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A colourful Sallah Durbar in Northern Nigeria

Silent Eid: How Hardship and Insecurity Are Dimming Nigeria's Sallah Spirit

By Martha Gwary

Once a season of joy and abundance, Sallah celebrations across Nigeria are increasingly defined by restraint, anxiety and economic struggle.

What was once a season of colour, abundance and communal joy is increasingly becoming a subdued affair across Nigeria, as economic hardship and rising insecurity force millions to mark Sallah on a markedly lower scale.

From Festivity to Frugality

In years past, the Eid celebrations—whether Eid al-Fitr or Eid al-Adha—were synonymous with bustling markets, lavish feasts and vibrant gatherings. Families travelled across states to reunite with loved ones, children donned new clothes with pride, and neighbourhoods echoed with laughter, prayers and the aroma of richly prepared meals. Today, that familiar rhythm has been disrupted.

Economic Crisis Bites Hard

At the heart of the shift lies a deepening economic crisis. Spiralling inflation, high food prices and dwindling purchasing power have left many households struggling to meet basic needs, let alone fund festive traditions.

The cost of rams, a central feature of Eid al-Adha, has soared beyond the reach of average Nigerians. For many families, the symbolic sacrifice has been replaced with modest meals—or, in some cases, none at all.

"I used to buy at least one ram every year," said a civil servant in Abuja. "Now, even feeding my family daily is a challenge."

CONTINUES ON PAGE 3

Police Intensify Nationwide Deployment as Nigerians Celebrate Peaceful Eid-el-Fitr

- IGP ordered heightened visibility policing and coordinated patrols
- The 2026 Eid in Nigeria was moderately safe

BY GIFT LUCKSON,
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The Inspector-General of Police, Olatunji Disu, has ordered the nationwide

deployment of tactical assets to ensure the safety and security of lives and property during the Eid-el-Fitr celebrations.

Disu also extended warm

felicitations to Muslim faithful across Nigeria, congratulating them on the successful completion of the Ramadan fast and the joyous occasion of Eid-

el-Fitr. On Friday, the IG directed Commissioners of Police and Tactical Commanders across the 36 states and the Federal Capital

Territory to implement comprehensive security measures during the festive period. Mobilisation of the

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ADARA (KADARA) PEOPLE: THE CULTURAL IDENTITY AND RESILIENCE OF ONE OF SOUTHERN KADUNA'S LARGEST ETHNIC GROUPS



THIS LIFE! >>16

NIGERIA'S EDUCATION SECTOR GRAPPLES WITH POOR INFRASTRUCTURE, LIMITED MATERIALS, AND OVERCROWDING — RETIRED PRINCIPAL



Prayers at Eid ground

Neptune World

New opinions are always suspected, and usually opposed, without any other reason but because they are not already common

JOHN LOCKE

Tell no lies, claim no easy victories

AMILCAR CABRAL



PICTURE OF THE DAY

Cecilia Adebisi Ugowe is the first female Deputy Inspector-General of Police (DIG) in Nigeria. A trailblazer, she achieved several "firsts" for women in the Nigeria Police Force, including being the first female Commissioner of Police (CP), Assistant Inspector-General of Police (AIG), and Force Secretary. She retired as a DIG and was honoured for her service on her 90th birthday in December 2025. Cecilia Ugowe remains a pioneering figure whose service to the Nigeria Police Force helped broaden opportunities for women and strengthen professionalism at a time when policing was overwhelmingly male-dominated.

RANDOM FACTS

Some mind-blowing facts about babies

Babies are born with more bones than adults: Newborns have about 300 bones, while adults have 206. Some bones fuse together as they grow.

They can recognise faces within hours: Babies are naturally wired to recognise human faces, especially their mother's, shortly after birth.

They dream a lot: Babies spend about 50% of their sleep in REM, the stage linked to dreaming—much more than adults.

Babies have more taste buds than adults: They even have taste receptors on their cheeks and tongue, making them very sensitive to flavours

Their hearts beat much faster: A baby's heart can beat 120–160 times per minute, almost double that of adults.

They have super grip strength: Newborns can grip objects tightly, sometimes even supporting their

own body weight briefly. Babies are natural swimmers (for a short time): They are born with a "dive reflex", which helps them hold their breath underwater—but this fades after a few months.

They hear before they are born: Babies can hear sounds in the womb, including voices and music, during pregnancy. They don't produce tears at first: Newborns cry, but they don't produce visible tears until a few weeks later.

Their brains grow incredibly fast: A baby's brain doubles in size in the first year of life—one of the fastest growth rates in humans.

They know their mother's smell: Babies can recognise their mother by scent within days of birth.

Smiling is partly instinctive: Some babies even smile in their sleep, before they learn social smiling.



Bukar Abba Ibrahim: A leading political figure and revolutionary from Yobe

Bukar Abba Ibrahim (October 1950 – 4 February 2024) was a Nigerian politician who served as the senator representing Yobe East senatorial district from 2007 to 2019. He previously served twice as the governor of Yobe State from 1992 to 1993 and from 1999 to 2007.

Bukar Abba Ibrahim was born in October 1950. He began attending primary school in 1957. In 1965, he proceeded to Government College in Maiduguri. After taking the West African School Certificate Examination in 1970, he was admitted to Ahmadu Bello University in 1972 where he obtained his Bachelor of Science degree in Quantity Surveying in 1975.

Thereafter, he undertook post-graduate professional training in the United Kingdom from 1981 to 1982, which led to his qualification as an associate member of the Nigerian Institute of Quantity Surveyors.

From 1985 to 1988, he worked as a civil servant in Borno State, eventually becoming Commissioner of Works.

Ibrahim was a devoted Muslim and was married to three wives: Hajjiya (Dr) Maryam Ibrahim, Hajjiya Aishatu



Ibrahim and Khadija Ibrahim. Bukar Ibrahim died in Madinah, Saudi Arabia on 4 February 2024, at the age of 73.

In December 1991, a few months after Yobe State was created, Ibrahim contested and won the gubernatorial election under the banner of the Social Democratic Party (SDP). He held that position until November 1993, when the military took control of the government.

Nigeria transitioned from military to civilian rule beginning in late 1998. Gubernatorial elections were held in January 1999 and Ibrahim was again elected governor, this time under the banner of the All People's Party (APP), he took over office on 29 May 1999. The APP was later renamed the All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP) due to a factional split. He was re-elected in 2003 for a second four-year term

and was one of only four incumbent ANPP governors to maintain their positions.

During his first term, on 5 August 1993, Ibrahim split the state's four emirates into 13. This change was reversed by the military regime of Sani Abacha. In his second term after the return to democracy, on 6 January 2000, he re-implemented the new emirates, adding Ngazargamu, Gujba, Nguru, Tikau, Pataskum, Yusufari, Gudi, Fune and Jajere. The Emir of Fika, Muhammadu Abali, protested at the break-up of his emirate and took the government to court, but eventually accepted the change. In 2007, he was elected to the Senate for the Yobe East constituency. He ran for re-election in the 9 April 2011 Senatorial contest for Yobe East on the ANPP platform, and won with 115,763 votes against former Senator Lawan Jalo Zarami of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), who gained 67,438 votes.



Ladi Kwali: The talented hands that shaped not just clay, but history

In the picture above, renowned Nigerian potter Ladi Kwali is captured during the "Nigerian Pottery on Show" exhibition in London on 14 June 1962.

This moment is memorable for being more than just an exhibition, it reflects the quiet pride of a woman whose hands shaped not only clay, but history. Ladi Kwali, deeply rooted in the traditional Gwari pottery craft passed down through generations, stood in London as a symbol of cultural brilliance from a newly independent Nigeria. The exhibition marked a turning point, where her intricately designed vessels, once fired in village kilns, were now admired in foreign galleries. It was a meeting of worlds: tradition and modernity, village and metropolis. Through her work, Nigeria present itself as a nation of beauty, talent, heritage, and resilience to the world.

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NEWS

Police Intensify Nationwide Deployment as Nigerians Celebrate Peaceful Eid-el-Fitr

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Special Intervention Squad The directive includes the strategic deployment of tactical teams and intelligence operatives, as well as the mobilisation of the Special Intervention Squad and conventional police personnel to Eid prayer grounds and other critical infrastructure.

“Operational measures include strategic deployment of tactical teams and intelligence operatives, deployment of the Special Intervention Squad and conventional police personnel to Eid prayer grounds and critical infrastructure, and increased presence at highways, motor parks, recreational centres, and other public spaces to ensure peaceful and hitch-free celebrations,” part of the statement read.

Coordinated Patrols

The Inspector-General further ordered heightened visibility policing, coordinated patrols, enhanced surveillance operations, and intelligence-led stop-and-search duties to proactively deter criminal activities and respond swiftly to any emerging threats.

Disu urged members of the public to remain vigilant, cooperate with law enforcement agencies, and promptly report any suspicious activities to the nearest police station or through designated emergency lines.

Police Personnel



Police Personnel

Deployed in 33 LGAs

The Nigeria Police Force in Oyo State has deployed personnel across all 33 local government areas to ensure the safety of lives and property during the Eid-el-Fitr celebrations.

The state Commissioner of Police, Femi Haruna, disclosed this in a statement issued on Thursday in Ibadan, the state capital by the Police Public Relations Officer, Olayinka Ayanlade.

The CP felicitated Muslim

faithful on the successful completion of the holy month of Ramadan and the celebration of Eid-el-Fitr, commending their devotion, prayers, and sacrifices.

He urged them to sustain the virtues of peace, tolerance, and unity that define the season.

Security Heightened in Kaduna

Similarly, the Kaduna State Police Command has rolled out extensive security arrangements

across the state for the Eid-el-Fitr celebrations, assuring residents of a safe and peaceful festive period. In a press statement, the Command's Public Relations Officer, DSP Mansir Hassan, said tactical commanders, intelligence operatives, and other personnel have been deployed to strategic locations, including Eid prayer grounds, markets, recreational centres, and major highways.

The move, according to

the police, is aimed at preventing any security breaches before, during, and after the celebrations. Adequate Personnel for Jigawa

The Jigawa State Police Command has announced comprehensive security measures toward a peaceful and hitch-free 2026 Eid-el-Fitr celebration across the state.

This was contained in a press statement signed by the Police Public Relations Officer, SP Shiisu Lawan

Adam.

The command said adequate personnel and operational assets were strategically deployed to safeguard lives and property before, during, and after the Sallah festivities.

A Moderately Safe Eid Overall, the 2026 Eid in Nigeria was moderately safe overall, but overshadowed by insecurity in some regions, particularly the North-East.

Silent Eid: How Hardship and Insecurity Are Dimming Nigeria's Sallah Spirit

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Sallah has become just another day of survival.”

Markets Lose Their Buzz

Markets that would ordinarily witness a frenzy of last-minute shopping now record low patronage. Traders lament poor sales, while buyers haggle desperately, often leaving empty-handed.

New clothes, once a staple of the celebration, have become a luxury item for many, with parents opting to make do with old garments.

Insecurity Dampens Movement and Gatherings

Compounding the economic strain is the persistent threat of insecurity in several parts of the country. From banditry and kidnappings in the North-West to insurgency in the North-East and communal clashes in other regions, fear has replaced festivity.

Travelling long distances for family reunions—once a cherished Sallah tradition—has become a risky undertaking.

Security concerns have also affected communal prayers and outdoor festivities. In some areas, attendance at Eid grounds has thinned, with worshippers wary of potential attacks. Recreational outings, durbar festivals and large gatherings have either been scaled down or cancelled altogether.

Children Feel the Change

Parents, too, are growing increasingly cautious. Children who once roamed freely during the festivities are now kept close to home, limiting the sense of communal bonding that defined past celebrations.

Faith Amid Hardship

Religious leaders have urged Nigerians to focus on the spiritual essence of Sallah rather than its material



Sallah Durbar

aspects. Yet, even they acknowledge the emotional toll of the current realities.

“Sallah is about sacrifice, gratitude and unity,” one cleric noted. “But it is difficult to ignore the

hardship people are facing. The joy is no longer as it used to be.”

Pockets of Resilience

Despite the gloom, there are pockets of resilience. Some communities have embraced modest, collective celebrations, pooling resources to support the less privileged. Acts of charity, though constrained, continue to offer glimmers of hope.

A Muted Celebration

Nevertheless, the broader picture remains sobering. The transformation of Sallah from a grand cultural and religious spectacle into a muted observance underscores the weight of Nigeria's present challenges. Until economic stability is restored and security improved, the echoes of past celebrations may remain just that—memories of a more vibrant time.

For many Nigerians, this Sallah celebration has given way to contemplation, and festivity to frugality—a quiet reflection of a nation navigating difficult times.

NEWS

BY ABDULLAHI HARUNA



Police

Delta community head, four others arrested over festival assault on young women

The Delta State Police Command has arrested a community head and four other suspects over the reported sex assault of young women during a festival in Oruamudhu community in Ozoro, Isoko North Local Government Area of the state.

In a statement on Friday, the Command's spokesman, Bright Edefe, disclosed that the Delta Police Commissioner, Aina Adesola, had ordered the transfer of the suspects to the state criminal investigation department (CID).

"The community head and chief organiser of the event, one Chief Omorede Sunday, and four other suspects from Oramudu quarters in Ozoro have been arrested.

"The CP has ordered that they should be transferred to State CID with immediate effect. The CP vows that anyone involved will be arrested and brought to justice," Edefe said.

The command's spokesman further noted that both tactical and investigative assets had been duly deployed with a clear mandate to identify, apprehend, and ensure the prosecution of all individuals found culpable.

He called on Delta residents, particularly victims and witnesses, to come forward with any information that would aid ongoing investigations.

Edefe gave the assurance that all information provided will be treated with strict confidentiality

and the highest level of professionalism.

"The Commissioner of Police further appeals to residents of the state to remain calm, vigilant, and law-abiding, while assuring that the command remains fully committed to protecting lives, safeguarding the rights of all citizens, and maintaining public order.

Viral videos of assaults on different women sparked outrage on social media, with many Nigerians calling on security agencies to arrest the perpetrators and protect the women.

Edefe said one Omorede Sunday, the community head, was arrested.

The Delta State Government condemned the act, describing it as "barbaric and unacceptable."

Defence HQ denies terrorism allegations against Yobe, Borno residents

The Defence Headquarters has clarified recent remarks by the Chief of Defence Staff, General Olufemi Oluyede, following reports suggesting that he accused the people of Borno and Yobe States of complicity in terrorism.

In a statement on Thursday by its spokesman, Maj. Gen Samaila Uba, the DHQ, described the reports as misleading and emphasised that the CDS did not indict or generalise the residents of the two states.

Rather, he said the CDS highlighted the importance of community partnership, vigilance, and collective responsibility in addressing Nigeria's security challenges.

The DHQ explained that the CDS was referring to isolated instances where criminal elements exploit community structures to aid terrorists, noting that these cases should not be seen as a blanket accusation against entire communities.

He cited an example where some wounded terrorists were found sheltered within a local community, emphasising the need for residents to remain vigilant and supportive of security efforts.

"In view of the potential to misinform the public and undermine ongoing counterterrorism efforts, it has become necessary to set the record straight.

"At no time did the CDS indict or generalise that the good people of Borno and Yobe States are complicit in terrorism, as falsely portrayed.

"Rather, the CDS emphasised the critical role of community partnership, vigilance and collective responsibility in addressing the evolving security challenges facing the nation.

"The CDS specifically referred to instances where criminal elements and collaborators exploit community structures to aid terrorist activities.

"He gave an example of a particular town where some wounded terrorists who earlier took part in an attack against their own troops were found within the community, which implied that some residents of the community were complicit," the statement partly read.

He reaffirmed the Armed Forces' commitment to protecting law-abiding citizens and defending Nigeria's territorial integrity, while urging media organisations to exercise professionalism, verify facts, and avoid sensationalism that could misinform the public.

Uba praised the resilience and cooperation of the people of Borno, Yobe, and all Nigerians in the collective fight against terrorism, noting that "together we shall overcome the enemies of our nation."

Police launch probe as corps member dies during abortion

Victoria Ariyo, a female corps member serving in Abeokuta South LGA of Ogun State, has died after allegedly terminating a pregnancy. She was said to have died on Tuesday from complications that arose after undergoing a suspected abortion procedure.

Her remains have reportedly been interred at Kobape cemetery along the Kobape-Sagamu road in the state's capital.

According to Daily Trust, Abass Olalekan, the NYSC Local Government Inspector (LGI) for Abeokuta South, has been arrested by the police in connection with the corps member's death.

When contacted, Oluseyi Babaseyi, the police spokesperson in the state, confirmed Ariyo's death and said investigations were ongoing. He, however, declined to comment on Olalekan's



Casket

arrest and alleged involvement.

As of the time of filing this report, Babaseyi's telephone line was switched off, while Emmanuel Igba, the

Ogun State NYSC spokesperson, said he was unaware of the incident.

The police and the Ogun NYSC are yet to issue official statements on the

corps member's death and the reported arrest.

Reports indicate that Ariyo's death comes barely a month after the mysterious passing of another corps member, Adeleye Mary, who was also serving in the same local council.



Defence Headquarters.

OUR HEART

Dangers inherent in the ongoing waves of defections in the country

There is a steady gale of defections that has been blowing across the nation's political space. Though it appears to be of a mild velocity incapable of causing serious havoc, such is however, deceptive.

Correctly deciphered, it is more of a combination of a cyclonic storm and hailstones, the sort that comes with great, devastating consequences in its wake. In other words, the prevailing tides of defections seem imbued with negative portents inimical to the trajectory of democracy, the nation's political party system, stability and unity of the country.

Firstly, Nigeria is supposedly practising the American model of the presidential political system. It is unlike the Westminster parliamentary system that allows for "cross carpeting", that is, the movement or defection by elected members of parliament from one political party to another. Such was the experience of the country under the parliamentary system of the First Republic, 1960 to 1966.

Perhaps, as a result of the tradition and practice of consistent loyalty to the political party embodied in the presidential system, there were no recorded incidents of elected officials crisscrossing between political parties during the entire span of the Second Republic, 1979 to 1983.

The situation was, however, upturned in the ongoing Fourth Republic when, under the watch and encouragement of President Olusegun Obasanjo, some elected members of the opposition parties at the National Assembly started to trickle to the then ruling People's Democratic Party, PDP. Frantic attempts to check the trend by invoking the relevant constitutional provisions before the law courts were not successful. That was even though defection was in clear breach of the nation's presidential constitution.

By 2014, the practice had become so normal, frequent and brazen to the point that an orchestrated deluge of defections resulted in a political tsunami that the sixteen unbroken years of the PDP rule were truncated by the then newly formed All Progressives Congress, APC.

