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# Echoneews

LAGOS COMMUNITIES EDITION

A publication of Echoneews Newspapers Limited

Monday 3rd February - Sunday 9th February 2025

# HOW SUBAIR TURNED LIRS AROUND



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# How Subair Turned LIRS Around

By Kunle Awosiyan

**W**ith Lagos generating over N50 billion monthly as internal revenue, the Chairman of the state Internal Revenue Service, Dr. Ayodele Subair has said that the secret is not by increasing the tax rate but by bringing more Lagos residents into the tax net. He said this during an exclusive interview on a national television, saying without people paying their taxes, government will not have revenue. As he put it, "Every year has always been like a revelation, we are constantly breaking the record and it's not by increasing the tax rate but by bringing more people into the tax net and being more diligent about our work. We have set target and we monitor this target on a daily basis. We are very confident that we will always do better than the previous years with the cooperation of Lagosians who appreciate what the governor is doing. Without people paying their taxes, government has no revenue.

In a separate interview, Subair said that he had to introduce various technological measures, including whistle blowing initiative to provide probity, accountability and transparency to the workings of the agency. To him, the idea has allowed stakeholders, taxpayers, staff to report anything unethical to the management, which are being dealt with to move LIRS forward. He said that the fact that LIRS was able to remove physical contact of the taxpayers from the agency's officers but enable them to interact with technology had tremendously helped the growth and tax collection in the state. "The informal sector is a



Dr. Ayodele Subair

largely untapped area, and the administration has been very proactive in trying to increase tax collection from it. The Directorate of Informal

Sector and Special Duties was created, which together with a lead consultant is in charge of mobilising the informal sector and penetrating

workers' unions and associations in order to register tradesmen, artisans and union workers for tax purposes. Our tax education and

enlightenment teams go out into markets and explain the need for tax payments. We have also translated the Personal Income Tax (Amendment)

Act of 2011, and tax forms in Yoruba, Ibo, Hausa and pidgin English to improve connectivity with different communities across the state.

Through our programmes we have significantly increased communication and engagement with the general public, urging them to pay taxes, with positive results. Meanwhile, we have been able to show where this money is going thanks to the large number of visible projects and initiatives currently being undertaken in Lagos," he said.

Subair who emerged Most Outstanding Public Sector CEO of 2024 at the Peak Performer FEST with LIRS also recognised as the 'most outstanding revenue collection agency of the

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## Secret of LIRS' Success as Tax Collector

Lagos State Internal Revenue Service set January 31 deadline for taxpayers to file in their returns. In this interview on a National Television and Monitored by Kunle Awosiyan of Echonews, the Executive Chairman of the Lagos State Internal Revenue Service, LIRS, Dr. Ayodele Subair speaks on various steps the organisation has taken to constantly improving the revenue base of the state. **Excerpts**

**W**hat is the compliance level of Lagosians to tax payment?

It is very important that Lagosians comply because tax is not just a constitutional obligation but also a legal, moral and social obligations. It is important that everybody files his or her returns on or before the deadline set by LIRS.

**What specific type of tax applicable to individuals?**

We have Personal Income Taxes. There are some others like withholding taxes.

**Are all individuals subjected to deduction or tax credit?**

When we talk about credit, it always comes by way of prepayment, for example if a taxpayer has a rental income and tenant, his tenant is supposed to withhold a certain percentage of the rent and remit on his behalf. That becomes a credit to a taxpayer and also if a taxpayer has a dividend in a certain Plc, it also subjects to withholding tax deductions and he is allowed to set that off from his eventual tax

liability. Those are the kinds of incentives and also if he files within good time, he is entitled to one per cent discount of the tax payable.

**How does LIRS capture those that are supposed to pay tax?**

Every taxpayer is supposed to report all his or her global income. Either he is in

employment or trade or vocation. He is expected to aggregate all the incomes and report truthfully.

*Continued from page 4*



Dr. Ayodele Subair



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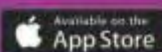








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# How Subair Turned LIRS Around

*Continued from page 2*

year', said ideas and innovations had helped so much because nobody wants to pay tax in any part of the world. "Nigeria is not different from the other parts of the world. So, we spend a lot of time in advocacy because we realise that a lot of our citizens don't avail them.

Last year the agency had to shut down 34 Companies over N356.12m Tax Debts. These are 34 corporate organisations that failed to remit Personal Income Taxes of their employees and for non-remittance of consumption taxes by operators in the hospitality sector to the Lagos State Government. Another measure LIRS put in place is ensuring that taxpayers strictly comply with the Consumption Tax law.

Operators of restaurants, hotels, and event centres in the state remit a five per cent consumption tax on all consumables and personal services.

Recall that the State on June 22, 2009, enacted the Hotel Occupancy and Restaurant Consumption Law of Lagos State otherwise called Hotel Consumption Law, which imposed consumption tax at five per cent on the value of goods and services consumed in hotels, restaurants and event centers within the state.

According a report by the Director, New Growth, LIRS, Jimi Aina copied from the agency website, by paying the consumption tax, consumers contribute to the development and maintenance of the amenities and services by the state.

According to Subair, at a stakeholders' meeting on the new initiative, held in Lagos recently, LIRS, e-

portal was created to increase transparency and make tax payers experience flexibility from the comfort of their homes, offices, cars and mobile devices, saying the online initiative allows for existing and new user for individual and corporate payers.

"With this e-tax platform, taxpayers would be able to access and generate whatever kind of information they want as their online presence allows for a minimum knowledge of computer; ideally one must have a basic knowledge of digital trends, but however is it very easy and simple to operate.

"If you are not able to operate computer, then you are expected to either



use a consultant or if you are market woman who has a child that can operate a smart phone, it would be easy like running through those application," he said.

The e-tax platform, according to the agency is a digital tax administration solution leveraging on over 19 years of experience working with the largest

state Tax authorities across Sub-Saharan Africa as well as best in class tax processes and frameworks.

It also leverages an open standard platform and

enables enterprise-wide data and business rules management, greater transparency and increased taxpayer self-services, with a highly flexible technology.

## Secret of LIRS' Success as Tax Collector

*Continued from page 2*

**What about those working in Lagos and earning income in dollars from foreign countries?**

All residents of Lagos are supposed to report all income earned either local or foreign. We have a challenge with "local Japas" as they are called. They are expected to truthfully report all their earnings even if it has come from offshore.

**Any flexibility about the deadline?**

The deadline is sacrosanct and it is by law. This is a federal law and we cannot do anything about it.

**What is the penalty for failure to file returns?**

We will take a defaulter to court and upon conviction, he will

be fined N50, 000. Another thing is that we can do a best of judgment assessment on a defaulted taxpayer. This is by checking what he files the previous year. With this he has to pay within 30 days and if he fails to do so, we approach the court again and this time we don't go to open court but lay the record before a judge in his chamber to get judgment against the defaulter. It's not a good thing to be on the wrong side of the law.



Dr. Ayodele Subair

*As a responsible organisation, we subscribed to NDPR, Data Privacy Act and all data within our confines are treated as highly confidential. We do training for our officers on this and emphasise on this seriously.*



# Secret of LIRS Success as Tax Collector

*Continued from page 4*

**How about the confidentiality of the taxpayers return, how robust is that?**

That is very robust. As a responsible organisation, we subscribed to NDPR, Data Privacy Act and all data within our confines are treated as highly confidential. We do training for our officers on this and emphasise on this seriously. People have got to be able to come and tell the state their economic activities they have been involved and the income they earn. If they don't feel that they are acting in confidential way, it might deter some other people from coming. Confidentiality is key and we have annual audit on data protection. We have to be certified. We have Data Protection officer who is assigned specifically to ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all levels.

**Should taxpayers expect any changes based on the tax reform bill?**

Two things, one, the new reform is federal laws and we can hardly influence them. Secondly, we expect a lot of good news from tax reform. For taxpayers, I know that some of the things that bring multiple taxation conversation will be removed. And from the interim report, some of the taxes between 40, 50 taxes will be pruned down to single digit.

**What channels are available for Lagosians to pay taxes?**

We are customer centric. We have a lot of channels open to assist taxpayers to file their returns. If you go to our "e-tax", it's an end-to-end tax administration solution, e-tax.lirs.net. It opens up, there is a button, "My returns". Click on the buttons and it's set for use. It's user's friendly. There are also support system to help people. For instance there is a chat-box that people can engage that answers all the questions.

We want to eliminate physical contact. But for those who are not tech-savvy, they can walk to any of our 39 tax stations. There is a desk at every station where we have e-tax champions who will be ready to assist. And for those who do not want to come physically, they can call contact centres with operators who will guide taxpayers



Dr. Ayodele Subair

step by step on how to complete their returns.

**Are you expecting to earn more than what you earn last year?**

Definitely, every

year has always been like a revelation, we are constantly breaking the record and it's not by increasing the tax rate but by bringing more people into the

tax net and being more diligent about our work. We have set target and we monitor this target on a daily basis. We are very confident that we will always

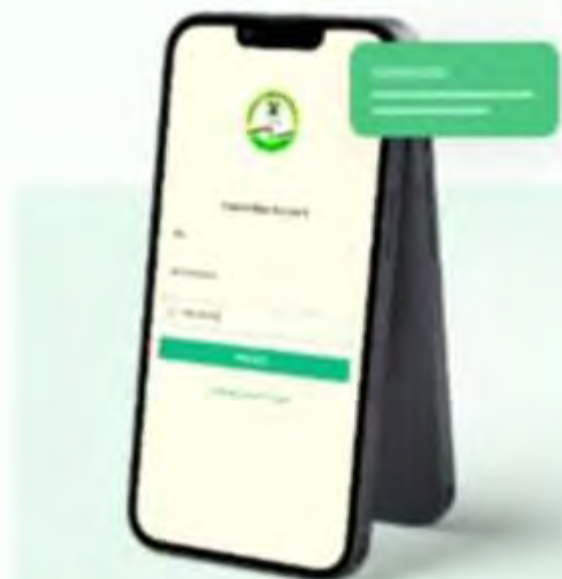
do better than the previous years with the cooperation of Lagosians who appreciate what the governor is doing. Without people paying their taxes,

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### Lagos State Internal Revenue Service

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# Women Development Centre Harps On Empowerment, Self Reliance

The Lagos State Women Development Centre, Agege, has organised a two-day Composite Training for staff as part of measures to improve the quality of service delivery across all levels.

