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Gaza Takeover Plan: Implications for world peace

BY UJI A. ILIYASU

World leaders have been swift in their criticism of Trump's Gaza plan, which involves relocating the 2.3 million Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip.

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas rejected the plan, stating that Palestinians will not allow any infringement on their rights. Egypt and Jordan as well as other Arab nations, have also flatly rejected the plan.

Turkey's Foreign Minister emphasized that the evacuation of Gaza and forced

displacement of Palestinians are unacceptable.

Reactions from Europe

France reiterated its support for a two-state solution, emphasizing that Gaza's future lies within a future Palestinian state.

The UK's Foreign Minister, David Lammy, expressed similar sentiments, stressing the need for a two-state solution.

Germany's Foreign Minister, Annalena Baerbock, warned that expelling Palestinians from Gaza would be unacceptable and contrary

to international law.

Abdel Fattah al-Sisi

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, has rejected US President Donald Trump's plan to take over Gaza and move Palestinians to Egypt and Jordan.

The meeting on Tuesday between Jordan's King Abdullah II and US President Donald Trump ended in tense anticipation of what will come next for the Gaza Strip.

At stake was Trump's suggestion that the United States "take over" the enclave and expel Palestinians to Egypt

and Jordan.

King Abdullah mentioned during an impromptu news conference that an alternative plan to rebuild Gaza without ethnically cleansing it would be crafted by Arab countries, including Egypt, which was already planning an emergency Arab summit on Gaza on 27 February.

Hamas

Hours later, Egypt issued a statement confirming it would present "a comprehensive vision for rebuilding Gaza while ensuring Palestinians remain on their land" and

reiterated its commitment to working with the US to reach "a just settlement to the Palestinian issue".

What is at stake for Egypt?

"It's hard to know how seriously to take Trump's proposed US takeover of Gaza," Jacob Eriksson, lecturer of post-war recovery studies at the University of York, told Al Jazeera.

"If Trump persists, however, it could put

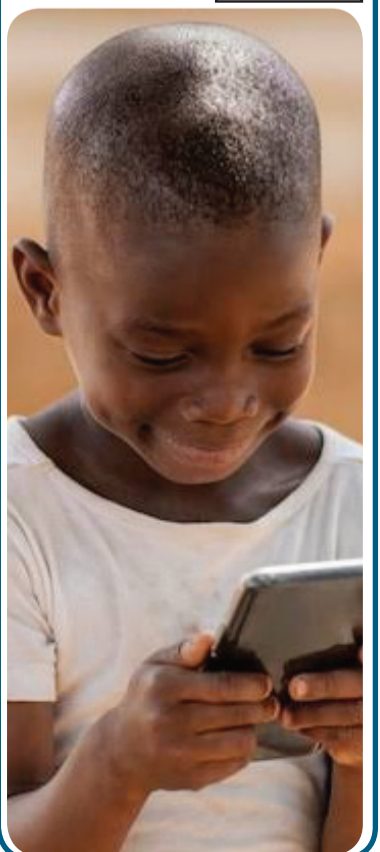
SOCIETY OR SOCIAL MEDIA: WHO TRAINS THE CHILD FOR NATION-BUILDING?

BY KASIM ISA MUHAMMAD

In a world that is increasingly digital, the question of who plays the most critical role in children's upbringing for nation-building has become a topic of debate. Traditionally, society—including family, schools, and religious institutions—was responsible for instilling values in children. However, the rise of social media has significantly influenced young minds, shaping their thoughts, behaviour, and aspirations. While some argue that social media provides exposure and knowledge, others believe that it erodes moral values and weakens societal bonds. The real question remains: between society and social media, who trains the child better for nation-building?

Yakubu Salisu, a sociologist, believes that society is the foundation of a child's upbringing. He stated, "The primary socialisation of a child occurs within the family and the immediate community. These early lessons in morality, discipline, and responsibility form the building blocks of nation-building. Social media, on the other hand, is too uncontrolled to be relied upon for

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OLDIES >>10

WOMEN SHOULD EMBRACE ENTREPRENEURSHIP - BUSINESS WOMAN



Neptune World

Life is not a problem to be solved but a reality to be experienced

Soren Kierkegaard

Originality is the essence of true scholarship. Creativity is the soul of the true scholar

Nnamdi Azikiwe

PICTURE OF THE DAY

Mr Stobart, a resident of Jos, Plateau State, around 1930s with his workers. All staff, except security in his uniform, are adorned in Babban Riga and Rawani (turban)

PHOTO CREDIT: Google



UP&DOWN



UNIZIK expels female student for attacking lecturer over TikTok video

The management of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, has expelled a student, Goddy-Mbakwe Chimamaka Precious, over her assault on a lecturer from the Department of Theatre and Film Studies.

In an official expulsion letter dated February 13, 2025, and signed by the Acting Registrar, Mr Victor I. Modibelu, the university stated that the decision followed the recommendation of the Student Disciplinary Committee, which found the student's actions to be a gross violation of the institution's disciplinary regulations, specifically Regulation 4 (SDR).

The incident, which gained widespread attention after a video surfaced online, reportedly involved Precious attacking the lecturer identified as Dr. Chukwudi Okoye.

RANDOMFACTS

The real North Americans were Indians and got their names from their various tribes.

Half of all US states, 25 to be precise, are named after Native Americans. Learn about the states and the meaning of their names in alphabetical order.

1. Alabama: Named after the Alabama tribe, or Alibamu, a Muskogean-speaking tribe. Sources are divided between the meanings "clearers of the thicket" or "gatherers of herbs."

2. Alaska: Named after the Aleut word "alaxsxaq," meaning "the mainland"

3. Arizona: Named after the O'odham word "al □ □ onak," meaning "little spring"

4. Connecticut: Named after the Mohican word "quonehtacut," meaning "place of the long tidal river"

5. Hawaii: Original Hawaiian word meaning "homeland"

6. Illinois: Named after the Illinois word "illiniwek," meaning "men"

7. Iowa: Named after the Ioway tribe, whose name means "gray snow"

8. Kansas: Named after the Kansa tribe, whose name means "people of the south wind"



FUN PUZZLE

Find The Hidden Words

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



Woman convicted for killing 3 family members dies in prison cell

A woman suspected of killing three members of the same family by poisoning a Christmas cake has been found dead in her prison cell in Brazil.

Deise Moura dos Anjos was found without vital signs during a morning check at a women's state prison in the southern Brazilian city of Gualaiba, in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, CNN affiliate CNN Brasil reported Thursday, citing local police.

"Immediately, the staff provided first aid" and called the emergency medical service, "which, upon arriving at the scene, confirmed her death," the criminal police said in a statement.

"Deise was alone in the cell. The circumstances will be investigated by the Civil Police and the General Institute of Expertise," the statement added.

CNN Brasil reported that Dos Anjos' husband, Diego, asked for a divorce the day before her death.

The cake poisoning, which killed three people and hospitalized three others, occurred on Christmas Eve in the city of Torres in Rio Grande do Sul.

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Gaza Takeover Plan: Implications for world peace

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Egypt in a difficult position," he added, referring to Trump's threats that he would freeze aid funds to Egypt if it does not cooperate.

"At a time when Egypt continues to face mounting economic challenges linked to debt and inflation, this could have a significant impact."

Since 1946, the United States has given Egypt more than \$85bn in bilateral foreign aid, including military and economic assistance, according to the American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt.

And Egypt was the fifth-largest recipient of US foreign aid in 2023, receiving \$1.45bn, 85 per cent of which was for the military sector.

Egyptian journalist Hossam El-Hamalawy said that the aid Cairo receives "is a statement that Egypt is a close ally and is a partner for Washington" and signifies strong political backing from Washington.

Although foreign support is vital for the survival of the current Egyptian administration, so is internal political peace, which could be destabilised if the expulsion of Palestinians is allowed.

"Generation after generation of Egyptian youth

have had Palestine as their gateway into politics," El-Hamalawy said.

"In addition, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, is very worried about the replication of the Beirut scenario where Palestinian resistance operations in one way or another gave Israel a justification to go into Lebanon and occupy chunks of it for a very long time," El-Hamalawy added, referring to Israeli attacks on Lebanon and occupation of its territory for different periods, including today.

Counter-offer

For now, until Trump stops talking about forcing the displacement of Palestinians, el-Sisi has reportedly said that he will not attend any talks at the White House.

Egypt has little choice but to work with other Arab states on a counter-proposal that they can defend together.

"Any drastic action could endanger important agreements," political analyst Abdallah Nasef, who believes Cairo will have to compromise a little in the proposal, told Al Jazeera.

"Egypt could, similar to Jordan, offer to take in injured individuals and their families,

albeit at a larger rate and number than that proposed by Jordan," Nasef suggested.

King Abdullah said on Tuesday that Jordan could "right away" take 2,000 sick children.

Egypt has been treating injured Palestinians in its hospitals since the start of the war, and will likely continue to do so in larger numbers when the crossing opens.

"While any significant economic contribution to the reconstruction of Gaza is likely to prove difficult given aforementioned economic challenges, Egyptian officials ... would undoubtedly continue to offer its services as a mediator and a political partner," researcher Jacob Eriksson said, doubtful of how much Egypt could financially contribute.

Reconstruction efforts

Israel has said that it will not compensate Palestinians or help to pay to fix the damage it has wrought in Gaza. Instead, it would be up to regional countries and the international community to implement any plan put forward by Egypt and Jordan.

"One can speculate that, definitely, this plan will involve enlisting massive

amounts of cash and finances from the Gulf states to speed up the reconstruction process for the Palestinians without displacing them," El-Hamalawy said.

Egyptian construction companies do appear ready to cooperate with an international effort to rebuild Gaza. For instance, real estate and construction tycoon, Hisham Talaat Moustafa, said in a TV interview on 9 February that he has been working on a reconstruction plan that would require the participation of about 40 to 50 construction companies from Egypt and other countries.

"Egypt could contribute to reconstruction efforts while simultaneously guaranteeing that Gazans don't need to be forced out," Nasef said, adding that "They won't have to if caravans and tents, which Israel continues to block, are allowed into the Strip." He agreed with El-Hamalawy, though, that Egypt's efforts would have to be bankrolled by the Gulf, due to Egypt's economic problems.

Gulf states aid

Gulf countries have played a significant role in funding

the aid reaching the Gaza Strip in the last few months, with the Gulf Cooperation Council announcing in December that its member states – Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates – had collectively given \$650m in humanitarian aid to Gaza, along with the occupied West Bank, since October 2023.