As it was, the alliances between political parties and the defections of elected PDP legislators and governors were perfected with the singular aim to defeat incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan. In the countdown to another epochal presidential election in 2027, the blistering wind of defections is here with us. But, the only difference is that the propelling motives are very dissimilar.

A significant feature of the ongoing gale of defections is that, it is virtually and wholly flowing in the direction of the ruling party, the APC. Thus, instead of denuding it in strength, as was the case with the PDP on the eve of the 2015 elections, the APC is being bolstered by the extant currents of defections.

Also, while the then incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan was negatively impacted by the earlier political tsunami, the architects of the prevailing gale of defections are single-

mindedly committed to the goal of enhancing the electoral prospects of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu.

By the trend of the political currents in the country, several keen observers have expressed fears that the country might be on the path to a one-party state. Among the telltale indicators that experts point to buttress this view are the massive material resources being palpably deployed by the ruling party in the execution of the project. A policy of carrots and sticks seems to be in use as a strategy. Prominent members of the opposition are either induced, cajoled, bribed with irresistible material offers or promised tempting political rewards in the forms of appointments or assured of second terms, in the cases of first-term governors and legislators.

Like an army in a scorched-earth warfare, the APC has been identified by several observers as a hidden but powerful catalyst in the devastating internal crises that have resulted in the crippling of opposition political parties.

From the Labour Party to the PDP, the two major opposition parties, agents and moles of the APC are reported to be working against their political parties from within for the APC. The unabashed role of the FCT Minister, Nyesome Wike, in the ruination of the PDP is a widely given reference point.

With the latest defection of Governor Douye Diri of Bayelsa State, from the PDP to the APC, all but one of the six states in the Niger Delta geo-political zone, are now within the fold of the APC. Delta State Governor Sheriff Oborevwuri, along with his predecessor, Ifeanyi Okowa, had much earlier crossed over to the APC. Joining his counterparts in Ebonyi and Imo States, the last week's defection of Enugu State Governor Peter Mbah has swollen to three the number of the APC-controlled states out of the five states in the Southeast.

A major defining feature of the nation's ongoing spate of defections is the fact that almost all the prominent people decamping from, especially the PDP, to the APC are from the south of the country. This is patently dangerous to the country in multiple ways. The pattern of ongoing defections appears to bear the tendencies of politically polarising the country ahead of the 2027 elections. This is because of the emerging scenario whereby the South of the country is perceived as politically arm-twisting the North into submitting to the demand for the perpetuation of the principle of rotational presidency.

It does not appear that the North would want to be coerced into submission even if the region is positively disposed to the concept, as was the case in 2023. The danger herein is that a political battle line would have been drawn between the two regions if the North took up the gauntlet by similarly taking a common ground of resistance to the subtle but clear political blackmail.

In a nutshell, the gale of defections building up in parts of the country, must be carefully assessed. It has to be deftly managed to enhance the practice of multiparty democracy in the country.

In other words, the nation must guard against the germination of the dangerous seeds of despotism. History teaches that the rise of totalitarian states under tyrants or despots usually began with the incapacitation or outright elimination of opposition political parties and voices.

Very pertinently, the country must be further wary that the gale of defections is taking on the pattern of regional divides. Nigeria has a very unpleasant reference in its political past. The 1951 incident of mass cross carpeting by members of the National Conventional of Nigerian Citizens, NCNC to the Action Group, AG, in the Western Regional House of Assembly, was a critical, even if remote causative factor, among other chains of events that led to the collapse of the First Republic as well as the attendant gruesome civil strife, 1967 to 1970.

Though enacted nine years before Independence and fifteen years before the collapse of the Republic, the bitterness felt as a result of the cross carpeting, significantly heightened ethnic and regional animosities and mutual suspicion that have lingered through the years. The ongoing gale of defections bears so much semblance to that 1951 unfortunate incident in the political annals of the country.

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NORTH-EAST

BY GIFT LUCKSON
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Three police officers, vigilante leader killed as bandits raid Taraba community



Bandits

Taraba State Police Command has confirmed that three police officers and a local vigilante leader have been killed in an attack by suspected bandits in Tordamisa, Akate Ward of Donga local government area of Taraba State.

According to the police, the incident occurred after a distress call was received from a resident, Mr Zaki Orbanga, reporting that

gunmen had attacked Tse Kwe Village of the same locality.

A press release issued by the command's public relations officer, ASP Victor Mshelizah, and made available to newsmen in Jalingo, said a team of officers led by the divisional police officer (DPO) of Donga Division, alongside operatives of the Special Force, was immediately

deployed to the scene to restore order and protect residents.

The statement said, "On arrival at the location, the suspected armed bandits opened fire on the police team, resulting in a fierce exchange of gunfire. The police operatives responded swiftly and repelled the attackers.

Regrettably, during the encounter, CPL Raphael

Danjuma and PC Ebenezer Daniel sustained fatal gunshot wounds in the line of duty.

"Another officer, PC Samuel Bawa, was initially reported missing during the operation. A search party was subsequently organised, and his body was later recovered in a nearby bush. "Additionally, the corpse of Nutsa Tyav, a 60-year-old Chairman of the Vigilante Group in Tordamisa Village, was also recovered following the attack," the statement said.

The commissioner of Police, CP Betty Enekpen Isokpan Otimenyin, expressed deep sorrow over the loss of the brave officers and the vigilante member who paid the supreme price while protecting the state and nation at large.

The Command extends its heartfelt condolences to the families of the deceased and assures them that their sacrifice will not be forgotten.

Meanwhile, security operations have been intensified in the area as efforts are ongoing to track down and apprehend the perpetrators of this heinous attack.

Gov. Zulum urges Borno residents to collaborate with military to tackle insurgency

Governor Babagana Zulum of Borno State has urged residents to heighten their collaboration with the military and other security agencies to combat renewed Boko Haram attacks. The governor stressed that the military alone can't tackle the insurgency without community support.

Zulum said this on Thursday during his state-wide broadcast to the citizens of the state following renewed Boko Haram attacks and Monday triple suicide bomb attacks in Maiduguri, the Monday Market, the Post-Office area and the University of Maiduguri entrance gate that claimed 25 lives with several others injured.

The governor said, "This fight is not the responsibility of the military alone; it is a collective effort. I must emphasise the importance of cordial, close collaboration with our military. "They are here to protect us, and they need our eyes and our ears. I extend my deepest sympathies to the families of our gallant soldiers, security personnel and our volunteer forces who have sacrificed their lives in the line of duty.

"Fellow citizens, the recent resurgence of insecurity in parts of our dear state over the past few weeks is deeply concerning. As the chief security officer, let me assure you that the overall security environment, while tested, remains under control, and we are doing everything possible to protect lives and property.

"Over the past seven years, we have worked tirelessly to restore peace and prosperity to this great land and rebuild our state. Within the period, we have responded with prompt, positive actions on every occasion.

"We have not allowed the dark dreams of the wayward ones to take root, and instead, we have fostered hope and resilience among the communities affected by the conflict. Through a combination of consultations and collective planning, with the strong support of our security agencies and the civilian JTF,

the Almighty Allah (SWT) has helped us achieve some measure of success and peace. "We do not believe that the decrease in past attacks signals the end of the insurgency. No, it is not. In fact, at the leadership level, we are very conscious of the fact that much more needs to be done to permanently address the root of this madness and the menace of illogical attacks among our peace-loving people."

Governor Zulum noted that the recent spike in activity by the criminal elements is a direct consequence of the sustained and aggressive military operations being conducted across the theatre, saying that the operations have dislodged the criminals, forcing them to flee and seek respite by infiltrating Borno communities.

He, however, reassured citizens that the worst days are over, adding that the administration has been constantly assessing the situation, and a robust, coordinated response is already in motion.

The governor added that these cowardly elements who seek to disturb the peace of the people will obtain no sanctuary in Borno State.

"We will deal decisively with their resurgence. Fellow citizens, this fight is not the responsibility of the military alone; it is a collective effort. I must emphasise the importance of cordial, close collaboration with our military.

"They are here to protect us, and they need our eyes and our ears. I extend my deepest sympathies to the families of our gallant soldiers, security personnel and our volunteer forces who have sacrificed their lives in the line of duty.

"My heart also goes out to every civilian whose life has been disrupted by this situation. Your resilience is the bedrock of our state, and the power of prayer in unison is a weapon no enemy can withstand," Zulum further said.

Gov. Buni distributes N100,000 cash gifts to APC executives in Sallah gesture



Beneficiaries

Yobe State Governor, Mai Mala Buni, has extended a generous hand to the leadership of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in the state, approving the payment of N100,000 to each executive member as a Sallah support package. The financial gesture, which was distributed to party officials across the state, is aimed at enabling them to celebrate the

Eid al-Fitr holiday with ease and happiness. It also serves as a token of appreciation for their dedication to the party's ideals.

Presenting the cash gifts at the event, the state APC Chairman, Alhaji Muhammad Gadaka, who represented Governor Buni, called on the beneficiaries to remain loyal and steadfast. He described the governor's

action as a reflection of his commitment to the welfare of party structures.

"This is not just a gift; it is an encouragement from our leader, Governor Mai Mala Buni. We must show our appreciation by working harder for the success of the party," Gadaka said.

In their response, party executives Hon. Budu Lawan and Mani Ahmad praised the Governor

for his thoughtfulness. They assured him of their readiness to mobilise support and ensure the party's victory in the forthcoming elections.

The event also had in attendance the Special Adviser to the Governor on Political and Legislative Matters, Alhaji Usman Kabaruma, and other key stakeholders of the party in the state.



Zulum

NORTH-EAST

BY IBRAHEEM EL-TAFSEER

Gov. Buni sympathises with victims of Maiduguri bomb blasts, donates N10 million

Yobe State Governor Dr Mai Mala Buni has donated the sum of N10 million to assist victims and the families of those who lost their lives in the recent triple bomb blasts in Maiduguri.

Governor Buni announced the donation during a sympathy visit in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State, following the multiple explosions that claimed over 30 lives and left several others injured.

The governor was represented by his Deputy, Idi Barde Gubana, who conveyed heartfelt condolences to the government and people of Borno State, particularly to families affected by the tragic incident.

He explained that he was representing Governor Buni, who is currently in Mecca performing the lesser Hajj (Umrah), and therefore unavoidably absent.

Delivering the governor's message, the Deputy Governor stated that the government and people of Yobe State deeply share in the grief of the victims. "Our hearts bleed as innocent citizens, who were merely going about their lawful daily activities, have become victims of this senseless violence," he said.

He urged residents to remain vigilant and promptly report suspicious movements to security agencies, emphasising that security is a collective responsibility.

He described the attacks as barbaric and unfortunate, lamenting the loss of innocent lives and injuries sustained by



Gov. Buni

many, and prayed for Allah's forgiveness for the deceased and speedy recovery for the wounded.

He also reaffirmed the strong bond between the two states, noting that "Borno and Yobe are one; whatever affects Borno equally affects Yobe."

The governor also commended the Federal Government and frontline security personnel for

their renewed efforts in restoring peace to the region.

In his response, the Deputy Governor of Borno State, Umar Usman Kadafur, expressed profound appreciation to the Yobe State delegation for the show of solidarity.

He noted that both states continue to face similar security challenges, especially in light of ongoing military operations in the Sambisa Forest aimed at dismantling Boko Haram

strongholds.

According to him, such operations often lead to the infiltration of insurgents into urban areas using improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

He called for sustained collaboration between the people and governments of both states to find lasting solutions to the recurring attacks. He also urged citizens to intensify prayers for an end to insurgency and for lasting peace and harmony across the region.

Police rescue cleric locked inside house over Ramadan preaching

Operatives of the Nigeria Police Force in Gombe State have confirmed the rescue of a cleric who was allegedly locked inside a house by aggrieved youths in Birin Fulani community of Nafada Local Government Area over allegations of offensive remarks during Ramadan Tafsir preaching.

The cleric, Abubakar Mahmoud Puma, from Akko Local Government Area, was reportedly confined on Sunday after a group of youths believed to belong to the Darika sect accused him of making abusive and derogatory comments about their leaders.

According to DSP Buhari Abdullahi, the spokesman for the Gombe State Police Command, the cleric had been deployed to Birin Fulani to conduct the 2026 Ramadan Tafsir by the national headquarters of Jama'atu Izalatil Bid'ah Wa Iqamatus Sunnah (JIBWIS) with headquarters in Jos.

DSP Buhari explained that the incident occurred around 3:00 a.m. when they received reports of a disturbance in the community and the Divisional Police Officer mobilised officers to the scene to restore calm.

"Upon arrival, it was discovered that the cleric had been locked in a house by aggrieved youths," the police said.

The officers reportedly engaged the youths in dialogue, leading to the safe release of the cleric without injury. He said no life was lost and normalcy has been restored in the area.

DSP Buhari noted that the state's Commissioner of Police, Umar Ahmed Chuso, has ordered an investigation into the incident to determine both the immediate and underlying causes of the action taken by the youths.

The command also warned residents against spreading unverified information on social media, noting that such actions could heighten tension and mislead the public.



Police

Troops arrest two gunrunners, recover exhibits



Suspects

Troops of the 6 Brigade Nigerian Army/Sector 3 Operation Whirl Stroke have arrested two suspected gunrunners

and recovered 444 rounds of ammunition in Taraba State.

In a statement on Thursday signed by the

Acting Assistant Director, Army Public Relations, 6 Brigade Nigerian Army, Lt. Umar Muhammad, the suspects were arrested during

a routine stop-and-search operation along the Wukari-Ikyaio Road in Wukari Local Government Area.

"The operation, conducted on 19 March 2026, led to the interception and arrest of two suspects who were riding on a motorcycle," the statement said. The suspects were identified as Mr Wisdom Soomga, 32 years old, from Ukum Local Government Area of Benue State, and Mr Elisha Danladi, 38 years old, a native of Wukari Local Government Area of Taraba State.

"A thorough search of the suspects led to the recovery of 444 rounds of 7.62mm special ammunition," it stated.

"Other items recovered include cash, totalling N29,200, two mobile phones, ATM cards, charms, personal belongings, and a motorcycle used for transportation."

The statement added that "both suspects and the recovered items are currently in custody for further investigation to ascertain the source and intended use of the ammunition."

The Commander, 6 Brigade Nigerian Army/Sector 3 Operation WHIRL STROKE, Brig.-Gen. Chukwuemeka Michael Akaliro commended

the troops for their vigilance and prompt response.

He said the action was "in line with the directives of the Chief of Army Staff to decisively eliminate criminal elements and enhance security across Taraba State." Akaliro urged the troops "to sustain the momentum and remain resolute in their efforts to rid the area of all forms of criminality."

He also assured law-abiding citizens of the Nigerian Army's continued commitment to safeguarding lives and property, while calling on the public to support security agencies by providing timely and credible information on suspicious activities.

The commander further reiterated his commitment to discipline and professionalism.

He said, "Officers and soldiers who demonstrate professionalism, dedication, and courage during operations will be duly recognised and rewarded."

CUSTOMS

BY ABDULLAHI HARUNA

Customs command generates N285.6 million revenue, pledges sustained fight against smuggling

The Ogun I Area Command of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), Idiroko, has announced the resumption of export activities at the border post, alongside a significant increase in revenue generation.

The acting comptroller of the command, Oladapo Afeni, disclosed this during a press briefing, noting that the command generated N285.6 million during the period under review.

Afeni said the amount represents a sharp increase of N259.2 million compared to the revenue recorded during the same period in 2025, translating to a 1,082 per cent growth. He explained that the revenue was generated from baggage assessments and from the auction sales of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) intercepted during anti-smuggling operations. "I would like to reiterate that the revenue activities of the command comprise importation and exportation of legitimate goods, goods traded under the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS), and the assessment of merchandise contained in baggage," he said.

Regarding export performance, Afeni



Customs officials.

revealed that the command recorded a major breakthrough, moving 95 metric tons of goods valued at N305.7 million Free On Board (FOB).

"In export, the command recorded a significant

surge in activity, moving 95 metric tons of goods with a Free On Board value of N305.7 million. This represents a substantial year-on-year improvement compared to the same period in 2025, when no export trade was recorded,"

he stated.

The acting comptroller commended traditional rulers, community leaders and host communities for their cooperation and support in the command's anti-smuggling campaign. He also acknowledged the

media's role in promoting the service's activities and pledged that the command would continue to enforce government fiscal policies aimed at encouraging compliant trade while sustaining the fight against smuggling.

Afeni further expressed appreciation to the Comptroller-General of Customs, Bashir Adewale Adeniyi, and the service's management for their continued support and confidence in the command's operations.

Customs seizes expired Chloroquine injections, other contraband in 13 containers

The Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) has intercepted expired Chloroquine injections, Diclofenac tablets, and other contraband, laden in 13 containers, worth N6.38 billion, at the Apapa Command.

Speaking while displaying the seized items, the Comptroller-General of Customs, Adewale Adeniyi, said the containers were intercepted following detailed scanning analysis and physical examination by Customs officers. According to him, the importation of expired drugs and controlled substances poses a direct threat to public health, while the concealment of codeine-based products represents a calculated attempt to fuel substance abuse and undermine the country's healthcare system.

He disclosed that a 40-foot container conveying large quantities of expired pharmaceutical products, including Mixagrip Cold Caplets and Ladinax tablets, was intercepted.

Adeniyi further revealed that two

40-foot containers carrying large consignments of Hyepra 200 and Sildenafil Citrate, unregistered pharmaceutical products, were also seized.

"A 20-foot container conveying 800 cartons of Codeine (TPL CSC) deliberately concealed inside toilet flushing cisterns and sanitary ware was intercepted. Also seized were a 40-foot container conveying cartons of Artesunate 60 injections and a 20-foot container conveying restricted security equipment without End User Certificates, including bulletproof vests, helmets, walkie-talkies and tactical torches," the Customs boss said.

According to him, additional seizures include a 20-foot container containing expired muffin cookie biscuits, another 20-foot container containing 36,000 cans of expired Primo energy drinks, and a 20-foot container loaded with expired St. Kelvin tomato paste.

Adeniyi added that another 20-foot container containing expired De Truth tomato paste and a 40-foot container containing 1,700 cartons of Codeine cough syrup,

concealed in luxury food flasks, were also intercepted.

He explained, "Another 40-foot container was found to contain 1,575 cartons of CSMIX with codeine concealed with 156 cartons of electric kettles, alongside additional pharmaceutical seizures including 13 cartons of Bristol brand Co-codamol 500mg and two cartons of Zevita brand Co-codamol 500mg. "Officers also intercepted 13 jumbo bags of Cannabis Sativa (Colorado) weighing 347.57kg concealed inside a Toyota Sienna vehicle with Chassis No. 5TDDK3DC7DS057669."