The Director of the Centre, Mrs. Adeleye-Segun Olufunke explained that the training stemmed from Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu's commitment to training and retraining public service workers.

Mrs. Adeleye-Segun noted that the programme seeks to ensure that all employees are equipped to better serve the community and remain up-to-date with the latest industry standards.

"We want everyone, from the cleaners to the instructors, to understand their roles and improve in their jobs," she stated.

The Director said the training programme also reflects the ongoing efforts to adapt to current trends, especially in practical fields such as fashion design, hairdressing and barber, catering and photography among others.

In addition to staff development, Mrs. Adeleye-Segun, who spoke about the challenges faced by both students and staff, said economic constraints had affected student attendance, with many struggling to pay for the practical materials required for their courses despite receiving free tuition.

"We want to ensure that our students are not only learning but are also ready to market their products," she said, highlighting that part of the training that includes online marketing skills to help graduates become self-reliant. She also emphasised the

centre's commitment to gender inclusion, noting that it is one of the core missions of the centre to empower women with programmes that focus on political awareness and skill acquisition, aimed at increasing women's participation in public life. "We are working towards making women self-employed, independent, and even employers of labour," she explained.

On his part, the Facilitator and Chief Executive Officer of Icon Consult Limited, Mr. Femi Tinuoye, who trained participants on the subject titled: "Organisation and Management: The 21st Century Role and Challenges of a Manager", stated that emotional intelligence is a key leadership factor that managers must imbibe in

today's evolving world.

He noted that at the end of the training, participants should be able to define and discuss organisation and management, discuss essential managerial skills, anticipate change, display emotional stability and build resilience against challenges.

At the end of the programme, participants of the Composite Training described it as a life-

changing opportunity to grow personally and professionally. They said the training, aimed at empowering instructors, support staff and management staff with advanced skills and innovative teaching strategies, left a lasting impression on them.

They also expressed their commitment to apply the lessons from the training by continuing to pursue

knowledge as well as share it with others.

This composite training initiative serves as a testament to the importance of equipping educators with the tools and mindset needed for continuous improvement, ensuring they remain at the forefront of their professions while empowering their students for success.

## LAGFERRY To Harness Potential of Waterways

The Managing Director, Lagos State Ferry Services (LAGFERRY), Hon. Abdoulbaq Ladi Balogun, has assured that the Lagos State Government will continue to harness the full potential of the Lagos waterways by ensuring the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, promotion of water tourism, improved livelihood, and ensure revenue growth for the state by taking full advantage of the blue ocean economy said to be worth US \$1.5 trillion worldwide.

The Managing Director gave this assurance during his agency's annual waterways event tagged: "Ignite Lagos 2.0: Water Steeze Edition" held over the weekend at the Five Cowries Terminal Falomo Ikoyi. "This event is being held to encourage more people to explore Lagos' waterways, boost waterway transportation and tourism, and provide an opportunity to

showcase Lagos' aquatic resources and cultural heritage", he said.

Balogun further stated that hosting the event ensures an economic boost for the state through the generation of revenue and stimulation of local businesses such as catering,

entertainment, and decorations.

In his words, "Unique venue settings often enhance social interaction and create a conducive atmosphere for business or personal connections ensuring networking opportunities for

attendees. With LAGFERRY's emphasis on safety and well-trained personnel, guests can enjoy peace of mind while on board. We are here to combine leisure with functionality, offering Lagosians a fresh way to celebrate while fostering a

deeper appreciation for the city's aquatic resources".

The event, which had fun seekers on board the Agency's barge, MF Adimu Orisha, sailed from the Five Cowries Terminal Ikoyi to the Ikoyi link bridge with lots of music, dance and networking.





# LSMTL, Body of Engineers Stage “Say No To Building Collapse” Rally



The General Manager of the Lagos State Materials Testing Laboratory; Engr. Olayinka Abdul has called for the deliberate adoption of core professionals into the construction of building projects for durable structures. Speaking during a 5.5 km walk, organised in collaboration with the Nigerian Institution of Civil Engineers (NICE) as part of advocacy against Building collapse, themed “Say No To Building and Infrastructure Collapse, Patronize Only Qualified Civil Engineers”, Abdul emphasised that the rising challenges in the

built industry reflect a critical juncture where there must be reaffirmation to commitment and quality, as well as safety and integrity of the structures being erected. She said, “We gather here on a common front united in a common purpose, to mitigate the risks that contribute to building collapse while promoting sustainable construction practices. It is disheartening, however, that there are quite alarming statistics on building collapse. “It not only leads to loss of lives, but also represents significant economic costs,

community trauma, and a breach of the trust our society places in us as builders and enforcers of safety in the Engineering Industry. “Once you have an idea, get the right person, tell them your plan, and let the professionals be your designers. Let them be your advisors, let them tell you what steps to take. Once you engage them, starting from materials procurement to others, then you will have done the right thing,” the General Manager advised. While encouraging optimal work commitments, Engr. Abdul implored Nigerians to desist from selecting random

people in their building projects, as the many intricacies in building systems require strict adherence to streamlined processes, to effectively curb episodes of collapse to structures; even as they should solely consider the employment of seasoned and skilled artisans in their construction works. She said that the professionals who are trained on how to solve any problem can efficiently address issues that emanate during the construction of projects. Also Speaking, the National Chairman of

NICE, Engr. Tokunbo Ajanaaku, who commended the enthusiasm exuded by participants, said, “What we have started is a journey to take back our profession and the built environment space. NICE is committed to sustaining the advocacy and stepping it up to shaping policy and ensuring containment of the menace of building collapse. Let us continue to advocate, and say no to building and Infrastructure collapse, in Nigeria” The Chairman of Lagos Chapter, Engr. Faith Oko-Ukoni informed that the sensitization initiative

was targeted at educating members of the Public on how to ensure that Lagos State is free of building and infrastructure collapse. Oko-Ukoni reiterated the need for all Nigerians to build right, build safely and use the right professionals to avoid the menace of building collapse. “We know that building collapse cannot be eradicated, but we can reduce it. After today's exercise, we hope we will be able to talk to someone, too. We are advocating for the right professionals to build our building and infrastructure,” she opined.



## Osakwe's Nomination as UK Cyber Personality Excites Sanwo-Olu

Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu has applauded Dr. Fene Osakwe, Chairman of the Lagos State Cybersecurity Advisory Board, for becoming the First African to be nominated for the Cyber Personality of the Year award in the United Kingdom.

The Cyber Security Awards, established in 2014, recognises outstanding individuals, teams, and organisations within the global cybersecurity sector. This independent event operates without affiliations to any magazines, organisations, or products, thus allowing judges to base their decisions solely on merit. The Cyber Personality of the Year Award acknowledges an individual who has exhibited exemplary leadership, advocacy, and expertise in the field of cybersecurity. It celebrates those who have established themselves as thought leaders and made substantial contributions to the industry, thereby enhancing its visibility and fostering the development of others.

Governor Sanwo-Olu said: "I congratulate Dr Fene Osakwe, whose exploits have shown the great potential of our youths in the tech space. We in Lagos are proud of him and will continue to encourage our youths to become the best so that Lagos will be known as the home of experts in the tech and innovation space."

Dr. Osakwe is the sole African nominee in this category, competing alongside distinguished leaders from 11 other countries. His leadership, ambition, and innovative strategies in cybersecurity over the past decade have earned him international acclaim. He has authored several influential articles

on platforms such as Forbes and has been a leading figure in cybersecurity research and publications.

Earlier in 2024, Dr. Osakwe was invited to join the Global Advisory Board for Penetration Testing by EC-Council, recognized as the world's largest certification body for information security professionals. He also became a member of the Forbes Technology Council in 2021.

As a keynote speaker at major cybersecurity conferences in both Europe and Africa in 2024, his presentations have received commendations for their insight and educational value.

Dr. Osakwe provides mentorship to graduate, master's, and doctoral students at four universities across the United Kingdom, Nigeria, the United States, and Canada. His accolades

include being recognised by the New York City Journal as one of the top 20 coaches to watch in 2023, and by CIOLOOK in March 2023 as one of the top global cyber leaders under the age of 40.

He was honoured as the Cyber Youth Mentor of the Year in Dubai in 2022, received the Exceptional Leadership Award at Internet 2.0 in Dubai, and won a global book award for his Amazon best-selling publication in August 2023. Furthermore, he was named one of the top 100 inspiring personalities of 2022, among numerous other distinctions.

Under his leadership, Lagos State conducted its inaugural cybersecurity awareness month for citizens in October 2024, aimed at educating the public on protective measures against cybercrime. Dr. Osakwe is also leading other innovative initiatives in

collaboration with the Ministry of Innovation, Science, and Technology to enhance cybersecurity within the state.

This nomination not only highlights the exceptional talent emerging from Lagos State and Nigeria but also serves as a testament to Dr. Osakwe's dedication and intellectual prowess.

Reacting to his nomination, Dr. Osakwe remarked that the honour illustrates that excellence transcends colour, emphasising that the global audience is continually observing our achievements.

He finds it inspiring to receive recognition on an international scale, and being the sole African candidate in this category represents a significant honour. Dr. Osakwe has consistently believed that Nigeria possesses the potential to address the global tech talent shortage effectively.



Dr. Fene Osakwe,

## Poverty Alleviation: 300 Persons Get "Sanwo-Olu Listen" Cheques

In line with its commitment to continuously improve the lives of the residents, the Lagos State Government has distributed 300 Cheques to another set of beneficiaries of the Sanwo-Olu Listen Financial Assistance Programme.

Speaking at the event which was recently held at The Secretariat, Alausa, the Special Adviser to the Governor on Political, Legislative and Civic Engagement, Dr. Afolabi Tajudeen said that the laudable gesture by the Governor is a testament to the fact that the Government is still fully committed to its goal of putting smiles on the faces of Lagosians while ensuring an all-inclusive Governance where no one is left behind.