The reconstruction of Gaza, where the vast majority of buildings and infrastructure has been destroyed by Israel, will cost far more.

But with Trump's Gaza displacement plan complicating matters and a ceasefire deal in Gaza that has threatened to collapse in the past week, Arab countries are under pressure to respond.

Reactions from China, others

China rejected Trump's plan, emphasizing its support for a two-state solution and the principle of "the Palestinians governing Palestine".

Brazil's President, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, dismissed Trump's expansionist ambitions and tariff threats as "bravado".

Australia, Japan, and Spain

The three countries have also expressed their opposition to the plan, reiterating their support for a two-state solution.

The implication of Gaza takeover plan for Arab world

The Gaza takeover plan proposed by Trump has far-reaching implications for the Arab world. Rejection and Backlash are likely to be immediate responses from Arab states, as they view the plan as an attempt to displace Palestinians and undermine their right to statehood.

Arab nations, including Saudi Arabia, have already rejected the plan, with Saudi Arabia reaffirming its commitment to a Palestinian state as a precondition to establishing diplomatic ties with Israel.

Egypt and Jordan, which have historically been reluctant to host more Palestinians, are also unlikely to support the plan.

Trump fueling extremism

The plan may also fuel extremism and instability, as it could be perceived as a US-backed attempt to impose Israeli control over Palestinian territory.

Society or Social Media: Who trains the child for nation-building?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

raising responsible citizens."

He added, "Children learn best through direct human interactions, role modeling, and practical guidance that can only be provided by a structured society. Leaving them at the mercy of digital platforms without supervision can lead to moral decay."

While Yahuza Rabi'u Garba, a historian, argues that social media has become an undeniable force in shaping children's views. "Historically, communities played a central role in raising children collectively. However, in today's world, social media acts as a global community, exposing children to diverse ideas. While this can be beneficial, it also presents challenges, as children may adopt foreign cultures that conflict with their native values," he explained.

He stressed, "The historical approach of communal upbringing is being eroded by the prevalence of online interactions, which often lack the warmth and ethical considerations of physical mentorship."

For Aisha Isa, a mother and educator, the answer lies in balance. She said that "social media is neither entirely good nor bad; it depends on how children

are guided in using it. Parents and teachers must ensure that children consume positive content while still reinforcing cultural and moral values at home. The real issue is whether parents are actively involved in monitoring their children's media consumption." She revealed, "Many parents today are too busy to supervise their children's online activities, leading to situations where children absorb misleading information without critical evaluation. We need an approach that combines parental involvement with digital education."

While Ibrahim Ahmed Kabir, a youth leader, shared his perspective on how social media can be a powerful tool for nation-building if used correctly. "Look at young people today who use social media to promote change, advocate for good governance, and create awareness on important issues. If we integrate digital literacy into our education system, social media can serve as a means of empowering children rather than corrupting them," he stated. He added, "The internet provides a voice for the youth, allowing them to contribute meaningfully to societal growth. However, it must be harnessed properly to ensure positive outcomes."

Meanwhile, Mustapha Muhammad, a school teacher, remains sceptical

about the influence of social media on children's moral development. "I have seen firsthand how students are negatively influenced by the internet. Many children now lack respect for elders, prefer instant gratification, and are more interested in trends than academic or moral excellence. Society must reclaim its role by enforcing discipline and setting clear moral expectations," he said. He stressed, "While technology is important, it should not replace the fundamental role that society plays in raising children. A strong moral foundation must be laid before exposing them to the vast and sometimes misleading world of social media."

Despite the differing opinions, one thing remains clear: the impact of social media on children is undeniable. While it provides access to knowledge and global opportunities, it also exposes children to harmful influences. The key, therefore, is for society to take proactive steps in guiding children's interaction with social media.

Parents must take responsibility for their children's digital consumption by setting boundaries and educating them on the consequences of their online activities. Schools should integrate media literacy into their curricula, helping students differentiate between beneficial and harmful



content. Religious institutions and community leaders should also play their part by reinforcing ethical values.

Moreover, government policies can help regulate social media content to protect young users from harmful exposure. There should be stronger enforcement of online safety measures, including restrictions on inappropriate content and cyberbullying prevention. It is also essential that governments work alongside technology companies to ensure that digital platforms are safe spaces for children's intellectual and moral growth.

As technology continues to evolve, so too must our approach to parenting and education. Rather than viewing social media as an enemy, society should harness its potential for positive change while ensuring that traditional moral values are not neglected. Nation-building is a collective effort, and every stakeholder—parents, educators, government, and social platforms—must work together to raise responsible citizens.

The debate over who trains a child better for nation-building—society or social media—is complex. While

society lays the foundation for morality and discipline, social media influences perspectives and broadens knowledge. The challenge lies in striking the right balance. As the world becomes increasingly digital, the responsibility of training children should not be left to chance. Society must remain actively involved, ensuring that children grow into responsible individuals who will contribute positively to nation-building. Only through a well-structured approach combining societal values with digital awareness can we hope to raise the next generation of responsible leaders.

NEWS

Lawmakers Agbese, Onwusibe, Akpanke accused of seeking bribe from jailed Binance boss

The Head of Financial Crime Compliance at cryptocurrency firm, Binance, Tigran Gambaryan, who spent eight months in a Nigerian detention facility over alleged corruption, has identified three Nigerian lawmakers who allegedly demanded a bribe of \$150m from him.

Nigerian authorities detained Gambaryan and his colleague, Nadeem Anjarwalla, a 37-year-old British Kenyan who serves as the regional manager for Africa at Binance.

Both were charged with money laundering involving \$35 million, as initiated by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission.

Anjarwalla managed to escape from custody on March 22, 2024. However, Gambaryan was released following the intervention of the United States government.

While in detention, the Binance boss said some lawmakers in the House of Representatives demanded bribes from him.

Taking to his verified X handle, Gambaryan named Philip Agbese, Ginger Onwusibe and Peter Akpanke, all members of the House, as the men who allegedly demanded the huge sum from him.

Gambaryan's post on X read in part, "The DSS was involved in the House of Representatives matter. We met with them at their office on Friday, January 5, 2024, as a prerequisite to our meeting with the House of Representatives. They alluded to the fact that we had to comply with whatever the House members instructed us to do.

"At the House meeting, there were three members present. Two of them were Peter Akpanke and



Gambaryan

Philip Agbese, both working under the leadership of Ginger Obinna Onwusibe. There was a third House member, but I don't recall his name.

"They set up fake cameras and media to make the meeting appear official, but the cameras weren't even plugged in. As you may already know, this ended

with them asking for a \$150m bribe, paid in cryptocurrency into their personal wallets. A Micky Mouse operation at its best."

Reacting to the development, however, Agbese, who doubles as the Deputy Spokesman of the House, has called on the Binance boss to support his claims with evidence or face the consequences of his actions.

Speaking with PUNCH Online, the Benue lawmaker said, "I am outraged by the false allegations made by Tigran Gambaryan, an executive of the controversial crypto firm Binance, claiming that I was among those who demanded a \$150m bribe from him.

"These allegations are false. I was not part of any meeting with any Binance executive regarding money for any purpose. The leadership of the committee took the matter to court, and Binance has already apologised.

"Let it be on record that I am not a member of the Committee on Economic and Financial Crimes. I visited my colleague, Hon Peter Akpanke, in his office, where he was meeting with some visitors about an activity of his committee, with Hon Peter Anakwe, a member of the committee present. We exchanged pleasantries and, in character with my person as an avid pursuer of knowledge, discussed Binance's activities that did not include any demand from anyone.

"It was during this visit to the office of Hon Akpanke, with Hon Anakwe present, that he told me they were interfacing with the Binance team from abroad over a referral to their committee. What transpired between the two of them and the Binance executive after I left the office is left to them."

He said he never saw the visitors again after the meeting and did not afterwards attend any meetings with Binance executives, the EFCC or the DSS.

Many feared dead as trailer loses control on Kano bridge

A yet-to-be-ascertained number of people have been killed while others sustained injuries after a trailer lost control on the popular Muhammadu Buhari bridge in Kano.

The ill-fated trailer was said to be heading for the southern part of the country.

Commenting on the incident, a social media user, Yahya Abubakar Sadiq, wrote, "Right now, at Hotoro NNPC, under the bridge from Mariri to Unguwa Uku, a truck (Tarela) has overturned, carrying both people and goods. At least more than twenty people were involved, some have lost their lives, while others have sustained serious injuries."

According to an eyewitness, Shu'aibu Hamisu, the trailer lost control while coming from Maiduguri Road trying to navigate the interchange through the underpass tunnel which gives access

to ring road and connects Zaria highway.

"The trailer slipped inside the underpass," he said, adding, "Others have been rescued while many lost their lives on the spot," he added.

Tragic incidents involving trailers have occurred at the same spot at different times in the last year.

The vehicles involved are usually trailers conveying animals, food items and individuals from the northern region to the southern part of the country.

According to business operators around the vicinity, "usually, it occurs when the driver underestimates the vulnerability of vehicles under the bridge and tries to go under speed."

When contacted, the Kano State Fire Service command spokesperson, Saminu Yusuf Abdullahi, said they were working to get details.



FG to create 'Power Rangers' to fight vandals of electricity assets

Nigeria has decided to set up a special security team to protect its power installations and infrastructure from the activities of vandals.

This was revealed by the Minister of Interior, Olunmi Tunji-Ojo, on Friday.

He said, "We have decided now with the Minister of Power to have what we call the power rangers.

"The 'power rangers' will be created with officers of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) and will be responsible for stopping the vandalism of power infrastructure which has caused blackouts across the country.

Amid growing reports of vandals damaging

power installations and outcry over frequent blackouts sometimes caused by vandalism, the minister said it was critical to find a unique solution to the problem.

The decision to set up the power rangers, he said, was influenced by the successes of the Mines Marshalls unveiled by the Federal Government in March 2024 to tackle security challenges in the mining sector.

"What we had before we (the Bola Tinubu administration) came was the generalisation of national assets. But we said no, you cannot have one specific medication that can treat all illnesses," he said.



OUR HEART

The imperative for a revolution in the agricultural sector of the north

Way back in 1982, when he took the presidential campaign train of the defunct Unity Party of Nigeria, UPN, to the old Gongola state, now Adamawa and Taraba states, late Chief Obafemi Awolowo made a pledge that, if he won the election, his government would construct a speed rail line with refrigerated coaches from the Mambila Plateau to Lagos.