According to him, the seized items collectively amount to N6,381,237,988 worth of prohibited, expired, and falsely declared goods.

The Comptroller-General stressed that Apapa Port is no longer a playground for smugglers or criminal syndicates hiding behind legitimate trade documentation. In accordance with the Nigeria Customs Service Act 2023, Adeniyi said the consignments are liable to outright forfeiture, adding



Intercepted contraband.

that penalties will be imposed, evaded revenues recovered, and all persons connected to the shipments prosecuted.

He explained that Apapa Port remains Nigeria's busiest maritime gateway and one of the most strategic trade corridors in West Africa, noting that the Service has been working with government agencies and industry stakeholders to address persistent port congestion and improve efficiency

across Nigeria's maritime gateways. "Measures such as the recent launch of the Green Channel at Lekki Deep Seaport are part of our broader strategy to accelerate cargo clearance for compliant traders and strengthen enforcement against high-risk consignments. Today's engagement should therefore be seen as part of that continuing effort to modernise our cargo control processes," he stated. "As the volume of trade passing

through Nigerian ports continues to grow, the responsibility placed on the Nigeria Customs Service becomes even greater. Thousands of containers pass through this port every day, carrying goods that support businesses, sustain industries and drive our national economy. While our mandate requires us to facilitate legitimate trade, we must also ensure that our ports are not exploited by criminal elements."

PRIME PHOTOS

BY MERCY ADAJE
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An iconic picture of an Eid mosque in Funtua, Katsina State, in the year 1975.



A photograph of Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana with Ahmadu Bello in Zaria, 1959. Nkrumah led Ghana to independence in 1957, inspiring other colonies to pursue the end of colonial rule.



A photograph of Hausa builders constructing a mud (tubali) fence in a community within Katsina State in 1957.



This remarkable image captures the crew members of Nigeria Airways.

PRIME10MENT

BY MERCY ADAJE
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Burna Boy makes history as first African artist to gross \$3m in Oceania tour

Grammy-winning Nigerian music superstar Burna Boy has set a new record as the first African artist to generate the highest revenue from a single concert. According to Touring Data, a global tour monitoring platform on X, @burnaboy's "No Sign of Weakness" is officially the highest-grossing tour by an African artist in Oceania's history, with \$3.1 million from 31,000 tickets sold across 4 shows." He achieved the milestone during the Sydney stop of his tour at Qudos Bank Arena in Australia, generating \$1.117 million in revenue from a single show.

The 'No Sign of Weakness' tour spanned 20 shows across three continents, including North America, Europe, and Oceania.

During the Oceania leg, four shows in Australia sold approximately 30,946 tickets, producing a total of \$3.1 million in revenue.

This achievement underscores that African artistes can sell out large arenas outside the continent.

Burna Boy's global tours have now become some of the highest-earning tours by African artists worldwide.



Burna Boy



2Baba

2Baba to host grand concert marking 25-year music anniversary

Legendary Nigerian singer, Innocent Ujah Idibia, popularly known as 2Baba, has unveiled plans for a landmark concert to celebrate 25 years in the music industry.

The event, titled "The 2Baba Experience," is scheduled to hold on March 29, 2026, at Eko Hotel & Suites, Lagos.

The concert is expected to serve as a major moment of reflection and celebration, highlighting the evolution of Nigerian and African music on the global stage.

Over the past two and a half decades, 2Baba has remained one of Africa's most influential artists, playing a key role in shaping the modern sound and international recognition of Nigerian music.

Organisers said the event will not only celebrate his career but also spotlight the growth of Afrobeats and honour artists who continue to push Nigerian music worldwide.

The show is expected to feature performances from multiple generations of artists, bringing together key figures across the music industry to showcase Nigeria's rise as a global entertainment powerhouse.

As part of the celebration, 2Baba will also recognise contemporary artists who have contributed significantly to expanding the global reach of African music.

Speaking on the upcoming concert, he said: "This celebration is bigger than me. It is about the journey of our music, our culture, and the many talented artists who have carried the sound of Africa to the world. I am grateful to everyone who has been part of this story for the past 25 years."

Fans are to expect an evening of live performances, special guest appearances, and memorable moments celebrating the legacy of Nigerian music.

Further details on performers, ticketing, and event partners are expected to be unveiled in the coming weeks.

How I struggled for 16 years in the music industry before breakthrough - Spyro

Nigerian music star Oludipe Oluwasanmi, popularly known as Spyro, has taken to social media to reflect on his journey, urging fans not to lose hope despite life's challenges.

He shared the post on his Instagram page on Tuesday, revealing his years of struggle in the music industry and how perseverance and faith played a key role in his breakthrough.

"If someone had told me 3 years ago that I would become this fly, I would have argued it, and now I look at my life, and all I can say to someone reading this is PLS DONT GIVE UP... I have been in the industry hustling for 16 years, and I was at my lowest when JESUS is still in the business of changing lives, JUST BELIEVE," he wrote.

His message highlights the often unseen struggles behind success. Spyro revealed he spent over a decade working before gaining recognition, and many fans have praised his resilience, drawing inspiration from his story.



Spyro

NEPTUNE PRIME BUSINESS

BY ABDULLAH HARUNA

MARKET SURVEY

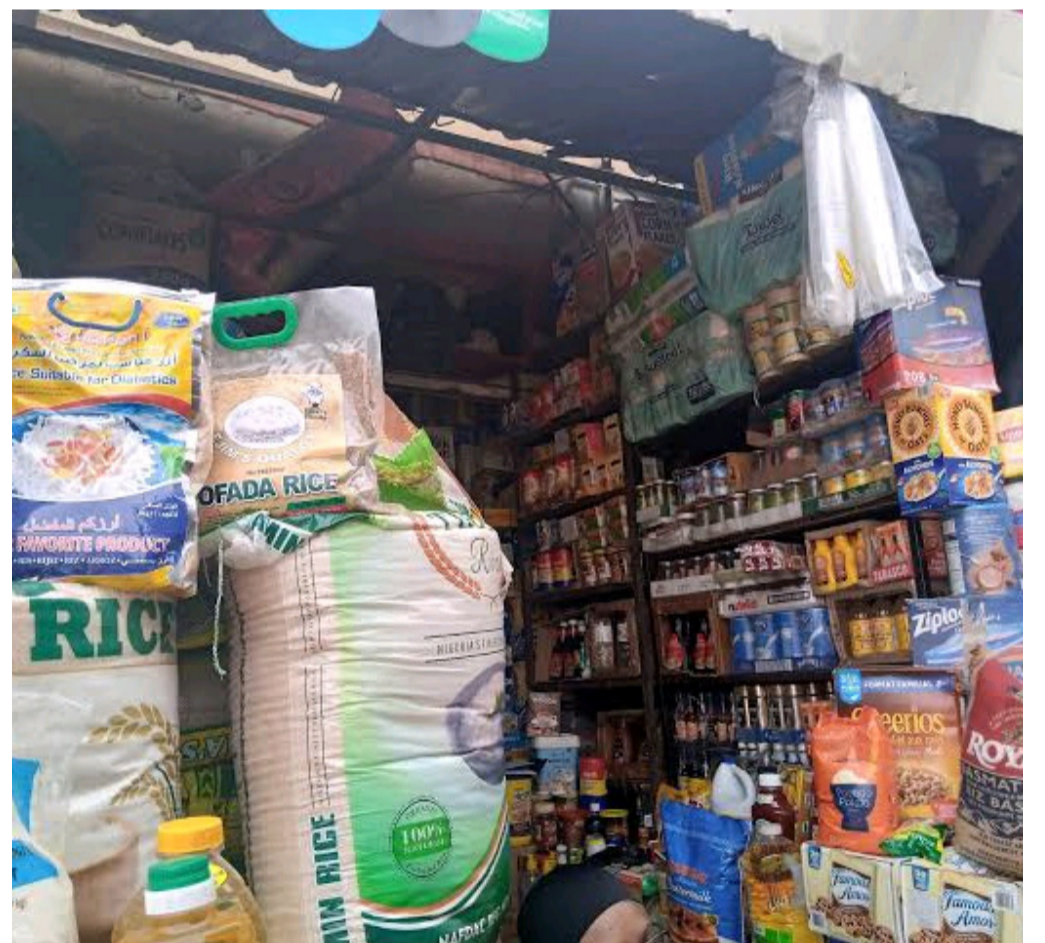


Nigerians celebrate Sallah on tight budgets amid rising food and fuel costs

Nigerians have raised concerns over the sharp increase in food prices during the celebration of Eid al-Fitr (Sallah). A market survey shows that food costs have skyrocketed. A small bag of pepper now sells for about N36,000, up from N18,000, while a large bag of onions has increased to N105,000 from N60,000. Similarly, a basket of tomatoes has risen from N32,000 to as high as

N67,000. What was bought for N1,000 is no longer possible even with N1,500. Some customers say they brought N10,000 to the market, but it wasn't enough to purchase essential items, adding that rising transport costs and the necessities exacerbated the situation. "Before, I used to spend N1000 which is usually much but now with N1500, I cannot buy the same amount. The small

crate of pepper sold for N200 is now N500. I brought N10,000 to the market to buy food items to celebrate Sallah but it was not enough. I had to borrow N500 to add to what I have," a customer lamented. He added that the rising cost of other essentials has strained his spending, adding that the cost of transportation has exacerbated the rise in the cost of living. "Also, an Eva-pet-sized



red oil has also increased to N2000 from N1500, I budgeted N1800 for it. Transportation costs have also increased. I will have to trek home. The salary is not enough and has not increased. I wondered why we struggle with agriculture in our country," another buyer said. Another consumer highlighted how even simple meals have become expensive, saying the impact is already evident in the daily meal planning

of many households. Residents in major cities like Port Harcourt, Kano and Abuja expressed similar frustrations, linking the surge to rising fuel prices, with petrol selling for as high as N1,300 per litre in some stations. In some major markets, a basket of tomatoes sells for between N28,000 and N30,000, up from N18,000–N22,000. With fuel stations like AA Rano among others selling petrol at N1,300 per litre,

the resulting effect affects staples such as rice and meat. A 50kg bag of rice now sells for between N60,000 and N65,000, while a kilogram of meat has risen to about N8,500 from N7,000. In Kano, a basket of fresh tomatoes that previously sold for moderate prices of between N18,000 and N22,000 now costs significantly higher ranging from N28,000 to N30,000 with traders blaming transportation expenses.

MILESTONE

BY AYANDA NGWANE



Amb. Ayanda Ngwane, Managing Director of BRICS TV West and Central Africa Bureau in an interview with Mr Adeagbo.

Nigeria's creative economy draws diaspora home as government unveils "Diaspora Return" initiative

Special Assistant to the President on Arts, Culture, and Creative Economy speaks on culture, commerce, and the untapped potential of Nigeria's creative sector About Ayomide Adeagbo Ayomide Adeagbo is an award-winning photographer, published author, and founder of Xtreme Media, with over a decade of experience at the intersection of photography, storytelling, and politics. His career reached a defining chapter as Special Assistant on Visual Communications and Personal Photographer to Rt. Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila, CFR, Speaker of the 9th House of Representatives — a role through which he gave Nigeria's legislature a powerful new visual language, bringing Parliament closer to the people. His book,

Gbajabiamila: The Long Road, remains a landmark archival contribution to the nation's legislative history. Today, as Special Assistant to the President on Art, Culture, and the Creative Economy, Adeagbo is tasked with institutionalising the Presidency's creative economy agenda — shaping policy and strategy with sustainable public impact. His story is one of unrelenting commitment to ingenuity, inventiveness, and public service. Nigeria's Presidency is doubling down on its bid to reconnect Africans in the diaspora with their roots, as Ayomide Adeagbo outlined the vision behind the "Diaspora Return" initiative in an exclusive interview with Ambassador Ayanda Ngwane, Managing Director of BRICS TV West and Central Africa Bureau,

Managing Director Neptune Prime. The conversation, set against the backdrop of deepening ties between Nigeria and South Africa — two of Africa's most influential economies — signals a new era of continental cooperation where culture and commerce move hand in hand. Adeagbo described the initiative as fundamentally anchored in connection, with clear fiscal dividends for the nation. "We want to bridge the gap between Nigeria and Africans in the diaspora by tethering them back to their roots," he said. "From a governance perspective, it is a win-win: the more people who visit, the stronger our Internally Generated Revenue becomes." The initiative, he stressed, is not a call to abandon adopted homelands but an invitation

to preserve cultural ties — encouraging the diaspora to return and collaborate with local fashion designers, musicians, artists, and chefs, generating shared economic value on both sides. An Economy That Never Sleeps Beyond cultural symbolism, Adeagbo positioned Nigeria's creative sector as a compelling investment destination — a "24/7 engine" offering reliable returns for those willing to engage. "In Nigeria, the creative and cultural sector never sleeps," he said. "I see it as a space where any investor can plug in and see a guaranteed return. The energy here is a literal currency." Ambassador Ngwane raised the question of structured homecoming packages — cultural tours and ancestral DNA tracing programmes

— to ease the logistics for diaspora returnees. Adeagbo welcomed the suggestion as central to the broader investment conversation. Nigeria and South Africa: Closer Than Ever The dialogue between the two leaders mirrors a significant diplomatic shift now backed by concrete policy. South African President Cyril Ramaphosa announced that Nigerian tourists and business travellers can now apply for visas without submitting their physical passports, with qualifying applicants eligible for a five-year multiple-entry visa. South Africa has also moved to a visa-free arrangement for Nigerian citizens as of December 2024, permitting stays of up to 90 days for tourism, family visits, and business travel. (iVisa Travel) Both governments have equally committed to an Early Warning Mechanism — a joint security framework designed to protect each other's citizens and prevent the kind of tensions that once strained bilateral

relations. A Win-Win for Africa What Nigeria and South Africa represent together is far greater than the sum of their parts. Accounting for a substantial share of the continent's GDP, cultural output, and diplomatic influence, their alignment sends a powerful signal to the rest of Africa. From the textile markets of Lagos to the design studios of Johannesburg, from Afrobeats to Amapiano, the creative synergies between these two nations are already redefining African excellence on the global stage. When they move together, the continent moves forward. As Ambassador Ngwane put it: when Nigeria and South Africa come together, it is not just a win for two countries — it is a win for Africa. Adeagbo closed with an invitation that was equal parts policy and poetry: "It is woven into our fabrics, our music, and our daily interactions. To truly understand the secret, you have to be here."



Mr. Ayo Adeagbo, Special Assistant to the President on Arts, Culture, and Creative Economy.

HERITAGE

BY TAWHEED YAKUB

Adara (Kadara) People: The cultural identity and resilience of one of Southern Kaduna's largest ethnic groups

The Adara (Kadara) people of Nigeria are a culturally vibrant and historically grounded ethnic group, known for their resilience, strong communal values, and deeply rooted ancestral heritage preserved across generations.

Recognised for their courage, unity, and deep attachment to their land, the Adara people have maintained their cultural identity despite colonial restructuring, missionary influence, political transitions, and the pressures of modern civilisation.

They are predominantly found in Kaduna State, particularly in Kachia Local Government Area and surrounding communities such as Kateri, Kadara, and neighbouring districts.

Their homeland is characterised by savannah vegetation, rolling hills, and fertile farmland, which have shaped their agricultural practices, settlement patterns, and community organisation. Over time, the Adara people have contributed significantly to the socio-political development of Southern Kaduna, upholding values centred on unity, respect for elders, justice, courage, and communal cooperation.

Historical Background and Origin

Adara's history is preserved largely through oral traditions, clan genealogies, folktales, and ancestral

narratives passed down by elders.

Linguistically, the Adara language belongs to the Niger-Congo language family, reflecting historical and cultural ties with other Southern Kaduna ethnic groups.

Traditionally, the Adara lived in organised settlements structured around clans and extended families. These settlements were often located in areas that allowed for effective farming and communal cooperation.

The Adara people maintained relationships with neighbouring groups such as the Gbagyi, Atyap, Bajju, and Hausa communities through trade, intermarriage, and cultural exchange while preserving a distinct identity. Leadership was historically organised under clan heads, village heads, and councils of elders responsible for land administration, conflict resolution, marriage arrangements, and cultural preservation.

Today, the Adara Chiefdom, led by the Agom Adara, remains a respected traditional institution overseeing cultural affairs and community leadership. Colonial administration introduced changes in governance structures, yet traditional leadership continues to play a vital role in Adara society.

Culture and Tradition

Adara culture is strongly

communal and centred on kinship ties and collective responsibility. Elders are regarded as custodians of wisdom and tradition, while younger generations are expected to uphold discipline, respect, and communal values.

Communal labour, especially during farming seasons, house construction, and community projects, is a defining feature of Adara society.

The Adara language remains central to identity and is expressed through proverbs, folktales, songs, and oral traditions that transmit history, moral values, and cultural knowledge.

Christianity is predominant among the Adara people today, alongside Islam and elements of indigenous beliefs that continue to influence cultural practices.

Traditional music, drumming, and dance performances play an important role during festivals, weddings, and ceremonies, reinforcing unity and cultural pride.

Marriage Customs

Marriage among the Adara is regarded as a sacred institution that unites not just individuals but families and clans.

The traditional process involves family introductions, negotiations conducted by elders, agreement on bride price (often including livestock or symbolic items),



and blessings from both families.

Marriage ceremonies are marked by music, dance, feasting, and active community participation.

While polygamy existed historically, modern religious influence and socio-economic realities have made monogamy more common in contemporary Adara society.

Socio-Economic Life

Agriculture remains central to Adara's livelihood. The people cultivate crops such as maize, millet, guinea corn, yams, cassava, and vegetables. Animal husbandry, petty trading, and local crafts also contribute to the economy.

In modern times, Adara men and women are active in education, civil service, healthcare, business, politics, and entrepreneurship across Kaduna State and beyond, while maintaining strong cultural ties to their heritage.

Modern Times

Like many indigenous communities, the Adara people face challenges including youth migration to urban centres, economic pressures, and concerns about language preservation. However, cultural associations, churches, youth organisations, and the traditional council continue to promote Adara heritage and unity.

Efforts to document oral traditions and encourage the teaching of the Adara language among younger generations reflect a strong commitment to preserving

their identity in a rapidly changing world.

Ceremonies and Cultural Practices

Adara ceremonies symbolise unity, spirituality, bravery, and respect for ancestors.

Important cultural events include harvest celebrations, naming ceremonies, marriage rites, funerals, and community festivals that showcase traditional dances, attire, and cultural pride.

