cows and the symbolic act of the groom eating food prepared by the bride's family, at which point the matrimonial tie is considered knotted.

Intriguingly, the Kambari men do not claim attraction based on nudity, in a society historically noted for earlier practices of near-nudity, but rather on the artistry of women's braided hair, tattoos, good manners, and overall presentation.

Dance

Dances are also a core part of their cultural fabric. The "Igbe" dance honours hunters and their catches; "Ikuru" celebrates naming and marriages; while the "Virgin Dance" features young women dancing in a bridal rite context, symbolically inviting suitors. Another annual cultural anchor is



the Molongom Festival, a people-powered celebration that reinforces identity, unites generations, and spares no homage to deities or spirits, focusing instead on communal remembrance through costume, drumming, and dance.

Food and Economy

Agriculture is the epitome of the Kambari. They are passionate farmers of millet, guinea-corn, groundnuts, yams, rice, sorghum, beans, and corn; ingredients that feed their communities and beyond. Many keep chickens and goats, while wealthier families maintain cattle herds.

Despite this productivity, the Kambari remain marginalised. The terrain is often remote and

underdeveloped, with poor roads and minimal healthcare. Their semi-nomadic tendencies, use of donkeys for transport, and reliance on subsistence agriculture further underline the challenges of modernisation and the persistence of a way of life deeply tied to ancestral rhythms.

Spiritual Beliefs

Spiritual life among the Kambari is rooted in traditional animist systems. Many worship a deity named Magiro, and once revered Azangunu as well, though both deities have faded from active worship, their legacy survives in rituals and dances that affirm communal bonds.

Beliefs in spirits, ancestors,

witchcraft, ghosts, magic, and the power of medicines and oaths remain deeply embedded. Ghosts, for instance, are said to appear at night with fiery auras and can be dangerous, reflecting a perspective that is rich in supernatural interpretation. Animism is central, and various inanimate objects may be worshipped or sacrificed to for protection and guidance.

The Kambari songs, ceremonies, and harvests narrate a story of belonging, one that refuses to die. Through their traditions and beliefs, the Kambari remind us that true identity thrives not just in uniformity, but in the vibrant reality of rooted and relished histories.



HISTORICITY

BY JESSICA MBAMAH

Into the cultural, religious significance of the ancient city of Timbuktu

Timbuktu is an ancient city in Mali, situated 20 kilometres (12 miles) north of the Niger River. It is the capital of the Tombouctou Region, one of the eight administrative regions of Mali.

With a population of 32,460 in the 2018 census, Timbuktu is renowned for its rich history as a centre of trade and learning, particularly during the Islamic Golden Age.

Founded around the 12th century, it became a crucial hub for trans-Saharan trade routes, connecting West Africa with North Africa and the Middle East.

Timbuktu's strategic location facilitated the exchange of goods like salt, gold, ivory, and slaves, enriching the city and attracting scholars and intellectuals. The University of Sankore, with its numerous religious schools and libraries, made Timbuktu a renowned centre of Islamic scholarship and culture.

The name "Timbuktu" is said to mean "place of Buktu," possibly named after an old woman who guarded a well while the Tuareg were away. The city began as a Tuareg settlement and grew into a thriving trade centre, connecting West Africa to the Mediterranean region.

Spiritual Beliefs

Timbuktu, historically and presently, is deeply rooted in Islamic spiritual beliefs, particularly Sunni Islam. While traditional African religions like animism and ancestor worship were prevalent before the spread of Islam, they are now practised by a smaller percentage of the population.

Timbuktu also became a

major centre of Islamic scholarship and learning, with its Sankore University playing a crucial role in the dissemination of Islamic knowledge.

The city's prominence as a centre of Islamic learning dates back centuries, with rulers like Mansa Musa actively promoting the faith and building mosques like the Sankore Mosque. While Islam is dominant, some people in Timbuktu may still hold traditional beliefs alongside their Islamic faith or as part of their cultural heritage.

Trade and Economy

Historically, Timbuktu was a prosperous economic centre and a hub for the trans-Saharan trade, exchanging gold, salt, and other commodities like ivory, cloth, and slaves. Its wealth and influence, particularly under the Mali Empire, were derived from controlling these vital trade routes and taxing merchants.

Today, the economy of Timbuktu is in a state of decline, primarily due to instability, insecurity, and a lack of infrastructure, although agriculture and tourism were once significant activities.

Timbuktu flourished as a major trading centre where merchants from North Africa gathered to exchange goods. The most valuable commodities traded were gold and salt. Other traded items included ivory, cloth, slaves, books, horses, and ostrich feathers.

Crafts and Monuments

Timbuktu, Mali, showcases monuments like the ancient mud-brick mosques and

Sankore Madrasah, reflecting its historical importance as a centre of Islamic learning. Traditional crafts include jewellery making, leatherwork, and cotton weaving, often featuring geometric designs and produced for the tourist trade.

Decline

Although the city's architecture and artistry are significant, it has faced threats from conflict, leading to its designation as a World Heritage site in Danger.

Timbuktu faced threats from extremist groups leading to the destruction of cultural sites; efforts by local and international communities have aimed to preserve its heritage. The city's population has declined as a result of the recent issues.

Notable People

Ali Farka Toure (1939–2006) was a musician known for popularising the desert blues genre.

Ahmad Baba al-Timbukti (1556–1627), a Sanhaja Berber writer, scholar and political provocateur.

Abdul Rahman Ibrahima Sori (1762–1829), a prince and Amir (commander) who was captured and sold to slave traders and transported to the United States in 1788.

Mahamane Alassane Haidara (1910–1981), a politician who was elected to the French Senate in 1948. Souheil Ben-Barka (born 1942), a Moroccan film director, screenwriter and film producer.

Cissé Mariam Kaidama Sidibé (1948–2021) was a Malian politician and the first female prime minister of Mali.



ROOTS

BY GIFT LUCKSON
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Mary Prince: A pioneering voice for enslaved women

Mary Prince (1788 – after 1833) was born in Bermuda into slavery. She was sold several times across the Caribbean, including in Bermuda, Turks and Caicos, and Antigua. She endured harsh treatment and gruelling labour, including working in salt ponds and as a domestic servant.

Early Years

Mary Prince's early years were a relentless journey of loss, cruelty, and suffering. Born into slavery, she was separated from her family at the tender age of 12, sold away from the people she loved most.

It was not unusual for enslaved children to be sold, but the heartbreak she experienced was deeply personal. The pain of separation from her mother and siblings haunted her throughout her life, a recurring theme in her narrative, which would later become a vital voice in the abolitionist cause.

As a young girl, Mary had little choice but to endure the brutality of her masters—harsh work, severe punishment, and the degradation of being treated as property. Her childhood, like so many others in her situation, was stolen from her.

Despite the trauma, Mary's fierce determination never faltered. She held on to her humanity in the face of cruelty, and it was this inner strength that would carry her through the unimaginable hardships to come.

Flight to Freedom

In 1828, she travelled with her enslavers to London. Once there, she sought refuge with the Anti-Slavery Society. Because slavery was not legal in Britain, she never returned to her owners in the colonies.

Legacy

In 1831, she published her autobiography, *The History of Mary Prince, a West Indian Slave, Related by Herself*.

This was the first account of a Black woman's life published in Britain, and it gave a firsthand, female perspective on the brutality of Caribbean slavery.

Her testimony became a powerful tool for the abolitionist movement in Britain. Mary Prince is remembered today as a key figure in the struggle against slavery in the British Empire.

Memoir and Impact

The impact of Mary's memoir was immediate and profound. Abolitionists hailed it as an essential document in the fight for emancipation, seeing it as irrefutable proof of the horrors of slavery. But her story also sparked fierce controversy. Pro-slavery advocates, who sought to protect their interests, tried to discredit Mary and her account.

They questioned the truthfulness of her testimony, but her narrative stood strong, unassailable in its truth. It served as both a deeply personal testimony and a broader call to action, a cry for justice that could not be ignored.

Mary's memoir was not just a book; it was a revolutionary act. In telling her story, she defied the very system that sought to oppress her, giving a voice to those who could not speak for themselves.

Through her courage, she exposed the lie that slavery was anything but a violent, dehumanising institution. Her words resonated beyond her time, continuing to inspire generations of activists, scholars, and everyday people in the ongoing fight for freedom and equality.



The History of
Mary Prince
West Indian Slave

OLDIES

BY KASIM ISA MUHAMMAD

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How I smoothly combined marriage with education - University staff, Fatima Abbas

Born in 1969, Fatima Abbas stands as a living testimony that education has no age limit and marriage should never be a barrier to pursuing one's dreams. Now a staff member of Yobe State University, she embarked on the unusual journey of enrolling at Yobe State University to study Islamic Studies while raising a family. It was a path filled with sacrifices, sleepless nights, and moments of doubt.

In this exclusive interview with Neptune Prime, Fatima shares her inspiring story of how she balanced marriage, motherhood, and education. She reflects on the challenges she faced, the lessons she learned, her personal interests, and her advice to young women who often find themselves caught between societal expectations and personal ambitions.

Neptune Prime: Madam Fatima, thank you for granting us this interview. To begin with, you were born in 1969 and are now a university staff member. Could you tell us a bit about your early life before you got married?

Fatima: Thank you very much. I was born into a modest family in 1969. My childhood was shaped by discipline, religious upbringing, and community values. Education was important in my family, but for many girls at the time, it was not always prioritised. Still, I was fortunate to attend school and gradually developed a deep interest in Islamic knowledge, which later motivated me to study Islamic Studies at Yobe State University.

Neptune Prime: You enrolled at the university after marriage, which many women find very difficult. How exactly were you able to continue with your education while managing your home?

Fatima: It was not an easy journey at all. Marriage comes with responsibilities – being a wife, a mother, and at the same time a student. I had to learn how to manage time properly. Sometimes I woke up very early to do house chores, prepare meals, and see that the family was settled before attending lectures. At night, when everyone was asleep, I would sit with my books to study. It took a lot of sacrifice and determination, but with the support of my husband and children, I was able to carry on.

Neptune Prime: Many women drop out of school after marriage because of pressure. What kept you going?

Fatima: What kept me going was the conviction that education is not just for men, but also for women. I wanted to prove that

marriage should not stop a woman from achieving her dreams. My husband's encouragement was also a big factor; he understood my passion for education and gave me moral support. I also looked at my children and thought, "If I give up now, what lesson am I teaching them?" That thought alone gave me strength.

Neptune Prime: What was the biggest challenge you faced during your studies?

Fatima: Time and finances were the greatest challenges. Sometimes I had to sacrifice personal comfort to pay for academic needs. There were days when managing family responsibilities and attending lectures felt impossible, but patience and discipline kept me going. I also faced criticism from some people who believed a married woman had no business pursuing higher education. But I ignored those voices and stayed focused on my goal.

Neptune Prime: Did you ever feel like quitting along the way?

Fatima: Yes, there were times I almost gave up. When exams came during Ramadan, or when a child was sick at home, I would feel overwhelmed. But then I reminded myself that nothing good comes easy. I told myself that if I stopped, I might regret it forever. So I kept pushing.

Neptune Prime: Aside from academics and work, how do you spend your free time? What are your hobbies?