With rail transportation infrastructure in place, the vision of Chief Awolowo aimed at the elimination of the enormous economic wastage associated with the movement of cattle from the far North to the markets in the southern parts of the country.

43 years after, live cattle and other herds are still being moved from their sources of abundance in the North, to markets or pasturelands across various other parts of the country. Besides the security challenges and other hazards, there are the huge and wasteful financial and physical tolls in the arduous nature of the movements of the herds and herdsmen.

The greatest losers in this rather archaic mode of transactions in livestock, are the region and people occupationally engaged in large-scale animal husbandry. In this case, the northern states have been losing the multiple derivable benefits of a properly harnessed livestock production sector.

As with the examples of India, Denmark, Holland, China, Brazil or, even African countries such as Ethiopia, Botswana and South Africa, the large population of cows, goats and sheep in many areas of the northern states ought to have long translated into the existence of flourishing industries of meat, beef and dairy productions, as well as, manufacturing outfits that use hides and skins, bones and blood for animal, poultry and fish feeds, hoofs and horns for gum and related materials production.

With a vast expanse of arable land of variegated vegetations, from the

Savana to the Sahel region, the North is simply a sprawling veld for the cultivation of assorted agricultural produce. Unfortunately, agriculture in the region has a similar fate of negligence leading to retardation and under-development, due to lack of value addition.

The north, for example, is largely the region of cultivation of tomatoes, pepper, onions and related produce as well as varieties of fruits for markets in the rest of the country and even beyond. However, while relying on the north for their basic raw materials, the country's most thriving canned tomato paste and fruit juice manufacturing companies are mostly located in the southwestern region.

Until very recently, the entire North had only one high capacity' rice milling company, the federal government-owned cereal company

at Badegi in Niger state. As a result, the abundant rice paddy produced across the region was either taken to mills located outside the region or, poorly processed by local manual millers.

Similarly, the bulk of the other forms of cereals and grains produced in the North are almost wholly sold in their raw state to food processing factories in other parts of the country where they are processed into flour, pasta, semovita and livestock feeds, among others.

As shown by recent developments in the country, there can be no gainsaying the imperative for the North to earnestly indulge in the translation of its vast agricultural endowments into optimal social and economic benefits. The Tax Reform bills currently in the works, are but clear signposts in the nation's drift towards what is popularly known as, "fiscal federalism." Or, "true federalism."

As it is, the North cannot reap the Value Added Tax, VAT, from the huge agricultural produce in the region, because, essentially, statutorily and logically, raw agricultural produce are not taxable. The VAT obtainable from such produce, ironically, go to those states in the south of the country where the value addition agro allied industries are located.

For as long as the North remains a producer and exporter of agricultural produce in their raw forms, for that long will the region remain backward and dependent on the swings and dictates of local and international owners of industries even as they critically rely on the raw materials from the region.

According to an adage from East Africa, the best time to plant a tree was ten years ago and the next best time to plant it is NOW. The North missed out on the opportunities to develop agro allied industries to reap maximally from the stupendous agricultural endowments in the region. It cannot afford to fall to begin to do so now.

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NORTH-EAST

BY SA'ADATU MAINA
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Yobe delegation with Moroccan representatives

Truck crushes Bauchi student to death

Students and management of Federal Polytechnic Bauchi were thrown into mourning when a truck crushed to death a female student of the institution.

Mr Rabiu Mohammed, the Public Relations Officer (PRO) of the institution, stated this in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), in Bauchi on Thursday.

Mohammed said the victim, Faith Adesola, a new student of the institution, paid her school fees, and started attending lectures but was yet to complete her registration.

This, he said, made it a little bit difficult to instantly trace her department after the accident but was later identified as a new student of the Department of Mass Communication of the institution.

"There was an accident and one of our students unfortunately was crushed to death by a truck driver.

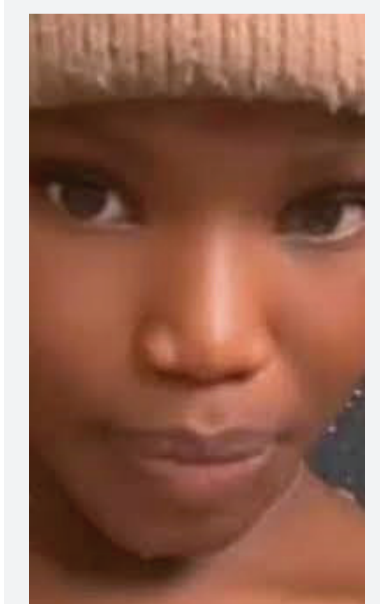
"From the reports received from the Chief Security Officer, the Students Affairs Officer as well as Head of the Department, the student took a motorcycle and unfortunately, the truck hit the motorcycle.

"This eventually resulted in the truck crushing the student and she lost her life in the process but the motorcyclist was unharmed.

"We took her to our clinic where the doctor confirmed her dead, and we have deposited her corpse at the Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Teaching Hospital's morgue so as to plan on how to reach the family," he said.

According to the spokesman, Adesola is from Osun State but based in Jos.

He called on students and the people of the area to remain calm, adding that the truck driver and the motorcyclist had reported at the nearest Yelwa Police Division.



Yobe to showcase sesame seeds, Gum Arabic, others in Morocco

The Association of Regions (Governor's Forum) in Morocco has made a special request for the Yobe state government to participate and showcase its sesame seeds and Gum Arabic at the forthcoming international trade fair in Meknes, Morocco.

This is contained in a statement signed by Mamman Mohammed, DG Press and Media Affairs to Yobe State Governor.

Mohammed El Bachiri, Executive Director of the association, said the association is ready to collaborate with the state government to attract investors and

marketers to Yobe State for direct and indirect investments.

He explained that under the collaboration programme, there are rooms for financing of Agriculture, environment, climate and housing in the local government areas.

Leader of the delegation and Secretary to Yobe state government, Baba Malam Wali, said government would take advantage of the forthcoming trade fair to present its agricultural products.

"We have high quality graded sesame seeds, Gum Arabic, beans, groundnut and livestock among others in commercial

quantities in all the local government areas.

"His Excellency Gov. Mai Mala Buni has directed us to collaborate with reputable agencies and organisations to attract employment and wealth creation opportunities for the benefit of our youth.

"The state government is ready to partner the association to engage our youth into agricultural production, especially in the sesame seeds and others" Malam Wali said.

The state Commissioner for Agriculture, Hon Mustapha Goniri, said Yobe state produces

and processes the best sesame seeds of international standard.

"The state government under His Excellency Governor Mai Mala Buni established four Sesame seeds processing plants to upgrade the quality of the product.

"The international trade fair would give our state the opportunity to show the quality of our farm produce to the World," Goniri said.

Similarly, the state Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Ibrahim Adamu Jajere, expressed the readiness of the 17 Local Government Councils

to participate in the trade fair.

They all have the opportunity to showcase their individual products to attract investors to their areas and secure employment to their people" he said.

The Chief Executive Officer of the consulting firm, African Network Center, Ahmed Shuaibu Gara Gombe, assured to complete the documentation and all other necessary requirements for participation in the international trade fair.

Plan Int'l organises workshop on climate change for media stakeholders in North East

The Climate Change Project of the Plan International has organised a five-day capacity building workshop for media stakeholders from Yobe, Adamawa and Abuja on climate change early warning.

The workshop, titled: 'Strengthening Media Capacity for Better Climate Change Reporting', equipped the participants with the imperative knowledge, skills and tools needed to inclusively investigate and report on developing issues around climate change in Yobe and Adamawa states.

The training took place in Kano State with participants including journalists, influencers, and representatives from relevant Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) in Yobe, Adamawa and Abuja.

Presenting a paper titled, "Roles of Journalists in Championing Resilience Building and Raising

Awareness to Climate Change Impact," Prof Ambrose A. Zamba from the Department of Geography, Faculty of Environmental Sciences, MAU Yola, pointed out that journalists should highlight effective local strategies for climate adaptation and mitigation.

According to Prof. Zamba, this can help people adopt to climate solutions when they see real-life success stories.

He charged the training participants to always verify climate information from IPCC, NASA, and local meteorological agencies to avoid misinformation as much as possible.

He noted that, "Journalists are at the forefront in the fight against climate change by raising awareness, promoting early warning system, advocating for policy changes and showcasing solutions".



Participant

NORTH-EAST

BY DAJEN COMFORT YAKUBU
ComfortDajen@neptuneprime.com.ng



Court orders amputation of man's hand for attacking 14-year-old boy

Justice A.M Haruna of the Gombe State High Court has ordered the amputation of Abdullahi Suleiman who was found guilty of severing the right hand of a 14-year-old boy, Khalifa Abubakar, during a brawl.

The incident occurred on February 12, 2022 in Moddibo village, Yamaltu Deba Local Government Area, during a wedding ceremony that escalated into chaos.

By evening time, the groom instructed guests to leave the venue due to the commotion.

As the crowd dispersed, Suleiman, a resident of Wajari village, and other youths used machetes to scatter those present.

Khalifa, who paused to retrieve his fallen shoe, was brutally attacked by Suleiman, resulting in the complete amputation of his right hand.

Khalifa was rushed to the Federal Teaching Hospital in Gombe, where his injuries were treated.

His family reported the attack to the police, prompting legal proceedings against Suleiman.

In the case, filed under suit number GM/88C/2022, the prosecution presented five witnesses, including Khalifa, who identified Suleiman as the assailant. Three eyewitnesses testified to witnessing the attack while a medical doctor provided evidence on the severity of the injury.

The defence presented two witnesses, but their testimonies failed to convince the court.

In its ruling, the court acknowledged Suleiman's remorse and his counsel's plea for leniency, which included an offer to provide Khalifa with a prosthetic hand as restitution.

Senate seeks inclusion of North East in super highway projects

Senate seeks inclusion of North East in super highway projects

Senate has urged the federal government to include North East in the super highway project, following commendation to President Bola Tinubu for the N4.2trillion coastal road project.

Senate's call for inclusion of the North East in the project, followed a motion moved to that effect by Senator Danjuma Goje.

Senator Goje, in the motion titled 'Federal Government's Approval of N4.2trillion for

the Construction of Lagos-Calabar Coastal Road and Other Road Projects Nationwide,' lamented that out of the N4.2trillion road projects, only N19 billion was allocated to the zone.

"It is imperative to note that in this laudable project, the North East has only two projects, that is, Yola-Fufore-Gurin road in Adamawa State (N11.81 billion); and Lamido Road in Taraba State (N7.68 billion), out of the approved sum of N4.2 trillion.