These practices reinforce values of diligence, respect, courage, social harmony, and collective responsibility.

From the rural communities of Kachia to urban centres across Nigeria and the diaspora, the Adara people continue to demonstrate that tradition and modernity can coexist, preserving a proud legacy built on resilience, unity, and enduring cultural identity.



HISTORICITY

BY FALMATA MA'AJI MUHAMMAD (Student at Helwan University, Cairo, Egypt)



Chania: An ancient Greek city with value and historical significance



Chania, also sometimes romanised as Hania, is a city in Greece and the capital of the Chania regional unit. It lies along the north-west coast of the island of Crete, about 70 km (43 mi) west of Rethymno and 145 km (90 mi) west of Heraklion.

Background

The municipality has 111,375 inhabitants (2021). This consists of the city of Chania and several nearby areas, including Kounoupidiana, Mournies, Souda, Nerokouros, Daratsos, Perivolia, Galatas and Aroni. Chania was the site of a Minoan settlement, known from Linear

B tablets from Knossos as having been named Ku-do-ni-ja. The subsequent Greek settlement was likewise known as Cydonia (Ancient Greek: Κυδωνία, *Kydōnía*), ultimately the source of the English word "quince". An Archaeological Marvel Some notable archaeological evidence for the existence of this Minoan city below some parts of today's Chania was found by excavations in the district of Kasteli in the Old Town. This area appears to have been inhabited since the Neolithic Age. In 1898, during the final moves towards independence and

enosis—union with Greece—the Great Powers made Chania the capital of the semi-autonomous Cretan State (*Kritiki Politeia*), with Prince George of Greece, the High Commissioner of Crete living here.

Transitional Period

During these years, Crete issued its own stamps and money. This was a very important transitional period when, no longer an isolated vilayet of the Ottoman Empire, the city became more cosmopolitan and flourishing, regaining its role as the crossroad of civilisations, influenced by Europe as well as by the East.

Many important buildings were built during this era, intellectual and artistic societies were created and a new class of local aristocracy brought a different atmosphere to the everyday life of the town. The district of Halepa has many fine neoclassical embassies and consulates dating from this period.

However, the main goal was enosis with Greece, which came after Eleftherios Venizelos's constant opposition to Prince George's rule over Crete. The series of conflicts includes the Therisos revolt in 1905, which overthrew Prince George and brought Alexandros Zaimis to rule Crete. Finally, in 1908, Venizelos managed to establish a revolutionary government, recognised by the Great Powers. His later election as the prime minister of Greece (1910) eventually led to Crete's union with Greece on 1 December 1913, following the Balkan Wars. The Greek flag was raised for the first time at Fort



Firka in the Old Harbour in the presence of Venizelos and King Constantine.

Due to the popularity of Venizelos, Chania as with most of Crete remained staunchly pro-Venizelist, pro-Liberal and later pro-Republican in the National Schism and the interwar period. The only attempt to overthrow the monarchist Metaxas Regime occurred in the city with the failed 28 July 1938 uprising.

Economy

Two main sources of wealth

in Chania are agriculture and tourism. A large portion of the city's residents (not necessarily farmers) own many hectares of agricultural land where several plants are being cultivated, the most common ones being olive trees and citrus. Other important products include wine, avocados, dairy, honey etc.

The organisation of the Agricultural August has been a recent attempt to promote local quality products including a series of activities organised by the

Prefecture of Chania since 1999, which has proved very successful. On the other hand, starting from the early 1970s, tourism has developed rapidly. Nowadays the tertiary sector is becoming more and more important for the locals, since an increasing number of them are participating in the business.

An important centre of economic activities in the town is the Chania Chamber of Commerce and Industry (E.B.E.X.).



ROOTS

BY GIFT LUCKSON
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George Lewis (Slave George): The tragic story of a 17-year-old African boy in slavery

George Lewis (also known as Slave George or Lilburn Lewis' slave George) (c. 1794 – December 15, 1811) was a 17-year-old African American boy held as a slave; he was murdered in western Kentucky on the night of December 15–16, 1811 by Lilburne and Isham Lewis, grown sons of Dr Charles Lilburn Lewis and Lucy Jefferson Lewis, and nephews of Thomas Jefferson.

The brothers were also related to Meriwether Lewis of Lewis and Clark fame. Because the killing coincided with the time and location of the New Madrid earthquake and the ensuing disgrace of the prominent Lewis family, accounts of it quickly became part of the regional and national lore.

Soon after being released on bail, Lilburne Lewis accidentally shot himself. Jailed after his brother's death, Isham escaped and disappeared from the area, and is believed to have perished in the Battle of New Orleans in January 1815.

Origin

George was born into slavery in 1794 in Virginia and was held by the Lewis family. He grew up as a house slave and learned what was needed in the kitchen and other areas. When Randolph and Lilburne Lewis decided to move to Kentucky in 1806 with their families, they took their slaves with them, including George.

In early 1811, Lilburne and Isham Lewis were still in mourning for their mother and older brother Randolph, who had died the year before. Lilburne had also lost his first wife in 1811. He had remarried a local woman named Letitia. She was pregnant with their first child by early 1812, and Lilburne was struggling to support his first five children after a series of financial setbacks.

Isham had come to Lilburne on an extended visit, and that night after George accidentally broke a water pitcher that belonged to their mother, they were angered and killed him in front of seven other slaves.

Woes After Death

The dismemberment of George's decapitated corpse was interrupted by the most powerful U.S. earthquake ever recorded east of the Rocky Mountains, the Great New Madrid earthquake, which

struck at 3:15 a.m. Eastern time (2:15 a.m. in the Central Standard Time observed in the western Kentucky locale of the murder).

Lilburne intended to destroy the evidence by having the slaves burn George's dismembered body, but the New Madrid earthquake caused the chimney to collapse around the fire. (They were likely in the kitchen cabin.) In the days afterwards, the brothers made other slaves rebuild the chimney and hide the remains within it.

Two additional megaquakes jolted the region on January 23, 1812, and February 7, 1812. The second caused a partial collapse of the chimney that had concealed George's remains. In early March 1812, a neighbourhood dog retrieved the young man's skull and deposited it in open view in a roadway.

Rising Investigations and Suicide

Neighbours saw the skull and began to inquire about it. They determined it was that of slave George, who was missing, and learned that he had been murdered. In slaveholding areas of the United States, the torturous murder of a slave was illegal. Lilburne and Isham Lewis were quickly investigated, arrested and charged.

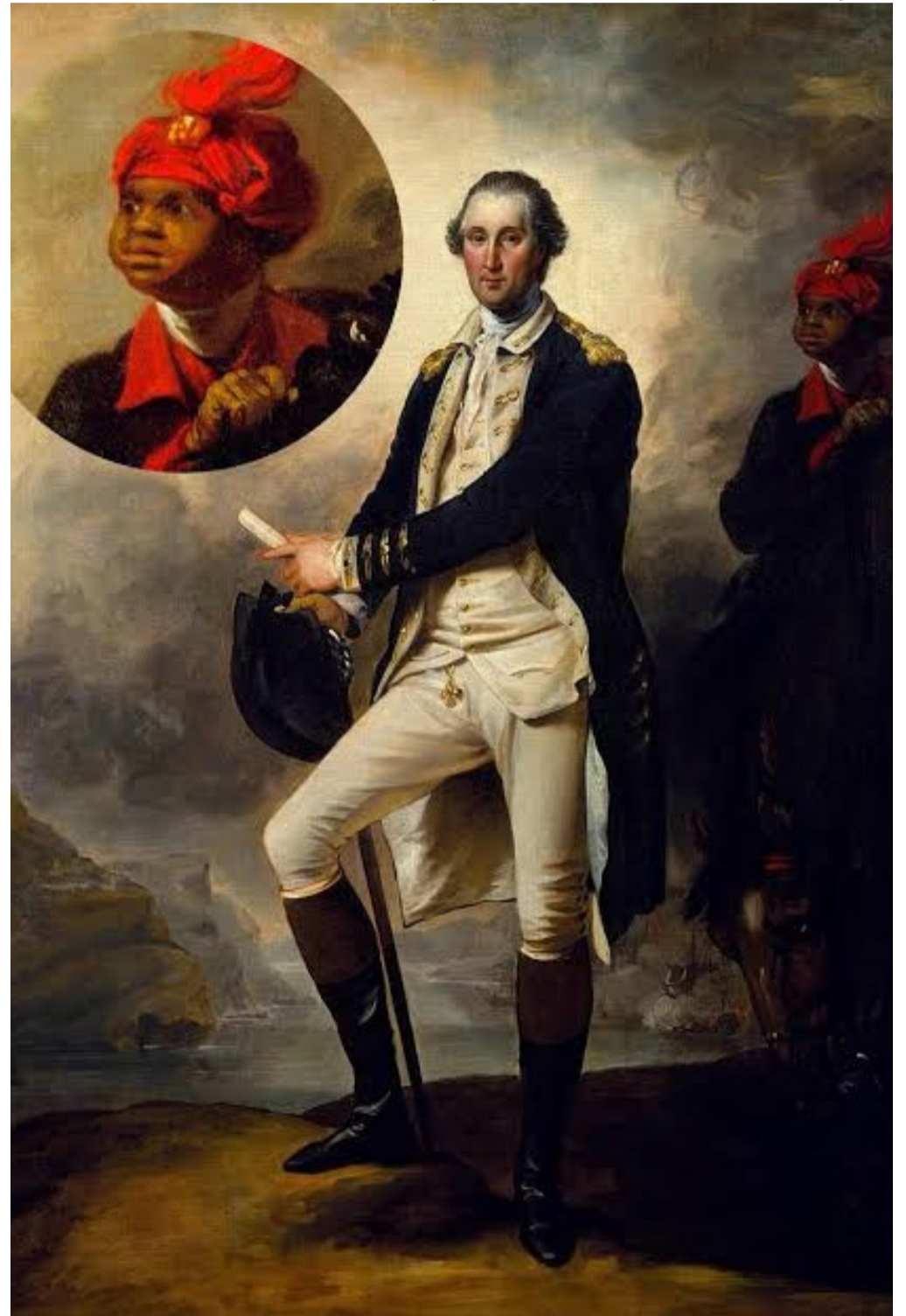
After they had been released on bail, on April 9, 1812, Lilburne encouraged his brother to carry out a joint suicide pact with him. However, as Lilburne attempted to demonstrate to his brother how to use a rifle, he accidentally shot himself prematurely. Isham then lost his nerve and did not follow through.

Held on investigation as an accessory to the suicide and George's murder, Isham escaped from jail and disappeared. Several weeks later, he joined the United States Army under an assumed name to fight in the War of 1812. Isham was killed in action during the Battle of New Orleans on January 8, 1815.

Media Accounts

Many books and articles since 1812 have examined the case of slave George and Jefferson's nephews. Historian Boynton Merrill Jr. considered the case as a rising out of the power abuses inherent in the institution of slavery, frontier stresses, mounting personal and financial losses in the Lewis family, Lilburne's mental instability, and abuse of alcohol by both brothers.

The poet and novelist Robert Penn Warren explored the scandal in his book-length poem *Brother to Dragons, A Tale in Verse and Voices* (1953, revised 1979).



THIS LIFE!

BY TAWHEED YAKUB

Nigeria's education sector grapples with poor infrastructure, limited materials, and overcrowding — Retired Principal



Abbas

Muhammad Abbas (M.A.), is a retired educationist who once served as the Principal of Fika Government Secondary School in the Potiskum Local Government Area of Yobe State. With decades of experience in the field of education, Abbas has dedicated his life to shaping the younger generation. He shares his journey, the challenges he encountered, and the wisdom he has gained over the years.

NP: Tell us about your background.

M.A.: My name is Muhammad Abbas. I was born in 1956, and my journey in education began in Plateau State, where I attended my primary school. It was during these formative

years that I developed a deep appreciation for learning and discipline. After completing my primary education, I proceeded to Government College Birnin Gwari in Kaduna State for my secondary education. I was not just an ordinary student; I was the Head Boy of my set, a role that instilled in me a sense of responsibility and leadership from a young age.

M.A.: After graduating from secondary school, I took a rather unexpected path—I learned tailoring. At the time, acquiring a skill was seen as an essential part of personal development, and I wanted to ensure I had something to fall back on.

However, my passion for education never waned. In 1987, I secured admission to study Education at the University of Maiduguri. It was a defining moment in my life because, despite my desire to further my education, the road was not smooth. I finally graduated in 1992, an achievement that marked the beginning of my lifelong journey as an educator.

NP: What challenges did you face during your education?

M.A.: One of the greatest challenges I faced was the lack of financial support. I did not have any scholarship to fund my university education. Unlike some of my peers

who had financial backing from the government or other organisations, I had to navigate my way through university with little to no assistance. It was not easy. There were times when I had to make tough choices—whether to buy books, eat, or save for future expenses.

M.A.: Despite these hardships, I remained focused on my goal. I worked tirelessly, studied diligently, and ensured that nothing deterred me from completing my education. The experience taught me resilience and determination. It also made me appreciate the value of hard work. After graduating, I was posted to Kwara State for my National Youth Service Corps (NYSC). That was yet another phase of my life where I had to adapt to new environments and face new challenges, but it was a valuable experience that helped shape me into the person I am today.

NP: Tell us about your career.

M.A.: My career was deeply rooted in education. Right from my university days, I knew I was meant to be a teacher. The passion I had for imparting knowledge and moulding young minds kept me motivated throughout my years of service. My first appointment was at Fika Government Secondary School, where I began as a teacher. I was eager to make an impact, and I committed myself to my work with diligence and sincerity.

M.A.: Over the years, I progressed in my career, taking on more responsibilities and earning promotions along the way. Eventually, I became the Principal of Fika Government Secondary School. As a Principal, my role expanded beyond just teaching. I had to manage students, teachers, and the school administration. It was a demanding position, but I embraced it wholeheartedly because I believed in the importance of education and the role teachers play in shaping society.

M.A.: Looking back, I take great pride in knowing that I contributed to the education of many young individuals, some of whom have gone on to become successful professionals in various fields. Teaching is not just a job—it is a calling. And I am

grateful for the years I spent serving as an educator.

NP: What were the biggest challenges you faced as a teacher?

M.A.: Teaching is one of the most challenging professions, second only to hospital work, in my opinion. The reason is simple—teachers deal with human beings at their most critical and impressionable stages of life. Students come from different backgrounds, each with unique personalities, strengths, and weaknesses. It takes patience, wisdom, and understanding to manage them effectively.

M.A.: One major challenge is discipline. As a teacher, you are responsible for not just educating students but also guiding their moral and social development. Some students are naturally obedient, while others require constant monitoring and discipline. It is a delicate balance—being strict enough to maintain order while being approachable enough to earn the respect and trust of the students.

M.A.: Another challenge is working with colleagues. The teaching profession requires teamwork, and sometimes, differences in opinion or teaching styles can lead to conflicts. However, I always ensured that I maintained professionalism and worked towards fostering a harmonious environment where both teachers and students could thrive.

M.A.: There were also infrastructural challenges—schools lacking adequate teaching materials, overcrowded classrooms, and in some cases, a lack of motivation among teachers due to delayed salaries or inadequate remuneration. Despite all these obstacles, I remained steadfast in my mission to educate and inspire.

NP: What advice do you have for aspiring teachers?

M.A.: To those who are considering a career in teaching, my advice is simple—be prepared for challenges, but do not be discouraged. Teaching is not an easy profession, and it requires dedication, patience, and a strong sense of purpose. However, the rewards are immense. There is nothing more fulfilling than seeing your students succeed and knowing that you played a role in shaping their future.

M.A.: Teachers should be consistent and committed to their work. Many people underestimate the impact of a good teacher, but in reality, teachers shape societies.

They instil knowledge, discipline, and values in students who will one day become leaders, doctors, engineers, and policymakers. That is why every teacher must take their responsibility seriously.

M.A.: In addition, teachers should continue to learn and grow. Education is not static—it evolves with time. A good teacher must keep up with new teaching methods, technology, and global trends to remain effective in the classroom. Lastly, teachers should always remember that they are role models. Students look up to their teachers not just for academic guidance but also for moral and social direction.

NP: What is your hobby?

M.A.: Now that I am retired, my greatest joy comes from spending time with my family. Throughout my career, I dedicated so much of my time to my work, ensuring that my students received the best education possible. Now, I prioritise my family and cherish every moment I have with them.

M.A.: Family is the foundation of every society, and I believe in the importance of maintaining strong family bonds. I enjoy engaging in meaningful conversations with my children and grandchildren, sharing my experiences with them, and watching them grow. Retirement has given me the time to reflect, relax, and appreciate the simple joys of life.

NP: What are your final thoughts?

M.A.: Education is the backbone of any society, and teachers play a crucial role in shaping the future. Looking back on my journey, I am grateful for the opportunity to have contributed to the lives of so many students. Teaching is not just about delivering lessons—it is about inspiring, mentoring, and guiding students to become responsible members of society.

M.A.: To aspiring teachers, I say this: be passionate about your work. Teaching is a noble profession, and while it comes with its challenges, the rewards are worth it. Seeing your students succeed, knowing that you played a part in their journey, is one of the greatest fulfilments in life.

M.A.: For society at large, I urge everyone to value education and support teachers. A well-educated society is a progressive society. We must all contribute in whatever way we can to ensure that education remains a priority.

The passion I had for imparting knowledge and moulding young minds kept me motivated throughout my years of service



HUMANIST

BY JAMEEL LAWANYAKASAI



31-year-old man appeals for support to raise N14.5m for life-saving surgery

Several months after sustaining severe injuries in a workplace accident, 31-year-old John Harrison Bodzah is enduring intense pain and worsening health conditions.

His mother, Mabel Bodzah, said John, who worked with a Port Harcourt-based company, suffered a badly injured left arm and bladder complications after the incident, leading to repeated hospital admissions. She said he has since lost his job, struggles to eat, and passes urine painfully. Medical reports indicate

that John urgently requires surgery to correct the arm injury and address bladder obstruction that is threatening his kidneys, with the estimated cost put at N14.5 million.

His mother, a petty trader, said the family's savings have been exhausted and appealed for help. Major kidney surgery, primarily a nephrectomy (removal of all or part of a kidney), treats cancer, severe damage, or infection. Performed under general anaesthesia via open or laparoscopic (minimally

invasive) techniques, it involves removing the kidney, sometimes with surrounding tissue.

Recovery takes several weeks, with risks including infection, bleeding, and injury to surrounding tissues. Mrs Bodzah said, "John is my third child. Before the accident, he was strong, hardworking, and full of hope," she said, fighting back tears.