Fatima: I love reading, especially Islamic literature and history. I also enjoy gardening because it gives me peace and allows me to reflect. Cooking is another hobby; I love preparing traditional dishes for my family. And now that I am a grandmother, I spend a lot of time with my grandchildren – they bring joy to my heart.

Neptune Prime: What is your favourite food?

Fatima: My favourite food is tuwon shinkafa with miyan kuka. It reminds me of home and family gatherings. Food, for me, is more than just eating – it is about bonding with loved ones.

Neptune Prime: And what about your favourite colour?

Fatima: Green has always been my favourite colour. It symbolises peace, hope, and growth. Whenever I see green, I feel calm and optimistic about life.

Neptune Prime: Who were your role models growing up, and how did they inspire you?

Fatima: My biggest role model was my mother. She was not formally educated,



Fatima Abbas

but she valued knowledge greatly. She always encouraged me to pursue learning and told me that a woman who is educated is a blessing to her family. I also looked up to my teachers, especially those who showed dedication despite the challenges of teaching in our environment.

Neptune Prime: Today, many young women struggle to balance societal expectations with their personal ambitions. What advice do you have for them?

Fatima: My advice is simple: never give up on your dreams. Education does not end at marriage, and learning has no age limit. Women must be independent, not in a way that challenges their husbands, but in a way that adds value to themselves, their families, and society. Discipline and focus are very important, and so is prayer. I also advise young women to choose supportive friends

and to surround themselves with people who encourage growth.

Neptune Prime: Some say women are sometimes discouraged by the lack of opportunities after studying. What is your view on that?

Fatima: Opportunities may be limited, but education in itself is an opportunity. It opens the mind, changes perspectives, and equips you with tools to handle life. Even if you do not get a formal job immediately, your education will reflect in the way you raise your children, manage your home, and contribute to your community. Knowledge is never wasted.

Neptune Prime: Looking back at your journey, what achievement are you most proud of?

Fatima: I am most proud of the fact that I did not allow challenges to stop me. I was able to obtain a degree

in Islamic Studies while fulfilling my duties as a wife and mother. Today, I see my children and grandchildren and I know that the example I set has inspired them. That is my greatest achievement.

Neptune Prime: What message do you want to leave for younger women who may read this interview?

Fatima: My message is that life is not always easy, but perseverance brings success. Education is the strongest weapon you can have, so do not abandon it. Always remain humble, respect your parents and elders, and never

compromise your values. Work hard, stay focused, and believe in yourself.

Neptune Prime: Finally, how do you want to be remembered in years to come?

Fatima: I want to be remembered as a woman who inspired others to pursue education despite challenges. I want people to say that Fatima Abbas lived a life of service, faith, and knowledge. If I can leave behind children and students who value learning, then I will consider my life successful.

I love preparing traditional dishes for my family. And now that I am a grandmother, I spend a lot of time with my grandchildren – they bring joy to my heart

HUMANIST

BY KASIM ISA MUHAMMAD
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Kashim Tumsah sponsors September outreach as A5 Sickle cell initiative brings hope to warriors



Tumsah

The fight against Sickle Cell Disorder (SCD) in Yobe State has received a fresh lifeline as the A5 Sickle Cell Support Initiative prepares for its September outreach, coinciding with Sickle Cell Awareness Month.

The event, to begin on 6th September 2025 at the Potiskum Local Government Secretariat (Town Hall), will distribute essential medications free of charge to patients living with the condition.

The initiative, which has become a steady source of relief for families battling SCD, aims to provide drugs such as folic acid, paludrine, vitazade, malaria treatment pills, heat balm, nutritional supplements, and painkillers.

In addition, sanitary pads will be distributed to female patients aged 13 and above, with a fundraising appeal made to well-wishers to help cover the costs.

Neptune Prime learned that for many families in Yobe, the cost of maintaining a child or adult living with sickle cell is overwhelming.

Speaking ahead of the event, Aliyu Bakama, Chief Executive Officer of the A5 Sickle Cell Support Initiative, explained that the programme is more than just drug distribution.

“It is about dignity, about giving our warriors the assurance that they are not forgotten. Every pill, every pack of supplements, every kind gesture means a day of relief, a chance to smile, and a stronger hope for survival.”

It is gathered that this year’s outreach is powered by Yobe diplomat, Barrister Kashim Musa Tumsah (KMT), MFR, who sponsored the Sickle Cell Survival Pack for the September edition.

His intervention ensures that patients in Potiskum and surrounding communities

Family begs for financial help for daughter’s heart surgery in India

The family of two-year-old Sodiya Inayat is appealing to the public for N20 million to enable her to undergo heart surgery at Marengo Asia Hospital in India.

According to her mother, Mrs Precious Inayat, the child first presented with a cough and other symptoms at Sacred Heart Hospital, Lantoro, Abeokuta, just a few weeks after birth.

She said she had also observed that her daughter was not gaining weight like other children during routine immunisation visits.

Inayat’s condition later worsened, with rapid heartbeat, persistent cough and other complications.

She was subsequently referred to the Federal Medical Centre (FMC), Idi-Aba, Abeokuta, where doctors discovered she had developed “multiple holes” in the heart.

A medical report signed by Dr Oyeibanji Adedayo, Consultant Paediatric Cardiologist at Babcock University Teaching Hospital, Ogun State, indicated that an echocardiogram conducted in June 2025 showed Inayat had developed sub-truncus VSD measuring 20mm, shunting bidirectional but predominantly right to left.

The report recommended a CT Pulmonary Angiography to define truncal anatomy and diagnostic cardiac catheterisation for



Inayat

oximetry, ahead of a possible corrective heart surgery.

The surgery is estimated to cost more than N20 million, a sum far beyond the means of the child’s parents. Mrs Inayat runs a small tailoring shop that earns about N15,000 monthly, while her husband, an interior decorator, earns less than N50,000 monthly.

Mrs Inayat described the situation as emotionally draining and appealed to well-meaning Nigerians to come to their aid.

FEATURES



Dr Duru

Use of gender-based laws for political persecution and social manipulation (5)

CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK

By Duru Sandra Chidinma, PhD

This research concludes that the misuse of gender-based laws to target, manipulate, or politically eliminate men is not only a social justice crisis, it is a failure of administrative balance, media responsibility, and human rights observance. Gender must not be a weapon, but a framework for fairness. To achieve true equity, Nigeria must rise beyond gender bias and embrace inclusive justice. The unheard screams of falsely accused men are not less human than those of women. And if justice must be blind, then it must not wear lipstick or a beard, it must wear truth.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined the weaponization of

gender-based laws in Nigeria and their use for political persecution and social manipulation against men, with a focus on the critical absence of administrative structures to protect male victims. It employed qualitative methods, including interviews, document analysis, and case studies, to highlight a systemic imbalance in policy design, enforcement, and advocacy.

Key findings include:

- The rise in false accusations and misuse of protective laws to destroy men's careers, reputations, and families.
- Administrative bias that often favors presumed female victims without due investigation.
- Media complicity in stigmatizing men through sensationalist, biased coverage.
- The lack of institutional and emotional support systems for wrongly

accused men.

- A growing societal need for inclusive gender policies, and the urgent establishment of a Federal Ministry of Men's Affairs.

Conclusion

This thesis concludes that gender-based laws, though vital, are being co-opted in some instances as tools of oppression against men, particularly within political and social power struggles. While women remain disproportionately affected by gender-based violence, justice must not become selective. Men, too, suffer in silence—ostracized, disbelieved, and discarded by systems built on binary victimhood narratives. The failure of current public administrative structures to recognize and respond to male victimization creates a dangerous precedent. When laws become shields for some and swords against others based on gender stereotypes, they

violate the very essence of justice.

It is no longer enough to shout "protect women" while ignoring the unheard screams of men. Justice must be holistic. Policy must be human. Governance must be fair.

Policy Development

- Draft and pass a Gender Balance Protection Bill, emphasizing equal treatment, criminalization of false accusations, and non-discriminatory administrative action.
- Amend the VAPP Act and similar statutes to include clauses protecting falsely accused individuals and penalizing malicious complaints.

Institutional Reforms

- Establish a Federal Ministry of Men's Affairs to mirror the Ministry of Women Affairs. Key responsibilities should include:
- Legal aid and representation for men

facing false or politically motivated accusations.

- Psychological counseling and trauma healing centers.
- Gender-equality advocacy programs inclusive of men's needs.
- National research initiatives on male vulnerability, suicide, and legal victimization.

Administrative Protocols

- MDAs must revise internal HR and disciplinary protocols to avoid premature punitive actions against male staff without thorough investigation.
- Introduce gender-neutral complaint review boards with independent oversight.

Media Ethics and Regulation

- Strengthen regulatory frameworks to penalize slander and premature reporting of allegations.
- Mandate equal prominence for acquittal/exoneration stories.
- Train journalists in balanced gender-sensitive reporting.
- Curriculum and Public Education
- Introduce gender-neutral justice education in secondary and tertiary institutions.
- Launch mass sensitization campaigns targeting families, workplaces, and communities to change the stigma around male victimhood.

Research Contributions

This study has made the following contributions:

1. Theoretical Advancement: It expands Critical Legal Theory, Masculinity Theory, and Policy Weaponization Theory into a combined framework for assessing gendered legal abuse.
2. Policy Innovation: Proposes the Federal Ministry of Men's Affairs as a novel governance structure.
3. Data Contribution: Presents original cases, interviews, and analysis of male-targeted legal persecution, previously under-documented.
4. Advocacy Groundwork: Provides a scholarly basis for reformist movements seeking male-inclusive justice systems.

Suggestions for Future Research

- Conduct large-scale quantitative surveys on the prevalence of false accusations in Nigeria.
- Study comparative frameworks from countries with male-

inclusive gender policies.

- Investigate the long-term psychological effects on men exonerated from false charges.
- Develop a model for restorative justice that includes male and female reconciliation processes.

Final Reflection

This research stands not as an indictment of women's rights, but as a clarion call for balance. For Nigeria to become truly just, our public administration and gender policies must reflect all human experiences, not just the loudest or most politically supported.

It is time to write laws for the silenced.


It is time to hear unheard screams, not just from women, but from men too. Because justice, when it wears a blindfold, must also have ears open to every voice.

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Dr DURU Sandra Chidinma, a Nigerian Scholar.

Concluded



SPORTS

BY MUHAMMAD KUKURI,
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Flying Eagles

U-20 World Cup: Flying Eagles intensify training sessions

Nigeria’s U-20 men’s national team, the Flying Eagles, have officially kicked off the decisive phase of their preparations for the FIFA U-20 World Cup in Chile, with training sessions underway at the NFF/FIFA Goal Project in Abuja. Head coach Aliyu

Zubairu is steering the camp as the squad transitions into what he described as “the most critical stage” of their three-phase buildup to the global showpiece, which begins on 27 September. Zubairu told journalists in Abuja that he is pleased with progress so far: “We are at top gear now,” the

coach declared. He confirmed that the team is working with a mix of home-based talent and foreign-based prospects, though club release remains a stumbling block. “We have invited some players from abroad, Nigerian players abroad, some from within the

country,” he explained. “Even though the majority of those we invited from abroad have still not been allowed by their clubs to come, we are pushing with the ones on the ground to make sure that we are heading towards having a very formidable and solid team for Nigeria U-20.”