"Apart from these two road

projects in the North East, there are other important road networks that are in bad condition, such as: Bauchi-Gombe road; Biu-Gombe road; Potiskum-Gombe road; Darazo-Gombe road; Numan-Jalingo road; Yola-Mubi road; Yola-Michika-Madagali-Gwoza - Bama road, Ngorore-Mayo Belwa-Zing-Jalingo; Mayo Belwa-Jada-Ganye; Biu-Gombi-Maraba; Biu-Dambo-Maiduguri, and Biu-Damaturu, among others, which desperately require serious reconstruction and rehabilitation.

"The North East is the only zone that is not connected to the super highway project embarked upon by this administration," he said.

He, however, commended President

Tinubu for the super highway projects which, according to him, will ensure connectivity by improving road safety with the aim of harnessing the viability of resources that abound across the length and breadth of the country, with a view to stimulate economic growth and development, but stressed that the North East should be included.

In nationalising the issue, the Senate amended Senator Goje's second prayer from urging the federal government to, as a matter of necessity, approve the rehabilitation of the listed deplorable roads in the North East to urging it to approve the rehabilitation of all deplorable roads across the country.

Yobe's pride, Abdulrahman, presents Guinness World Record certificate to Gov. Buni

Guinness World Record holder, Saidu Abdulrahman, has presented his prestigious Guinness World Record certificate to Yobe State Governor, His Excellency, Hon. Mai Mala Buni, at the Yobe State Government House in Damaturu.

The remarkable achievement was met with great admiration as the governor warmly received him and commended his dedication, perseverance, and hard work in attaining such global recognition.

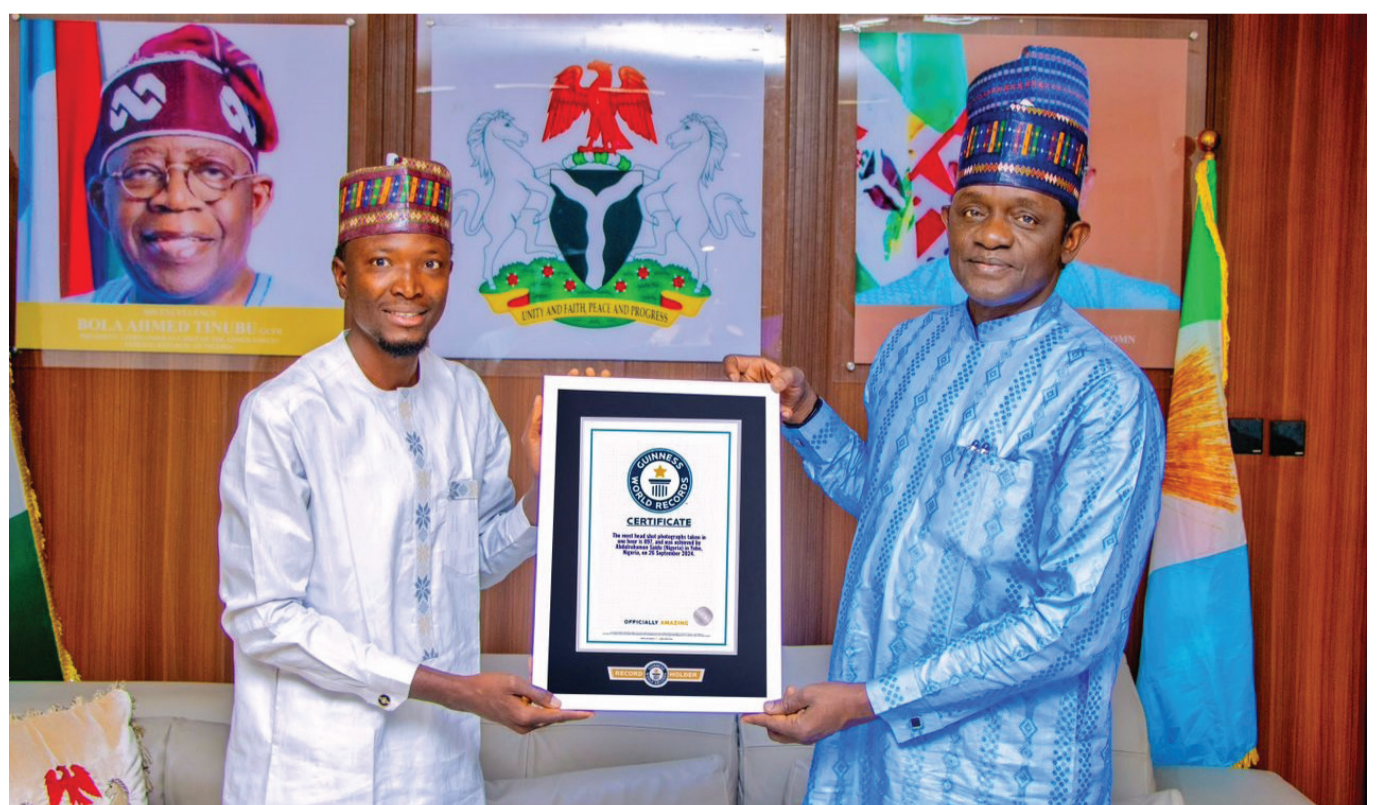
Governor Buni expressed his pride in Sa'id's accomplishment, emphasizing that his success serves as an inspiration to the youth of Yobe State and beyond.

He encouraged him to continue striving for excellence and to use his platform to motivate others to pursue their dreams despite challenges.

The governor also reaffirmed his administration's commitment to supporting and nurturing talents across various fields, ensuring that young achievers receive the recognition and opportunities they deserve.

The event marked a significant moment of celebration, not only for Sa'id Abdulrahman but also for the entire state, as it showcased Yobe's potential on the global stage.

Recall that Saidu broke the Guinness World Record for the most headshot photographs taken in one hour supported by Governor Mai Mala Buni.



Abdulrahman with Buni

CUSTOMS & NEMA

BY MARYAM SULAIMAN
MaryamSulaiman@neptuneprime.com.ng

NCS hosts roundtable on operational best practices for government-owned companies

The Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), on 6 February 2025, hosted a high-level roundtable discussion on operational best practices for government-owned companies at its Headquarters in Maitama Abuja. The event brought together key stakeholders from the military, paramilitary, and financial sectors.

The one-day event was attended by the Comptroller-General of Customs (CGC), Adewale Adeniyi, alongside his management team, representatives from the Ministry of Finance, senior officers from the Nigerian Air Force, and board members of various government-owned companies.

Also present were distinguished guest speakers, including Rear Admiral Suleiman Abdullahi, Air Vice Marshal Mohammed Umar (Rtd.), Professor Peter Akper SAN, Wing Commander Mohammed Mamu, and Managing Partner of Anaebonam Ken & Co, Christopher Ekwozor.

In his keynote address, CGC Adeniyi underscored the significance of corporate governance, financial autonomy, and operational efficiency in managing government-owned enterprises, particularly those under military and paramilitary organisations.

He emphasised that the Nigeria Customs Service operates four companies, each contributing to economic growth, job creation, and service delivery.

“We are here today to examine these companies’ operational structures, corporate governance, and financial realities.

“By sharing experiences and identifying challenges, we can develop solutions that will drive growth and efficiency,” he stated.

Air Vice Marshal Mohammed Umar (Rtd.) provided insights into the establishment and management of military-owned companies, tracing their evolution and impact.

He highlighted the pioneering role of Engineering and Technical Services Limited, followed by other entities such as Properties,



Housing and Construction Services, and the Nigerian Air Force Investment Company Limited.

Another expert, Rear Admiral Suleiman Abdullahi, former Director of Logistics and Defence Administration, discussed the unique challenges faced by government-owned companies, particularly the delicate balance between government oversight and business autonomy.

“Understanding the legal and structural frameworks of such companies is essential for

their sustainability,” he said.

The roundtable discussion came at a crucial time when government-owned enterprises strive to enhance efficiency and profitability while aligning with broader governance structures.

The discussions fostered collaboration between security agencies and business entities, paving the way for improved operational standards. The NCS Director of Legal Services, Smart Akande, Esq., delivered the vote of thanks, commending CGC Adeniyi and his management team for spearheading the initiative.

He also appreciated the esteemed speakers and attendees’ invaluable insights and contributions.

“Your perspectives have enriched our understanding of operational best practices for government-owned companies,” he stated.

The event came to an end with a renewed commitment to strengthening governance, enhancing operational efficiency, and ensuring government-owned enterprises Which remain viable contributors to national economic growth.

NEMA provides relief materials to Zamfara govt

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) has provided relief items to the Zamfara State government to assist the victims of the recent fire at a Qur’anic school in Kaura Namoda.

During the delivery of these items in Kaura Namoda local government, the Director General of NEMA, Hajjia Zubaida Umar, stated that this initiative reflects the Federal Government’s concern for the victims’ plight.

The Director General was represented by Mr. Aliyu Shehu Kafindangi, Head of NEMA Sokoto Operations Office, who announced that the relief support includes food items such as bags of rice, maize, and vegetable oil, as well as non-food items like detergents and medical supplies.

Hajjia Zubaida Umar had previously visited the victims, who are undergoing treatment at the Khadijah Women and Children Welfare Clinic in Kaura Namoda.

During her visit, the NEMA representative also provided medical supplies to the Primary Health Care Centre for the ongoing treatment of the victims.

Additionally, she led a team of joint stakeholders, including representatives from the Zamfara State Emergency Management Agency (ZEMA), the Zamfara State Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, and the Kaura Namoda Local Government Council, to the site of the incident to express condolences and support to the Qur’anic school community for the loss of students.

The items donated by NEMA were received on behalf of the state government by the Executive Secretary of ZEMA, along with the Director of Disaster Control, Hassan Usman Dauran; the Emir of Kaura Namoda, Alh. Sanusi Muhammad Asha; and the Commissioner from the Zamfara



State Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, represented by the Acting Permanent Secretary, Muhammed Bashir Maradun.

The team also visited the Emir’s palace to inform Alhaji Sanusi Muhammad Asha about the relief support from the Federal Government.

In response, the Emir of Kaura Namoda, Alhaji Sanusi Asha, pledged to oversee the distribution of food items to the victims through the Emergency

Response Committee established by the state and local governments.

On Wednesday, 17 Almajiris died and another 17 were injured in a devastating fire incident in Kaura Namoda Local Government Area of Zamfara State.

The fire broke out around 2:00 am due to burning corn stalks, engulfing the shelter where the pupils were asleep.