"Today, he is struggling to hold on to life. He has been in and out of hospitals for months, lost his job, and we have exhausted all our family

savings."

She explained that doctors have warned that her son urgently needs surgery to repair his injured arm and address severe bladder complications, adding that delays could lead to complete kidney failure. Medical reports from Full Grace Healthcare Services in Port Harcourt, signed by its Chief Executive Officer, Dr Grace Gabriel, confirm the severity of John's condition.

The report states that he presented with a complicated injury to the

left arm resulting from an accident, alongside a long-standing history of chronic kidney disease and severe urinary retention.

A Computerised Tomography (CT) scan revealed obstructive uropathy secondary to bladder outlet obstruction, with gross dilatation of both ureters and the pelvicalyceal systems of both kidneys. "Patient has been counselled for urgent cystectomy, possible sessions of dialysis, and skin grafting of the affected arm, with a total estimated cost of N14.5

million," the report noted. For Mrs Bodzah, the financial burden is overwhelming.

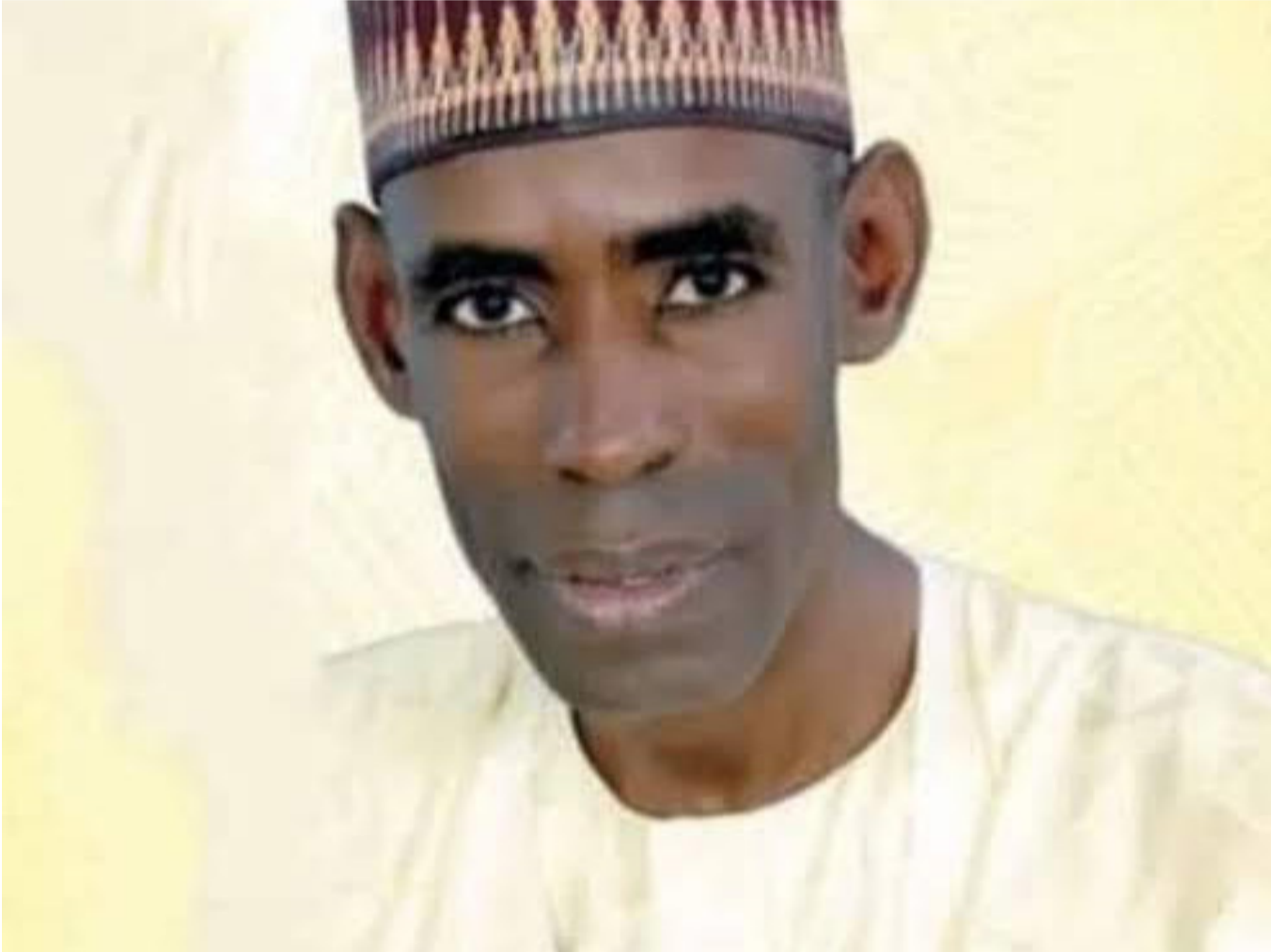
"The cost is far beyond what I can afford as a petty trader struggling to feed her family," she said.

"I am pleading with Nigerians to help save my son."

Well-wishers and members of the public who are moved to assist can send donations to Joshua Bodzah, First Bank, Account Number: 3036970550, or contact 08162619099 for further details.

FEATURES

Political Amnesia: Betrayal and the 2027 reckoning



Engr. Gwarzo

By Engr. Bello Gwarzo Abdullahi, FNSE

The political developments unfolding across Nigeria today present a troubling picture—one that can best be described as a case of collective amnesia. As a nation, we often speak about learning from history, yet our political conduct frequently suggests the opposite. The past is repeatedly treated like a script that can be discarded and rewritten whenever the balance of power shifts. The recent wave of political defections, coming at a time when the country is already grappling with severe economic and social pressures, raises serious questions about priorities and leadership focus. Rather than reflecting lessons from the past or presenting a coherent path forward, many of these movements appear driven by immediate political calculations rather than enduring principles. In many respects, Nigeria seems to be drifting toward a familiar political crossroads of its own making. The growing number of defections among governors, senators, and members of the House of Representatives and State Houses of Assembly has further deepened concerns about the health of our democracy. A democratic system thrives on healthy competition and a diversity of ideas. When political actors increasingly

gather under a single umbrella largely for political survival, the risk of drifting toward a de facto one-party dominance becomes real. In such circumstances, values that once guided public life—loyalty, integrity, and political consistency—are easily sacrificed. Kano provides a telling illustration of this broader national pattern. The reported move by Governor Abba Kabir Yusuf from the New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP) to the All Progressives Congress (APC) reflects a recurring feature of Nigerian politics: alliances often prove temporary, while loyalty frequently gives way to expediency. For years, the Kwankwasiya movement served as the governor's principal political platform. Any departure from that structure inevitably raises questions about political fidelity, especially given his long-standing association with Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso. Beyond the question of loyalty, the timing of such realignments also invites scrutiny. At a moment when the nation faces profound economic hardship and pressing social challenges, many citizens expect political leaders to concentrate on governance rather than repositioning for the next electoral contest. Yet electoral outcomes in Nigeria are rarely determined by party structures alone. Beneath the formal

framework of politics lies a deeper interplay of culture, faith, and community identity. Traditional institutions, communal loyalties, and religious influence continue to shape political behaviour in ways that party manifestos often fail to capture. Religious leadership, in particular, has historically played a significant role in shaping political choices, especially across Northern Nigeria. However, the experience of the 2023 elections—and the reactions that followed—appears to have prompted a period of reflection among many citizens. Increasingly, people are asking difficult questions about what voting primarily along religious lines has delivered to the nation. The irony is evident: the moral virtues preached by both Christianity and Islam do not always translate into political conduct. This disconnect has understandably weakened public confidence and contributed to a broader sense of national disillusionment. At the grassroots level, frustration among the talakawa—ordinary Nigerians—continues to grow. Many feel mobilised during elections but neglected once power is secured. Should the national conversation shift toward demands for accountability, justice, and genuine economic relief, some of the political calculations being made today may ulti-

mately prove short-sighted. In many ways, the present moment reflects a wider national challenge. Across the federation, political parties have gradually lost much of their ideological character. Rather than serving as platforms for ideas and policy direction, they increasingly function as vehicles for access to power. Alliances form and dissolve with remarkable speed, leaving citizens increasingly sceptical of the system. History offers numerous warnings about the consequences of such patterns. Sudden defections, fragile alliances, and high-profile political betrayals have rarely produced lasting stability in Nigeria. Yet these lessons appear to be repeatedly overlooked, as though each electoral cycle begins with a deliberate forgetting of what came before. As the nation gradually approaches the 2027 elections, the real question may not be whether politicians remember history—but whether voters do. If the electorate refuses to succumb to political amnesia, the coming elections could present an opportunity for renewal. If not, Nigeria risks repeating a familiar cycle in which ambition overtakes principle and yesterday's lessons are once again sacrificed in the relentless pursuit of power. By Engr. Bello Gwarzo Abdullahi, FNSE. Email: bgabdullahi@gmail.com



Kareto

The Last Domino: Bala Mohammed and the sunset of the PDP

By Abubakar M. Kareto

In Nigerian politics, the “big tent” of the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) hasn’t just folded; it has been systematically dismantled. With Governor Bala Mohammed of Bauchi State, the Chairman of the PDP Governors’ Forum reportedly crossing the carpet to join the All Progressives Congress (APC), the final pillar of the main opposition has effectively crumbled. What we are witnessing is not a simple defection; it is the culmination of a multi-layered strategy that critics argue has transformed Nigeria’s vibrant multi-party democracy into a looming one-party system. **The Architect and the Aftermath** The fingerprints of FCT Minister Nyesom Wike are visible across this landscape. By maintaining a foot in both camps, Wike successfully paralysed the PDP’s internal decision-making for years. Mohammed’s exit is the “mission accomplished” moment for those seeking to neutralise the PDP. With only Seyi Makinde of Oyo State remaining as a PDP governor, the party that once boasted it would rule for 60 years has been reduced to a ghost of its former self. **A Three-Pronged Consolidation** The narrative from the opposition is clear: this wasn’t just a political defeat; it was a systemic squeeze. **The Executive & Judiciary:** A series of court rulings ranging from leadership disputes to election petitions consistently favoured factions that weakened the PDP from within. **The INEC Factor:** Critics argue the electoral umpire’s processes have become a mere formality in a landscape where the ruling party’s influence is absolute. **Targeting the ADC:** With the PDP sidelined, the African Democratic Congress (ADC) has suddenly become the last lifeboat for dissent, gaining nine senators overnight. However, the political machinery

is already pivoting; the “destabilisation project” is likely moving its sights toward this new threat. **Nigerian Democracy: Killed by Those Who Claimed Bring It** Those who stood on the front lines to claim they brought democracy to Nigeria have, through calculated defections and the systematic erosion of opposition, effectively dismantling the house they built. By orchestrating a landscape where dissent is silenced and the ruling party is the only viable path to power, they have traded the vibrant pluralism of our struggle for a monolithic stability. In their quest for absolute control, they have finally destroyed the very democracy they once claimed to save. **The Real Losers: The Nigerian People** When a country pivots toward a one-party state, the concept of accountability vanishes. Democracy thrives on the “threat of replacement” the idea that if the ruling party fails to provide security, electricity, or economic stability, the people can vote for an alternative. If the APC becomes the only viable path to power, the internal primary becomes the only election that matters. The general election becomes a rubber stamp. In this scenario, the “people” lose their greatest leverage: choice. **The Road Ahead** Nigeria stands at a crossroads. As the PDP fades into the history books, the question isn’t just about who joins the APC next, but whether any independent voice can survive. If the ADC is swallowed or splintered, the transition to a de facto one-party state will be complete. History shows that one-party systems rarely prioritise the public good; they prioritise the survival of the party. For Nigeria, the end of opposition may very well be the beginning of a democratic winter. *Abubakar M. Kareto is a Public Affairs Analyst.*

SPORTS

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Super Eagles

FIFA rejects Nigeria's petition against DR Congo, NFF appeals

The Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) has announced that it is appealing the decision of the FIFA Disciplinary Committee, which rejected its petition challenging the eligibility of certain players fielded by the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo) during the 2026 FIFA World Cup play-off in Rabat, Morocco, last November. Nigeria had been

eliminated from the play-offs after losing to DR Congo 4-3 on penalties.

Following the match, the NFF raised concerns over the legitimacy of some DR Congo players, alleging irregularities in the issuance of passports that qualified them for the fixture. After several months of deliberation, FIFA delivered its verdict rejecting Nigeria's petition.

The NFF, however, confirmed it has formally launched an appeal, signalling its determination to pursue the matter through the proper channels. "We have received the decision of the FIFA Disciplinary Committee on our petition, but we are not satisfied with the decision, which rejected our petition. "I want to assure Nigerians that the NFF

has immediately commenced the process of appealing the decision," said NFF General Secretary, Dr Mohammed Sanusi. Meanwhile, DR Congo is all set for the intercontinental playoff scheduled for later this month, having named its squad earlier. The team will face the winner of the encounter between the Jamaica national football team and the New Caledonia national football team, with the victor securing one of the final slots at the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Osimhen to undergo surgery following injury



Osimhen

Nigerian international and Galatasaray's star striker, Victor Osimhen, is facing a potential spell on the sidelines after sustaining a fractured arm during the club's UEFA Champions League Round of 16 second-leg clash against Liverpool at Anfield. The incident occurred during Galatasaray's 4-0 defeat on Wednesday, which saw them exit the competition 4-1 on aggregate. A club statement issued on Thursday confirmed the severity of the injury following hospital examinations. "The decision regarding surgery will be made in the coming days after further examinations," the Turkish club announced, without specifying an anticipated return date for their prolific forward. The injury took place early in the match when Osimhen was involved in an aerial challenge with Liverpool defender Ibrahima Konaté. Konaté

landed awkwardly on Osimhen's arm, causing immediate distress for the Nigerian star. Despite initial suggestions from some Liverpool players that Osimhen might be feigning or exaggerating the injury, he continued to play the remainder of the first half with a bandaged forearm before being substituted at half-time. Subsequent medical assessments revealed a fracture in Osimhen's right forearm, which has since been placed in a medical cast. The club's medical team is now deliberating the necessity of surgical intervention. Osimhen had been a pivotal figure for Galatasaray in their Champions League campaign, bagging seven goals and providing three assists in ten appearances, alongside earning four man-of-the-match accolades. Adding to Galatasaray's injury woes, Osimhen's replacement in the match, Noa Lang, also suffered a "serious cut to his right thumb" and is scheduled to undergo surgery in Liverpool before returning to Turkey. Liverpool's dominant victory at Anfield has propelled them into the quarter-finals, where they are set to face current holders Paris Saint-Germain.

Iran negotiating with FIFA to move all World Cup games to Mexico - Official

In a statement posted on X by the Iranian Embassy in Mexico, Iranian football president Mehdi Taj was quoted as saying the country is "currently negotiating" with FIFA to move all World Cup games involving Iranian players to Mexico. Iran has qualified for the World Cup, which is to be held jointly in the US, Canada and Mexico from June 11, and two of its matches are scheduled to be played in Los Angeles and Seattle. Iran qualified for the 48-team tournament to be held in the US, Canada and Mexico from June 11 and is scheduled to play two group matches in Los Angeles and one in Seattle. They were the first Asian nation to qualify for the World Cup, securing their spot on March 25, 2025. The US-Israel war on Iran started on February 28, 2026, and is now in its third week.



World Cup

SALUTE TO SERVICE

BY MERCY ADAJE
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William Godang Walbe: A soldier's defining role in Nigeria's military and political landscape

William Godang Walbe was a Nigerian Army colonel who became widely known for serving as the military aide de camp to General Yakubu Gowon, Nigeria's third Head of State. He was born on 13 July 1943 in Kabwir District, Kanke, in present-day Plateau State, Nigeria. He was the son of Tokmuwa and Ngot. Walbe received his secondary education at the Nigerian Military School in Zaria, one of the country's foremost institutions for military training at the secondary level. After completing his studies, he joined the Nigerian Army and in 1962 he was commissioned as a second lieutenant. In the early years of his career, he served in several operational and administrative roles, including Anti-Tank Platoon Commander in the 2nd Battalion and General Staff Officer Grade III in the 2nd Brigade. These assignments formed the foundation of his military experience during a period when Nigeria's armed forces were expanding rapidly. Walbe gained historical prominence through his

involvement in the events surrounding the 1966 Nigerian coup d'état. At the time he held the rank of lieutenant and was part of the security detail of General Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi, who had assumed power earlier in the year following the 1966 Nigerian coup d'état. Walbe served alongside Major Theophilus Danjuma within Ironsi's protective unit. Despite their official duties, both officers became associated with a group of northern military personnel who opposed Ironsi's government. The grievances that fuelled the July uprising were largely linked to the aftermath of the January coup, which had resulted in the deaths of several prominent political and military leaders. Among those killed were Prime Minister Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and the Premier of Northern Nigeria, Ahmadu Bello. Many officers in the northern ranks of the army believed the handling of the crisis had deepened political tensions and undermined trust within the military. The counter coup of July 1966 ultimately



Walbe

ly led to the deaths of General Aguiyi Ironsi and Lieutenant Colonel Adekunle Fajuyi, who was then serving as the Military Governor of the Western Region. The uprising involved a number of officers who would later play important roles

in Nigeria's political and military history. Among them were Lieutenant Colonel Murtala Muhammed, Major Martin Adamu, Lieutenant Muhammadu Buhari, and Captain Joseph Garba. After the upheavals of 1966, Walbe continued

his service in the Nigerian Army and later became the aide de camp to General Yakubu Gowon during Gowon's tenure as Head of State. His career reflected the experience of many officers of his generation whose professional lives were shaped by the

turbulent political developments of post-independence Nigeria. Colonel William Godang Walbe died on 27 June 2011. His life remains closely connected with the defining military and political events that transformed Nigeria in the 1960s.