Teenage weightlifter Florence Olarinoye wins 6 gold medals in Ghana

Weightlifting prodigy Florence Olarinoye has continued to make her mark for Nigeria by winning six gold medals at the African Junior and Youth Weightlifting Championship in Ghana. Nigeria is among the 14 countries vying for honours at the Ga Mashie Hall of the Trust Sports Emporium, Accra, Ghana, and the young weightlifter laid down a marker in the 58kg category. Olarinoye won three gold medals in the youth category and added another three in the junior category. She lifted snatch 71kg, clean & jerk 86kg, totalling 157kg. Another young Nigerian lifter, Cecilia Ezinwa, also won two gold and a silver in the 48kg class. Ezinwa lifted 63kg in snatch,

72kg in clean and jerk and a total of 135kg to raise the curtain for Nigeria’s medal rush on Monday. Their feats took Nigeria’s total number of medals at the championship to eight gold and one silver. The 15-year-old Olarinoye came into the limelight at the 2024 National Sports Festival held in Ogun State earlier this year, where she shared the podium with her mother, Ronke Olarinoye. The Lagos City College student won silver for Lagos State in the women’s 59kg clean and jerk, with a best lift of 59kg in the clean and jerk, going up against the experienced Folashade Lawal. She had also won gold at the 2023 national Youth Games in Asaba, Delta State.



Olarinoye

Arsenal hijacks Tottenham’s move, accepts £67.5m deal to sign Eberechi Eze

Arsenal are poised to snatch Eberechi Eze from under the noses of arch-rivals Tottenham Hotspur in what could be one of the most audacious moves of the Premier League’s summer transfer window. Spurs appeared to be on course to bring the 27-year-old Crystal Palace attacking midfielder to their corner of north London. However, it is now being suggested that Arsenal, amid concerns over a knee injury to Kai Havertz, may scupper the deal and bring England international Eze, who was released by the Gunners as a 13-year-old, to the Emirates. The Athletic reported that Arsenal had reached an agreement in principle with Palace to sign Eze, with the deal worth in the region of the expired £68 million (\$91 million) release clause, matching the level of fee Spurs were prepared to pay. Arsenal’s interest increased after Havertz suffered an injury setback. The German international came on in the second half of Sunday’s victory over Manchester United and completed the game, but was absent from Arsenal’s open training at the Emirates on Wednesday. Arsenal finished runners-up to Premier League champions Liverpool last season and are expected to challenge for the title again, whereas Spurs, who won the Europa League final, ended the campaign in a lowly 17th place — one spot above the relegation zone. Eze played 84 minutes of the weekend draw at Chelsea and trained on Wednesday ahead of Palace’s Conference League play-off at home to Fredrikstad, with coach Oliver Glasner insisting he and Eagles captain Marc Guehi, a target for Liverpool, would both start the European tie. “Before Chelsea, I think many of you were surprised that Marc and Ebs started and played almost the whole game,” Glasner told a pre-match press conference earlier Wednesday. “Most of you will be surprised that they will start again tomorrow because of all the rumours. But again, they are committed.” Glasner, who also guided Palace to Community Shield glory in a penalty shoot-out win over Liverpool, added: “They are committed to the team, they have a contract here, they played a crucial part in our success, and they will play a crucial part as long as they are here. “Because they are good, they are committed to the team, and when one of the players leaves, which I don’t know at the moment, then they want to leave as players who always gave 100 per cent for Crystal Palace. “This is what they did since they signed, and this is what we expect from them until the end of their contract, whenever this is.” Palace captain Guehi is under contract until next year, while Eze’s deal expires in 2027. “This noise, these rumours, it’s not just for three days, it’s been written for weeks,” said Glasner.



Eze

FAMILY DYNAMICS

• WITH

• AISHA AUYO,

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He Fulfilled His Own Dreams and Forgot Mine

Many women enter marriage with hopes of growing alongside their husbands, spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually. Sadly, some discover that while they invest in their husbands' progress, their dreams are left unattended. Today's story is from a woman who has spent ten years in marriage waiting for a promise to be fulfilled.

Dear Sis Eesher,

Please advise me. I am a married woman with children, and this year marks the tenth year of my marriage. Before our wedding, my husband promised that I would further my education because I had only completed high school.

The problem is this: whenever I raise the issue of returning to school, it ends in a quarrel. My husband himself was only a secondary school graduate, but during our marriage, he managed to obtain two academic certificates because he went back to school. At the time, he told me that neither of us could be studying simultaneously. I agreed and waited.

Now that he has finished, I don't see him making any effort towards supporting my ambition. Whenever I bring it up, he pretends not to hear, and if I insist, it turns into a heated argument. He often says there is no money to put me in school, which is true, but what hurts more is the silence—no encouragement, no words of hope, just indifference.

The small business I am managing has not been doing well either, and I feel sad and stuck. People also mock SSCE holders, and I experience that sting of being looked down upon. What do I really do at this point?

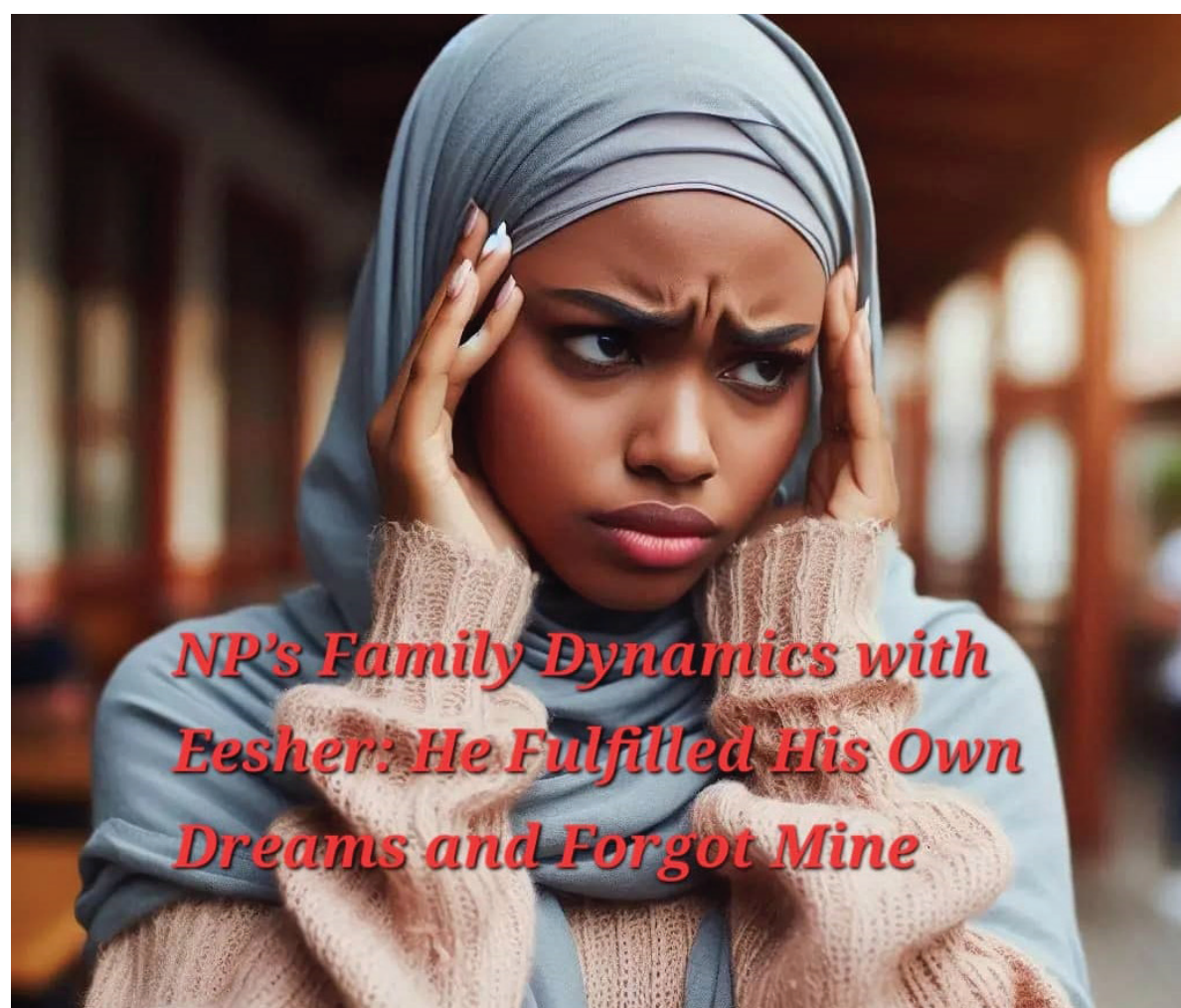
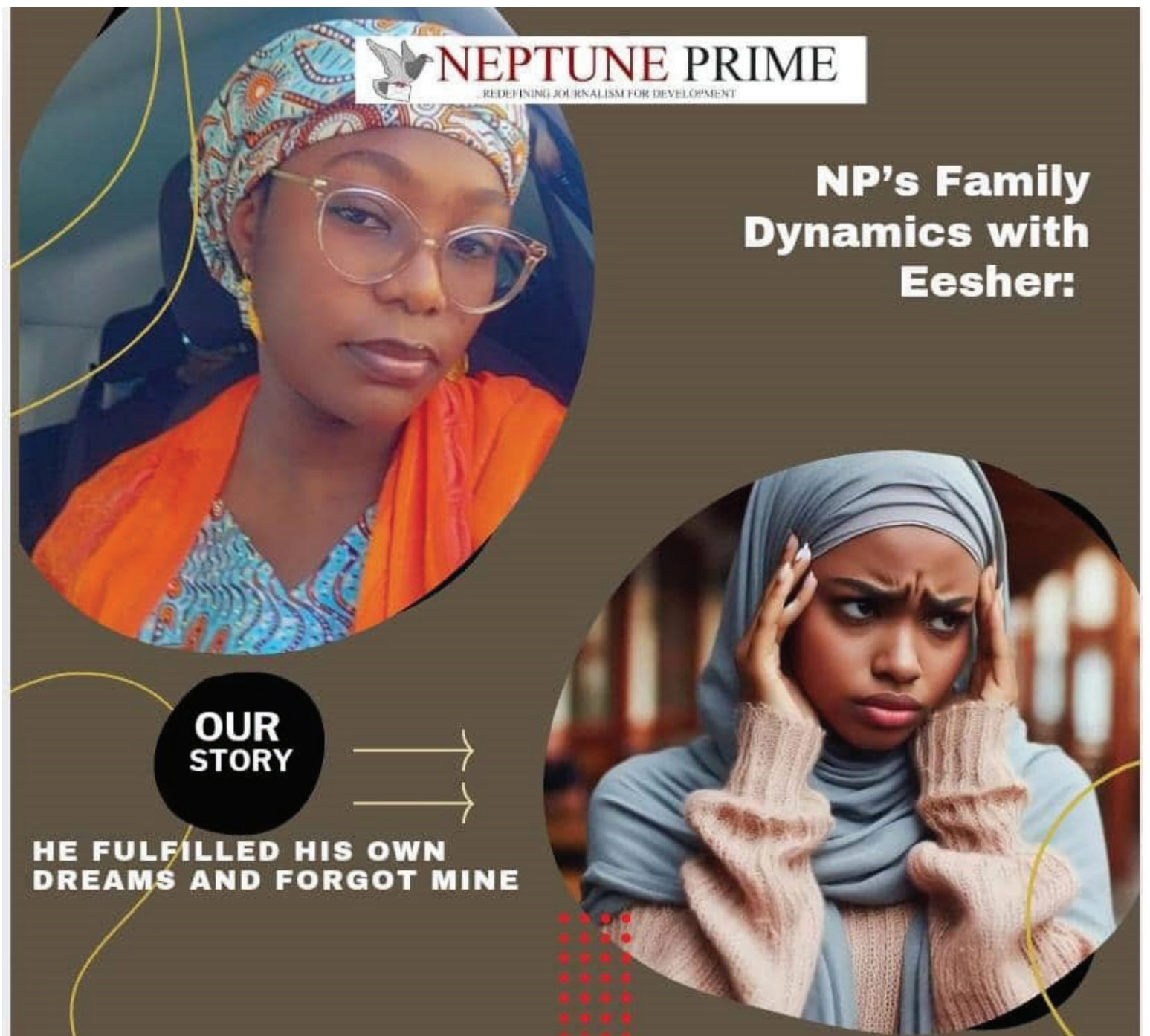
Dear Anonymous,

First, let me acknowledge your pain. You are not wrong for desiring education, nor are you wrong for feeling disappointed. A promise was made to you, and you have waited patiently for ten years.