Reacting, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, who

commiserated with the state government and owners of the school, enjoined public and private schools to prioritise children’s safety and security at all times and directed regulatory authorities in the education sector to ensure compliance with safety standards.

Maryam Sulaiman Neptune: The relief items were to assist the victims of the recent fire at a Qur’anic school in Kaura Namoda.

PRIME PHOTOS

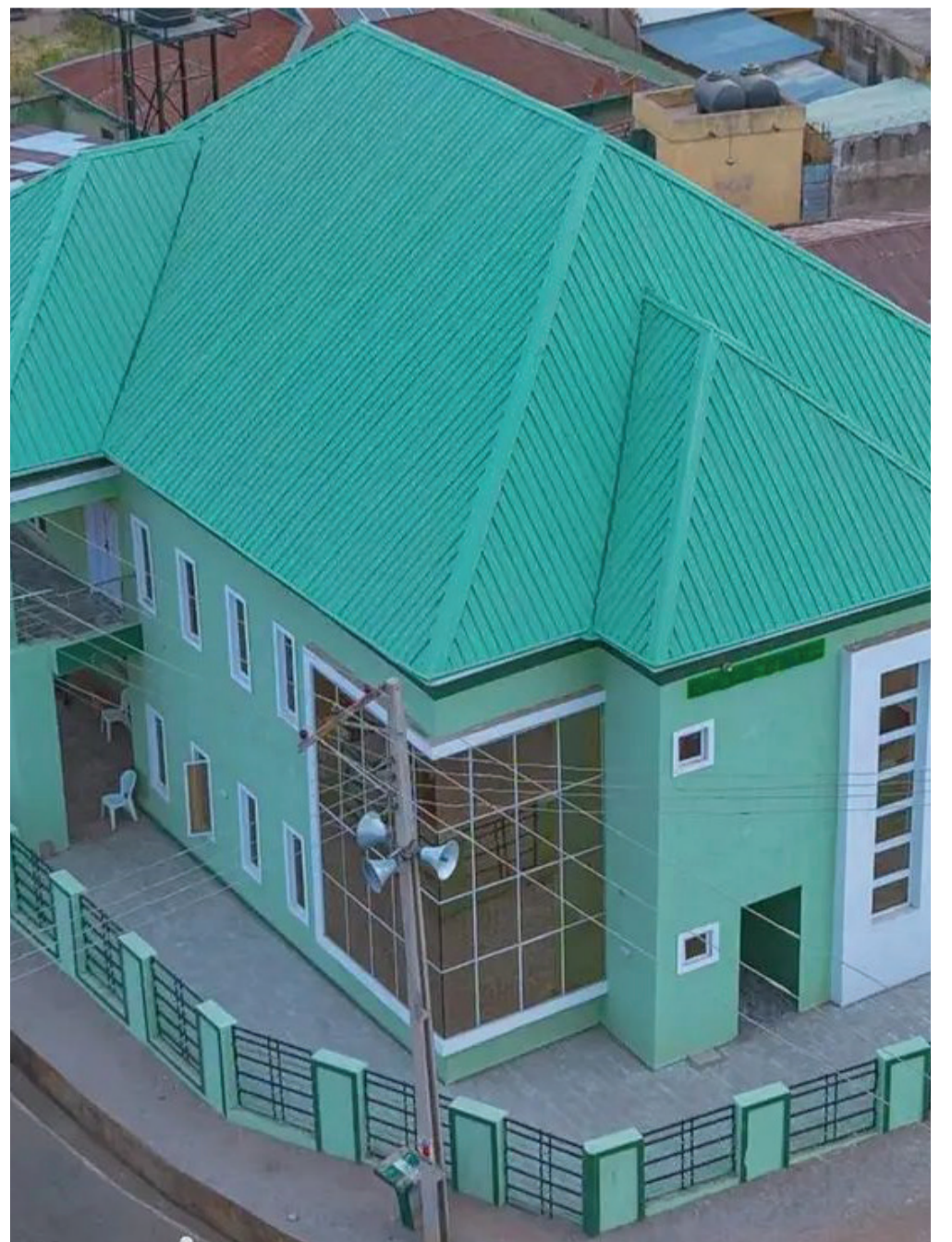
BY MARYAMUMAR
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World Guinness Records Holder, from Yobe State, Sa'idu Abdul Rahman, presents his certificate to Governor Mai Mala Buni.



Nigerian Lady Makes History as Youngest Black Female Pilot for Commercial Airlines in the U.S.A.



Governor Inuwa Yahaya Builds GOSTEC Headquarter to Strengthen Security in Gombe

PRIME PHOTOS

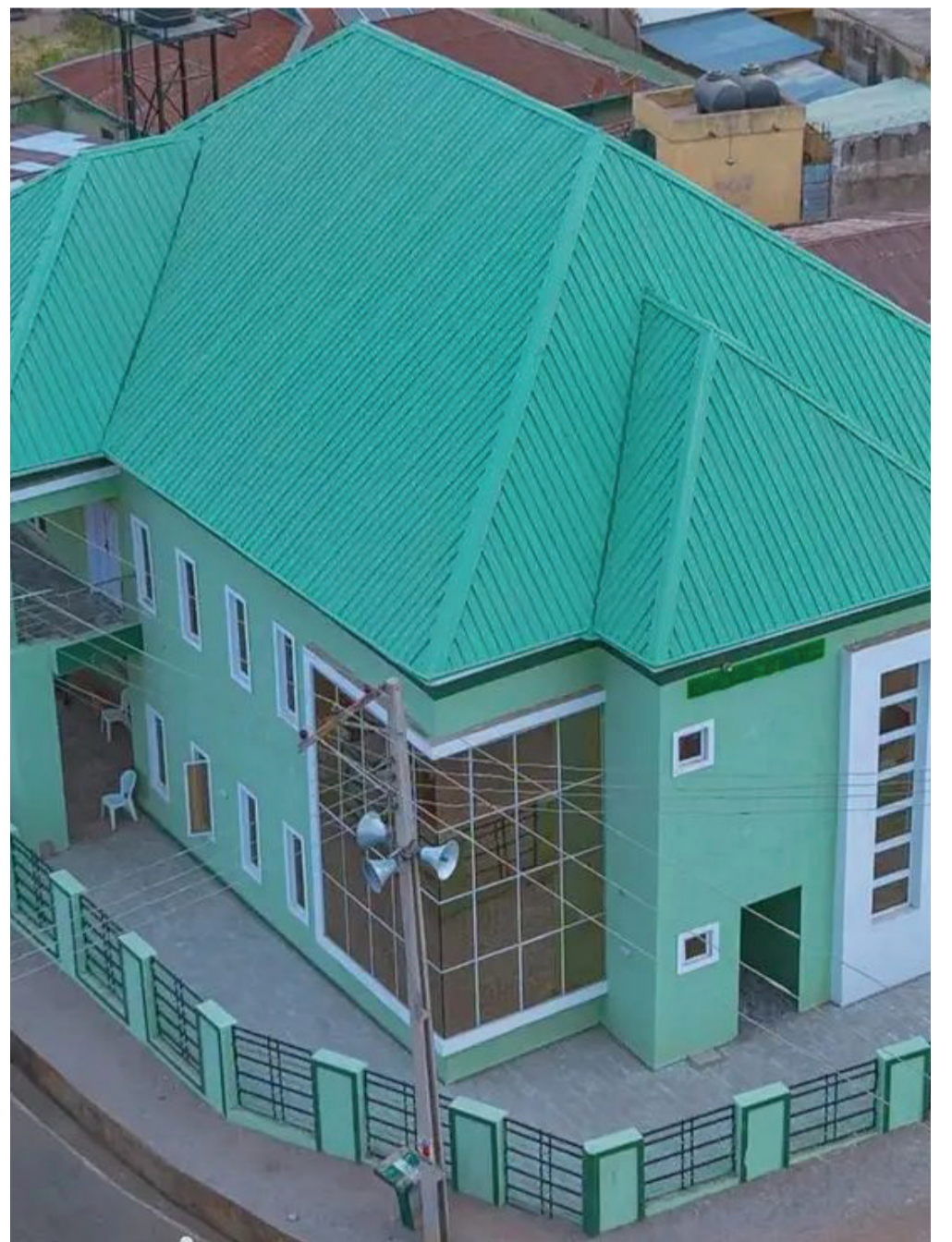
BY MARYAMUMAR
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Governor Inuwa Yahaya Builds GOSTEC Headquarters to Strengthen Security in Gombe

PRIME10MENT

From Dajen Comfort Yakubu
ComfortDajen@neptuneprime.com.ng



Tiwa



Shallipopi

The Headies has unveiled the nominations for its 17th edition and it wasn't without some surprise omissions.

Like every award ceremony, some omissions sparked conversations, especially given the profile of the artists involved and the quality of the snubbed material.

The eligibility window for this award ceremony was fixed between April 1, 2023, and July 31, 2024. During this time, Nigerian artists released notable projects and records, many of which were nominated.

However, like every award ceremony, some omissions sparked conversations, especially given the profile of the artists involved and the quality of the snubbed material.

In this article, we considered some of the major snubs from the 17th Headies Awards nominations list.

Note: This write-up is based on the assumption that the omitted works were submitted.

BEST RECORDING OF THE YEAR

TEMS - BURNING
SEYI VIBEZ - DIFFERENT PATTERN

BURNA BOY - HIGHER
AYRA STARR & GIVEON - LAST HEARTBREAK SONG
SARZ FEATURING LOJAY - BILLIONS

NOTABLE SNUBS:
ASAKE - 'Lonely At The Top', ODUMODUBLVCK - 'Blood On The Dance Floor'

Ahead of the awards predictions for this category favoured Asake's hit record 'Lonely At The Top' whose composition carries an imposing quality that made it the standout track from his sophomore album 'Work Of Art'.

Also, OdumoduBlvck's 'Blood On The Dance Floor' is one of the most musically accomplished singles in the year in review and its omissions come as a surprise.

PRODUCER OF THE YEAR

SARZ - HAPPINESS
LONDON - OZEBA
MAGICSTICKS - BASQUIAT

REMA / PRODUCER X / CUBEATZ / DEATZ / KLIMPERBOY - HEHEHE

DIBS - DIFFERENT PATTERN

NOTABLE SNUBS:

P.PRIIME, JAY SYNTHS, BLAISE BEATZ, KZITO

In the year in review, P.Priime had an emphatic run that included producing a bulk of Rema's successful sophomore album 'HEIS'. It comes as a shock that he couldn't secure a spot among the nominees.