The impressive career of Alwali Jauji Kazir in military leadership and public administration

Alwali Jauji Kazir, CFR, was born on 2 August 1947 in Kazir Village in Jakusko Local Government Area of Yobe State. He rose through the ranks of the Nigerian Army to become a Major General. He later held some of the most important military and administrative positions in Nigeria during the era of military rule. Kazir received his early education at Amshi Primary School, which he attended from 1955 to 1957, before continuing at Gashua Central Primary School in 1958. His early schooling laid the foundation for a career that would later combine military leadership with public administration. During his service in the Nigerian Army, he served in several strategic roles. In 1992, while holding the

rank of brigadier general, he was appointed Director of Army Faculty at the Armed Forces Command and Staff College, Jaji, one of the country's most important military training institutions. Kazir first gained wider public prominence when he was appointed Military Governor of Kwara State from December 1989 to January 1992 during the military administration of Ibrahim Babangida. His tenure was marked by an emphasis on development, administrative reforms, and social infrastructure. As governor, Kazir developed a reputation for energetic leadership and was popularly known as the "action governor." He placed strong emphasis on teamwork, rural development, and industrial

growth. One of the notable reforms during his administration was the regrading of traditional rulers, which elevated several royal fathers to higher categories within the traditional institution. He also established the Christian Pilgrims Welfare Board, an initiative that had been under consideration since 1979. His administration also promoted sports and youth development. Under his leadership, a baseball court was constructed at Ade-wole, and Kwara State Stadium Complex hosted the fifth CISM Joint Military World Handball Championship in September 1990. Kazir also paid attention to infrastructure, particularly the rehabilitation of roads, and encouraged the use of direct labour in the execution of government projects.



Kazir

In August 1994, following the sudden removal of Chris Alli as Chief of Army Staff, Kazir, who was then the General Officer Commanding of the 1 Division of the Nigerian Army, was promoted to the rank of Major General and appoint-

ed Chief of Army Staff by the military government of Sani Abacha. He served in that capacity from August 1994 until March 1996 before retiring from active military service later that year. Years after leaving the army, Kazir continued to receive

recognition within traditional institutions. In April 2009, he was turbaned as Madakin Bade by the Emir of Bade, Abubakar Umar Suleiman, a title that acknowledged his contributions to both national service and community development.

SOCIALS/FASHION

BY GIFT LUCKSON
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QUICK STATISTICS ON FASHION

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

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

23%
Nigerians women replaces panties with tight!

78%
of Nigerians patronise native attires

78%
patronise nature attires

79%
of Nigerians can't live without jeans

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

79%
of Nigerians patronise can't dress without jeans



Hairstyles have long been more than just a way to groom or beautify the hair—they are powerful expressions of identity, culture, and fashion. Across different societies, the way people style their hair often reflects their beliefs, social status, and connection to tradition.

Symbolic Styles

In many cultures, especially in Africa, hairstyles carry deep cultural significance. Styles such as braids, cornrows, and locs are not only aesthetically pleasing but also symbolic.

They can represent age, marital status, tribe, or even social rank. Traditionally, hairdressing was also a social activity, bringing people together and strengthening community bonds. At the same time, hairstyles play a major role in shaping fashion trends. Modern fashion constantly evolves, and hair is a key part of personal style. Celebrities, influencers, and designers often introduce new hairstyles that quickly become popular.

For example, natural hairstyles and protective styles have gained global recognition, influencing both runway fashion and everyday looks.

New Ideas and Dynamic Creativity

The relationship between hairstyles and fashion is dynamic. While fashion introduces new ideas and creativity, traditions help preserve cultural identity. Today, many people blend both—wearing traditional styles with modern twists. This fusion allows individuals to stay fashionable while still honouring their roots.

However, hairstyles can also spark conversations about identity and acceptance. In some societies, certain traditional hairstyles have faced discrimination in schools or workplaces. This has led to growing awareness and movements advocating for the acceptance of natural and cultural hairstyles as part of one's identity.

A Form of Self-Expression

Hairstyles are a powerful form of self-expression that connects fashion with tradition. They tell stories of heritage, reflect changing trends, and continue to influence how people present themselves in society.

The fashioning of hair remains an aspect of personal grooming, fashion, and cosmetics, with practical, cultural, and popular considerations influencing some hairstyles.

Hairstyles for men

During the 15th and 16th centuries, European men wore their hair cropped no longer than shoulder-length, with very fashionable men wearing bangs or fringes.

In Italy, it was common for men to dye their hair. In the early 17th century male hairstyles grew longer, with waves or curls being considered desirable in upper-class European men.

The male wig was supposedly pioneered by King Louis XIII of France (1601–1643) in 1624 when he had prematurely begun to go bald. This fashion was largely promoted by his son and successor Louis XIV of France (1638–1715), who contributed to its spread in European and European-influenced

Hairstyles: A powerful expression of identity, fashion, and culture

countries. The beard had been in a long decline and now disappeared among the upper classes. Perukes or periwigs for men were introduced into the English-speaking world with other French styles when Charles II was restored to the throne in 1660, following a lengthy exile in France. These wigs were shoulder-

length or longer, imitating the long hair that had become fashionable among men since the 1620s. Their use soon became popular in the English court. The London diarist Samuel Pepys recorded the day in 1665 that a barber had shaved his head and that he tried on his new periwig for the first time, but in a year of plague he was uneasy about wearing it.



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You can send your pictures to neptuneprime2233@gmail.com

TECHWORLD

BY MUHAMMAD KUKURI
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GAMESCIENE

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

GADGETADDICT

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

web update

Overdependence on AI may diminish cognitive abilities, Experts warn

The increasing integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into workplaces and studies around the world is raising fresh concerns among education experts, who warn that students may gradually lose vital cognitive abilities if they become overly dependent on technology.

Recent data indicates that between 40 and 45 per cent of employees already rely on AI tools to complete aspects of their daily job tasks, and analysts expect that figure to grow significantly in the coming years.

As AI systems continue to shape the modern workplace, education specialists are urging schools, parents and policymakers to rethink the skills young people must develop to thrive in a rapidly evolving labour market.

Experts at Bright Heart Education recently examined emerging trends in employment, including the types of careers likely to grow in an AI-driven world and the core skills children will need to remain competitive.

Their findings suggest that while artificial intelligence is transforming industries, the most valuable skills of the future will remain deeply human, particularly those connected to thinking, creativity and emotional understanding.

Education specialists warn that one of the biggest risks of widespread AI adoption is that young people could begin to "outsource" their thinking to machines, potentially weakening their ability to analyse information independently.

According to Dr Ryan Stevenson, Co-founder and Director at Bright Heart Education, students may begin to accept AI-generated information without questioning its accuracy if they fail to develop strong cognitive awareness.

He explained that as technology increasingly handles complex thinking tasks, children must learn to remain active participants in the thinking process rather than passive recipients of automated answers.

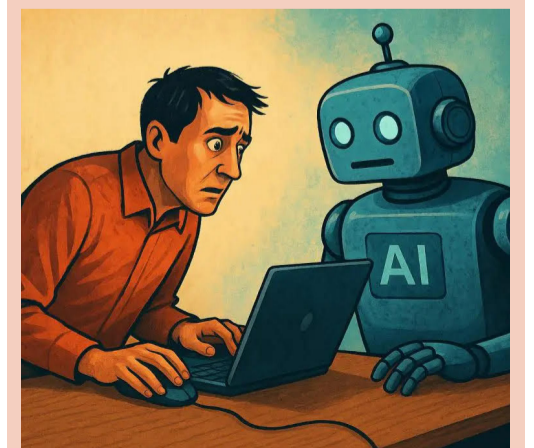
"If students rely too heavily on AI tools, they risk outsourcing their cognition and simply accepting what the technology produces as truth," Stevenson noted.

They said one of the most important skills that can counter this trend is metacognition, the ability to understand and reflect on one's own thought processes.

Metacognition allows individuals to examine how they arrive at conclusions, assess whether their reasoning is sound and adjust their thinking when faced with new information.

In addition to metacognition, experts highlight creative problem-solving as another crucial ability that schools must nurture in the next generation.

Creative problem-solving involves developing new ideas and innovative approaches rather than relying solely on traditional methods. While artificial intelligence systems can analyse vast amounts of data and generate responses based on existing information, they struggle to produce genuinely original ideas.



Overdependence on AI.

How Artificial Intelligence is transforming business discovery in Nigeria

The way Nigerians search for and discover businesses is undergoing a major transformation, driven by advances in artificial intelligence (AI) and shifting consumer behaviour.

Olumide Balogun, director at Google West Africa, has outlined key shifts in search behaviour and what Nigerian business owners can do to stay discoverable. From taking photos of products in traffic to asking highly specific questions via voice or text, consumers are moving beyond traditional keyword searches. For business owners, this evolution presents both a challenge and a significant opportunity to connect with customers in more intuitive ways.

One of the most notable shifts is the growing popularity of visual discovery. Consumers are increasingly using



AI in business.

tools such as Google Lens to identify and locate products simply by taking a picture.

With billions of visual searches conducted monthly, many tied to purchase intent, businesses are being urged to prioritise high-quality

product imagery across digital platforms.

Clear and detailed photos can improve visibility in search results when users look for similar items.

AI-powered search is also enabling more natural, conversational interactions rather than

short keywords, users now ask detailed questions such as where to find specific products in particular locations with added conditions like delivery or opening hours.

Features such as AI-generated search summaries often referred to as AI Overviews aggregate and present relevant information quickly.

Akwa Ibom adopts AI-powered teaching model in government schools

The Akwa Ibom State Government has launched an Artificial Intelligence (AI) powered basic education reform programme aimed at improving foundational literacy and numeracy for children in state-owned primary schools.

The programme, implemented by EIDU in partnership with the State Ministry of Education, introduces a data-driven and AI-enabled approach to teaching and learning. EIDU, a global leader that specialises in improving learning outcomes, offers a platform that uses human-centred AI and digital tools to guide teachers with structured lesson plans and provide children with personalised, interactive learning activities tailored to their progress.

The programme is being implemented in phases, with the first phase reaching 6,000 pupils



Artificial Intelligence.

across 67 schools during the 2025/2026 academic session.

The initiative integrates technology into classroom instruction while equipping teachers, school leaders and education managers with real-time insights to track progress and address

learning gaps.

The Commissioner for Education, Prof. Ubong Essien Umoh, recommended the initiative because it aligns with the ARISE Agenda's commitment to improving the quality of education in the state. The development affirms

the aspirations of Governor Umo Bassey Eno, who has consistently emphasised the importance of improving learning outcomes for children in the state.

EIDU partners with over 40 governments across four countries to improve foundational learning outcomes based on its AI-enabled teaching model, reaching more than 790,000 children.

WORLD NEWS

BY ABDULLAHI HARUNA



Sanchez

Spain to spend 5bn euros to ease Middle East war fallout – PM

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez announced Friday a sweeping package worth five billion euros (\$5.8 billion) aimed at cushioning the economic impact of the Middle East war, including a “drastic reduction” in energy-related taxes.

Speaking after an emergency cabinet meeting, the Socialist leader said the 80-measure package was necessary to shield households and key sectors from surging costs.

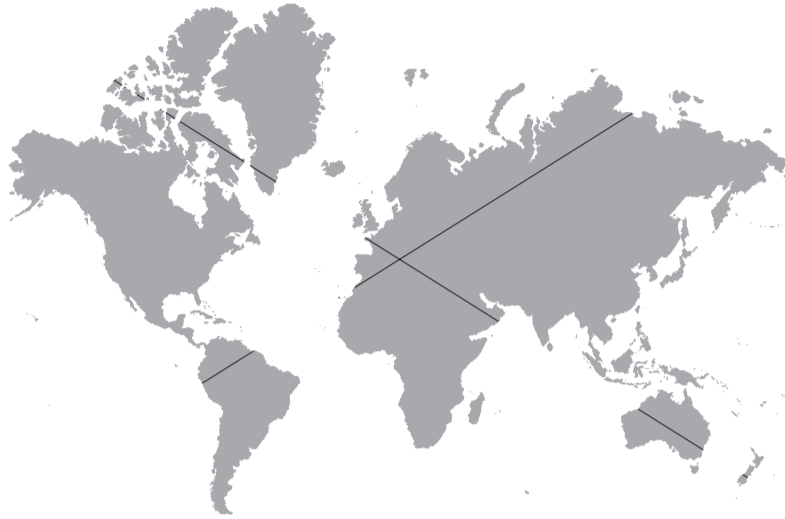
“Extraordinary situations require extraordinary responses,” Sanchez said.

The package, set to take effect Saturday following publication in the official gazette, includes cuts to value-added tax on gas and fuel expected to reduce pump prices by as much as 30 euro cents per litre, or roughly 20 euros per tank for the average car.

The government will also slash electricity taxes by 60 per cent, suspend a production tax and reduce the value-added tax on electricity to 10 per cent from 21 per cent.

Additional support includes a direct subsidy of 0.20 euros per litre of fuel for transport operators, farmers, ranchers and fishermen, along with equivalent aid for fertiliser purchases.

Sanchez also announced a decree introducing a “temporary freeze” on rents nationwide, a measure that still requires parliamentary approval after tough negotiations with his coalition partner, the far-left Sumar party. “Clearly, these measures will not prevent the effects of this illegal war from reaching Spain, but they will at least mitigate their impact and make them somewhat more bearable,” Sanchez said.



“No more attacks on Iran’s major gas facility,” Trump assures



Trump

U.S. President Donald Trump has said Israel will not carry out further strikes on Iran’s major gas facility, even as he warned Tehran of severe consequences if attacks on Gulf energy sites continue.

Trump’s remarks followed rising tensions in the Middle East after strikes on key energy infrastructure heightened fears of disruptions to global oil supply, with crude prices reportedly surging by about five per cent.

“No more attacks will be made by Israel about this extremely important and valuable South Pars Field unless Iran unwisely decides to attack a very innocent, in this case, Qatar,” he said. The escalation came amid a series of retaliatory attacks by Iran on Gulf energy installations, including Qatar’s Ras Laffan LNG facility, after Israel struck Iran’s South Pars Gas Field—part of the world’s largest natural gas reserve.

In a post on social media, Trump

called for an immediate halt to attacks on both Iranian and Qatari energy infrastructure, stating that Washington had no prior knowledge of Israel’s strike. He, however, issued a stark warning to Tehran, saying the United States would respond forcefully if Iran failed to de-escalate.

“In which instance the United States of America, with or without the help or consent of Israel, will massively blow up the entirety of the South Pars Gas Field at an amount of strength and power that Iran has never seen or witnessed before,” Trump added.

The U.S. president had earlier described Israel’s strike as a reaction to escalating tensions in the region, noting that Iran responded by targeting energy facilities in Qatar and threatening broader attacks across the Gulf, including Saudi Arabia. While Trump maintained that the U.S. was not involved in the initial strike, reports by The Wall Street Journal suggested he may have approved Israel’s plan to target the gas facility.



Public execution in Iran

Iran executes 19-year-old wrestler, two others in public hanging

Iran has executed a 19-year-old champion wrestler, Saleh Mohammadi, alongside two other protesters in a public hanging carried out on Thursday.

Mohammadi, described as a rising wrestling talent from Qom, was reportedly accused of the capital offence of waging war against God. Human rights groups said he was tortured into confessing and denied a fair trial before his execution.

“His execution was a blatant political murder, part of the Islamic Republic’s pattern of targeting athletes to crush dissent and terrorise society,” Nima Far, a human rights activist and Iranian combat athlete, told Fox News.

Authorities said Mohammadi and two others — Mehdi Ghasemi and Saeed Davoudi — were arrested during the January protests and accused of killing two police officers “with knives and swords”, according to Iranian state media.

Despite appeals from the United States, the three men were convicted and executed in Tehran.

Following the mass arrests linked to the protests, United States President Donald Trump had earlier claimed he received assurances from Iranian authorities that executions would not go ahead, saying hundreds of demonstrators had been spared.

“We’ve been told that the killing in Iran is stopping — it’s stopped — it’s stopping,” Trump said at the time. “There’s no plan for executions, or an execution, or executions — so I’ve been told that on good authority.”

Iranian authorities, however, rejected the claims and proceeded with the trials, which were reportedly accelerated after tensions escalated between Iran, the United States and Israel.

Amnesty International condemned the executions, stating that the accused were denied “adequate defence and forced to make ‘confessions.’”

The organisation added that the three men were subjected to “fast-tracked proceedings that bore no resemblance to a meaningful trial.”

Far described the executions as a repeat of past actions by Iranian authorities, referencing the 2020 execution of wrestler Navid Afkari.

He also urged international sporting bodies, including the International Olympic Committee and United World Wrestling, to take action against Iran.

“Iran must be banned from international competitions until it halts executions of protesters and athletes, releases those jailed in sham trials, and ends retaliation against competitors who speak out or defect,” Far said.

DID YOU KNOW?

BY VIVIAN OKAFOR

Several lakes around the world are pink in colour

Pink lakes, found globally, owe their vibrant, unnatural colour to high salinity combined with salt-loving algae and bacteria (*Dunaliella salina* or *Salinibacter ruber*) that produce red pigments. Famous examples include Australia's Lake Hillier and Hutt Lagoon, Senegal's Lake Retba, and Mexico's Las Coloradas, often looking most vivid during dry seasons.

Famous Pink Lakes Around the World
Lake Hillier (Australia): Famous for its permanent, bubblegum-pink colour set against the blue ocean on Middle Island.
Lake Retba (Senegal): Known as Lac Rose, this lake is renowned for its intense pink hues, particularly from November to June, and is often used for salt harvesting.

Hutt Lagoon (Australia): A coastal lagoon that changes from red to lilac pink depending on the time of day and season.
Las Coloradas (Mexico): A series of artificial salt ponds in Yucatan that are extremely vibrant.
Salina de Torrevieja (Spain): A popular, large, salty pink lake in Europe.

Laguna Colorada (Bolivia): A shallow salt lake often filled with flamingos, appearing red-pink from algae and mineral deposits.
Lake Natron (Tanzania): A highly alkaline lake that often shows intense red and pink colours.
Koyashskoe Salt Lake (Crimea): A crimson-pink lake in the Kerch Peninsula.
Lake Masazirgol (Azerbaijan): A pink salt lake used for mining.

Why are they pink?
 The colour is biological rather than chemical. High salinity, intense sunlight, and low nutrients encourage specific bacteria and algae to produce carotenoids (red pigments) to survive. These microorganisms thrive in these harsh conditions. The colour is not permanent; it can fade to dull grey, white, or light blue depending on rain, temperature, and sunlight.



Coral reefs are the Earth's largest living structure

The Great Barrier Reef is the largest living structure on Earth. Satellite photograph of the Great Barrier Reef situated off the northeastern coast of Australia shows that it stretches for 1,429 miles over an area of approximately 133,000 square miles, making the Great Barrier Reef the largest coral reef system in the world.

The Great Barrier Reef, located off the coast of Australia, is the world's largest living structure, stretching over 2,300 km and spanning 344,400 square kilometres.

Composed of roughly 3,000 individual reefs and 900 islands, this massive ecosystem is built by billions of tiny coral polyps and is so vast that it

is visible from space.

It is not a single organism, but a complex, interconnected system created by living stony corals that secrete limestone skeletons over thousands of years. It is the largest living structure on Earth and can be seen from outer space.

The reef supports over 1,500 species of fish, 400 species of coral, and numerous endangered species like dugongs and dolphins.

Designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1981, it is a critical marine ecosystem under protection.

The reef grows at an average rate of about 1cm per year as corals reach for sunlight. The Great Barrier Reef represents roughly 10% of all the world's coral reefs, making it a crucial component of ocean health.

LIVING LEGENDS

BY AISHA AUYO
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Wendy A. Okolo, Renowned Aerospace Engineer

Wendy A. Okolo is a Nigerian-American aerospace research engineer in the Intelligent Systems Division at NASA Ames Research Centre.

She is the first Black woman to obtain a PhD degree in aerospace engineering from the University of Texas at Arlington. She was also the Special Emphasis Programmes Manager for Women at Ames.

Okolo obtained her secondary education at Queen's College, an all-girls school in Lagos, Nigeria. She then received a bachelor's degree in aerospace engineering at the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) in 2010. Okolo later became the first Black woman to obtain a PhD in aerospace engineering from UTA in 2015 at age 26.

Her PhD studies were supervised by Atilla Dogan. During Okolo's undergraduate years, she served as president of the Society of Women Engineers at the university.

Okolo started her career as an undergraduate intern for Lockheed Martin, working on NASA's Orion spacecraft. Over

the course of two summers, she interned with the Requirements Management Office in Systems Engineering and the Hatch Mechanisms team in Mechanical Engineering.

As a graduate student, Okolo later worked in the Control Design & Analysis Branch of the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL), Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

Okolo is an Associate Project Manager in the Intelligent Systems Division of NASA Ames. She is a research engineer in the Discovery and Systems Health Technology (DaSH).

Some of her recognitions include:

Amelia Earhart Fellowship (2012)

DoD National Defence Science and Engineering Graduate (NDSEG) Fellowship (2012)

Texas Space Grant Consortium (TSGC) Fellowship (2012, 2013)

AIAA John Leland Atwood Graduate Award (2013)

Black Engineer of the Year Award (BEYA) for the Most Promising Engineer in the United States government.



Okolo



Madugu

Justin Pwanidi Madugu, Football Manager and Celebrated Coach

Coach Justin Pwanidi Madugu (born 19 January 1964) is a Nigerian football manager and official. He is the current manager of the Nigerian women's team. He hailed from Numan local government area of Adamawa State. Madugu became part of the coaching staff of the Nigerian women's team from 2012 onwards. He

also coached the Nigerian national mini-football team at least until 2018.

He later coached Adamawa United and returned to the Nigeria women's national team in November 2021.

He was also listed as the coach of Plateau United for the 2022–23 season. He participated with the team in the Confederation Cup and the Champions League.

In June 2023, he was elected Financial Secretary of the Nigerian FA.

Madugu signed a 2-year contract with the NFF and was confirmed as the Super Falcons Head Coach. On 7 August 2025, Madugu was nominated for the Ballon d'Or Women's Team Coach of the Year award. The nomination follows his outstanding

leadership that guided Nigeria to a record-extending 10th Women's Africa Cup of Nations (WAFCON) title in Morocco.

Under Madugu, the Super Falcons rediscovered their competitive edge, remaining unbeaten, conceding just once, and defeating three former champions and won their 10th WAFCON title.

ANIMAL WORLD

By Mercy Adaje
MercyAdaje@neptuneprime.com.ng

The incredible adaptability and speed of the Iguana

If lizards had a “chill” mascot, it would undoubtedly be the iguana. These prehistoric-looking reptiles are some of the most iconic creatures in the Americas, ranging from the rainforest canopies of Central America to the volcanic rocks of the Galápagos.

The word “iguana” is derived from the original Taino name for the species, iwana. In addition to the two species in the genus *Iguana*, several other related genera in the same family have common names of the species including the word “iguana”.

The species is a popular quarry for pets, and non-native animals have been widely introduced beyond its native area, into Ishigaki Island, the Florida Peninsula, Hawaii, Singapore, Thailand, Taiwan, and numerous islands with native Iguana populations in the Lesser Antilles.

While there are many species, these three represent the incredible adaptability of the iguana family:

Green Iguanas (*Iguana iguana*): The most famous variety. Despite the name, they can be orange, blue, or lavender. They are arboreal (tree-



of their heads, iguanas have a parietal eye. It can't see shapes or colours, but it detects light and movement, helping them spot predatory birds circling from above.

Tail Whipping: If a predator (or a confused human) gets too close, an iguana can use its tail like a whip with incredible speed and force.

Detachable Parts: Like many lizards, younger iguanas can drop their tails if grabbed (autotomy) and regrow them later, though the new version is usually darker and stiffer.

Social Sunbathing: They are ectothermic (cold-blooded), so they spend hours basking in the sun to regulate their body temperature. This “communal basking” looks like a scaly pile-up. Iguanas are often sold as tiny, cute green hatchlings, but they are “expert-level” pets. Within a few years, they become 15-pound giants that require massive custom enclosures, specific

In Florida, Green Iguanas are actually an invasive species. They've become so common that during cold snaps, they lose their grip on tree branches and “rain” down onto sidewalks in a state of cold-induced stupor!

dwelling) and can grow up to 6 feet long.

Marine Iguanas: Found only in the Galápagos, these are the only lizards in the world that forage in the sea. They have blunt noses for scraping algae off rocks and “sneeze” out excess salt.

Rock Iguanas: These are sturdier, ground-dwelling species often found in the Caribbean. They are currently some of the most endangered lizards on the planet.

Iguanas aren't just scaly statues; they have some wild biological “tech” built in:

The “Third Eye”: On top

JOKES AND PUZZLES

BY ABDULLAH HARUNA

JOKES

The Exam Trick

A student wrote nothing in his exam and still submitted his paper. The teacher asked, "Why is your paper blank?" He replied, "I didn't want to cheat, so I didn't write what I don't know."

The Smart Kid

Teacher: "Why are you late?"

Student: "Because of the sign."

Teacher: "What sign?"

Student: "The one that says 'School Ahead, Go Slow.'"

The Doctor Visit

Man: "Doctor, I feel invisible."

Doctor: "Who said that?"

The Phone Call

Mum: "Why are you shouting on the phone?"

Son: "The person I'm talking to is far away."

The Lazy Friend

Friend: "I'm going to start exercising tomorrow."

Me: "Tomorrow never comes, you're safe."

The Job Interview

Interviewer: "Where do you see yourself in 5 years?"

Me: "Celebrating the 5th anniversary of you asking me this question."

The Prayer Point

Pastor: "Pray for what you need!"

Man: "God, give me money!"

Friend whispers: "Add wisdom."

Man: "God, give me money and let wisdom follow me on WhatsApp."

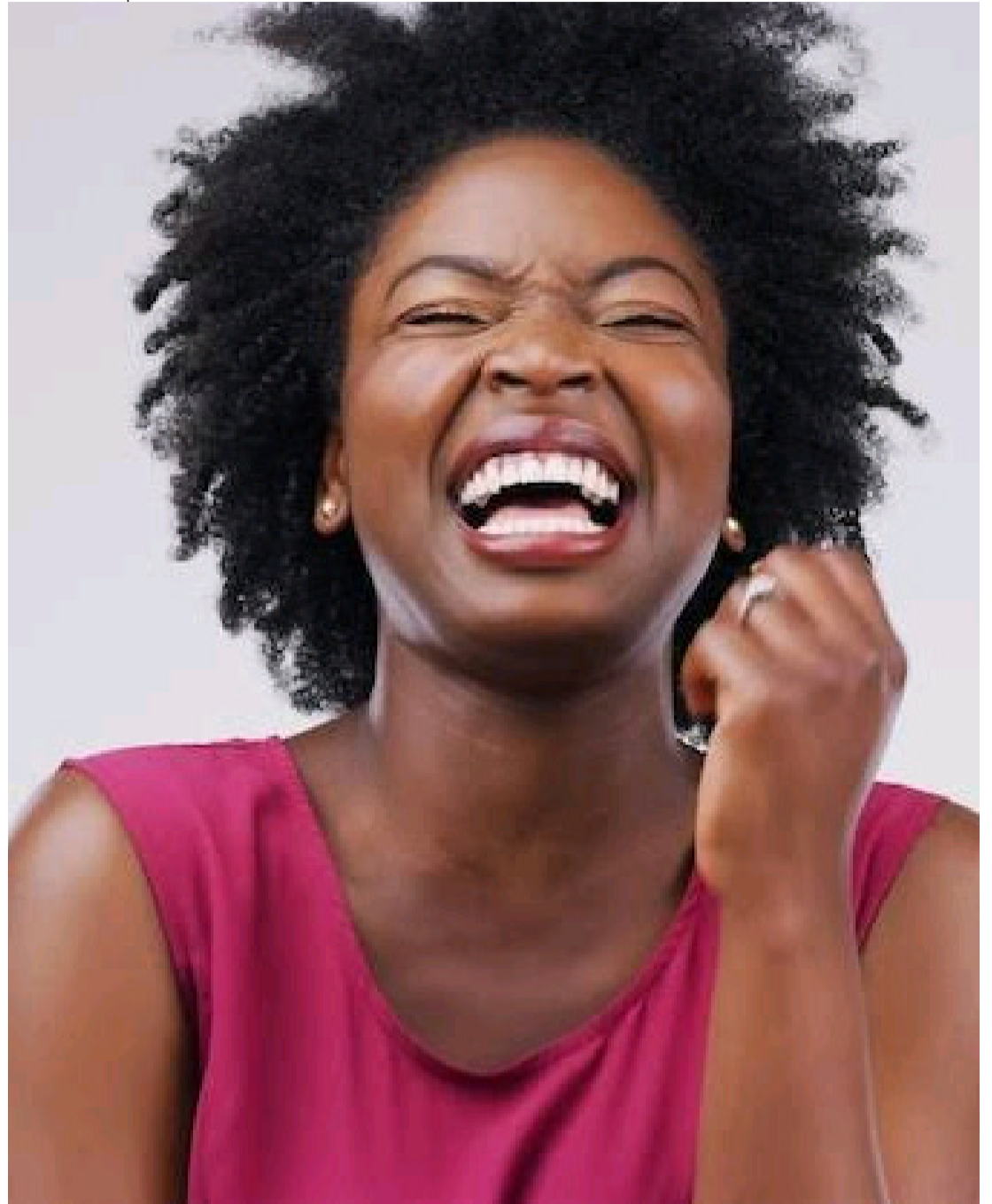
The Alarm

I set 5 alarms to wake up early.

I woke up...

turned all of them off...

and slept like a king again.



RIDDLES

Riddle: The more of this there is, the less you see.

What is it?

Answer: Darkness.

Riddle: I follow you all day long, but when the sun sets, I disappear. What am I?

Answer: Your shadow.

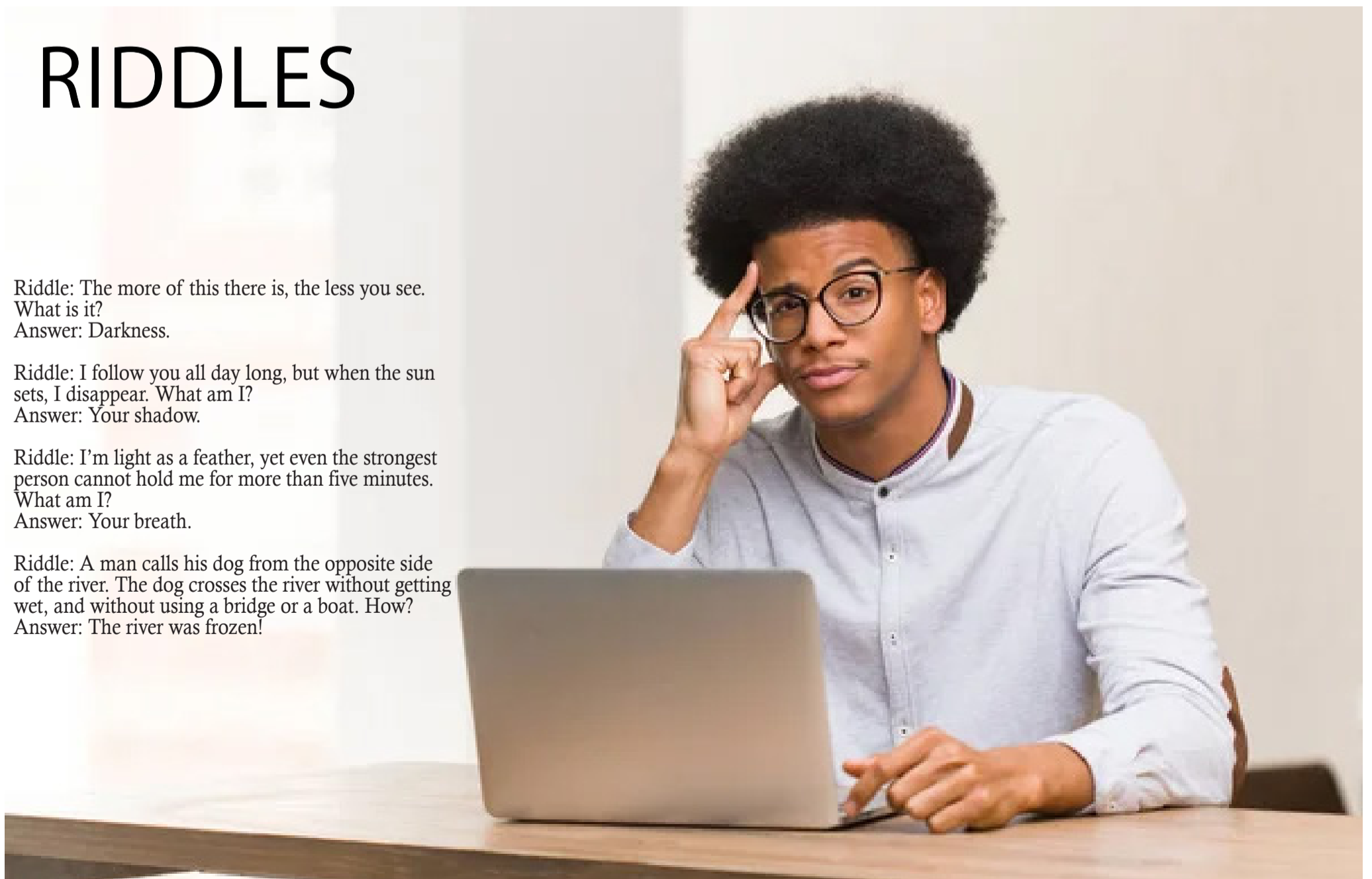
Riddle: I'm light as a feather, yet even the strongest person cannot hold me for more than five minutes.

What am I?

Answer: Your breath.

Riddle: A man calls his dog from the opposite side of the river. The dog crosses the river without getting wet, and without using a bridge or a boat. How?

Answer: The river was frozen!



SPORTS: BEHIND THE SCENES

By Muhammad Kukuri
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NBA: Thunder beat magic to clinch playoff spot

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander enjoyed another 40-point night as the Oklahoma City Thunder beat the Orlando Magic 113-108 to become the first NBA team to secure a playoff berth.

The 27-year-old Canadian went 14 from 27 from the field as he extended his record of most 20-point games in a row to 129.

Chet Holmgren added 20 points and 12 rebounds as the Western Conference leaders claimed a ninth straight win to improve to 54-15 for the season.

"We got off to a good start but then the car kind of came off the road for a little bit," reigning NBA Most Valuable Player Gilgeous-Alexander said.

"But that's what great teams do – they figure out a way to get the car back on the road, they figure out a way to go into a building and win a game when the chips are stacked against you, and we did that tonight."

San Antonio Spurs remain second in the West after a comfortable 132-104 win over the Sacramento Kings, while the Minnesota Timberwolves beat the Phoenix Suns 116-104.

In the Eastern Conference, the Detroit Pistons handed the Washington Wizards a 13th straight loss to strengthen their position at the top.

But the 130-117 triumph was marred by an injury to star point guard Cade Cunningham, who had to leave the game in the first quarter with a back issue.

The New York Knicks stay third in the East after a thumping 136-110 win over the Indiana Pacers, a 14th consecutive loss leaving last year's NBA Finals runners-up 15-54 this term.



Gilgeous-Alexander

The nerves and strength of winning at an older age

The air in the arena was thick with the scent of floor wax and nervous energy. For Leo, the "twilight of his career" wasn't just a phrase sports commentators used—it was the dull ache in his left knee every time he pivoted.

At thirty-six, Leo was the oldest player in the league. He was the "mentor," the guy who sat on the bench and talked the rookies through their jitters.

But that night, in Game 7 of the Finals, the star point guard had gone down with a sprained ankle in the second quarter.

The coach looked down the bench. His eyes bypassed the flashy youngsters and landed on Leo. "Leo. Get in there. Control the pace."

Leo didn't enter the game with a burst of speed. He entered with a rhythm.

While the opposing team played with raw power, Leo played with geometry. He knew where the ball needed to be three seconds before it got there. He didn't outrun the defence; he outsmarted them.

With four minutes left in the fourth, the scoreboard read 92-89. Leo's lungs felt like they were filled with hot sand. Every time he jumped, he felt the gravity of twenty years of professional basketball pulling at his sneakers.

With twelve seconds on the clock, Leo's team trailed by one point. The crowd was a deafening wall of sound. He took the inbound pass.

His defender was twenty-two, fast, and chirping in his ear. "Old man, you're gassed. Give it up."