However, you do not have to wait any longer for someone else to champion your dreams. The reality is that your husband may never prioritise your education the way you wish. That doesn't mean you should abandon your ambition.

Here are some steps you can take:

1. Encourage Yourself First: Do not wait for validation from your husband or anyone. Remind yourself that your dream is valid, and your value is not defined by your current certificate.
2. Explore Affordable Options: Education today is no longer confined to classrooms. There are part-time programmes, online diplomas, and even short professional courses you can start with little cost. Some NGOs and government schemes also support women's education—keep an eye out for them.
3. Build Gradually: Since your business is struggling, consider learning basic business skills online for free. Platforms like YouTube and free learning sites can give you knowledge while you prepare financially for bigger academic goals.
4. Communicate with Wisdom: Instead



of confronting your husband with arguments, share your dream as a journey you want to take for yourself, your children, and even the family's pride. Sometimes changing the tone of the conversation reduces resistance.

5. Never Let Shame Define You: Many people with only SSCE have built successful lives. Certificates open doors, yes, but confidence, resilience, and continuous self-improvement are equally powerful keys.

My dear, you may not control your husband's actions, but you can control your own. Don't let ten more years pass while waiting for someone to give you permission. Start where you are, with what you have, and trust Allah to bless your sincere effort.

With love and prayers,
Sis Eesher

SOCIALS/FASHION

BY SUSAN MBAMAH

QUICK
STATISTICS
ON FASHION

99%
Of Women are not aware of underskirt or patroning such!

45%
of Women avoid bras due to advanced methods of sewing blouses

23%
Nigerians women replaces panties with tight!

78%
of Nigerians patronise native attires

78%
patronise nature attires

79%
of Nigerians can't live without jeans

84%
of Nigerians still patronise fairly used cloths, bags and shoes

79%
of Nigerians patronise can't dress without jeans

TO FEATURE ON OUR FASHION/SOCIAL PAGE!
You can send your pictures to neptuneprime2233@gmail.com

Fashion is cyclical. What was once rebellious often returns as refined. Few trends embody this cycle better than tie-dye, a technique that has travelled across centuries and continents, shifting from ancient artistry to countercultural symbol, and now to a polished high-fashion statement.

In the 21st century, tie-dye is not just back; it has been reinvented, rebranded, and redefined. From pandemic-era DIY projects to luxury runways, tie-dye has emerged as a fashion phenomenon, uniting nostalgia with modernity.

Tie-Dye Before Woodstock
Although tie-dye is often tied (pun intended) to 1960s counterculture, its origins run much deeper. Ancient civilisations across Asia and Africa practised forms of resist dyeing long before it became associated with rock concerts and flower crowns.

Shibori (Japan) – Dating back to the 8th century, shibori used intricate folding, stitching, and binding techniques to create detailed patterns on indigo-dyed fabric.

Bandhani (India) – A method still practised today, involving tying fabric with tiny knots before dipping it in dye, producing delicate dotted patterns.

Adire (Nigeria, West Africa) – Yoruba artisans mastered resist-dyeing with indigo, creating symbolic patterns that carried cultural meaning. These techniques were not simply about fashion; they were about identity, spirituality, and symbolism, proving that tie-dye has always been more than just decoration.

The 1960s: Tie-Dye as Counterculture Icon
Tie-dye exploded into the Western mainstream in the 1960s and 1970s, becoming a visual anthem of freedom, peace, and rebellion.

At the height of the hippie movement, tie-dye symbolised anti-establishment ideals; rejecting conformity and celebrating individuality. Music icons like Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix, and The Grateful Dead turned tie-dye into a cultural uniform, but it wasn't just music it was political. Tie-dye was worn during anti-war protests, civil rights demonstrations, and feminist rallies. Wearing tie-dye meant more than being fashionable it was about making a statement.

The Dormant Years
After its psychedelic peak, tie-dye faded in popularity. In the 1980s, fashion shifted toward minimalism and power dressing, leaving little room for swirls of colour. The 1990s revived it slightly through rave culture and skateboarding, but by the 2000s, tie-dye was often dismissed as a kitschy relic of the past more associated with summer camps and tourist T-shirts than style. It seemed destined to remain a nostalgic trend until the 21st century brought a new wave of reinvention.

The 21st Century Revival
The 2010s and 2020s ushered in a surprising revival of tie-dye, but this time it looked different. The comeback was fuelled by several cultural shifts.

The DIY Boom: During the COVID-19 lockdowns, people worldwide turned to creative hobbies. Old sweatshirts and T-shirts were reborn with at-home tie-dye kits, flooding

Tie-Dye: The reinvention of a polished high-fashion style



Instagram and TikTok with pastel swirls.
Social Media Influence: Influencers and celebrities flaunted tie-dye loungewear and matching sets, making it aspirational rather than outdated.

High-Fashion Endorsement: Luxury designers like Prada, Dior, and Stella McCartney reintroduced tie-dye in sophisticated palettes, proving it could be both casual and couture.

Gen Z's Values: Individuality, sustainability, and authenticity matter more than conformity. Tie-dye embodies all three, each piece is unique, eco-conscious DIY aligns with slow fashion, and it rejects cookie-cutter mass production.

This combination turned tie-dye from a nostalgic throwback into a modern statement.

Celebrities, Designers, and the Tie-Dye Renaissance
The revival wasn't accidental, it was influenced by fashion icons and global tastemakers.

Beyoncé – Through her Ivy Park x Adidas line, Beyoncé embraced neon tie-dye active wear, merging athleticism with boldness.

Justin Bieber: he helped normalise tie-dye sweats as streetwear essentials, often pairing oversized hoodies and joggers in vibrant hues. Hailey Bieber & Gigi Hadid elevated pastel tie-dye loungewear to “quarantine chic,” making it a stylish yet comfortable choice.

Prada, Dior, & Stella McCartney reimaged tie-dye with muted tones, luxury fabrics, and couture techniques. Dior's Spring/Summer 2020 collection even presented



hand-dyed silk gowns, elevating the craft beyond its countercultural roots and so on.

This fusion of celebrity influence plus high-fashion credibility made tie-dye both aspirational and accessible.

Beyond T-Shirts: Tie-Dye as a Lifestyle

In the 21st century, tie-dye has expanded far beyond its 1960s stereotype. Today, it's not just a T-shirt trend, it's a lifestyle aesthetic.

Loungewear & Active wear: Tie-dye sweat sets became the pandemic uniform.

Sneakers & Streetwear: Nike, Adidas, and Vans all released tie-dye versions of their classics.

Accessories: Bags, hats, scrunchies, and even face masks saw tie-dye makeovers.

Home Décor: Tie-dye blankets, bedding, and wall hangings turned apartments into boho sanctuaries.

Beauty & Hair: Tie-dye manicures, makeup looks, and rainbow hair became festival staples.

Sustainability and Tie-Dye's Green Future

Tie-dye's revival also taps into the eco-conscious movement reshaping fashion:

Upcycling: Old clothes get a second life with dye rather than ending up in landfills.

TECHWORLD

BY MUHAMMAD KUKURI
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GAMESCIENE

Dubbed the 'sickest ever' video game because players only have one aim - to massacre as many people as possible in a 'genocide crusade', Hatred is the second game in history to get adults only rating.

GADGETADDICT

Obviously inspired by the iPhone's glass touchscreen display, the Iconoclock, which is a wall clock that points out each hour with approximations of familiar app icons. Its crystal face delivers a similar jet black yet glossy background as the ubiquitous smartphone.

web update

Google, TikTok, Microsoft deactivate 13.5 million accounts in Nigeria

The National Information Technology Development Agency said that big tech companies, including Google, Microsoft, and TikTok, deactivated more than 13.5 million accounts in 2024 as part of compliance with Nigeria's Code of Practice for online safety.

The announcement followed the submission of the 2024 compliance report under the Code of Practice for Interactive Computer Service Platforms and Internet Intermediaries, a framework jointly issued by NITDA, the Nigerian Communications Commission, and the National Broadcasting Commission.

The Code outlines clear obligations for large service providers to register in Nigeria, comply with local laws, meet their tax obligations, and adopt measures to safeguard users from harmful online practices.

According to NITDA, the compliance reports provided by the platforms revealed that users lodged a total of 754,629 complaints in 2024, leading to the takedown of 58,909,112 pieces of content judged to be harmful.

In addition, 420,439 items of content were removed and later re-uploaded following successful appeals by users, while 13,597,057 accounts were permanently closed or deactivated for violations.

In a statement signed by its Director of Corporate Communications and Media Relations, Hadiza Umar, NITDA said the submission of the reports was a significant step towards creating a safer and more responsible digital environment for Nigerian users.

The agency explained that the figures demonstrated the platforms' commitment to maintaining a secure and trustworthy online space in line with the Code of Practice and their own community guidelines.

"The submission of these reports marks a significant step towards fostering a safer and more responsible digital environment for Nigerian users," the regulator said.

"Building a safer digital space requires sustained collaboration and engagement among all stakeholders. We remain committed to working with industry players, civil society, and regulatory partners to strengthen user safety measures, enhance digital literacy, and promote trust and transparency in Nigeria's digital ecosystem."

The agency commended Google, Microsoft and TikTok for their continued compliance, stressing that transparency through the publication of such reports was central to accountability in Nigeria's digital governance framework.



AI teaching plan

TRCN to introduce AI-generated lesson plans

The Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) has announced plans to introduce contextualised, Artificial Intelligence (AI)-generated lesson plans for schools across the country. TRCN Registrar, Dr Ronke Soyombo, disclosed this while signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with GMIND AI.

Under the partnership, an AI-powered platform will be developed to deliver contextualised and simulated lesson plans tailored for Nigerian classrooms.