Jay Synths was the man behind Flavour's 'Big Baller' which earned two nominations including one for Song of the Year. He also produced one of the defining hits of 2023 in Kcee's 'Ojapiano'. Many observers will find his omission puzzling.

Blaise Beatz produced one of the biggest hits of 2024 Kizz Daniel's 'Twe Twe' whose beat richly explores Nigerian indigenous folk drums. However, this wasn't enough for him to earn a nomination.

If musical accomplishment is a basis for nomination in this category, it's also puzzling to see why KZITO wasn't



Chike

Mohbad

nominated for his contributions to Victory's Album of the Year nominated project 'Stubborn' notable for the track 'Pier 46'.

BEST COLLABORATION EMOTIONS - TIWA
Savage feat. Asa
Blood On The Dance Floor -

ODUMODUBLVCK, BLOODY CIVILIAN, AND WALE

CAST - SHALLIPOPI FT ODUMODUBLVCK
EGWU - CHIKE & MOHBAD
OLE - QING MADI & BNXN

TWE TWE REMIX - KIZZ DANIEL & DAVIDO
IDK - WIZKID FT. ZLATAN

NOTABLE SNUBS:
BNXN & RUGER
BNXN & Ruger marked their newfound friendship with the release of the R&B

project that housed the hit song 'Poe' whose omission from the Best Collaboration shortlist comes as a surprise.

AFROBEATS SINGLE OF THE YEAR
BIG BIG THINGS - YOUNG JONN FT. KIZZ DANIEL AND SEYI VIBEZ.

NEPTUNE PRIME BUSINESS

MARKET SURVEY

Commodity Prices (Per Bag):

BY MARIYA SHUAIBU SULEIMAN, MariyaShuaibu@neptuneprime.com.ng

- Maize: N45,000
- Soya Beans: N72,000
- Beans: N95,000
- Guinea Corn (Dawa): N50,000
- Millet (Dauro): N55,000
- Rice (Samfarere): N55,000

BUSY WUSE MARKET, ABUJA



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BUSY WUSE MARKET, ABUJA



MILESTONE

BY AYANDA NGWANE,
AyandaNgwane@neptuneprime.com.ng

David James Egwu MBA, PhD, shaping the future of Africa-U.S. relations at the African Ambassadors Economic Forum

David James Egwu has emerged as a pivotal figure in Africa's social transformation through a series of impactful initiatives. Beginning in 2013, Egwu co-founded the Young CEO's Business Forum, a groundbreaking project designed to empower budding entrepreneurs. His vision expanded to creating an influential platform that facilitates critical dialogue between the public and private sectors, aimed at spurring innovation, promoting fair trade, and ensuring inclusivity throughout the African continent.

Egwu's commitment to social change is further exemplified by his role in co-founding the Africa Women Impact Summit, which champions gender equality and has launched the Project Empower Her campaign. With support from prominent institutions like Access Bank and Microsoft, this campaign has remarkably funded, trained, and built the capacities of over 3,000 women in the past three years.

At the helm of Eden Integrated Services as CEO, Dr. Egwu has demonstrated an unwavering dedication to service excellence. His leadership has successfully orchestrated more than 35 international events across three continents over the last decade, solidifying the company's reputation as a premier event and brand management enterprise.

In addition to his extensive experience, David holds an MBA with a major in Artificial Intelligence from Nexford University, strengthening his passion for business and technology. This advanced degree complements his Bachelor's degree in Mathematics and Computer Science, further enhancing his expertise in the intersection of these fields.

On July 18, 2025, in Washington, DC, the prestigious Africa House will serve as the venue for African Ambassadors Economic Forum (AAEF).

This is an event poised to unite African Ambassadors, stakeholders, and key leaders in amplifying Africa's voice in U.S. policy-making and fostering a robust trade partnership between the two regions.

Co-organised by the Global Initiative for the Advancement of Africa (GIAA), led by the dynamic duo, Dr. David James Egwu and Dr. Utchay Odims, Co-founder and President respectively.

The AAE Forum aims to address critical issues and opportunities that define Africa-U.S. relations. This summit is not just an event; it's a pivotal moment for collaboration and empowerment, setting the stage for long-term goals that will reshape economic narratives.

Key Goals of the Summit Include:



Establishing a cohesive African U.S.

Ambassadors' Bloc: The forum will lay the groundwork for a unified front with an executive secretary to coordinate efforts and enhance collective influence over U.S. policies.

Creating a Communication Channel

Attendees will foster collaboration between African ambassadors and leaders from Diaspora organisations across Africa's six geographical zones, fostering a sense of community and shared purpose.

Forming an African Diaspora Think Tank

This initiative will provide expert insights and strategic recommendations to support the African Union Ambassador to the U.S.

Establishing an African Trade Union Coalition

The forum will initiate plans for an annual African trade fair in the U.S., promoting economic growth and cooperation across sectors.

Creating a Legislative Engagement Team

Key African Diaspora leaders will be assembled to advocate for African interests in negotiations with U.S. policymakers.

Initiating an African Lobby Bloc:

Discussions will commence on forming an African lobby

team focused on trade, investment, and security issues, facilitating greater engagement in U.S. legislative processes.

The summit will gather a distinguished assembly of participants, including African ambassadors to the U.S., heads of government, U.S. government policymakers, African-born U.S. elected officials, national leaders of diaspora community organizations, industry leaders, and women leaders, all dedicated to fostering a stronger economic partnership.

Dr Egwu, Dr Utchay to visit Liberian president

In the lead-up to this landmark forum, Dr. Egwu, Dr. Utchay Odims and other members of the organizing committee will embark on a pre-conference tour across Africa, starting with a three-day business delegation to Liberia, at the invitation of His Excellency, President Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Sr. This delegation will explore significant business and trade opportunities in Liberia, focusing on sectors such as infrastructure development, agriculture, healthcare, and more.

"Our visit aims to facilitate meaningful dialogue and foster partnerships that will yield mutual benefits for both Liberia and our delegation," Dr. Egwu stated. The delegation will also extend an official invitation to President Boakai to join other leaders in Washington, D.C., for the AAE Forum 2025.

VENUE:
Africa House,
Washington
DC, USA

DATE
18TH-20TH
JULY
2025

(Keynote speaker)
Her Excellency Dr. Jewel
Howard Taylor
**Immediate Past Vice
President of Liberia**

(Keynote speaker)
Her Excellency Dr. Anikina Chihombori Quo,
**MD, President and Founder, African
Diaspora Development Institute (ADDI)**

(Keynote speaker)
H.E. Hilda Suka-Mafudze
**African Union
Ambassador to the USA**

THEME:
Unifying African Leaders to
Advance US-Africa Relations
Under the 2063
African Union Agenda

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**African Ambassadors
Economic Forum
2025**

**WASHINGTON
DC,
USA**

An initiative of

(KEYNOTE SPEAKER & AWARD RECIPIENT)
Hon. Imaan Sulaiman-Ibrahim Ise,
**Honourable Minister of Women Affairs
Nigeria.**

**Unifying African Leaders to
Advance US-Africa Relations
Under the 2063
African Union Agenda**

Hope Edge International GIAA GLOBAL INITIATIVE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF AFRICA

HERITAGE

BY MARIYA SHUAIBU, Suleiman
MariyaShuaibu@neptuneprime.com.ng

The Kanuri People: Keepers of an ancient empire, rich traditions, and unique cuisine

In the heart of Nigeria's northeast, primarily in Borno State, live the Kanuri people, proud descendants of the legendary Kanem-Bornu Empire. Their deep-rooted history, elaborate customs, and distinctive way of life continue to define their identity, making them one of the most fascinating ethnic groups in West Africa.

A legacy of empire and resilience

The Kanuri trace their origins to the mighty Kanem Empire, established around the 9th century CE near Lake Chad. Over time, the empire evolved into the Bornu Empire, which thrived for centuries as a center of Islamic scholarship, trade, and governance. Despite external pressures and colonial disruptions, the Kanuri people have preserved their traditions and political structure, with the Shehu of Borno remaining a respected figure in their society.

Distinctive attire and cultural identity

Kanuri men are often seen in intricately embroidered flowing robes (babban riga) paired with caps adorned with elaborate patterns. Women wear colorful wrappers (zani), matching headscarves (gele), and adorn themselves with beads and henna during celebrations. The Kanuri's love for fine embroidery and richly woven fabrics highlights their deep appreciation for artistry.

Music and dance play a central role in Kanuri celebrations. Instruments like the kakaki (long metal trumpet) and algaita (traditional oboe) create captivating rhythms during festivals, weddings, and royal ceremonies.

The flavours of Kanuri cuisine

Kanuri food is as rich as their history, offering a unique blend of flavors and textures. Some of their most cherished dishes include:

Fura da nono – A refreshing blend of millet balls (fura) and fermented milk (nono), often enjoyed as a cooling drink.

Kunu gyada – A creamy, peanut-based porridge loved for its nutritious and energizing qualities.

Tuwo masara or tuwo shinkafa – A thick maize or rice pudding served with a variety of rich soups.

Miyan Kuka – A green soup made from baobab

leaves, a staple among the Kanuri, often paired with tuwo.

Danfadani – A special fried pastry enjoyed as a snack or breakfast dish.

These meals are not just food; they are symbols of community and hospitality, often shared among family and guests.

Marriage and Family Life

Marriage among the Kanuri follows traditional Islamic customs, emphasizing family involvement and communal celebration. The process begins with an intermediary initiating marriage discussions, followed by the presentation of the bride price (sadaki), which traditionally included gold coins but has evolved into money and gifts.

A unique Kanuri tradition is the Ra'aki, where the groom sends preliminary gifts such as clothes, perfumes, and jewelry—to the bride's family, symbolizing his readiness for marriage. After the wedding, the bride undergoes a brief period of seclusion to transition into her new life.

The Monarchical System: The Shehu of Borno

The Kanuri have a structured traditional leadership system, with the Shehu of Borno serving as the paramount ruler. The Shehu, who resides in Maiduguri, traces his lineage to the rulers of the Kanem-Bornu Empire and remains a custodian of Kanuri heritage. Alongside his council, he plays a crucial role in cultural preservation, conflict resolution, and maintaining traditional customs.

A people rooted in history and open to change, the Kanuri remain steadfast in upholding their customs. Festivals, storytelling, and their distinct Kanuri language serve as vital tools for cultural preservation.

As Nigeria's diverse cultural landscape continues to evolve, the Kanuri stand tall as guardians of a storied past, rich traditions, and a unique way of life that continues to inspire generations.