Reiterating the dedication of the Lagos State Government to alleviating the financial challenges of the residents of the State, Dr. Afolabi said that the presentation is just the tip of the iceberg as more cheques will be presented in the coming month, adding that the Government is not relenting in its effort at ensuring everyone in Lagos State benefit from the Sanwo-Olu Listen to Financial Assistance programme.

In his words, "The initiative is designed to cater for a variety of needs, including support for small businesses, education, housing, and health challenges. The health-related requests, in particular, received significant attention. We ensured that all supporting documentation from reputable hospitals is attached to the

application, and once we can verify such claims, we try as much as possible to provide the best possible support."

Clarifying the process for accessing financial assistance, the Special Adviser explained that applicants must submit a letter of request clearly stating their needs and specifying the amount of financial support required.

He further added that the Application letter must include a photocopy of the Lagos State Residents Registration Agency (LASRRA) card as a means of identification, a National Identity Number (NIN), a passport photograph, as well as contact details to reach the selected applicant after a thorough selection process.

Expressing his gratitude to Mr. Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu and the Deputy Governor, Dr. Obafemi Hamzat for their unwavering support to the Office, Dr Afolabi encouraged the residents of Lagos who are yet to benefit from the programme to key into the initiative as the Babajide Sanwo-Olu's Administration is dedicated to making a difference in the lives of those facing economic hardships while creating an enabling environment where every citizen has the opportunity to succeed and prosper.

The Permanent Secretary, Office of Political, Legislative & Civic Engagement; Engr. Sholabomi Shasore was also present during the cheque presentation ceremony to the beneficiaries.



# Lagos Inaugurates Sustainability Workshop, Promote Circular Economy

Lagos State government launched an Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) workshop at the weekend to promote a green and circular economy practice. The workshop specifically targeted Nano, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (NMSMEs) to boost the state's economic prosperity. The forum, tagged inaugural Economy Business Network (EBN) workshop was hosted by the Office of the Special Adviser to Governor Sanwo-Olu on Climate Change and Circular Economy with the theme: "Empowering Green Growth: Building Capacity for a Sustainable Circular Economy" is designed to equip eco-enterprises with practical guidance, build a community of Change-Makers and positioning Lagos as a leader in Circular and Green Economic Development.

In her opening remarks at the event held at the Lagos Chamber of Commerce, LCCI, the Special Adviser on Climate Change and Circular Economy, Mrs. Titi Oshodi, said the workshop was an important step forward in stimulating the State's economic growth by embracing Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles in the circular economy.

Mrs. Oshodi said that the EBN is more than just a network; it is a dynamic ecosystem designed to empower eco-enterprises and support sustainable business practices across Lagos State. She noted that since the



launch of the EBN, over 500 eco-enterprises have been nurtured, providing them with the necessary tools, resources, and networks to thrive in an increasingly competitive yet environmentally conscious marketplace. Explaining the various projects being championed by her office to realise a circular economy development, she said "Our office has been fiercely committed to delivering innovative solutions that not only address pressing environmental challenges but also create pathways for social inclusion and economic growth". "Initiatives, like Let Lagos Breathe, Eco-

Circulate, and Leave No One Behind, have begun laying the foundation for a transformative shift in how we engage with our environment. Today's forum is an integral extension of that ongoing journey", the Special Adviser added. In his address, Commissioner for Economic Planning and Budget, Mr. Ope George said Lagos sits as the bedrock of the NMSMEs forming the backbone of the economy, adding that the enterprises are not only job creators but also catalysts for innovation and resilience.

George, represented by the Special Adviser to the Governor on

Economic Planning and Budget, Mr. Lekan Balogun, emphasised the State government's priority in placing importance on economic inputs that ensure meaningful outcomes on the well-being of the populace. His words: "Lagos State is home to a vibrant ecosystem of Nano, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (NMSMEs), which form the backbone of our economy. These enterprises are not only job creators but also catalysts for innovation and resilience".

"For Lagos State, prioritizing economic impact is essential in evaluating the outcomes not only of the circular economy

but across all sectors, ensuring that every initiative contributes meaningfully to the prosperity and well-being of our people". While noting that the establishment of the EBN in May 2024 marked a significant milestone in efforts to drive sustainable economic growth, the Commissioner said, "We are witnessing firsthand how sustainability-driven business models can unlock economic opportunities while addressing environmental challenges".

He emphasised the need for the workshop to pay attention to ESG principles and green financing, which

stresses the government's commitment to empowering NMSMEs to thrive in a competitive global market.

"By integrating ESG principles, we are ensuring that the economic outcomes of these initiatives are measurable, impactful, and aligned with the overarching goals of inclusivity and shared prosperity".

Various presentations were delivered on "Building a Financially Sustainable and Bankable Business Plan" by Mrs. Temitope Olugbile, Financial Advisory from Deloitte; ESG by CEO, Integritas limited, Dr. Adebola Odunsi and CEO, Tese (an ESG Solutions firm)



# Sanwo-Olu Gives Contractor 12 Months To Complete Ojo General Hospital

The pace of work on the General Hospital project being constructed in Ojo town in Lagos State may improve rapidly, given Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu's renewed commitment to push the project to completion.

The Governor, on Tuesday, gave a 12-month deadline to the contractor handling the project when he led an on-the-spot tour of the project site to assess the progress of the construction work.

Besides, the Governor also flagged off the construction of 27-block shopping complex along LASU-Iyana Iba Road.

Sanwo-Olu, accompanied on the tour by the Deputy Governor, Dr. Obafemi Hamzat and members of the State cabinet, was received by Ojo residents led by their traditional leaders.

Sited on 6.5 hectares along Lagos-Badagry corridor, the Ojo General Hospital is a 280-bed infrastructure being developed by the Sanwo-Olu administration to ramp up medical care in Lagos West Senatorial District.

When completed, the multi-specialist hospital will be the biggest healthcare facility in the district, complementing other primary and secondary care facilities operating in the zone.

The hospital borders Ojo military cantonment, Lagos State University and also Lagos Rail Mass Transit (BLUE LINE) infrastructure.

Sanwo-Olu said the hospital was being developed to address



inadequate medical facilities in the area, stressing that the infrastructure would bring about a new care experience for residents in the area.

He said: "We have just taken a tour to see the construction work being carried out on this hospital project. Our word here is to encourage the contractor, who, we believe, is dealing with a big task, given the magnitude of the project. We will give the contractor all the support and encourage them to give their best. Whatever is to be done on our own part, we will fulfil our obligations.

"Based on the pace of work, we are hoping the project should have

been completed in the next 12 months, which means that the contractor should hand over the project by the end of the year. We will push everything to ensure that this task becomes a reality in the next 12 months. We extend our appreciation to stakeholders in the community for being part of this journey but we urge them to be patient while the construction continues."

Sanwo-Olu said when the project is completed, the hospital would be part of the infrastructure initiated by his administration to bring improvements to the Ojo area.

Listing other ongoing projects in the area, the

Governor noted that the hospital project had been sited in front of the Blue Line which will terminate at Okokomaiko.

"There is a complete renewal of infrastructure in this axis, which shows that our Government is working to fulfil its promises to our residents in Ojo and Badagry Division," Sanwo-Olu said.

Aside from the medical departments, the project is being developed with four blocks of Doctors' residence. The semi-detached accommodation comprises eight units of three-bedroom apartment in each block, making a total of

64 apartments.

Facilities in the main hospital building will include delivery theatre and wards, paediatrics, pharmacy, Oncology and Gynaecology, Accident and Emergency, Intensive Care Unit, surgical wards, dialysis centre, administrative unit, and outpatient department. The ancillary facilities include morgue, central laboratory, equipment storage facility, laundry, bank, engineering department and parking lot.

Turning the sod to flag off the construction of the Platinum Shopping Complex, Sanwo-Olu said: "This is an attempt to achieve regeneration not only to improve infrastructure

but also to reclaim the aesthetic properties of the environment and improve people's lifestyles. All the infrastructure projects being sited in this area are designed to improve the socio-economic power of our citizens in this corridor."

The shopping complex is being developed by Almera Global Investment Services — a private developer — in collaboration with Lagos State Development and Property Corporation (LSDPC), and Ojo Local Government Areas.

The project will be constructed in four phases. Each block will have 30 shops, resulting in a total of 1,500 shops.



# LAGOS HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY SPEAKERS

## Past and Present

The Lagos State House of Assembly has appointed eight Presiding Speakers since its inception in year 1979. On 2nd of October 1979, the Late Olosun Osinowo emerged as the first Speaker of the state's parliamentary House. Osinowo, under the flagship of the United Party of Nigeria, UPN, contested and won the representative position from Ikorodu Constituency 01. His Speakership tenure lasted till 5th of October 1983 during the second Nigerian Republic.

He spearheaded legislative duties at the Assembly Complex which comprised of 40 members, two each from the 20 local government areas in the state.

He died on 13th August, 2013 at the aged of 72.

- Late Oladimeji Longe  
Following the expiration of Osinowo's tenure as Speaker, a new legislative administration began. The Late Oladimeji Longe took the reigns as leader of the Parliamentary House - in a short stint.

Longe, who represented Itire-Ikate Constituency, began his tenure from October 6th till December 31, after a military coup ended the Nigerian Second Republic.

He attended the Methodist Primary School, Otapete, Ilesha, Osun State between 1937 and 1944 and had his secondary education at the Ilesha Grammar School between 1946 and 1951. He started his career with



- Mojisola Meranda



- Mudashiru Obasa



Adeyemi Ikuforiji



- Jokotola Pelumi



- Adeleke Mamora



- Shakirudeen Kinyomi

the Nigeria Railway Corporation at the age of 22 in year 1952 before proceeding to the University of London where he got his certificate in Law in 1965.

The 3rd Assembly was inaugurated on January 14, 1992, with the emergence of Hon. Shakirudeen Kinyomi as Speaker.

Same as Longe, Kinyomi's tenure was short-lived due to the Abacha-led military coup which abrogated the third republic.

He was a representative of Ojo Constituency 01.