Soyombo said the initiative would revolutionise lesson

preparation and improve teaching quality nationwide.

She added that the platform would be officially launched on October 6, following the unveiling of TRCN's new website on August 25, which will feature multilingual video guides.

Soyombo said: "We want AI-generated lesson plans that are contextualised for our children. Every lesson will also be simulated, because 21st-century learners need to see and experience concepts for learning to be profound."

She explained that, unlike generic global platforms, the TRCN-GMIND system would

integrate Nigerian history, culture and realities into lessons.

"Our children can still learn about the Victorians, but they must also learn about the life and Benin Kingdoms in the same breath," she said.

The platform will provide two categories of resources – AI-generated lesson plans with simulations for digitally skilled teachers, and prescriptive, ready-to-use lesson plans for teachers with limited ICT skills.

This, she said, would guarantee inclusivity.

According to the TRCN boss, the resource bank will cover all subjects and be accessible online, through state TRCN offices, and in downloadable formats.

She added that lesson contents will also be differentiated for gifted, average and

less able learners, with a focus on practical, hands-on activities.

"Once the burden of lesson planning is reduced, teachers can focus on adapting materials to their learners' needs," she said.

While the project is currently tailored for Nigerian educators, Soyombo said it would be open to all registered and licensed teachers. Director of Strategic Partnership and Innovation at GMIND AI, Deji Ajani, described the project as a flagship example of AI in African education.

"We are excited to co-create TRCN AI, a customised ecosystem that blends cutting-edge technology with Nigeria's unique educational needs," he said.

Telco company unveils product for hourly payment of mobile internet

Safaricom, Kenya's biggest telco, has introduced a new product that could reshape how customers pay for mobile internet. The product, called B-Live and launched on Wednesday, allows users to buy data by the hour instead of the traditional megabyte or gigabyte bundles.

Prices range from KES 20 (\$0.16) for 1 hour to KES 150 (\$1.16) for six hours, with usage tied strictly to time, and not data volume.

The move marks Safaricom's boldest attempt yet to tackle long-running customer frustration over data bundles depleting too fast.

For years, Kenyans have complained that their mobile data disappears unpredictably, despite the operator's efforts to explain usage patterns and roll out a wide range of bundle

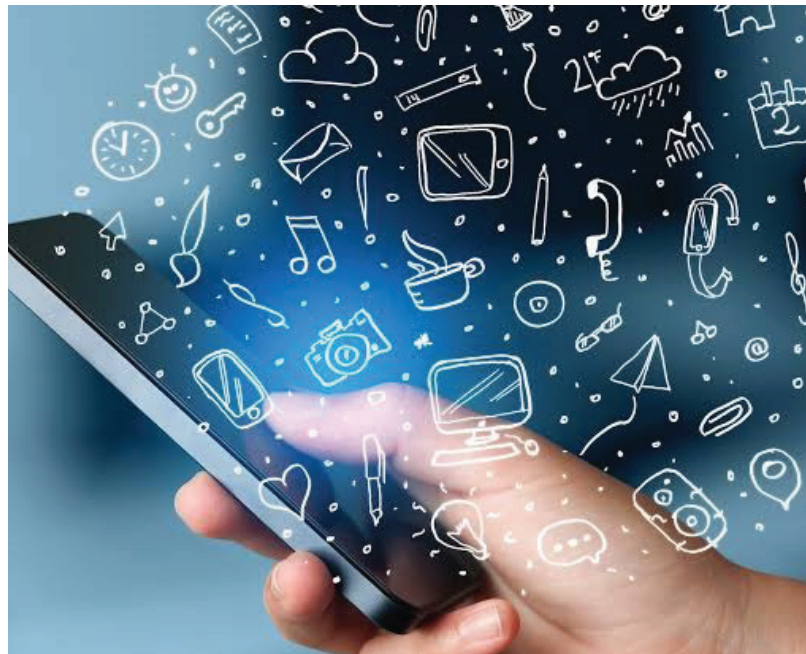
options.

By shifting the unit of consumption from volume to time, Safaricom is betting it can restore predictability, promising customers clarity over costs whether they're streaming, scrolling, or downloading.

The new product, tested since July, also comes with restrictions. Safaricom has disabled hotspotting, and a fair-usage policy means heavy users may see speeds throttled if they cross undisclosed thresholds, an approach Safaricom has previously applied to its fibre and 5G Wi-Fi services.

Without transparency, the risk is that the same "fast depletion" complaints resurface in a different form.

No other Kenyan operator currently offers a fully time-based mobile data product of this scale.



Mobile internet



Microsoft, TikTok

WORLD NEWS

BY MERCY ADAJE
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Yoweri

Uganda agrees to take undocumented migrants from US

Uganda has agreed to receive migrants who do not qualify to remain in the United States, a foreign ministry official said Thursday, in Washington's latest attempt to speed up deportations.

US President Donald Trump's administration has negotiated arrangements to send people to third countries, among them El Salvador and Eswatini, which have been fiercely criticised by rights groups.

At roughly 1.7 million Uganda already hosts the largest refugee population in Africa, according to the United Nations, and is the latest East African country to announce such a deal with Washington, joining Rwanda and South Sudan. "The agreement is in respect of Third Country Nationals who may not be granted asylum in the United States, but are reluctant to or may have concerns about returning to their countries of origin," the Ugandan foreign affairs ministry's permanent secretary, Vincent Bagire, said in a statement on X.

He said it was a "temporary arrangement", which specified that "individuals with criminal records and unaccompanied minors will not be accepted".

Bagire also stated Uganda's preference that "individuals from African countries shall be the ones transferred to Uganda".

"The two parties are working out the detailed modalities on how the agreement shall be implemented," he added.

The UN's refugee agency notes that Uganda — led by President Museveni Yoweri, who has held power for almost four decades — has a "progressive refugee policy, maintaining an open-door approach to asylum".

However the country also saw a "significant" increase in arrivals in 2024, it said, primarily as a result of Sudan's civil war, but also unrest in South Sudan and the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

Kampala's announcement of the agreement comes a day after the country denied any such deal existed.

It also comes after Rwanda said it would receive up to 250 migrants earlier this month.

Kigali is yet to give any further details of that agreement, which Washington has not confirmed.

However, the Trump administration has struck a deal with South Sudan.

The impoverished and increasingly fragile nation accepted a group of eight migrant criminals from the US earlier this year. Only one of them is South Sudanese.

Though their extradition was fought in the American court system, South Sudan confirmed in July that its government had taken care of the men, without giving further details.

Since returning to the White House in January, Trump has taken several actions aimed at speeding up deportations of undocumented migrants to countries that are not their own.



SpaceX

Elon Musk's SpaceX launches secretive US military spacecraft

SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket blasted into space on Thursday night carrying the US military's secretive X-37B drone. The rocket successfully launched at 11:50 pm (0350 GMT on Friday), according to SpaceX's livestream of the event.

The Falcon 9 lit up the night sky over NASA's Kennedy Space Centre, where it was launched from.

The US Space Force has said the drone's mission will include "a wide range of test and experimentation objectives."

These operational demonstrations and experiments comprise next-generation technologies, including laser communications and the highest-performing

inertial sensor ever tested in space," the service said in a statement last month.

"Mission 8 will contribute to improving the resilience, efficiency, and security of U.S. space-based communications architectures," it added.

About the size of a small bus, the X-37B US space drone looks like a mini version of the manned space shuttles retired in 2011.

On previous missions, the X-37B has carried out tests for US space agency NASA.

In operation since 2010, the X-37B Orbital Test Vehicle was designed for the Air Force by United Launch Alliance by Boeing.



ICC

ICC condemns new US sanctions on judges, prosecutors

The International Criminal Court (ICC) has denounced new US sanctions against two more of its judges and two prosecutors, calling them a "flagrant attack" on its independence.

The four persons include Judge Nicolas Guillou of France, who is presiding over a case in which an arrest warrant was issued for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Canadian judge Kimberly Prost and deputy prosecutors Nazhat Shameem Khan of Fiji and Mame Mandiaye Niang of Senegal were also hit.

Prost was involved in a case that authorised an investigation into alleged crimes committed during the war in Afghanistan, including by US forces.

"These sanctions are a flagrant attack against the independence of an impartial judicial institution," the court said in a statement.

The ICC said it stood "firmly behind its personnel and victims of unimaginable atrocities".

It said it would "continue fulfilling its mandates, undeterred" and "without regard to any restriction, pressure or threat".

Four other judges and the court's prosecutor had already been placed under sanctions.



Judge Nicolas Guillou of France

DID YOU KNOW?

BY VIVIAN OKAFOR

Cleopatra married her younger brothers

Cleopatra VII was the last queen of Egypt and the last ruler of the Ptolemies, a Macedonian Greek dynasty that ruled Egypt for nearly three centuries.

Known today simply as "Cleopatra," she was a strategic politician who used familial and romantic relationships to strengthen her position as queen. This involved having children with dictators, marrying her siblings, killing her siblings and installing her toddler son as co-ruler.

Cleopatra married two of her younger brothers, Ptolemy XIII and Ptolemy XIV, by Egyptian royal customs that allowed and encouraged such marriages to consolidate power and lineage.

She first married Ptolemy XIII around 51 BC when she was 18 and he was 10, but this union was brief and characterised by rivalry. After his death, she married his younger brother, Ptolemy XIV, who was 12 at the time, a marriage that was largely symbolic and political in nature.

Birth and Power

Cleopatra was born around 70 or 69 BCE in Alexandria, Egypt to King Ptolemy XII. During Cleopatra's childhood, rivals ousted her father from Egypt, replacing him with her older sister, Berenice IV.

Young Cleopatra travelled with her father to Rome, where he gained support to retake the throne. Using this support, he overthrew and killed his daughter Berenice. In 52 BCE, he made Cleopatra his co-regent, and they ruled together until his death

a year later.

With her father's death in 51 BCE, Cleopatra and her brother Ptolemy XIII, who was around 10 years old, became co-rulers of Egypt. This reflected their father's wishes and, as was the political custom at the time, the siblings likely married each other.

Soon, her young co-ruler drove her out of Egypt. With Cleopatra in exile, her other sister Arsinoe IV attempted to claim the throne as co-ruler.

Brother-sister marriages were a tradition among the Egyptian pharaohs, dating back to the Ptolemaic Dynasty.

Marriages to siblings were considered a way to keep the royal bloodline pure and to maintain the divine representation of the gods Osiris and Isis, who were also siblings and husband and wife.

Cleopatra and her brother were co-rulers, but their relationship deteriorated into sibling rivalry and political conflict, with Ptolemy XIII's advisors conspiring against Cleopatra.

Ptolemy XIII drowned while trying to escape a battle in 47 BC.

After Ptolemy XIII's death, Cleopatra married her younger brother, Ptolemy XIV, around 47 BC when she was 22 and he was 12.

This marriage was largely a political and cultural formality, as Ptolemy XIV held little actual power, and Cleopatra already had the backing of Julius Caesar.

Ptolemy XIV died around 44 BC, and it is believed that Cleopatra may have murdered him to pave the way for her son Caesarion to rule.



Humans weigh less on the Moon than on Earth

The spot on the Earth where the Moon is directly overhead is called the Zenith point.