HISTORICITI

BY UCHECHI DANIEL
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“Argungu Fishing Festival: A Celebration of Culture and Tradition”

The Argungu Fishing Festival, held annually in Argungu, Kebbi State, Nigeria, is one of the most iconic cultural and traditional events in the country. This spectacular festival, which dates back to over 80 years, is a celebration of the rich cultural heritage of the people of Kebbi State, particularly the Sokoto Caliphate. It is recognized globally and stands as a symbol of unity, tradition, and reverence for the environment and the art of fishing.

Origins and History

The festival is believed to have been founded in 1934 by the Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Sa'ad Abubakar, and it originally served as a means to mark the end of a long farming season. The roots of the festival are deeply tied to the traditions of the Kebbi people, who have always revered fishing as an essential part of their livelihood and culture. The festival itself is thought to have begun as a celebration to appease the gods of water and to pray for good harvests, peace, and abundance for the coming year.

Though it was initially a local event, the Argungu Fishing Festival has grown over the years, attracting international visitors and becoming a crucial part of Nigerian tourism and cultural identity. Today, it serves as a vibrant testament to Nigeria's diverse cultural landscape.

The Festival's Activities

The Argungu Fishing Festival is a massive event, often lasting for four days, and it is filled with a rich variety of activities. The festival is most famous for its fishing competition, where fishermen from various parts of the region gather to catch the largest fish using traditional hand-woven nets and large fish hooks. Participants typically dress in distinctive traditional clothing, often white robes and fez hats. The event is a highly competitive one, with the fishermen using wooden boats to navigate the waters of the Matan Fada River.

The highlight of the festival is the dramatic, high-energy moment when thousands of fishermen line up at the riverbank. At the signal of a gunshot, the fishermen enter the water and cast their nets, each hoping to catch the biggest fish. The fish is then weighed, and the winner receives a substantial prize. The festival usually draws significant crowds, and the sense of competition and excitement is palpable.

Cultural Celebrations and Performances

Beyond the fishing contest, the festival is a platform for showcasing the culture and heritage of the people of Kebbi and surrounding regions. Throughout the event, there are performances of traditional music and dance, as well as displays of local arts and crafts. Drumming, masquerades, and singing are common, and visitors get the chance to experience the unique rhythms and sounds of Kebbi's cultural history.

An important cultural element of the festival is the traditional camel race, which is held on the outskirts of the town.



Camels, often seen as a symbol of resilience and strength, are ridden by skilled horsemen who perform feats of agility and skill. This race is a thrilling spectacle and is enjoyed by both locals and visitors.

Another feature of the Argungu Festival is the display of beautiful local arts. The festival brings attention to the craft of weaving, pottery, and embroidery—handicrafts passed down through generations that remain a central part of the local economy.

The Global Impact

The Argungu Fishing Festival has grown in significance over the years and has become an essential part of Nigeria's tourism industry. It attracts visitors from all over the world, including tourists, scholars, and enthusiasts of cultural heritage. The event has been featured in international media, and its growing global appeal underscores Nigeria's role in the cultural tourism space.

However, despite the festival's international recognition, its roots remain deeply local. The event continues to honor the values of community, tradition, and the close relationship the people of Kebbi have with nature. It stands as a reminder of the importance of preserving local customs while celebrating cultural diversity.

Challenges and Preservation Efforts

Over the years, the Argungu Fishing Festival has faced challenges, such as environmental changes, climate conditions affecting the river's water levels, and the pressure of modernization. As a result, there have been concerted efforts by the government and local stakeholders to preserve the cultural significance of the festival while ensuring its sustainable future.

In response to these



challenges, the Kebbi State Government has worked to develop the festival into a more organized and sustainable event, attracting more tourists while safeguarding its authenticity. Initiatives like preserving the Matan Fada River, improving infrastructure in Argungu, and enhancing local skills have all contributed to strengthening the festival's legacy.

Conclusion

The Argungu Fishing Festival is not just an annual celebration; it is a living tradition that binds the people of Kebbi State, Nigeria, and the broader world together. It stands as an enduring symbol of the nation's cultural wealth, pride, and history. As this remarkable festival continues to captivate the hearts of people worldwide, it remains a powerful reminder of the importance of honoring local heritage, celebrating nature, and coming together in unity.



ROOTS

Borno man who fought in America's Civil War in 1860s

BY FAROOQ A. KPEROGI

In my first #BlackHistoryMonth article of 2025, I bring attention to the remarkable story of a Kanuri man who came to the United States in January 1860 and fought in the American Civil War to end the enslavement of Black people.

In the spirit of America's Black History Month, which is celebrated every February, I am continuing my tradition of writing columns that focus on the unique experiences, trials, and triumphs of Black Americans.

My focus this week is on an intriguing, superbly brilliant, impressively polyglottic, but surprisingly unknown Borno man by the name of Nicholas Said who migrated to the United States a little over a year before the American Civil War started on April 12, 1861, in which he fought on the side of Union forces.

I first encountered Said's story sometime last year by chance while watching a documentary about early Muslim presence in America. During the film, a Black American Muslim woman mentioned Nicholas Said whom she said traced natal roots to a part of what is today Nigeria.

I was struck by two things: the onomastic oddity of his name (what Muslim man from what is now Nigeria would bear such an incongruous appellative identifier as "Nicholas Said" in the 1860s?) and by the absence of the man in the accounts of early Muslim Americans, a field with which I am a fairly familiar.

My curiosity led me to

abandon the documentary midway in search of the man. It turned out that he wrote his own autobiography in 1873 titled "The Autobiography of Nicholas Said: A Native of Bornou, Eastern Soudan, Central Africa." I immediately placed an order for it on Amazon.

I also bought Dean Calbreath's irresistibly absorbing 2023 book on Said titled "The Sergeant: The Incredible Life of Nicholas Said: Son of an African General, Slave of the Ottomans, Free Man Under the Tsars, Hero of the Union Army," which I read with the kind of hunger that turns pages into a feast, each chapter a savory bite of history too rich to put down.

Said was born Mohammed Ali ben Said around 1836 in Kuka (now called Kukawa) to a Kanuri father and a Mandara-Margi mother. He became "Nicholas" much later in his life when he became a servant to a Russian prince, who converted him to Christianity. I'll come back to this.

Kukawa, Said's hometown, was the capital of the Borno Empire and the immediate successor to the previous, storied 340-year-old capital called Ngazargamu.

By the 1840s, during Said's boyhood, European travelers who visited Borno recorded that Kukawa had a population of around 100,000. "By comparison, in 1840, only 11 cities in the United States had more than 40,000 residents," writes Dean Calbreath.

He was the 13th of his mother's 19 children. His father, more popularly known by the moniker



Barka Gana ("little blessing")—a name bestowed upon him by Sheikh Mohammed el-Kanemi who trained him in Arabic and Quranic memorization in Ngala from ages 9 to 12—was a fierce, furious, and far-famed fighter in Borno's army. His ruthless conquest of enemies earned him the chilling nickname Malak al-Mawt, Arabic for "Angel of Death."

He was Borno's chief Kachala, what we would call today the Chief of Army Staff, during the reigns of Sheikh Mohammed al-Amin ibn al-Kanemi and Sheikh Umar, al-Kanemi's son.

Decades before Nicholas Said migrated to the United States (and, before that, to Europe), his father's name and exploits had already reached both continents through an 1826 book titled *Narrative of Travels and Discoveries in Northern and Central Africa: In the Years 1822, 1823, and 1824*. Authored by three European travelers—Dixon Denham, Hugh Clapperton, and Walter Oudney—the book documented their time in Borno and the events they witnessed there.

One particularly poignant encounter they witnessed was the resolution of a personal conflict between Said's father, Barka Gana, and the king of Borno, Sheikh al-Kanemi.

Following Barka Gana's decisive military victory, al-

Kanemi, delighted with his general's success, presented him with a beautiful horse as a token of appreciation.

However, al-Kanemi remembered that he had promised the same horse to someone else and thus requested Barka Gana to return it. Enraged by al-Kanemi's act, Barka Gana, who had cherished the gift, not only returned the horse but also every other horse al-Kanemi had ever given him.

This act of defiance infuriated the al-Kanemi so much that he ordered that Barka Gana be stripped naked in public, denuded of his position, and sold as a slave abroad. Barka Gana apologized for his arrogance, accepted his fate, but pleaded that his wives and children be spared.

When he returned to the palace the following day to be sold into slavery, al-Kanemi fixed his gaze on him and couldn't hold back tears. The king cried publicly and forgave his general.

The account of this incident—and of Barka Gana's military exploits, devotion to Islam, fierce loyalty to the Shehu, etc.—by European travelers who witnessed it firsthand and wrote about it was "so popular it was translated into French, German, Spanish, Italian, Dutch, and Russian, and over the coming decades, poets, clergymen, scientists, and politicians reshaped its stories to suit their purposes," according to

Calbreath.

In London, scientists held Barka Gana as evidence that "Africans had the same brainpower as Europeans."

In the American South, where Black enslavement and notions of Black subhumanity were mainstream, abolitionists used the story of al-Kanemi's tear-jerking restraint from inflicting punishment on Barka Gana to illustrate the point that "we Americans, particularly of the South, may take a useful lesson from these sable sons of Africa and learn to emulate their Christian feelings of 'mercy' and 'moderation' before we go to civilize them."

In fact, Barka Gana's story made it to the U.S. Congress. House of Representative member Charles Miner from the state of Pennsylvania, who was an abolitionist, said in Congress that Barka Gana's dexterous warfare tactics should serve as an inspiration for the U.S. Army to reverse its ban against black people serving in the military.

"The African race makes excellent soldiers," Miner said. "They are admirably adapted for military service."

By a stroke of historical happenstance, decades later, Barka Gana's son, Nicholas Said, would serve as a sergeant in the U.S. Army and fight in the American Civil War to end the enslavement of Black people.

OLDIES

BY KASIM ISA MUHAMMAD
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Women should embrace entrepreneurship - Businesswoman



Mato

Zuwaira Mato is businesswoman based in Potiskum, born in 1957. With years of experience in various ventures, she shares her insightful story in this interview, reflecting on her business journey, past experiences, and fundamental lessons for the younger generation.

N:P Good afternoon, Mrs. Zuwaira Mato. Thank you for agreeing to this interview. To start, could you tell us a little about your early life and how you got into business?