Mamora's term as the Speaker of the Lagos Assembly began in 1999 and ended in year 2003.

He was born on 16 February 1953. He

obtained a Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences at the University of Ile-Ife, alongside others in Medicine and Surgery, MBBS, in the same institution.

Pelumi headed the house between June 2, 2003 and December 29, 2005

Ikuforiji spent the most time on the seat. He served from December 29, 2005

to June 4, 2015.

Obasa, representing Agege Constituency I, became the speaker of the house in June 2015, he was impeached on January 13, 2025.

Meranda, representing Apapa Constituency I, succeeded Obasa on January 13, 2025, emerging as the first female to lead the house.



# Education Commissioner Harps On Synergy In Technical Colleges

Kehinde Adeleye

**T**he Commissioner for Basic and Secondary Education, Mr. Jamiu Alli-Balogun has implored the staff and teachers of Government Technical Colleges to empower and delegate responsibilities to subordinates for proper collaboration in discharging their responsibilities.

Alli-Balogun gave the advice in his keynote address delivered at



the opening ceremony of the annual Management Retreat organised by the Lagos State Technical and Vocational Education Board (LASTVEB) with the theme: "Technical and Vocational Training: Key to Sustainable Development", held recently at the Novatel Hotel, Lekki, Lagos.

He maintained that officers must be ready to align and focus on discharging their duties, stressing that the retreat is an opportunity to review past activities and clarify new goals and objectives to prioritise actions. He further enjoined the participants to replicate what

operates internationally in Lagos State towards improving technical and vocational training.

While answering questions from officers, the Commissioner advised that participants must brainstorm to chart a roadmap through which a new narrative could be achieved for the brighter future of technical and vocational training in the state.

He reiterated that Governor Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu has promised to continue to support technical and vocational education because he was impressed by the

turnout of graduates during the 2024 graduation.

In her presentation, the Executive Secretary of LASTVEB, Ms. Moronke Azeez told the participants to be more focused so that the Agency will achieve its set goal of becoming the national leader in providing excellent and equitable technical and Vocational training in Nigeria.

She maintained that the LASTVEB has achieved a lot compared to where the agency was some years back, especially when Technical Colleges were being jettisoned by workers and citizens who considered technical colleges as dumpsites for failures. She charged all participants who are the

management team of the Agency to always remain focused and have a sense of dedication to make the students excel as far as technical and vocational education is concerned.

"The Lagos State Government, through LASTVEB, is dedicated to providing industry responsive and gender-inclusive technical education in Nigeria that not only creates employment opportunities but also enables self-employment," Azeez said.

She, however, revealed that the agency had

developed various work plans for the workers to make LASTVEB become the national leader in the provision of excellent and equitable Technical and Vocational training in the country.

Azeez expressed gratitude to the participants, especially those who have been with the agency in the past few years and had contributed immensely to the transformational training, just as she admonished them not to relent in their efforts at making the agency a credible and leading provider of technical and vocational education in the country.

"We have constantly received feedback that our past graduates are excelling, whether as self-employed individuals or in gainful employment with various organisations. Participants should continue to add achievements and remain focused and should also be proud of our achievements. Recently, four of our Technical Colleges in the State have been chosen to be part of the Federal Government's CNG Conversion Centres, which is a plus for us. That means we are moving forward," she said.

Facilitators also presented papers at the event. One of the facilitators and former Permanent Secretary, Mr. Abiodun Bamgboye, spoke on "Fostering Excellence in Public Service Leadership".

He urged the participants to always communicate with their workers and organise for feedback from them. He urged them to be creative and proactive and advised them not to restrict change, or else they would be consumed by it.



# Greenline Project: Lagos Signs

## MOU With FG ... Set To Begin Exploratory Work

The Lagos State Government has said it has signed an MoU with the Federal Government's Ministry of Finance Incorporated (MOFI) to kickstart exploratory work on the development of the Green Line project.

The Lagos State Commissioner for Information and Strategy, Mr. Gbenga Omotoso made this known at a Citizen/Media Stakeholders forum organised recently by the Ministry, adding that the 68 km Green Line once completed will connect Marina to the Lekki Free Trade Zone, along one of the fastest-growing industrial corridors on the continent.

He recalled that, in 2024, the State Government completed 36 road projects, including bridges, link bridges, and pedestrian infrastructure noting that it also has over 51 other road projects that are at various stages of development, across all five divisions of the State.

According to the



Government spokesperson, these include the Arowojobe Link Bridge and Approach Road, Mende, Maryland; Sand Zero Road, Oyingbo; Platinum Road, Igbokusu; Babafemi Dada Bridge and adjoining roads - Yinka Folarin, Jamiu Lawal, and Shalom Academy Road Network, Samuel Ekundayo Road, and Abaranje Road.

Others are Eluku Street/Mosafejo, Agbowa Ikosi, Adamo-Akanun-Agunfoye Lugbusi

Roads, Oba Dosunmu Road, Ikeja GRA, Oduduwa Way and Oduduwa Crescent, Ikeja GRA, Sasegbon Street, Ikeja GRA, Alternative Route to Admiralty Circle Toll Plaza, Sobo Arobiudu Street, Ikeja GRA and Lekki-Epe Expressway (Phase IIA and Phase IIB).

Under its Bus Reform Initiative (BRI), the present administration is developing new BRT Bus terminals, with ongoing projects at various stages of completion. The detailed engineering design and construction

of the Abule Egba Bus Terminal are progressing well. Similarly, work on the Iyana Ipaja Bus Terminal is advancing, while the Ajah Bus Terminals and Depots, along with the Addo Road Junction Improvement and Pedestrian Bridge, are nearing completion. Additionally, the construction of BRT infrastructure along the Lagos-Badagry Expressway is progressing, with

the section from Doyin Orile to Mile 2 currently under development.

The Commissioner averred that history was made last year with the completion and commissioning of the first phase of the 27-kilometer Red Line rail. This rail line, on which passenger operations commenced on October 15, 2024, is expected to serve 500,000 passengers per day.

The initial phase covers a 27-kilometer stretch from Agbado in Ogun State to Oyingbo

in Lagos, with eight stations at key areas (Agbado, Iju, Agege, Ikeja, Oshodi, Mushin, Yaba, and Oyingbo), four vehicular overpasses, three Pedestrian Bridges, and integration with Ikeja, Oshodi, Yaba and Oyingbo Bus Terminals, among other features.

Omotoso added that the plan of the administration is to connect the Red Line with the Blue Line, revealing that work has also commenced on the second phase of the Blue Line, which will extend it from Mile 2 to Okokomaiko.



# Lagos Launches N500m 'Ounje Eko' Subsidy

Kehinde Adeleye

In a move to bolster food security and domestic food production, the Lagos State Government has unveiled plans to launch a N500 million intervention

fund called "Ounje Eko" – a farmers' subsidy program aimed at providing affordable food sufficiency for its over 23 million residents. In collaboration with

the private sector and other stakeholders in the agriculture sector, the program seeks to ensure fair pricing of products for end-users while supporting local farmers.

The initiative was announced by the Lagos State Commissioner for Agriculture and Food Systems, Ms Abisola Olusanya, at a press

conference in Alausa, Ikeja.

The Ounje Eko subsidy program will provide a 25% subsidy on animal feeds for poultry, crop, and fish farmers, as well as tractorization services for crop production and the distribution of bags of fertilizers.

By offering these much-needed resources at a reduced cost, the Lagos State Government aims to stimulate agricultural growth and improve the livelihoods of local farmers.

The launch of the Ounje Eko program is scheduled for Wednesday, February 5, 2025, marking a significant step towards enhancing food security and

promoting sustainable agricultural practices within Lagos State.

The Commissioner further explained that the objectives of the programme are to sustain and improve production levels, ensure a steady supply of poultry and fish products in the market, prevent further farm closures and mitigate food insecurity in the state.

She noted that the initiative is a crucial step in the broader agenda to reduce over-reliance on food imports, and strengthen local food production and the overall agricultural value chain in Lagos State by supporting farmers from production to market distribution.



## OSHODI

# Oloyede's Second Term Bid Gathers Momentum

Kehinde Adeleye

The Chairman of Oshodi-Isolo Local Government, Otunba Kehinde Almaroof Oloyede, has continued to enjoy overwhelming support from critical stakeholders, residents, and political gladiators in the local government area as calls for his second term in office gain momentum daily.

Since he assumed office, Otunba Oloyede has demonstrated exceptional leadership, fostering inclusive governance and executing impactful developmental projects that have significantly improved the lives of residents. From infrastructure development to youth

empowerment programs, educational initiatives, and provision of safe drinking water, the Chairman's achievements have set a benchmark for effective local governance.

Speaking during a meeting of a support group working for the actualisation of the second-term bid of the council chairman, the Director-General of the group, Hon. Smart Akinleye, expressed gratitude to the members and residents of Oshodi-Isolo for their unwavering trust and encouragement.

He reiterated the commitment of the council boss to building on the achievements of his first term and delivering more innovative solutions

to the challenges facing the local government.

Also contributing at the meeting, which was held at the Marriage Registry of the local government, the council's Vice Chairman, Hon. Mrs. Modupe Badmus-Aregbe, appreciated the support group for their foresight and desire to work toward the actualisation of the second-term bid of the council chairman.

She said; "We have witnessed remarkable growth and transformation under the leadership of Otunba Oloyede for close to four years, and I am proud to have worked closely with him to achieve these milestones. It is only fair and just to support him for a second term to consolidate these gains and ensure continuity."

She also appreciated the devotion of the people, noting that God would



crown their efforts just as He did during the first term.

The Leader of the Legislative Arm, Hon. Rasheed Obasa, who led other councilors to the meeting, also contributed. The lawmakers of the local government equally threw their weight behind the Chairman, highlighting his leadership ability, which has resulted

in a seamless working relationship between the executive and legislative arms.

The Leader of the House stressed that without the cooperation and support of the lawmakers, the council chairman would not have been able to achieve the successes recorded.

Also in attendance were Supervisors, Special Advisers, SSAs, former councilors, traditional chiefs, grassroots politicians, mobilizers, and representatives of

the Ndigbo and Arewa communities.