You would weigh roughly one-sixth of your Earth weight on the Moon. So if your bathroom scale reads 180 pounds (81.6 kilograms) on Earth, it would read 30 pounds (13.6 kg) on the Moon.

When the Moon is overhead, the gravitational pull towards it reduces the effective gravitational force that pulls you towards Earth's centre. When the Moon is directly overhead, its gravitational pull adds an upward force on a person or object.

When the Moon is directly overhead, its gravitational pull slightly reduces your weight because it acts in the opposite direction to Earth's gravity. However, this effect is extremely small, resulting in a barely noticeable weight reduction of about 0.1 to 0.5 milligrams per kilogram of body weight.

Both the Earth and the Moon exert a gravitational force on you, pulling you downwards. When the Moon is directly overhead, its gravitational pull is directed upwards, slightly counteracting the Earth's downward pull.

Reduced effective gravity is a very slight decrease in your effective weight, as you are being pulled less strongly towards the Earth's centre. Why it is not noticeable is because of the weak lunar gravity. The Moon's gravity is much weaker than Earth's. The Moon is very far away, so its influence on your weight is minimal.

The tiny reduction in weight is far too small to be detected by a normal scale or felt by a person.

The moon's orbit is inclined about 5.145 degrees. So anywhere on earth between 5.145 degrees south and 5.145 degrees north, the moon will occasionally pass directly overhead.

The mass of the Moon is approximately 8.1×10^{19} tons (7.3×10^{22} kg). The reason a person weighs less on the Moon is that the acceleration due to gravity on the Moon is significantly less than that on Earth. Therefore, even though the mass remains constant, the weight, which depends on the gravitational pull, is reduced on the Moon.



LIVING LEGENDS

BY ZARA AHMED

Jay-Jay Okocha, retired professional footballer

Augustine Azuka Okocha, popularly known as Jay-Jay Okocha, was born on August 14, 1973, in Enugu, Nigeria. He is a retired Nigerian football player who has a net worth of \$5 million.

Just like many other football stars, he fell in love with the game while kicking around a makeshift ball on the streets.

Jay-Jay Okocha is best known for playing as a midfielder for teams like Borussia Neunkirchen, Eintracht Frankfurt, Fenerbahçe, Paris Saint-Germain, Bolton Wanderers, Qatar SC, and Hull SC.

He also played for Nigeria's national team from 1993 to 2006. He was also a star on the international stage, representing Nigeria from 1993 to 2006 and netting 14 goals.

He appeared in the FIFA World Cup 1994 and the 1998 FIFA World Cup. He has received nine club honours and three international honours throughout his career and was voted #12 on the list of the greatest African footballers of the last half-century in 2007.

In 2003 and 2004, he was named BBC African Footballer of the Year. He has also been named in the FIFA 100.

In 1990, he joined Enugu Rangers and produced many spec-

tacular performances during his time at the club. A particularly memorable one is when he rounded off and scored a goal against veteran Nigerian goalkeeper Willy Okpara.

Later that year, Jay-Jay decided to take a holiday to West Germany and joined his friend Numa for a training session at his club, Borussia Neunkirchen.

The coach was so blown away by Okocha's skills that he invited him back the next day and, before long, offered him a contract.

A year later, he briefly joined FC Saarbrücken before moving to Eintracht Frankfurt in the Bundesliga.

In December 1991, Okocha landed in Frankfurt and linked up with his new teammates, including Ghanaian international striker Tony Yeboah.

He put up some impressive performances for the German side, one highlight being a goal he scored against Karlsruher SC, which was voted as the 1993 Goal of the Year.

In 1995, Eintracht Frankfurt was relegated to the second tier of German football, and Okocha signed for Turkish Süper Lig club Fenerbahçe. He said goodbye to the Bundesliga with a tally of 18 goals in 90 match-

es.

Okocha joined Fenerbahçe in 1996 for approximately £1 million. In his two seasons with the club, he netted 30 goals in 62 appearances, many of them coming from direct free kicks, which became sort of his trademark.

In 1998, French side Paris Saint-Germain signed Okocha for around £14 million, making him the most expensive African player at the time.

He spent four years in Paris, playing 84 games and finding the back of the net 12 times. He was a mentor for young Brazilian footballer and future Ballon d'Or winner Ronaldinho.

In the 2001 UEFA Intertoto Cup, Okocha scored 5 goals, helping the team win the title alongside Aston Villa F.C. and ES Troyes AC.

In the summer of 2002, Okocha joined Bolton Wanderers on a free transfer from PSG. Even though he had a bit of a rough start with injuries plaguing his debut season, he still managed to score seven goals that helped steer the club away from relegation.

Okocha became team captain the following season and led Bolton to a runners-up spot in the 2004 Football League Cup final.



Kuti

Femi Kuti, Afrobeat Musician

Femi Kuti, born Olufemi, is a Nigerian musician and the eldest son of afrobeat pioneer Fela Kuti. He was born in London in 1962 and raised in Lagos, Nigeria.

Femi began his musical career playing in his father's band, Egypt 80, and later formed his own band, Positive Force, in 1986. He is known for his socially conscious lyrics and his fusion of afrobeat with other genres.

Femi embraced music thereby carrying his father's legacy.

Femi Kuti's musical journey began with his father's band, where he initially played saxophone. In the mid-1980s, he established his own band, Positive Force, and began carving out his own musical identity.

His debut album, released in 1995, gained recognition for its more accessible take on afrobeat. Femi has collaborated with various artists, including Thievery Corporation and Coldplay. He has also been involved with UNICEF as a goodwill ambassador.

Femi's personal life includes a complex relationship with his father, particularly after forming his own band, which led to a period of estrangement.

Tragedy struck in 1997 with the deaths of both his father and sister, an event that significantly impacted him and inspired his song "97".

Femi has continued to perform and release music, with his career spanning several decades and evolving with his unique style. He remains a prominent figure in the afrobeat scene and a voice for social justice.

Femi has been nominated for a Grammy Award four times in the world music category in 2003, 2010, 2012 and 2013 but has never won. On 19 December 2014, a management deal between Chocolate City Music Group and Femi Kuti was reached.

Femi Kuti's mother, Remilekun (Remi) Taylor, was born in Britain. She was of mixed African-American, Native American, English, and Nigerian heritage, according to a biography website. She was married to Fela Kuti.

Made Kuti was born to Femi and Funke Kuti on 26 September 1995. He was raised in the New Afrika Shrine. He learned to play multiple musical instruments, including the trumpet, alto, sax, piano and drums, in his childhood and started playing the trumpet at age 3.



Okocha



The Great Wildebeest Migration

The Great Migration is the largest herd movement of animals on the planet. In fact, with up to 1,000 animals per km², the great columns of wildebeest can be seen from space. The numbers are astonishing: over 1.2 million wildebeest and 300,000 zebra along with topi and other gazelle move in a constant cycle through the Serengeti-Mara ecosystem in search of nutritious grass and water. Guided by survival instinct, each wildebeest will cover 800 to 1,000km on its individual journey along age-old migration routes. Hungry predators including lion, leopard, cheetah, hyena, wild dog and crocs make sure only the strongest survive in this natural spectacle also known as ‘the greatest show on Earth.’ The circuit takes the animals from the Ngorongoro Conservation Area (although not into the Crater itself) in the south of the Serengeti in Tanzania, up through the Serengeti and across into the Masai Mara in Kenya and back again.

The journey is beset with danger: young calves are snatched by predators, the slow are brought down by prides of lion, brave beasts break legs on steep river slopes, crocodiles take their share of the stragglers, and the weak and exhausted drown. This migration is an annual cycle driven by rainfall and the availability of grazing land. It involves a massive movement of animals, including wildebeest, zebras, and gazelles, as they follow the rains and green pastures. The migration is a

spectacular wildlife event, attracting tourists and researchers from around the world. Key locations include the Serengeti National park in Tanzania and the Masai Mara National reserve in Kenya. The migration is not a simple circuit, but rather a complex movement influenced by rainfall patterns and the availability of food and water. A particularly dramatic part of the migration is the river crossings, where animals must face crocodiles.



BOOKS

BY SERGENILUS

The Protocols of the Elders of Zion (6)

CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK

FREE PRESS DESTROYED

7. We turn to the periodical press. We shall impose on it, as on all printed matter, stamp taxes per sheet and deposits of caution-money, and books of less than 30 sheets will pay double. We shall reckon them as pamphlets in order, on the one hand, to reduce the number of magazines, which are the worst form of printed poison, and, on the other, in order that this measure may force writers into such lengthy productions that they will be little read, especially as they will be costly. At the same time what we shall publish ourselves to influence mental development in the direction laid down for our profit will be cheap and will be read voraciously. The tax will bring vapid literary ambitions within bounds and the liability to penalties will make literary men dependent upon us. And if there should be any found who are desirous of writing against us, they will not find any person eager to print their productions. Before accepting any production for publication in print, the publisher or printer will have to apply to the authorities for permission to do so. Thus we shall know beforehand of all tricks preparing against us and shall nullify them by getting ahead with explanations on the subject treated of.

8. Literature and journalism are two of the most important educative forces, and therefore our government will become proprietor of the majority of the journals. This will neutralize the injurious influence of the privately-owned press and will put us in possession of a tremendous influence upon the public mind . . . If we give permits for ten journals, we shall ourselves found thirty, and so on in the same proportion. This, however, must in no wise be suspected by the public. For which reason all journals published by us will be of the most opposite, in appearance, tendencies and opinions, thereby creating confidence in us and bringing over to us quite unsuspecting opponents, who will thus fall into our trap and be rendered harmless.

9. In the front rank will stand organs of an official character. They will always stand guard over our interests, and therefore their influence will be comparatively insignificant.

10. In the second rank will be the semi-official organs, whose part it will be to attack the tepid and indifferent.

11. In the third rank we shall set up our own, to all appearance, opposition, which, in at least one of its organs, will present what looks like the very antipodes to us. Our real opponents at heart will accept this simulated opposition as their own and will show us their cards.

12. All our newspapers will be of all possible complexions — aristocratic, republican, revolutionary, even anarchical — for so long, of course, as the constitution exists . . . Like

the Indian idol "Vishnu" they will have a hundred hands, and every one of them will have a finger on any one of the public opinions as required. When a pulse quickens these hands will lead opinion in the direction of our aims, for an excited patient loses all power of judgment and easily yields to suggestion. Those fools who will think they are repeating the opinion of a newspaper of their own camp will be repeating our opinion or any opinion that seems desirable for us. In the vain belief that they are following the organ of their party they will, in fact, follow the flag which we hang out for them.