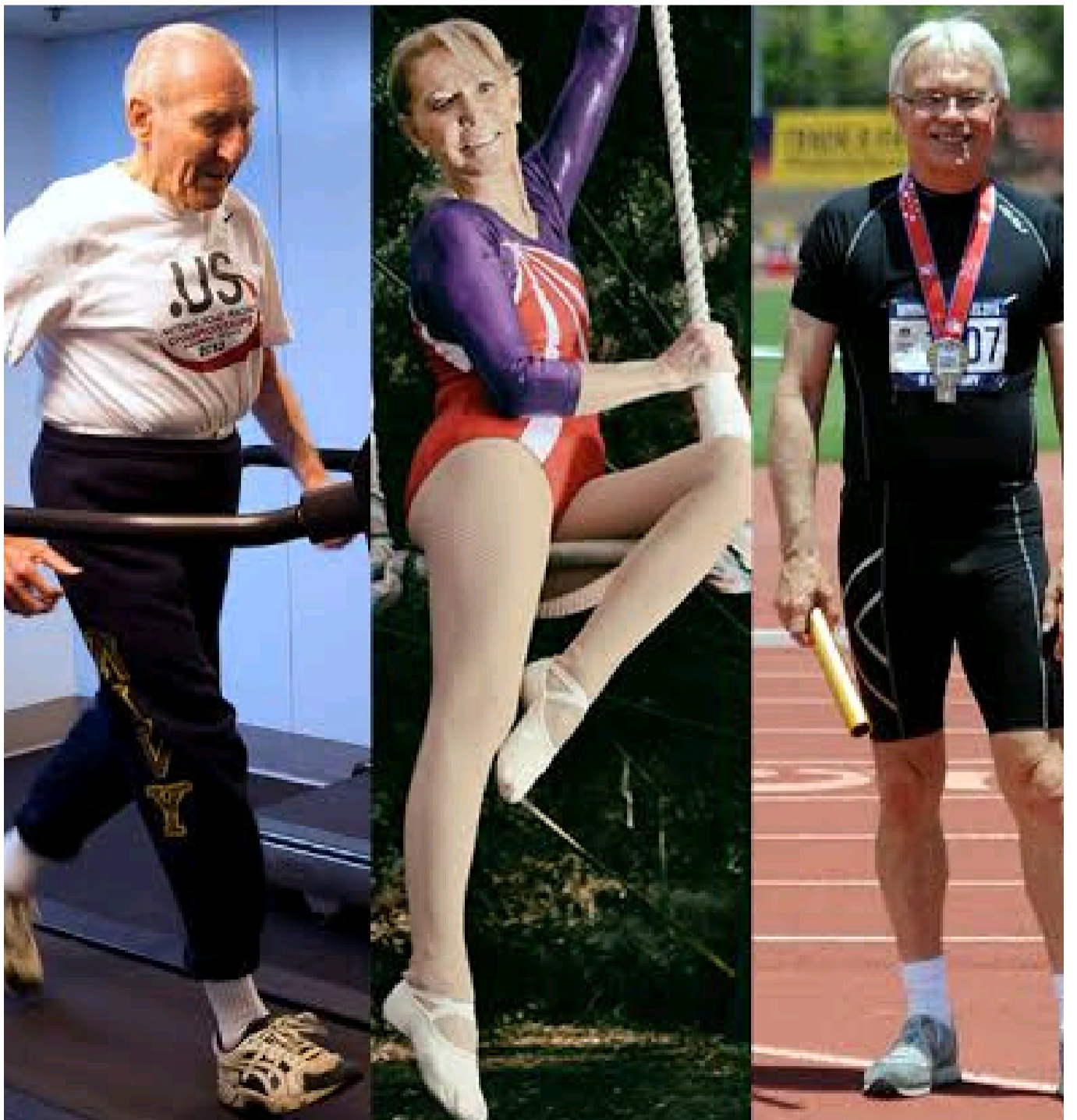
Leo didn't answer. He drove to the right, felt his knee scream, and then did something nobody expected. He didn't pass to the open rookie on the wing. He stepped back—a move he hadn't used in three years—and faded away into the air.

"Experience is the one thing you can't coach, and the one thing youth can't buy."

The ball left his fingertips with a soft rotation. It felt like an eternity while it was in the air, a silent arc against the bright rafters.

The buzzer sounded. The roar was so loud the floorboards vibrated. Leo didn't celebrate with a backflip or a scream. He just leaned over, hands on his knees, and breathed.

He hadn't won because he was the most athletic person in the building. He had won because he refused to let the fire go out, even when it had burned down to the embers.



Elderly athletes

BOOKS

BY MUHAMMAD AL-TJANI

Then I Was Guided (19)

CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK

This type of reasoning would not be accepted by simple-minded people, let alone by the scholars. I repeatedly tried to find an excuse for Umar but the circumstances surrounding the incident prevented me from finding an excuse. Even if I changed the words "He is talking nonsense", God forbid, to "the pain has overcome him", I could not find any justification for Umar when he said, "You have the Qur'an, and it is sufficient being the Book of Allah."

Did he know the Qur'an better than the Messenger of Allah, for whom it was revealed? Or was the Messenger of Allah, God forbid, unaware of what he was? Or did he seek, through his order, to create division and disagreement among the Companions, God forbid. Even if the Sunni reasoning was right, then the Messenger of Allah would have realized the good will of Umar and thanked him for that and perhaps asked him to stay, instead of feeling angry at him and telling them to leave his house. May I ask why did they abide by his order when he asked them to leave the room and did not say then that he was "talking nonsense"?

Was it because they had succeeded in their plot to prevent the Prophet from writing the document, so that there was no need for them to stay any longer? Thus, we find them creating noise and difference in the presence of the Messenger, and divided into two parties: one agreeing with the Messenger of Allah about writing that document, while the other agreed with Umar "that he was talking nonsense."

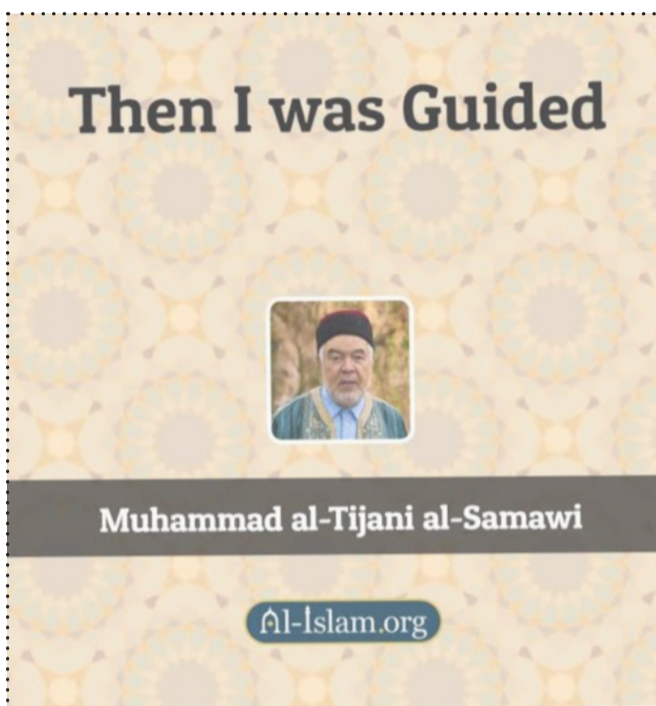
The matter is not just concerned with Umar alone, for if it was so, the Messenger of Allah would have persuaded

him that he could not be talking nonsense and that the pain could not overcome him in matters of the nation's guidance and of preventing it from going astray. But the situation became much more serious, and Umar found some supporters who seemingly had a prior agreement on their stand, and so they created the noise and the disagreement among themselves and forgot, or perhaps pretended to forget, the words of Allah, the Most High: "O You who believe! Do not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet, and do not speak loud to him as you speak loud to one another, lest your deeds become null while you do not perceive." (Holy Qur'an 49:2)

In this incident they went beyond raising their voices and talking loud to accusing the Messenger of Allah of talking nonsense, God forbid, then they increased their noise and differences until it became a battle of words in his presence. I think the majority of the Companions were with Umar, and that is why the Messenger of Allah found it useless to write the document, because he knew that they would not respect him and would not abide by the command of Allah by not raising their voices in his presence, and if they were rebellious against the command of Allah, then they would never obey the order of His Messenger.

Thus, the wisdom of the Messenger ruled that he was not to write the document because it had been attacked during his lifetime, let alone after his death. The critics would say that he was talking nonsense, and perhaps they would doubt some of the orders he passed whilst on his deathbed, for they were convinced that he was talking nonsense.

I ask Allah for forgiveness, and renounce what has



been said in the presence of the holy Messenger, for how could I convince myself and my free conscience that Umar ibn al-Khattab was acting spontaneously, whereas his friends and others who were present at the incident cried until their tears wet the stones, and named the incident "the misfortune of the Muslims". I therefore decided to reject all the justifications given to explain the incident, and even tried to deny it so that I could relax and forget about the tragedy, but all the books referred to it and accepted its authenticity but could not provide sound justification for it. I tend to agree with the Shi'i point of view in explaining the incident because I find it logical and very coherent.

I still remember the answer which al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr gave me when I asked him, "How did our master Umar understand, among all the Companions what the Messenger wanted to write, namely the appointment of 'Ali as his successor, as you claim, which shows that he was a clever man?" Al-Sayyid al-Sadr said: Umar was not the only one who anticipated what the Messenger was going to write. In fact most of the people who were present then understood the

situation the same way as Umar did, because the Messenger of Allah had previously indicated the issue when he said, "I shall leave you with two weighty things: the Book of Allah and the members of my Family (Ahl al-Bayt) and their descendants, if you follow them, you will never go astray after me."

And during his illness he said to them, "Let me write you a document, if you follow its contents, you will never go astray." Those who were present, including Umar, understood that the Messenger of Allah wanted to reiterate, in writing, what he had already said in Ghadir Khum, and that was to follow the Book of Allah and Ahl al-Bayt and that 'Ali was the head of it. It was as if the holy Prophet (saw) was saying, "Follow the Qur'an and 'Ali." He said similar things on many occasions, as has been stated by many historians.

The majority of Quraysh did not like 'Ali because he was young and because he smashed their arrogance and had killed their heroes; but they did not dare oppose the Messenger of Allah, as they had done at the Treaty of al-Hudaibiyah, and when the Messenger prayed for Abdullah ibn Abi al-Munafiq, and on many other incidents recorded by

history. This incident was one of them, and you see that the opposition against writing that document during the Prophets illness encouraged some of those who were present to be insolent and make so much noise in his presence.

That answer came in accordance with what the saying meant. But Umar's statement, "You have the Qur'an, and it is sufficient, being the Book of Allah" was not in accordance with the saying which ordered them to follow the Book of Allah and the Household (Ahl al-Bayt) together. It looks as if he meant to say, "We have the Book of Allah, and that is sufficient for us, therefore there is no need for Ahl al-Bayt." I could not see any other reasonable explanation to the incident other than this one, unless it was meant to say, "Obey Allah but not His Messenger." And this argument is invalid and not sensible. If I put my prejudices and my emotions aside and base my judgment on a clean and free mind, I would tend towards the first analysis, which stops short of accusing Umar of being the first one to reject the Prophet's Tradition (al-Sunnah) when he said, "It is sufficient for us, being the Book of Allah."

Then if there were some rulers who rejected the Prophet's Traditions claiming that it was "contradictory", they only followed an earlier example in the history of Islam. However, I do not want to burden Umar alone with the responsibility for that incident and the subsequent deprivation of the nation of the guidance. To be fair to him, I suggest that the responsibility should be borne by him and those Companions who were with him and who supported him in his opposition to the command of the

Messenger of Allah. I am astonished by those who read this incident and feel as if nothing happened, despite that it was one of the "great misfortunes" as Ibn Abbas called it. My astonishment is even greater regarding those who try hard to preserve the honor of a Companion and to correct his mistake, even if at the cost of the Prophet's dignity and honor and at the cost of Islam and its foundations.

Why do we escape from the truth and try to obliterate it when it is not in accordance with our whims... why do not we accept that the Companions were human like us, and had their own whims, prejudices and interests, and could commit mistakes or could be right? But my astonishment fades when I read the Book of Allah in which He tells us the stories of the prophets- may Allah bless them and grant them peace - and the disobedience they faced from their people despite all the miracles they produced. Our God! Make not our hearts to deviate after thou hast guided us aright, and grant us from Your Mercy; surely You are the Most Liberal Giver. I began to understand the background to the Shi'a's attitude towards the second Caliph, whom they charge with the responsibility for many tragic events in the history of Islam, starting from "Raziyat Yawm al-Khamis" when the Islamic nation was deprived of the written guidance which the Messenger wanted to write for them. The inescapable fact is that the sensible man who knew the truth before he encountered the men seeks an excuse for the Shias in this matter, but there is nothing we can say to convince those who only judge truth through men.

TO BE CONTINUED

The Arbiter

BY HASSAN GIMBA



Iran, Beware the Fangs of January, the Scourge of February, the Ides of March (1)

A few days ago, I woke in the night, anxious and checking the news, half-expecting America and Israel to have attacked Iran.

Given this tension, the central issue is the longstanding American-Israeli effort to destabilise Iran. Even though it cannot be exhausted in one article, I'd like you to come along as we look over the underlying hostility, the motives behind American and Israeli actions, and why both countries believe only a fractured, weakened Iran will serve their interests.

The apparent lowering of tensions and talk of de-escalation are largely superficial. America—the dog—and Israel—the tail that wags it—will never rest until they see a balkanised Iran; regime change to install a malleable monarchy is just a ruse. It is a first step to the annihilation of Iran, but at first, the people of the country have to be deceived into thinking they are going to have a new government.

The tag team of Donald Trump and Benjamin Netanyahu will not be satisfied with merely installing a malleable regime, because they represent a concept whose custodians plan in decades and think in centuries. As long as Iran remains intact, a future “antagonistic” government could replace their pliable proxy—and that is unacceptable to them. What they desire is a shattered Iran, broken into fragments and at each other's throats.

America wants to neutralise Iran to limit China's growing influence and weaken Russia. Iran currently acts as a buffer and supplies vital energy resources to China. For Israel, Iran obstructs its ambition for a so-called “Greater Israel.” Aware of Iran's strength and resilience, Netanyahu has worked relentlessly to push America into confronting Iran on his country's behalf.

China now sources almost all its oil from Iran, with Venezuela no longer a viable alternative. Should America succeed in cutting off Iran's crude oil exports to China, the Land of the Dragon would lose a critical fuel supply that sustains its economy. Without

it, China's economic stability could be severely threatened. For these reasons, America and Israel—long-time siamese twins with converging interests—have kept Iran in their sights. During the recent periods of unrest, Iran accused the CIA and Mossad of fomenting it, and both countries reportedly contemplated military action “to save Iranians” with the protests as an excuse. Following events in Venezuela involving Nicolás Maduro, Trump even considered a “limited” and “targeted” strike on Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. He publicly declared America was “locked and loaded,” but several factors restrained them.

One such factor was Iran's disruption of internet services and the jamming of Elon Musk's Starlink system, rendering GPS unreliable. Without satellite navigation and insider support, American and Israeli aircraft and missiles would struggle to operate effectively and could be easily neutralised.

Another deterrent was Iran's acquisition of advanced weaponry from China and Russia, as well as the testing of its own Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBM). This proved Iran could hit back, raising the risk of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), recalling the Cold War.

There was also palpable fear in Tel Aviv. After Iranian missiles inflicted significant damage during the 12-day conflict last June, Netanyahu's aircraft—the Wing of Zion—was reportedly flown to Crete, Greece, with some commentators suggesting he was on board. Israel was unprepared for a direct military confrontation with Iran, goading America, instead, into it. It instead favoured indirect tactics, including fomenting internal unrest.

Most Gulf states—except the UAE—reportedly informed America they would not allow their bases to be used for an attack on Iran. Turkey's President, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan,



Dr Gimba

also urged Trump to avoid military action.

These factors collectively compelled Trump to pause. Initially, he remarked that “they have stopped shooting people,” later adding that “they have stopped the killing of about 800 people,” the majority of whom were reportedly American and Israeli operatives.

Still, Iran must punish lawbreakers according to its laws—just as America, Israel, and all sovereign nations committed to the rule of law do. Failing to act would only embolden saboteurs and invite other unpatriotic citizens to commit more destabilising acts.

History is replete with examples of nations weakened by impunity. In Nigeria, Boko Haram members and bandits are often forgiven or even treated better than their victims. Those who lost homes and loved ones are rarely compensated, while perpetrators are “rehabilitated.”

That is the civilian reality. Imagine the fate of soldiers, police, and security agents. I remember a harrowing video of a woman in Maiduguri, Borno State, accused—despite her denials—of being a DSS agent, brutally beheaded by Boko Haram. It was devastating.

Aware of Iran's strength and resilience, Netanyahu has worked relentlessly to push America into confronting Iran on his country's behalf

But to appreciate the long-term planning of the concept the duo of Trump and Netanyahu represent, consider the recent “escape” of about 3,000 ISIS detainees from prisons run by American-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in Syria, and America's reported attempt to relocate another 7,000 ISIS prisoners to Iraq, which borders Iran. This could be interpreted as laying the groundwork for a future proxy force to destabilise Iran and push for regime change or fragmentation.

Meanwhile, Trump, who claimed he wanted to help Iranians, recently warned that he would destroy the people if anything were to happen to him. He remarked, “If anything happens, they're going to wipe [Iran] off the face of the earth,” and that, “I've left notification for that.”

Neither Trump nor his partner-in-crime, Netanyahu, stepped back out of a desire for peace. Trump still wants to strike Iran because it is what Netanyahu seeks. Military action remains firmly on the table. They may not have been ready before, but preparations are clearly underway. US carrier groups, fighter jets, and command units, what Trump called “Armada”, are moving closer, assembling enough firepower for air, sea, cyber, and special-forces operations designed to prevent Iran from mounting an adequate response. However, it could also be a show of force meant to intimidate Iran not to pass judgment on the 800 arrested agents.

However, US activist Calla Walsh captured their mindset succinctly when she said: “Israel (and America) doesn't need you to like Israel; it only needs you to support them in destroying Iran.”

Others echo this warning, urging the Persians to remain vigilant, as these Siamese twin warmongers appear eager to strike—whether through the fangs of January, the scourge of February, or, at the latest, the ides of March. Beyond open warfare, covert operations and crushing sanctions aimed to make Iranians suffer

economically and so rise against their government, they want to isolate Iran globally. However, despite repeated provocations from both parties for Iran to fire the first salvo, it has resisted taking the bait, consistent with its policy of avoiding war. Yet its leaders have vowed to retaliate decisively if attacked.

The Foreign Ministry stated that Iran is prepared to respond “with everything we have.” President Masoud Pezeshkian warned on X that any American attack would provoke a “severe and regret-inducing” response. Yahya Rahim Safavi, adviser to Imam Khamenei, declared, “We are preparing for the final battle with Israel,” stressing that “we are in a war phase” with no ceasefire or agreements in place.

Major General Mohammad Pakpour, head of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), reinforced this Thursday, saying Iranian forces “have their hands on the trigger,” and warned against miscalculation, citing lessons from June.

Next, we will examine the choices available to both sides and how a military confrontation might unfold. It is worth noting that Israel reportedly contemplated the use of nuclear weapons in its last war with Iran—a doctrine known as the Samson Option. Should this occur, Israel would become only the second nation, after the United States in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, to deploy atomic weapons in warfare.

Least I Forget

What is wrong with our politicians that they almost always fail the test of trust or amana, in Hausa? People who were literally licking the feet of Governors turn against them the moment the Governors elevate them to that seat.

God willing, we will examine how Governor Mai Mala Buni of Yobe State and Vice President Kashim Shettima are exceptional in maintaining trust and remaining loyal to their predecessors.

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