As the momentum continues to build, it is evident that the residents of Oshodi-Isolo local government are united in their call for continuity, believing that a second term for Otunba Oloyede will bring about even greater developmental strides for the community.



**A** septuagenarian, Muritala Adebayo, has been held for court trial over accusations of fraud amounting to N19,000,000 in Lagos.

Adebayo of age 73 was arraigned by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, at the Lagos Special Offences Court in Ikeja on three court charge bordering on conspiracy, stealing and obtaining money under false pretence. EFCC Counsel, Saadatu Yabo,

# EFCC Arraigns Man Over N19M Fraud

By Felix Kuyinu

informed that the accused, who was initially arraigned on January 2, 2024, fraudulently obtained N4,500,000 from Ademolake - the complainant, under the pretense that it was payment for three plots of land in

Ogombo and Ajah, Lagos. Yabo also mentioned that Adebayo obtained the sum of N5,500,000 from Ademolake by claiming it was part payment for 18 plots of land in Ayogbemi Village, Ibeju, Lekki.

Furthermore, the Prosecutor claimed that the litigant, sometime in 2019, Additionally, in 2019, defrauded the complainant by accepting three vehicles—two 2005 Toyota Camry models and a 2006 Honda Accord—with an agreed value of N9 million, again claiming the

payment was for the 18 plots of land - all which he knew was false. Yabo stated that the defendant, when asked about the money he was given, failed to answer satisfactorily. He also failed to refund the money back to the agitator. Yabo prayed for a trial date, while the defense counsel,

Bamidele Ogundele, asked the court to uphold the bail conditions granted by Justice Mojisola Dada at an earlier proceeding. Presiding over the case, Justice Rahman Oshodi granted the submission of the Ogundele. However, Oshodi ruled that the Deputy Registrar must verify all documents and ensure compliance of the bail conditions within 14 days. He adjourned the case till March 7.



## MOJ Trains Staff On Professional Development

**T**he Lagos State Ministry of Justice, MOJ, has held a training workshop for junior officers to enhance development in their judicial activities.

The two-day training session held at the Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry, LCCI, Ikeja, was facilitated to underscore the indefatigable commitment put up by the MOJ for its officers, empowering them for more developmental goals.

At the event tagged "Empowering the Backbone of the Ministry for Enhanced Productivity and Service Delivery", the state's Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, Lawal Pedro, SAN, said that the initiative was also aimed at providing a

unique platform for reflection, learning, and collaboration towards more growth in the state. Pedro added that the young officers were put through on ways to foster unity alongside enhancement of collective efficiency among each other.

The Attorney commended the participants, acknowledging them as the backbone of the ministry. He disclosed that their dedication, resilience and vital contributions are important factors in achieving the Ministry's mandate. The Ministry's Solicitor General and Permanent Secretary, Hameed Oyenuga, said: "These officers

By Felix Kuyinu

provide essential support that enables the efficient functioning of administrative, logistical, and operational processes in the ministry.

"Their contributions are indispensable to the overall effectiveness and success of the Ministry as a whole."

"There is need for efficiency and professionalism. This workshop is designed to address the unique challenges faced by these officers. It would equip the participants with practical skills and knowledge to enhance their productivity, ensuring they are better prepared to fulfill their roles and contribute meaningfully to the Ministry's objectives."

**A** suspect has pleaded guilty to robbing a National Youth Service Corp, NYSC, in Lagos.

At the Ikeja High Court on Monday, the transgressor, Olayemi Ayomide, was subsequently sentenced to 10 years in prison, in a ruling by the Presiding Judge, Modupe Nicol-Clay, following a plea-bargain submission.

The State Prosecutor, Titilayo Olanrewaju-Daud, mentioned that the convict, on December 31, 2018, at about 12pm in Ojuelegba, Lagos, robbed the NYSC member identified as Adekanbi Olubusayo, of his four Automated Teller Machine, ATM

## Man Jailed For Robbing NYSC Member

By Felix Kuyinu

cards, NYSC Identification card, a driving licence, Samsung C5 gold mobile phone, and the sum of N2,050, cash. According to the prosecutor, the offences committed contravened Sections, 76 (6) of the Administration of Criminal Law of Lagos State 2011, and Sections 406 (1) and 287 of the Criminal Law of Lagos State 2015.

The judge, while rulling against the jailer, who

stood trial on two counts bordering on theft, said: "This court finds the agreed punishment of 10 years to be adequate given the convict's admission of guilt and show of remorse.

"The convict, Olayemi Ayomide, is hereby convicted for the offence of attempt to commit felony and stealing, and he is hereby sentenced to 10 years imprisonment, to commence from the date of his remand being January 3, 2019."





# Free UTME Coaching Begins in Ifako-Ijaiye

*Kehinde Adeleye*

The Ifako-Ijaiye Local Government, led by Executive Chairman Prince Usman Akanbi Hamzat (UAH), initiated a screening exercise on January 25, 2025, for prospective candidates of the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME). The event marked the beginning of the distribution of free UTME forms to the local youth, particularly high school graduates seeking to further their education. The initiative is part of Prince Hamzat's HEEDS Agenda, which focuses on providing educational support to underprivileged students within the local government. Following the distribution of the forms, the council

plans to offer three months of free intensive coaching facilitated by experienced tutors in a conducive learning environment, ensuring that candidates are well-prepared for the UTME. On the day of the screening, a large number of candidates gathered at the Council Secretariat in Idiagbon as early as 7 a.m. Prince Hamzat encouraged the students to remain dedicated and hardworking in their academic pursuits. He also urged them to represent Ifako-Ijaiye Local Government as exemplary ambassadors by achieving excellent scores and securing admission into their desired courses. Members of the Executive Council of the Local Government were present to



oversee and coordinate the exercise. These included the Chief of Staff to the Executive Chairman, Alhaji Mustapha Abolaji; the Supervisor for

Education and Library Services, Alhaji Lawal Adelani; the Supervisor for Legislative Matters, Hon.

Emmanuel Olaibi; the SA on Education and Library Services, Deji Ogundimu; the SA on Politics, Policy, and Strategy, Afeez

Mustapha; and the CPS to the Executive Chairman, Amb Lateef Salaam, along with other officials from the Office of the Executive Chairman.

# Hamzat Inaugurates Projects at Harmony Estate

*Kehinde Adeleye*

The Chairman of Ifako-Ijaiye Local Government, Prince Usman Akanbi Hamzat (UAH), recently attended the Harmony Estate Annual Prayers and Thanksgiving Day, where several community development projects were commissioned to meet the overall needs of the area. The projects

included a remodelled estate gate, administrative building, security block, and community hall. This event followed Harmony Estate's achievement as the Best Community Development Association (CDA) in Lagos State in 2024, where it was recognized as the 1st Runner Up. During the occasion, Prince Hamzat

reiterated his commitment to encouraging individual, corporate, and community efforts towards socio-economic development and infrastructure in the region. His attendance at the event highlighted the importance of collaboration between government officials and local communities in fostering progress and development.





# APM Terminal Offers Scholarships to 45 Undergraduate Students

Kehinde Adeleye

In a demonstration of its commitment to education and youth development, Nigeria's largest container terminal, APM Terminals Apapa, has awarded scholarships to 45 undergraduate students from its host community in Apapa, Lagos.

The company plans to expand the scholarship program to benefit over 250 students within the next five years as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) efforts.

The scholarship recipients, all of whom are

undergraduates from public universities across Nigeria, were honored at a ceremony held in Lagos. Additionally, APM Terminals Apapa awarded scholarships to the children of five front-line employees of the company.

Steen Knudsen, the Terminal Manager, emphasized the importance of education as a driving force for progress.

He noted that this initiative aligns with the company's mission to improve lives and foster development in the communities where it operates.

He added: "Today, we are supporting 45 students, but our vision is to grow this

number to over 250 students within the next 4-5 years. Education is the foundation of the future, and we are proud to contribute to shaping the next generation of leaders.

"The company's contributions extend beyond scholarships. APM Terminals Apapa has a rich history of supporting education in its host community, including the renovation and upgrading of Randle Secondary School, Apapa. This investment provided the school with modern facilities, ensuring an improved learning environment for students."

Knudsen revealed plans to launch a technical training programme for

80 female mechanics in collaboration with the Lady Mechanic Initiative (LMI), equipping them with skills to become certified professionals.

Also, the Head of People Function, APM Terminals Nigeria, Uzoma Ben-Ude, encouraged the beneficiaries to strive for excellence and make the most of the opportunities provided.

She emphasised the importance of boldness and hard work in achieving success.

The company's Senior People

Business Partner and Scholarship Programme Lead, Omolara Olatunbosun described the scholarship as not just a recognition of the awardees' academic achievements, but also a testament to their character and drive to achieve more. She said: "It was clear that each of them was deeply committed to securing this scholarship, and their determination was inspiring. Out of over 150 applicants, they stood out for their resilience and perseverance."

The Chairman of Apapa Local Government, Hon. Idowu Senbanjo, commended APM

Terminals Apapa for its contributions and urged other companies in the area to emulate the initiative.

She advised the students to take their studies seriously and use the scholarship as a springboard for success.

The Port Manager of Lagos Port Complex Apapa, represented by the Port Legal Adviser, Maxwell Maduakolam, praised APM Terminals' commitment to education and urged the students to remain diligent.

Some of the beneficiaries expressed heartfelt gratitude to APM Terminals Apapa for the support.

Ebuwa Ekin-noma Blessing described the scholarship as a life-changing opportunity, while Lagos State University student, Ige Akindenuola said that the initiative would yield great results for the recipients and their communities.

National Open University of Nigeria student Nansoh Melody echoed similar sentiments, acknowledging the scholarship's positive impact on her education.