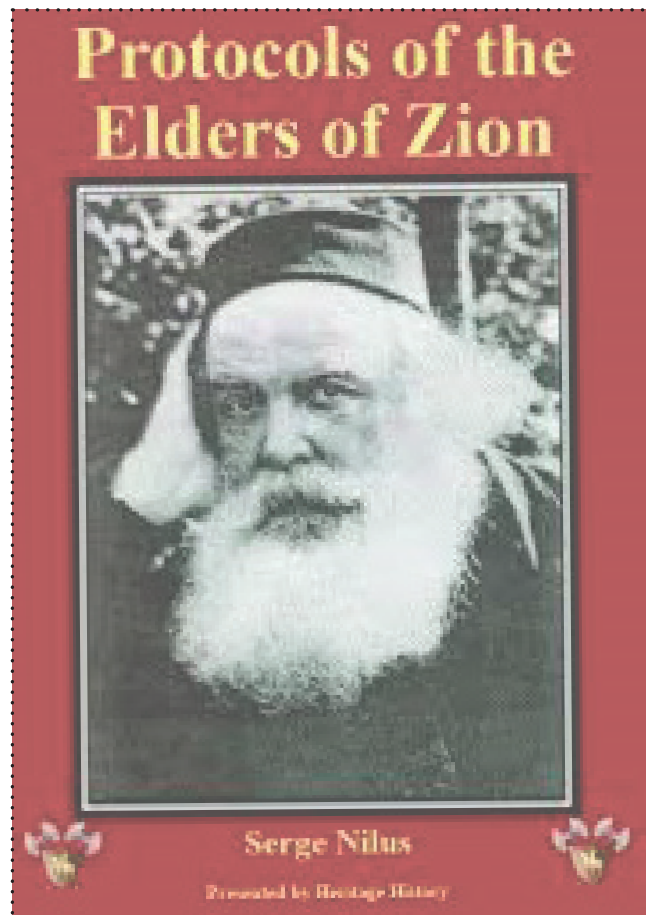
13. In order to direct our newspaper militia in this sense we must take special and minute care in organizing this matter. Under the tide of central department of the press we shall institute literary gatherings at which our agents will without attracting attention issue the orders and watchwords of the day. By discussing and controverting, but always superficially, without touching the essence of the matter, our organs will carry on a sham fight fusillade with the official newspapers solely for the purpose of giving occasion for us to express ourselves more fully than could well be done from the outset in official announcements, whenever, of course, that is to our advantage.

14. THESE ATTACKS UPON US WILL ALSO SERVE ANOTHER PURPOSE, NAMELY, THAT OUR SUBJECTS WILL BE CONVINCED TO THE EXISTENCE OF FULL FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND SO GIVE OUR AGENTS AN OCCASION TO AFFIRM THAT ALL ORGANS WHICH OPPOSE US ARE EMPTY BABBLERS, since they are incapable of finding any substantial objections to our orders.

ONLY LIES PRINTED

15. Methods of organization like these, imperceptible to the public eye but absolutely sure, are the best calculated to succeed in bringing the attention and the confidence of the public to the side of our government. Thanks to such methods we shall be in a position as from time to time may be required, to excite or to tranquillize the public mind on political questions, to persuade or to confuse, printing now truth, now lies, facts or their contradictions, according as they may be well or ill received, always very cautiously feeling our ground before stepping upon it . . . WE SHALL HAVE A SURE TRIUMPH OVER OUR OPPONENTS SINCE THEY WILL NOT HAVE AT THEIR DISPOSITION ORGANS OF THE PRESS IN WHICH THEY CAN GIVE FULL AND FINAL EXPRESSION TO THEIR VIEWS owing to the aforesaid methods of dealing with the press. We shall not even need to refute them except very superficially.

16. Trial shots like these, fired by us in the third rank of our press, in case of need, will be



energetically refuted by us in our semi-official organs.

17. Even nowadays, already, to take only the French press, there are forms which reveal masonic solidarity in acting on the watchword: all organs of the press are bound together by professional secrecy; like the augurs of old, not one of their numbers will give away the secret of his sources of information unless it be resolved to make announcement of them. Not one journalist will venture to betray this secret, for not one of them is ever admitted to practice literature unless his whole past has some disgraceful sore or other . . . These sores would be immediately revealed. So long as they remain the secret of a few the prestige of the journalist attacks the majority of the country — the mob follow after him with enthusiasm.

18. Our calculations are especially extended to the provinces. It is indispensable for us to inflame there those hopes and impulses with which we could at any moment fall upon the capital, and we shall represent to the capitals that these expressions are the independent hopes and impulses of the provinces. Naturally, the source of them will be always one and the same — ours. WHAT WE NEED IS THAT, UNTIL SUCH TIME AS WE ARE IN THE PLENITUDE POWER, THE CAPITALS SHOULD FIND THEMSELVES STIFLED BY THE PROVINCIAL OPINION OF THE NATIONS, I.E., OF A MAJORITY ARRANGED BY OUR AGENTUR. What we need is that at the psychological moment the capitals should not be in a position to discuss an accomplished fact for the simple reason, if for no other, that it has been accepted by the

public opinion of a majority in the provinces.

19. WHEN WE ARE IN THE PERIOD OF THE NEW REGIME TRANSITIONAL TO THAT OF OUR ASSUMPTION OF FULL SOVEREIGNTY WE MUST NOT ADMIT ANY REVELATION BY THE PRESS OF ANY FORM OF PUBLIC DISHONESTY; IT IS NECESSARY THAT THE NEW REGIME SHOULD BE THOUGHT TO HAVE SO PERFECTLY CONTENTED EVERYBODY THAT EVEN CRIMINALITY HAS DISAPPEARED . . . Cases of the manifestation of criminality should remain known only to their victims and to chance witnesses — no more.

Protocol No. 13: Distractions

1. The need for daily bread forces the GOYIM to keep silence and be our humble servants. Agents taken on to our press from among the GOYIM will at our orders discuss anything which it is inconvenient for us to issue directly in official documents, and we meanwhile, quietly amid the din of the discussion so raised, shall simply take and carry through such measures as we wish and then offer them to the public as an accomplished fact. No one will dare to demand the abrogation of a matter once settled, all the more so as it will be represented as an improvement . . . And immediately the press will distract the current of thought towards new questions. Into the discussions of these new questions will throw themselves those of the brainless dispensers of fortunes who are not able even now to understand that they have not the remotest conception about the matters which they undertake to discuss. Questions of the political are unattainable for any save those who have

guided it already for many ages, the creators.

2. From all this you will see that in securing the opinion of the mob we are only facilitating the working of our machinery, and you may remark that it is not for actions but for words issued by us on this or that question that we seem to seek approval. We are constantly making public declaration that we are guided in all our undertakings by the hope, joined to the conviction, that we are serving the common weal.

WE DECEIVE WORKERS

3. In order to distract people who may be too troublesome from discussions of questions of the political we are now putting forward what we allege to be new questions of the political, namely, questions of industry. In this sphere let them discuss themselves silly! The masses are agreed to remain inactive, to take a rest from what they suppose to be political only on condition of being found new employments, in which we are prescribing them something that looks like the same political object. In order that the masses themselves may not guess what they are about WE FURTHER DISTRACT THEM WITH AMUSEMENTS, GAMES, PASTIMES, PASSIONS, PEOPLE'S PALACES . . . SOON WE SHALL BEGIN THROUGH THE PRESS TO PROPOSE COMPETITIONS IN ART, IN SPORT IN ALL KINDS: these interests will finally distract their minds from questions in which we should find ourselves compelled to oppose them. Growing more and more unaccustomed to reflect and form any opinions of their own, people will begin to talk in the same tone as we because we alone shall be offering them new directions for thought . . . of course through such persons as will not be suspected of solidarity with us.

4. The part played by the liberals, Utopian dreamers, will be finally played out when our government is acknowledged. Till such time they will continue to do us good service. Therefore we shall continue to direct their minds to all sorts of vain conceptions of fantastic theories, new and apparently progressive: for have we not with complete success turned the brainless heads of the GOYIM with progress, till there is not among the GOYIM one mind able to perceive that under this word lies a departure from truth in all cases where it is not a question of material inventions, for truth is one, and in it there is no place for progress. Progress, like a fallacious idea, serves to obscure truth so that none may know it except us, the Chosen of God, its guardians.

5. When, we come into our kingdom our orators will expound great problems which have turned humanity upside down in order to bring it at the end under our beneficent rule.

6. Who will ever suspect then that ALL THESE PEOPLES WERE STAGE-MANAGED BY US ACCORDING TO A POLITICAL PLAN WHICH

NO ONE HAS SO MUCH AS GUESSED AT IN THE COURSE OF MANY CENTURIES?

Protocol No. 14: Assault on Religion

1. When we come into our kingdom it will be undesirable for us that there should exist any other religion than ours of the One God with whom our destiny is bound up by our position as the Chosen People and through whom our same destiny is united with the destinies of the world. We must therefore sweep away all other forms of belief. If this gives birth to the atheists whom we see to-day, it will not, being only a transitional stage, interfere with our views, but will serve as a warning for those generations which will hearken to our preaching of the religion of Moses, that, by its stable and thoroughly elaborated system has brought all the peoples of the world into subjection to us. Therein we shall emphasize its mystical right, on which, as we shall say, all its educative power is based . . . Then at every possible opportunity we shall publish articles in which we shall make comparisons between our beneficent rule and those of past ages. The blessing of tranquillity, though it be a tranquillity forcibly brought about by centuries of agitation, will throw into higher relief the benefits to which we shall point. The errors of the GOYIM governments will be depicted by us in the most vivid hues. We shall implant such an abhorrence of them that the peoples will prefer tranquillity in a state of serfdom to those rights of vaunted freedom which have tortured humanity and exhausted the very sources of human existence, sources which have been exploited by a mob of rascally adventurers who know not what they do . . . USELESS CHANGES OF FORMS OF GOVERNMENT TO WHICH WE INSTIGATED THE "GOYIM" WHEN WE WERE UNDERMINING THEIR STATE STRUCTURES, WILL HAVE SO WEARIED THE PEOPLES BY THAT TIME THAT THEY WILL PREFER TO SUFFER ANYTHING UNDER US RATHER THAN RUN THE RISK OF ENDURING AGAIN ALL THE AGITATIONS AND MISERIES THEY HAVE GONE THROUGH.

WE SHALL FORBID CHRIST

2. At the same time we shall not omit to emphasize the historical mistakes of the GOY governments which have tormented humanity for so many centuries by their lack of understanding of everything that constitutes the true good of humanity in their chase after fantastic schemes of social blessings, and have never noticed that these schemes kept on producing a worse and never a better state of the universal relations which are the basis of human life . . .

TO BE CONTINUED

SPORTS: BEHIND THE SCENES

BY MARYAM UMAR

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Redefining Possibilities: The inspiring story of Chris Nikic

Chris Nikic, born in 1999, was diagnosed with Down syndrome, a condition that often comes with developmental challenges and health obstacles.

Doctors told his parents early on that life for Chris would be full of limitations. But his journey shows the world something very different.

As a child, Chris struggled with balance, coordination, and delayed speech. He underwent multiple surgeries and often faced setbacks that most people never imagine.

Yet, his parents and coaches encouraged him with a simple principle: "1% better every day." Instead of trying to leap

to greatness, Chris focused on making small, steady improvements.

Through years of perseverance, he trained in swimming, cycling, and running, disciplines that together form the Ironman Triathlon, one of the most gruelling endurance races in the world:

- 2.4 miles (3.9 km) of swimming
- 112 miles (180 km) of cycling
- 26.2 miles (42.2 km) marathon run

In November 2020, Chris Nikic became the first person with Down syndrome to complete an Ironman. His time was 16 hours, 46 minutes, and 9 seconds, just under the 17-hour cut-off.

But beyond crossing the finish line, Chris's victory was symbolic: he broke stereotypes and inspired millions around the world. He showed that having a disability does not define one's limits.