# Tobun Promises Restoration Of Electricity In Epe

By Mohammed Adekola



**M**ember representing Epe constituency I at the Lagos-state House of Assembly, Hon. Abiodun Tobun has reiterated that he is not relenting on his efforts towards seeing the lasting solution to the epileptic supply of electricity in Epe. The lawmaker made this known at the annual get-together party organised by the Tobun for Real Team on Tuesday, 28th January, at the Epe Recreational Hall. In his words, "efforts have been geared up in a number of times on the re-installation

of the cables in areas they were vandalised but unfortunately these evil men repeatedly carted away the properties at different occasions and location while, we have discussed with the IKEDC officials and they are coming up with great strategies to ensure safety of the public property" "I will like to plead with the people of Epe division to exercise patience as the electricity hardship will soon be a thing of the past", he declared. Tobun affirmed that "It is a continuous development, My

contributions towards the growth of Epe is a continuous process. We are into projects that will be of benefit to the entire people of Epe" "I'm not resting on my oars because the development of the ancient town of Epe is paramount to me", he added. Residents of Epe LG confirmed the performances of the lawmaker is second to none and he has never taken his constituents for granted. They added that the people should support and cooperate with him in order for him to do more. Prince Wale Idowu

appreciates the leaders and the entire members of the APC for honouring their invitation He added that the get-together party was to give gratitude to Almighty God and celebrate Hon. Tobun for his quality representation at the LAHA. Former member, Federal House of Representatives, Epe Federal Constituency, Hon. Bola Gbabijo said, "the blackout in Epe is something that concerns all

and sundry and nobody is folding arms or showing unconcerned eyes to the issue. It will be restored very soon". The commissioner III, Lagos State Local Government Service Commission, Hon. Ahmed Seriki stressed that "the epileptic supply of electricity in Epe is so sadden. Efforts geared up by the stakeholders of Epe in order to restore electricity to Epe was not fruitful". "The vandals continue to cart away the cables. This is a fight for all. Everybody must be security conscious". Councilor representing

ward A6 at the Epe Local Government, com. Oluwo Rasheed in his view showered encomium on Tobun for his landslide achievements as the lawmaker representing Epe constituency I, in Lagos state house of Assembly. Oluwo however pointed out that the decision of all the councilors in Epe council to support Hon. Surah Animashaun for second term was in connection with her tremendous achievements and her willingness to do more for the people.



The Ifako-Ijaiye Community Development Committee (CDC), led by Chairman Pastor Samuel Opajobi, warmly received officials from the Ministry of Environment and Water Resources for a special monthly cleanup and public sensitization campaign in Olorunlagba CDA on January 25, 2025.

This collaborative effort aligns with the Lagos State Government's commitment to maintaining a cleaner environment and promoting healthy living habits for all residents.

During the campaign, the Ministry emphasized its dedication to addressing climate change concerns and ensuring that every corner of Lagos State remains clean and safe for its inhabitants.

The team lead disclosed that Olorunlagba CDA was selected for the special cleanup based on feedback from stakeholders and the public, which identified the area as needing immediate intervention.

The comprehensive cleanup exercise focused on Omirin Crescent, Sabainah Ola Street, and Oremeta Streets. Ministry officials worked alongside a team of sweepers to remove refuse from roadsides, clean drainages, and ensure

# Ifako-Ijaiye Community, Lagos Ministry Partner for Cleanup Campaign

Kehinde Adeleye



proper waste disposal.

Trucks were deployed to collect and remove all the waste, resulting in a noticeably cleaner and more pleasant environment for the community.

The Ministry officials took the opportunity to raise awareness among residents about the hazards of neglecting the environment, including the increased risk of flooding due to blocked drainages, health risks associated with waste accumulation, and the broader impact on

climate change.

They urged residents to take responsibility for maintaining the cleanliness of their surroundings and avoid engaging in practices that cause environmental harm.

In an effort to curb improper waste disposal, the Ministry issued a firm warning against patronizing cart pushers, whose operations are illegal in Lagos State.

Instead, residents were encouraged to collaborate with the PSP operators designated for their area.

The Ministry promised to address any concerns

or complaints regarding PSP services promptly and efficiently.

To further promote sustainable waste management, the Ministry emphasized the importance of waste segregation, highlighting the environmental and economic benefits of sorting waste into different categories, such as plastics, organics, and recyclables.

This practice not only helps reduce pollution but also creates opportunities for growth in the

recycling industry.

Pastor Opajobi commended the Ministry for the commendable initiative and pledged continued support for government efforts to sustain a cleaner Lagos. "If we keep up this momentum, Lagos will not only be the cleanest state in Nigeria but will also set a benchmark for other African cities," he stated.

He urged residents to see cleanliness as a shared responsibility and called for greater participation in community clean-up exercises. Furthermore, he

encouraged the government to strengthen the enforcement of environmental sanitation laws to ensure compliance and deter indiscriminate waste disposal.

This cleanup exercise serves as a reminder that a healthy environment contributes significantly to public health, economic growth, and a sustainable future for Lagos. By working together, the government and residents can achieve the vision of a cleaner, greener Lagos.



# Burna Boy Adds Richard Mille, Patek Philippe to Collections

By Nurudeen Adebayo



wristwatches—two Richard Mille timepieces and a Patek Philippe.

In a viral video capturing the moment of the high-end purchase, the Grammy-winning singer could be seen wearing two wristwatches on both wrists, visibly excited about his latest acquisitions.

A voice, presumably one of Burna's aides, could be heard enthusiastically announcing the cost of the watches, underscoring the lavishness of the purchase.

During the transaction, a staff member from the luxury store was heard explaining the specifications of Burna's new wristwatches.

One of the Richard Mille watches was identified as the Bubba Watson edition, featuring factory-set diamonds, to which Burna quickly responded, "No aftermarket," emphasizing that the piece is a limited edition.

The second Richard Mille watch was revealed to be the

Rafael Nadal RM35-03, with the store representative highlighting that it is the fourth model in the Rafael Nadal series.

As the camera captured the scene, another man sitting across from Burna appeared deep in thought, seemingly astonished by the staggering amount spent on the timepieces.

Burna Boy, who is known for his love of luxury, later calculated that his latest acquisition brings his total Richard Mille watch collection to seven.

The purchase further cements his status as

a collector of high-end fashion accessories.

The singer is no stranger to splurging on extravagant items. In 2024, he made waves after acquiring a Rolls-Royce customized with diamonds, further showcasing his affinity for opulent possessions.

Burna Boy's latest shopping spree has once again fueled discussions among fans and luxury enthusiasts, reinforcing his image as one of Africa's biggest stars with a taste for the finer things in life.

**A**fro beats headlines with his superstar Burna Boy has once again made three luxury

extravagant taste, as he recently acquired three luxury

# Black Sherif and Fireboy DML Team Up for 'So It Goes,'

By Nurudeen Adebayo

**G**hanaian sensation Black Sherif has joined forces with Nigerian star Fireboy DML for a highly anticipated collaboration, So It Goes.

The track, which showcases both artists' vocal prowess and emotional depth, serves as a preview of Black Sherif's sophomore album, IRON BOY, set for release in the first half of 2025.

Produced by longtime collaborator SamSney, with additional production from Louddaaa, So It Goes captures Black Sherif's relentless pursuit of a better life,

while Fireboy DML reflects on the highs and lows of success, honouring his family in the process.

The collaboration marks a major moment in West African music, uniting two of the scene's most dynamic talents and label mates.

Fireboy DML, known for his smooth, soulful vocals and hit records, complements Black Sherif's raw, emotive delivery, making So It Goes a standout track in both artists' careers.

Since breaking into the mainstream, Black Sherif has

experienced a meteoric rise, captivating a global audience with his unique voice and deeply personal lyrics.

His 2022 hit, Kwaku the Traveller, topped the Global Shazam Chart, further cementing his status as one of Africa's leading musical exports. His genre-blending approach to music has earned him critical acclaim, including the award for Best International Flow at the 2023 BET Hip Hop Awards.

With So It Goes, Black Sherif continues to build anticipation for IRON BOY, an album that promises to showcase his versatility and depth as an artist.



The track serves as a testament to his evolving sound and his ability to craft music that

resonates across borders.

As fans eagerly await the album's release, So It Goes solidifies Black

Sherif's reputation as one of the most compelling voices in contemporary African music.



# Single Mothers Fight Dirty Over Boyfriend

By Mohammed Adekola

**D**rama unfolded in Iraye, Epe, as two single mothers, Margaret and Tawa, got into a heated fight over a guy named Kola. The incident, which took many residents by surprise, involved accusations and jealousy over the man's attention. According to eyewitnesses, Kola, a married father of two, had been pursuing Margaret, a food vendor and mother of two, for a long time. However, Margaret turned him down, stating that her children were her priority. "I told him I wasn't interested because my children come first. He kept coming to my shop to buy

food and help me out, but I never encouraged him," Margaret said. Tawa a single mother of one, had been a frequent customer at Margaret's canteen, often coming around whenever Kola was there. One day, Kola asked Margaret to introduce him to Tawa, and Margaret did so. Tawa quickly accepted his advances, and the two started dating. Things seemed fine initially, but trouble started when Kola continued visiting Margaret's shop and offering her help, making Tawa feel insecure. "Tawa started telling people that I was trying to take her boyfriend, but I



ignored her. I didn't want any trouble," Margaret explained. The tension reached its peak when Tawa confronted Margaret at

her shop. Words were exchanged, and the argument quickly turned into a physical fight,

shocking bystanders. "I couldn't take it anymore. She was acting like she was innocent, but I knew something was going

on between them," Tawa said, the incident has since become the talk of the community.

# Owolomose Begins Project Inspection

By Mohammed Adekola

**E**pe Local Government Council, led by its Vice Chairman, Hon. Sikiru Adeniyi Owolomose, embarked on a comprehensive project inspection tour to assess the progress of various ongoing initiatives aimed at enhancing the quality of life for residents. The inspection tour, which is part of Princess Surah Animashaun administration's efforts to ensure transparency, accountability, and effective project management, aimed to evaluate the progress of ongoing projects, identify

potential challenges, and ensure that projects meet the needs and expectations of the community. The Vice Chairman of the Local Government, Hon. Sikiru Adeniyi Owolomose emphasised Princess Surah Animashaun administration's commitment to delivering impactful projects that benefit the people of Epe Local Government. Owolomose said Epe Local Government's efforts demonstrate its commitment to improving the lives of its citizens and providing essential services and infrastructure. The administration

remains dedicated to transparency, accountability, and effective project management, ensuring that all projects meet the needs and expectations of the community. "By monitoring progress and addressing potential challenges, the Council ensures that these projects have a lasting impact on the community. The Local Government's commitment to development is evident in its comprehensive approach to project implementation, and the administration will continue to work tirelessly to deliver impactful projects that benefit the people of Epe Local

Government", the Vice Chairman said. He assured the

community that the Chairman, Princess Surah Animashaun will continue to work tirelessly to ensure that

all ongoing projects are completed on schedule and to the highest standards.





# Concerned Residents Rally to End Six-Month Power Outage

By Mohammed Adekola

**E**pe Local government and neighbouring communities have been grappling with a prolonged power outage that has lasted nearly six months. Concerned residents and stakeholders are now taking action under the banner of #FixEpePower, calling for urgent solutions to restore electricity and secure the area's energy infrastructure.

In a viral post shared on social media, the group stressed that for over two decades, Nigeria's electricity sector has undergone several transformations, including privatization and decentralization. Recent policy changes, such as the removal of electricity from the exclusive legislative list and partial subsidy removal, have allowed states and private entities to run independent power grids. While these reforms have led to improvements in many parts of the country, the group noted that Epe remains in darkness due to persistent vandalism of power

infrastructure.

The affected areas; Epe Central, Eredo, and Ikosi-Ejinrin LCDAs, receive power from Ikorodu. However, continued sabotage of the transmission infrastructure has left homes, businesses, and essential services without electricity, stalling economic and social activities despite interventions from service providers and private stakeholder.

Determined to find a lasting solution, Concerned Epe Indigenes and Residents; the same group that successfully championed the #FixEpeRoads campaign in 2020 are now mobilizing resources and engaging key stakeholders to address the power crisis. Their goals include: **Protecting Energy Infrastructure:** Establishing a Joint Security Force comprising local and conventional security agencies to prevent vandalism. **Engaging Ikeja Electric:** Assessing the extent of damage and working on a sustainable funding plan for immediate power restoration.



**Long-Term Solutions:** Advocating for the construction of an Epe Power Substation or an Independent Power Plant to provide a stable energy supply. **Public Awareness:** Educating residents on the importance of protecting public infrastructure, including power lines, roads, and utility installations.

The initiative is expected to deliver:

**Enhanced Security:** A community-led security system to safeguard power installations.

**Immediate Power Restoration:** Businesses and households will regain electricity,

reviving economic activities.

**The Birth of 'Epe Energy Forum (EEF)':** A dedicated platform to sustain advocacy for improved electricity supply in the region. **Residents,** businesses, and stakeholders are urged to support the #FixEpePower movement by raising awareness on social

media and participating in community-driven initiatives.

The campaign has been endorsed by key political, traditional, and economic stakeholders, including youth groups, local government officials, and royal fathers across the Epe Division.



# New Iyaloja-General of Igbogbo/ Bayeku LCDA Unveils Agenda

By Nurudeen Adebayo

The newly appointed Iyaloja-General of Igbogbo/Bayeku Local Council Development Area (LCDA), Alhaja (Chief) Ashake Wahab, has unveiled her strategic agenda aimed at improving market administration and fostering development across markets within the council. Alhaja Wahab made this known during the first-ever New Year Prayer gathering held at Mikson Onas Hall along Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu Way,

Igbogbo.

The event, attended by market leaders and traders from 25 out of the 28 markets under her jurisdiction, also saw the formal declaration of January 2nd as an annual prayer day for markets within the LCDA. In her address, the Iyaloja-General emphasized the need for leadership training, capacity building, and regular market visits to ensure proper administration. She also highlighted key areas of focus such as discipline enforcement, security awareness, accountability, and transparency in market associations.

“I thank you all for your attendance despite the short notice. I did not expect such a large turnout because of the impromptu nature of the communication, but I sincerely appreciate you all for making the time,” she said. She explained that the prayer session was necessary to begin the year by committing the market activities into God's hands. Alhaja Wahab further encouraged market leaders and traders to attend the weekly meetings with Chief (Mrs) Folashade Tinubu-Ojo, the Iyaloja-General of Lagos, at the state secretariat. She described the

forum as an institution where they could gain insights into effective market operations, improve their leadership skills, and build networks. The Iyaloja-General revealed plans to introduce leadership training for market leaders, aimed at enhancing their skills in market organization, personal development, and business management. “To improve our skills in managing markets, running profitable

businesses, and strengthening our relationship with the public, we will be introducing regular leadership training,” she announced. “Resource persons will be invited to equip us with the knowledge and orientation needed to lead well and change the public's perception of us.” She also stated that she would embark on routine market visits to ensure strict compliance with market rules, address cases of indiscipline, and curb overnight trading activities, which pose security risks.

As part of efforts to boost morale and promote a culture of excellence, Alhaja Wahab disclosed plans to introduce an award scheme to honor the best-managed market within the LCDA. She urged traders and market leaders to embrace discipline, accountability, and cooperation to foster growth and improve market operations in the Igbogbo/Bayeku LCDA. The prayer gathering was attended by various market stakeholders, religious leaders, and community representatives, who expressed their support for the Iyaloja-General's vision and pledged their cooperation.





# Itire Ikate Residents Enjoy Free Cataract Surgery

By Saheed Afolabi

Itire Ikate LCDA residents were shown compassion and hopes as those with eye problems underwent free eye and cataract surgeries at the Gbagada general hospital. The medical services was rendered by the Itire Ikate LCDA and the NNPC. The initiative addressed the critical need for accessible eye care, particularly for those suffering from cataracts and other vision impairments. Professional and experienced

ophthalmologists performed the surgeries, offering beneficiaries the chance to regain their vision and improve their quality of life. Apatira emphasized his administration's commitment to quality healthcare for all Itire-Ikate residents, highlighting the importance of such partnerships in reaching the community. He praised the NNPC Foundation for their support and urged other organizations to participate in similar projects.

Beyond the surgeries, the medical mission provided comprehensive healthcare services, including general health screenings, consultations, and public health education. Residents gained valuable knowledge about preventive care, empowering them to manage their health and well-being. This successful collaboration demonstrates the positive impact of public-private partnerships in addressing healthcare challenges and

improving lives within the community. The program has left a lasting mark on Itire-Ikate, showcasing the power of leadership

and collaboration in community development.



# Apatira Assures Traditional Institution Of Government Support

By Saheed Afolabi



Chairman of Itirelkate LCDA, Dr Ahmed Apatira

Chairman of Itirelkate LCDA, Dr Ahmed Apatira has assured the traditional rulers in the community of his administration utmost support in discharging their duties. He made the pledge during the LCDA's hosting of the bi-monthly rotational meeting of royal fathers in the Lagos Division. The meeting, attended by prominent royal figures and dignitaries from across the division,

provided a platform for discussing key issues impacting traditional institutions and regional development. Apatira commended the royal fathers for their leadership and contributions to their communities, urging continued collaboration with government for sustainable progress. He revealed their importance in fostering unity, preserving cultural heritage, and strengthening community bonds, assuring them of his administration's

commitment to their well-being. He also acknowledged their vital advisory role in governance and community development. The royal fathers appreciated the council boss for his efforts in promoting peace and progress within the LCDA. They praised the meeting's organization and its value in facilitating discussions on traditional and contemporary matters, pledging their continued partnership with the government to improve the lives of their people.



# Speaking Truth to Power: A Review of Gbemisola Adeoti's *Stoning the Wind*

By Toyin Falola



The principle of equality is theoretically recognized as one of the fundamental foundations of democracy. Over the years, scholars have argued that equality prevents marginalization, and that the absence of marginalization signifies the existence of egalitarianism. It is in this context that Gbemisola Adeoti's anthology, *Stoning the Wind*, flourishes and is to be appreciated.

The poems in this anthology explore the origins of Nigeria's sociopolitical challenges by revealing the corruption in the system. One of the notable poems which vividly describes this is "The Chameleon and the Soldier Ant." In this poem, the poet delineates the distinctive traits of the chameleon and the soldier ant, attributing the features of the former to the oppressors (politicians) and those of the latter to the oppressed (masses). The poem reveals and examines the nation's recurrent challenges with authority, power, corruption, and violence.

Since the dawn of the Fourth Republic, Nigeria's elections have consistently been plagued by anomalies, malpractices, and violence. This ugly reality has forced

many Nigerians to question whether their votes truly matter. According to an article by Budgit.org, the 1993 general elections remain the fairest and freest election the country has ever had. However, its annulment by then-Head of State, General Ibrahim Babangida, serves as a stark reminder of Nigeria's history of dictatorship and abuse of power. The annulment of the election symbolizes corruption and misuse of authority. While in democratic theories, power belongs to the people, in practice however, it is concentrated among a select few, that is, the oppressors who wield power at the expense of the masses.

The depiction of the Chameleon "saluting the ground beneath the belly" and the "fallen leaves that keep a date with destiny" implies a veneration for the status quo and the government's consistent nonchalance to the plight of the populace. On the contrary, the soldier ant, symbolizing the downtrodden section of Nigerian society, is equipped with a "flimsy trunk, a fat head, and two cruel teeth as tools of terror." Despite the soldier ant's ferocious nature, its power stems from "solidarity and the martial oneness of a centurion," which underscores the significance of solidarity among the subjugated in the presence of formidable oppression. Perhaps a revolution is Nigeria's only path to redemption—or perhaps not. Gbemisola Adeoti suggests that true emancipation from internal colonialism (that is, from the ruling oppressors) lies in unity despite diversity rather than outright rebellion.