After the Ironman, Chris was awarded the Jimmy V Award for Perseverance at the ESPYs, and his mantra "1% better" has become a rallying cry for people striving against their own odds.

Today, Chris continues to advocate for inclusion and opportunities for people with disabilities, proving that greatness is not about perfection but about courage, persistence, and heart.



Nikic

Rahaman Ali: The quiet strength behind Muhammad Ali

Rahaman Ali, the younger brother of boxing legend Muhammad Ali and a former professional boxer, passed away on August 1, 2025, at the age of 82.

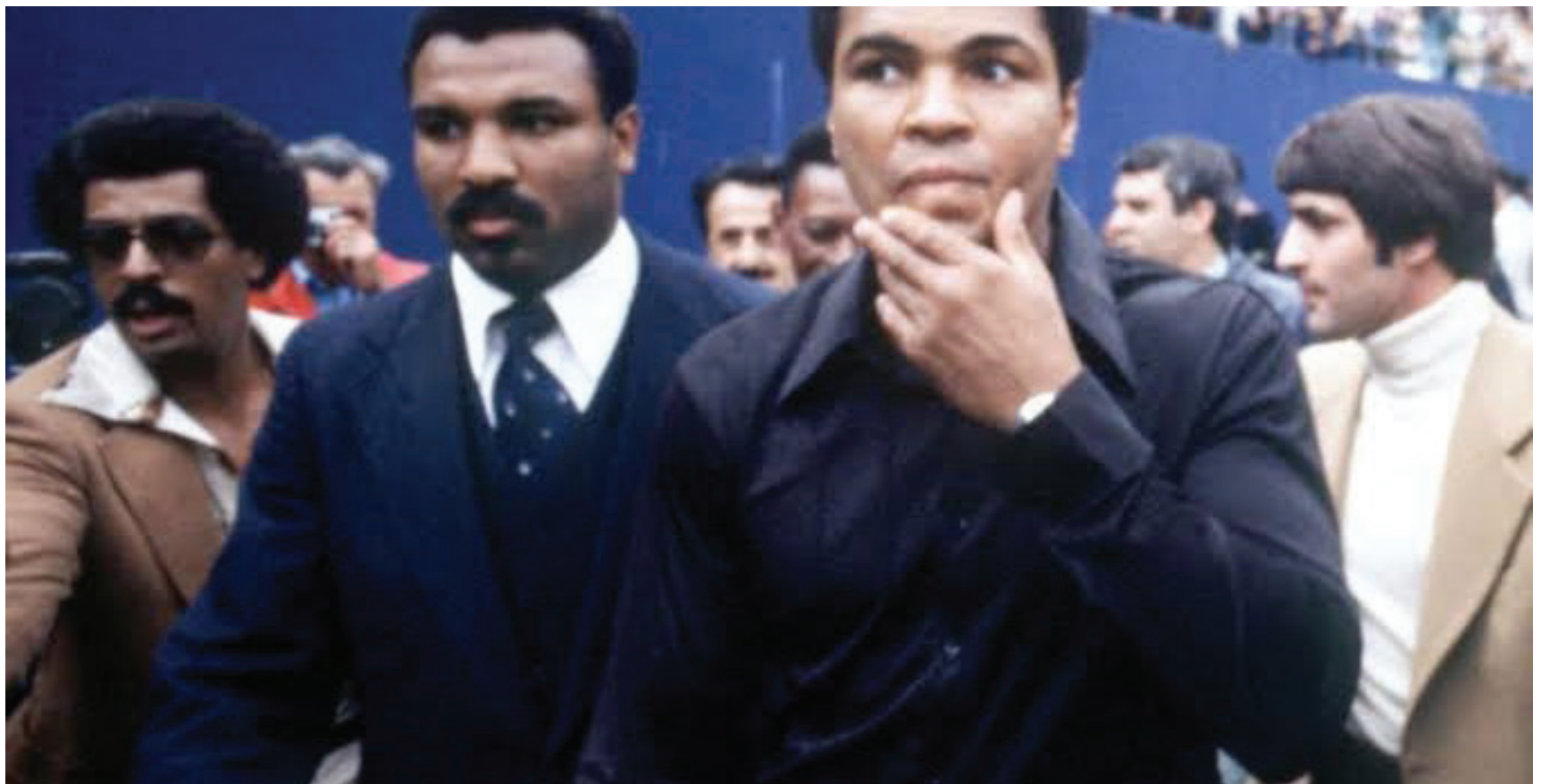
The Muhammad Ali Centre announced his death in a Facebook statement on Saturday, noting the profound loss of a steadfast supporter of "The Greatest," with no official cause of death yet disclosed.

You can't tell Muhammad's story without mentioning Rahaman.

"He was one of the most constant sources of support for Muhammad during his career, and their relationship was a true example of what it means to be 'my brother's keeper,'" said the president and CEO of the Ali Centre, DeVone Holt.

Born Rudolph Valentino Clay on July 18, 1943, Rahaman carved out his path in the boxing world, even if it was one spent mostly in the shadows of "The Greatest."

Between 1964 and 1972, he racked up 14 wins out of 18



Rahaman and Muhammad Ali

professional bouts, a respectable career that often flew under the radar.

But Rahaman's true impact wasn't limited to what he did in the ring, it was how he stood by his brother.

After hanging up his gloves, he became a constant figure in

Muhammad Ali's corner, both literally and figuratively.

He travelled with the champ, helped him train, and was there during some of the most historic moments in boxing history.

A storyteller in his own right, Rahaman authored two books chronicling

life alongside his brother. That's Muhammad Ali's Brother! My Life on the Undercard (2014) and My Brother, Muhammad Ali, The Definitive Biography (2019).

Tributes have poured in from the Ali family.

"Today, the last living member of my father's

immediate family returned to heaven," wrote Hana Ali, Muhammad's daughter, in an emotional Facebook post.

"Uncle Rock had a heart of gold. He never needed a spotlight to shine... and I believe that now, from above, he and Daddy are part

of something bigger... something beautiful.

His niece, Laila Ali, also paid her respects on Instagram:

"My father loved his brother Rahaman so deeply. They are now back in the arms of their beloved parents. May they all rest in eternal peace together."

The Arbiter

BY HASSAN GIMBA



AI as the new indolence, that Netanyahu call, Salah's tweet and our Kwam mentality (1)

In the past year or so, I have become a sad man. I feel sorry for myself, as I cannot do much to stem the tide. I also feel sad for our youth, who are daily ensnared by the ravaging trend. But I am more distressed for Nigeria, my country, for breeding such youth. We are mortgaging our country's future by sacrificing our youth's intellectual growth to Artificial Intelligence, AI. I recall our growing days with nostalgia. I started reading my senior sisters' novels, the Mills and Boon series, and those by Agatha Christie at age nine. At the same time, I could read popular Hausa novels, such as Magana Jari Ce, Iliya Dan Maikarfi, Ruwan Bagaja, and Dare Dubu Da Daya (Alfu Laila). There were magazines in the early to mid-1970s, such as Drum and its African Film, or Spear Magazine, featuring the iconic Lance Spearman (aka The Spear), regarded as our African James Bond in a photo comic illustration. There was also Sauna Jack! Before we reached class seven, those in our circle of friends, Mohammed Salisu Adamu, Nuhu Aliyu Kangiwa, Liman Shettima and a host of others had read almost all available comic books, illustrated in black and white drawings, mainly Tarzan, Captain America, Mighty Thor, Hulk, Spider-Man, The Avengers, and those World War stories in graphic forms. Forget that the war stories, unlike what we now know, always depict the American/ British soldiers as heroic and respectful of human dignity and the "Geneva Convention". Subtle colonisation of innocent minds! Our parents, by design, always brought home local and foreign newspapers,

news magazines, and the general-interest family magazine, the Reader's Digest, and we eagerly devoured them. By the time I was in primary seven, I had started buying newspapers, which were sold at ten kobo each.

Our primary school, Shehu Garbai, made strenuous efforts to mould us into readers who thought of what they read and could put that down on paper. It had a library, yet the school authorities registered all of us with the state library. There were days when we would march to the library with our teachers to read and study there. And we frequent the library even during holidays, reading there and borrowing two per person at a time to come and read at home for a maximum period of two weeks. This was typically what we did from primary school to university.

Our assignments were never "cut and paste", perhaps because there was no internet, not to mention Google. There was plagiarism, of course, but anyone caught was isolated and dealt with. However, assignments were research-based, submitted after studying the topic from different sources and "sparring" over it with colleagues. Examinations were marked based on the written work, which was based on a foundation of knowledge.

With the advent of the Internet and Google, assignments became increasingly based on gleaned materials from others' works. Without understanding the topic or having a more profound knowledge of it, students copied other people's work and presented it as their own.



Dr Gimba

If many conscientious students of knowledge abhor that method, what would they say about assignments now being written by machines? Our students have surrendered their thinking faculties to AI. There is no reading or writing; therefore, deep thinking has taken flight, and imaginations are now around skits and TikTok content creation. There is nothing intellectual; depth has given way to superficialities. Instead of glimpsing at the writer's soul through the spirit of his

writings, what faces us are mechanical grits, a body with no spirit, no signature, nothing linking the purported writer from the past through to the future. Ask him about what he claims to have written, and he will look lost. I have seen write-ups full of soulless highfalutin jargon, written by people I know who cannot string together one error-free sentence.

We are not talking about students' homework answered yesteryears through "copy and paste": as poor

academically as the habit was, at least one read the various parts of the subject to determine what to stitch together. Today, they don't even do that. You give the machine the topic and, voila!, your answer is there in less than a minute! Now, applications, ordinary letters, emails, proposals, and even the usual requests for favours through SMS or WhatsApp chats are AI-generated by our indolent youth. It is the demise of research-based knowledge, sadly.

And because they lack real knowledge and skills, having surrendered their brains and honour to machines, they have become so intellectually simplistic and lazy in honourable pursuits that they cannot stand

on their own. However, some of them are devilish in thought as their empty brains have since been converted into the devil's workshop.

They broadly come in three categories.

The more ambitious, greedy, evil ones among them gravitate toward ritual killings for money, or "Yahoo, Yahoo", separating the innocent hardworking from their lives and livelihoods.

The lazier, indulgent ones troop out to where there are advertised employment opportunities, with millions of them milling around a few hundred openings like a cloud of grasshoppers descending on a poor man's farmland. Yet there are others with the feeling of entitlement because they have been indulged by parents whose parents gave them a good education and discipline to be where they are today, but have, in return, failed in their parental duty. These lazy youths may live in mansions as their parents have done well for themselves as public servants, or they may be whiling away their time on couches in their parents' sitting rooms, intermittently playing PS5, watching Netflix, going to expensive stripper clubs at night, eating pizzas and shawarma with money they know their parents pilfered from our commonwealth.

They are so empty - having sacrificed their souls to machines - that they cannot even tie their bootstraps, not to talk of standing on their feet, yet they are quick to challenge anyone with the useless rhetoric of, "Do you know who I am?"

Hassan Gimba, anipr, is the publisher and CEO of Neptune Prime.

To be continued

We are mortgaging our country's future by sacrificing our youth's intellectual growth to Artificial Intelligence, AI.