In 2019, Omoyele Sowore, a Nigerian activist and journalist, initiated the #RevolutionNow movement, pushing for nationwide rallies to confront the sociopolitical crises affecting Nigeria. It is noteworthy that such uprisings are not unprecedented in Africa; we can consider the Arab Spring upheaval in Egypt as presenting a compelling parallel. Following nearly three decades of President Mubarak's unjust and autocratic rule, the youth and other concerned factions of the country mobilized en masse, compelling Mubarak to resign on 25th January 2011. Tunisia under Ben Ali is another significant example of an autocratic government. Ali ruled for over two decades without any evidence of

economic growth and with widespread violations of fundamental human rights. This incited a revolution in the nation, compelling the dictatorial president to flee in 2011. Recently, protests in Kenya were instigated by contentious proposed tax increases, and the movement has transformed into a fierce campaign for more governmental accountability. In the poem "Ballot Box," Adeoti furthers by critiquing the widespread electoral manipulation that afflicts Nigerian democracy. The opening line of the poem, "The ballot box is a resonant box that hums himself of hope and gloom," signifies that the voting box embodies both hope and despair in Nigerian electoral traditions. This is apparent in the nation's

electoral history, characterized by frequent controversy, violence, and claims of rigging. The analogy of the ballot box as a "harlot's trunk box" illustrates how corruption has wrecked our electoral processes through greed and deception. This is one of the images which carefully depicts Nigeria's corrupt electoral system. The 2007 general elections are a testament to this claim, as there were numerous negative reports regarding the electioneering. According to the Department for International Development, the April 2007 general elections were said to be the most unjust in post-independence Nigeria. Thus, there is additional proof that elections in Nigeria only benefit the privileged.



Gbemisola Adeoti



# Gbemisola Adeoti's Stoning the Wind

*Continued from page 26*

According to The Republic's article "The Many Sins of INEC," the author conveyed disappointment with INEC's logistical difficulties in several regions of the country during the last elections. Moreover, multifarious reports of violence and voter suppression were made in major cities of the country, such as Lagos and Rivers. This further corroborates the claim that the innovations of INEC, that is, the introduction of the Permanent Voters' Cards (PVC) and Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS), have only brought retrogressive developments to the nation, as the body still struggles to conduct credible elections. The lines "Voters don't count much as the counters of votes in power" mirror the tainted 2023 presidential election, which was marred by reports of irregularities from journalists and election observers, both local and international observers.

In a 2019 article by Yiagi Africa, it was reported that the 2019 general elections experienced one of the poorest turnouts in the country's history, with only 32% of the registered voters participating in electioneering. Among the factors that were considered to decline mass participation in elections include inefficient security, violence, and unfulfilled electoral promises. This challenges the legitimacy of authority when the populace abruptly becomes apolitical. Currently, voter suppression serves as a mechanism for manipulating electoral outcomes by dissuading and obstructing individuals



Gbemisola Adeoti

from casting their votes. Yiagi Africa stated that the 2019 gubernatorial elections did not occur in about 26% of polling units in Bayelsa. This action resulted in thousands of voters being unable to cast their ballots or make electoral choices—a well-calculated action that ultimately served the interests of a particular group or political party. Moreover, the depiction of the ballot box as a "presiding priest at the festival of hoax" implies that the electoral process is often a mere facade or mere formalities, with results "preordained" by those in power. The poet alludes to the "chameleon" nature of the voting box, which "swiftly" changes "coats and color" and obstructs the genuine wishes of the electorate.

In "Pandemic," Gbemisola Adeoti not only criticizes the government but also expresses his worries as a social scientist, recognizing that individuals are influenced by governmental policies, biases, as well as social and environmental factors. The COVID-19 pandemic and its global repercussions are indelible, as the poet asserts that the virus resulted from the global community's inadequate response to previous pandemics, such as Ebola. The poem continues by examining the unequal effects on the most vulnerable societal members and, at the same time, asserting that the pandemic served as a great equalizer, revealing the frailty of even the most powerful and affluent

individuals.

The poem also evokes a sense of responsibility that fosters unity among nations. During this period of devastation, a strong sense of global solidarity emerged. The lines in the poem serve as a poignant critique of the pandemic's effects on the global economy and geography. The phrase "Many play the flies that follow the corpse to the coffin" implies that many Nigerians have been compelled to adapt to the new reality of the pandemic, while many others grapple to endure in an economy grossly affected by the virus. The line "dying other people's death in homeland and exile" is a tribute to those who have been compelled to abandon their homes and communities in pursuit of safety, only to

encounter the unprecedented challenges of surviving in an unfamiliar and hostile setting.

The poet responded to the Covid-19 pandemic and other evils that have afflicted humanity with his poem "The Next Evil." "The Next Evil" is a poem that dwells on hope and resilience. The poem's opening line is a rhetorical question that challenges the thought that hopelessness is the worst affliction we can endure as humans. The lines: "What is the next evil that can befall a man who wakes up from a sleepless night thinking he has lost all light to multiple layers of plight?" is an assertion that hope is the foundation of our beliefs and credence as humans, even in our most desolate moments. In a world that has experienced several physical wars, conflicts, pandemics, lockdowns, and violence, this is a reminder that optimism remains the sole remedy for an uncertain future.

I can't think of a better way to end this review than by enclosing it with my own poem:

You are the one who speaks truth to power,  
The one whose pen breathes for justice  
In a land where truth is forbidden  
You are the one who challenges the authority  
Of the snakes who lure their people  
into a den of torture  
When the gates of fairness are locked  
You command your pen to seek redress.  
If not you, what then is the meaning of justice?  
And when the voices of the oppressed are silenced,  
you amplify their cries, a beacon in the night.  
Your words are a ray of hope and a call to action to fight for what is right.



# Ajala Reflects On Achievements

Kehinde Adeleye

**C**hairman of Odi-olowo Ojuwoye LCDA, Mr Rasaq Ajala is optimistic his achievements in sports in the community have had great impact in the youths while taking them away from drugs. Over 35 awards were given out to athletes, coaches and sport personalities. The Director General of the Lagos State Sports Commission (LSSC), Lekan Fatodu was awarded the Sports Icon of the year, vice chairman of Odi-olowo Ojuwoye LCDA, Seyi Jakande was awarded the Distinguished Sportsman of the year and Mrs Muibat Ajala, Sports mother of the year among others. The council boss who was awarded the Sportsman of the year in Lagos state said the award ceremony is a way to reward the exceptional talents in the community while providing a legal platform to the youths to earn a living and become patriotic to the country. "It's just to appreciate them, to let them know that they can use this platform to be a patriotic Nigerian and responsible

parents. To us we believe that one of the verifiable platform we can actually leverage on to give meaningful and sustainable platform to our youths is through sport.

"If you look around, we have four dominant sports in Odi-olowo Ojuwoye LCDA that our people love and engage in it which is football, basketball, table tennis and boxing."

Ajala is convinced that he has been able to use sports to correct the negative narrative on Mushin and Odi-olowo Ojuwoye LCDA to a positive light where the youths have abandoned criminal activities and redirect their energy to having a meaningful impact in the community through sports.

He's however delighted that numerous sport competitions that he pioneered as chairman of Odi-olowo Ojuwoye LCDA have positively impacted the community where games are created for the youths and also the elders competing in board games.

"If you look at the perception of people about Mushin, they believe Mushin is about negativity but

with sports we can actually leverage on it and let the people know about the capacity of our youth and let the people know we have what it takes to contribute to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the nation. We are telling our youths that they have the energy, instead of using the energy to terrorize the residents of the local government, they should direct the energy to sports and project the local government positively to the members of the public.

"Every December we organize the Odi-olowo Ojuwoye Sports Fiesta which is spread around multiple sports including the traditional Ayo Olopon table game which we use in carrying the elders in the community together. Studies have shown that there's surge in criminal activities during Yuletide period, so by organizing this Sport Fiesta is to redirect the focus of our youths which ordinarily they would have involved in one form of criminality or the other.

"We are constructing standard football pitch at Ilupeju Secondary School (Ilusec) that's due for commissioning before May. Just last year, we took some our male players to Sweden and their female counterpart will be taken to Denmark this year."



Chairman of Odi-olowo Ojuwoye LCDA, Mr Rasaq Ajala giving his speech at the Ghetto Tigers/Odi-olowo Ojuwoye Sports Awards



# GTCO Takes Centre Stage at 2025 NPA Polo Tournament

Kehinde Adeleye

The Group's long-running sponsorship of the NPA Lagos International Polo Tournament reinforces its commitment to celebrating Africa's rich sporting heritage and promoting inclusivity through world-class events. Last year's tournament featured a thrilling six chukkas encounter, culminating in Leighton Kings securing the coveted Majekodunmi Cup after a hard-fought match against Art Hotel Shoreline.

Guaranty Trust Holding Company Plc (GTCO) is thrilled to be the headline sponsor of the highly-anticipated 2025 NPA Lagos International Polo Tournament, which will take place at the esteemed Lagos Polo Club in Ikoyi from 4th to 23rd February 2025.

The 2025 NPA Lagos International Polo Tournament promises to be an even more spectacular affair, showcasing top-tier teams as they compete for the Open Cup and the Majekodunmi Cup in a series of high-goal and low-goal matches over the course of 18 days. The Silver Cup will be contested throughout the entire three weeks, while the Low Cup will take center stage during the third week, ensuring a dynamic and engaging experience for both players and spectators alike.

Commenting on GTCO's

role as main sponsor of the Lagos International Polo Tournament, Segun Agbaje, Group Chief Executive Officer, said: "At GTCO, we are passionate about fostering excellence and creating platforms that bring people together through shared passions. The NPA Lagos international Polo Tournament embodies the spirit

of teamwork, discipline, and fair play—values that resonate deeply with our brand. We remain committed to driving positive change by supporting local initiatives with global impact that foster community development and social progress, ensuring that the benefits of the tournament extend well beyond the sport itself."

GTCO has a

longstanding tradition of supporting impact-driven sporting events as part of its broader commitment to community development. The Group's long-running sponsorship of the NPA Lagos International Polo Tournament reinforces its commitment to celebrating Africa's rich sporting heritage and promoting inclusivity through world-class events.







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Published by Echoneews Newspapers Limited

21, Ona Iwa Mimo Street, Ori Oke Bus Stop, Ejigbo, Lagos. www.echoneews.ng Email: echoneews1111@yahoo.co.uk  
Managing Editor: Obe Rasheed • Editor: Kunle Awosiyan Circulation: Opeyemi Akinlade • Adverts: 08025378799