ZM: Good morning, and thank you for having me. I was born in 1957 in Potiskum local government area, and growing up, life was quite different from what it is today. Back then, opportunities were limited, especially for women, but I was determined to make something of myself. My journey into business began out of necessity. I started with small trades, selling items like spices and fabrics in the local at home. Over time, I learned the ropes of business—how to negotiate, manage resources, and build relationships with customers. It wasn't easy, but persistence and faith kept me going.

N:P: That's inspiring. What were some of the biggest challenges you faced as a businesswoman in those early days?

ZM: Oh, the challenges were numerous. First, there was the societal expectation that women should stay at home and not engage in business. Many people looked down on me for stepping out of that traditional role. I had to work twice as hard to prove myself. Second, access to capital was a huge issue. Banks were reluctant to lend to women, especially in rural areas like Potiskum. I had to rely on personal savings and small loans from family and friends. Another challenge was the lack of infrastructure. Transportation was difficult, and communication was not as advanced as it is today. I remember traveling long distances to source goods, sometimes on bad roads, just to keep my business running. But every challenge taught me something valuable, and I used those lessons to grow stronger and wiser.

N:P You've mentioned the importance of persistence. What lessons do you think the younger generation can learn from your

experiences?

ZM: The younger generation has so many opportunities today, but I feel they sometimes lack patience and perseverance. In my time, we didn't have the luxury of giving up easily. If a business idea failed, we would go back to the drawing board, rethink our strategy, and try again. Today, I see many young people wanting quick success, and when they don't achieve it immediately, they get discouraged. My advice is to embrace failure as a teacher. Every setback is a stepping stone to success. Also, I would encourage them to value hard work and integrity. In business, your reputation is everything. If people trust you, they will always come back to you. Lastly, I would say they should never stop learning. The world is changing rapidly, and to stay relevant, you must adapt and grow.

N:P: That's great advice. Speaking of change, how do you think business practices have evolved over the years, and how have you adapted to these changes?

ZM: Business practices have changed dramatically, especially with the advent of technology. When I started, everything was done manually—record-keeping, communication, and even marketing. Today, we have tools like mobile phones, computers, and the internet, which have made business operations much easier and faster. I've had to adapt by learning how to use some of these tools. For example, I now use mobile banking to manage transactions, and I've also embraced social media to reach a wider audience. However, while technology is a great enabler, I believe the core principles of business remain the same—understanding your market, delivering quality products, and treating customers with respect. These timeless values have helped me stay in business for decades.

N:P: You've had a remarkable journey. Looking back, what would you say is your proudest achievement?

ZM: My proudest achievement is not just the success of my businesses, but the impact I have been able to make in my community. Over the years, I have employed many young people, especially

women, and trained them in various trades. Seeing them grow and become independent brings me immense joy. I've also been able to support my family and give back to society through charitable initiatives. For me, success is not just about wealth; it's about making a difference in the lives of others. I'm also proud of the fact that I've been able to break barriers and challenge stereotypes about women in business. I hope my story inspires other women to pursue their dreams fearlessly.

N:P: That's truly commendable. You've had such a busy life running businesses and raising a family. Do you have any hobbies or activities you enjoy in your free time?

ZM: Oh, yes! Even with a busy schedule, I've always made time for things that bring me joy. One of my favorite hobbies is cooking. I enjoy cooking, especially traditional dishes. Cooking allows me to connect with my roots and share my culture with my family and friends. Occasionally, I like to read books, particularly those religious texts. And when I have the chance, I enjoy visiting friends and family, just to catch up and share stories. These activities help me relax and recharge.

N:P: That's wonderful to hear. You mentioned your family—could you tell us a bit about your children and how you managed to balance business and motherhood?

ZM: Ah, my children are my greatest blessing. I have nine children, and each one of them is unique and special in their own way. Balancing business and motherhood was not easy, but I always made sure to prioritize my family. I involved my children in my business from a young age, teaching them the value of hard work and responsibility. They would often help me in the market or with small tasks at home. This not only brought us closer but also prepared them for life. I also had a strong support system—my husband, relatives, and close friends who helped me when things got overwhelming. It was a juggling act, but with faith, patience, and good time management, I was able to give my best to both my family and my business.

N:P: That's incredible. With such a large family, how did you instill values like discipline and ambition in your children?

ZM: Instilling values in my children was very important to me. I believe that discipline starts with leading by example. I always made sure to demonstrate hard work, honesty, and resilience in everything I did. My children saw me wake up early, work long hours, and never give up, even when things were tough. I also made it a point to have open conversations with them about the importance of education, respect, and kindness. I encouraged them to set goals and pursue their passions, but I also taught them to be humble and grateful for what they have. Family time was sacred—we would sit together, share meals, and discuss our day. These moments helped me reinforce the values I wanted them to carry throughout their lives.

N:P: You've achieved so much in life. If you could go back and change anything, would you?

ZM: That's an interesting question. Honestly, I don't think I would change much. Every experience, whether good or bad, has shaped me into the person I am today. The struggles taught me resilience, the successes gave me confidence, and the mistakes helped me grow. If anything, I would probably tell my younger self to worry less and trust the process more. Life has a way of working out when you put in the effort and remain faithful. I'm grateful for every step of my journey, and I wouldn't trade it for anything. It's all part of God's plan.

N:P: Finally, what message would you like to leave for aspiring entrepreneurs, especially women, who look up to you?

ZM: My message to aspiring entrepreneurs, particularly women, is simple: believe in yourself and never let anyone tell you that you can't achieve your dreams. The road may be tough, but with determination, hard work, and faith, you can overcome any obstacle. Surround yourself with positive and supportive people, and don't be afraid to seek help when you need it. Also, remember that success is a journey, not a destination. Celebrate your small wins along the way, and keep pushing forward. Most importantly, stay true to your values and let your work speak for itself. The world needs more women who are bold, innovative, and compassionate. I believe in you, and I can't wait to see what you'll achieve.

My advice is to embrace failure as a teacher. Every setback is a stepping stone to success. Also, I would encourage them to value hard work and integrity

HUMANIST

BY KASIM ISA MUHAMMAD
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Abubakar, seeks financial assistance for urgent surgery

A 25-year-old resident of Dorayi area in Kano State, Abubakar Muttaka, is in a critical health condition. He is in desperate need of financial assistance for a life-saving medical treatment.

Muttaka is at present admitted at the National Orthopedic Hospital, Dala, where he is undergoing treatment for a severe skin condition that requires urgent surgical grafting.

According to medical reports, the procedure is essential to his recovery, and any delay could worsen his condition, leading to further complications.

The total amount required for his treatment has been estimated at N110,582, a sum that is beyond his financial capability.

It was learned that his family, already burdened with the high cost of medical bills, has reached out to the general public for assistance to ensure that Muttaka receives the necessary medical care without further delay.

A Plea for Help

Muttaka's condition has left him unable to work or fend for himself, making financial support from kind-hearted individuals and organisations his only hope.

"We have tried our best to raise funds, but the amount required is still far beyond what we can afford," a family member said.

"We are appealing to the public, philanthropists, government agencies, and non-governmental organisations to help save Muttaka's life. Any amount, no matter how small, will go a long way in ensuring he gets the urgent medical attention he needs."

How to donate

For those willing to support Abubakar Muttaka's treatment, donations can be made through the following account details:

Account Name: A5 Sickle Cell Support Initiative

Account Number: 1220232325

Bank: Zenith Bank

Muttaka's family remains hopeful that with the support of compassionate individuals, he will be able to undergo the skin grafting surgery and regain his health.



FEATURES

Local Governments: What next after autonomy?



By Abdulrazak Iliyasu Sansani

The recent directive allegedly from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) requiring the 774 local governments to present their budget proposals for the 2025 fiscal year has sparked renewed interest in local government autonomy. This development has been a long time coming, given the prolonged agitation for systemic changes in local government administration.

A 20-year-old university student's surprise that local governments in Nigeria prepare budgets highlights the widespread lack of awareness about local government operations because of the reality that local governments barely exist on paper in my states. When he asked, "Do local governments actually create budgets?" I explained that, like every tier of government or organization, they are meant to do so. However, his curiosity clearly illustrates the uncertainty surrounding local government autonomy

in Nigeria.

After the Supreme Court's landmark ruling in favor of local governments in Nigeria on July 11, 2024. The seven-justice panel of the apex court in the judgment delivered by Justice Emmanuel Agim, ruled that the 774 local government councils in the country should independently manage their own funds: millions of Nigerians thought the long wait for autonomy was finally over. However, the journey to true autonomy is often complex and winding given the history of the struggle for autonomy for this essential tier of government.

The Nigerian Constitution recognizes local governments as a tier of government, but they remain restricted by financial and electoral constraints. Local governments are expected to provide basic services, promote development, and ensure democratic participation. However, their lack of autonomy and financial power has hindered their ability to fulfill these responsibilities.

As someone who has

advocated for financial and electoral autonomy for local government councils for so many years, I believe that it is crucial for addressing Nigeria's security challenges, socio-economic issues, and building other sectors that require government's attention at the grassroots level. The lack of autonomy has led to a power vacuum, allowing non-state actors to exert their influence.

Nigerians await the implementation of any meaningful reform that can transform local government administration and bring about positive changes. The question remains: is Nigeria truly ready to empower local governments and bring relief to the millions of rural dwellers who have been neglected for far too long?

For decades, local governments in Nigeria have been suffocated by a lack of funds, rendering them ineffective in initiating or implementing meaningful projects. The joint account system, introduced years ago, has been a

subject of controversy, with experts arguing that it undermines true federalism and hampers local government autonomy.

Will the recent directive be mere rhetoric, or will it translate into tangible action? Is Nigeria truly ready to empower local governments and bring relief to the millions of Nigerians who have been neglected for far too long?

Only time will tell, but one thing is certain: the status quo is unsustainable. Nigerians await with bated breath the implementation of meaningful reforms that can revamp local government administration and bring about development.

As someone who has consistently advocated for financial and electoral autonomy for local government councils, I remain hopeful that this latest development will mark a turning point in Nigeria's journey towards true federalism and grassroots development. For local government autonomy and administration generally in Nigeria, I ask again what next?

Nigeria's Cycle of Greed: When will the poor breathe?

By Muhammad Umar Shehu

Nigeria is arguably the only country where the impoverished masses are forced to manage the situation as it is, while those in power enjoy life to the fullest. People endure abject poverty, yet our leaders show no sympathy for humanity.

Nigerian politicians lack compassion, empathy, and conscience for the populace; it is a nation where the poor must bear the suffering their leaders impose, while so-called politicians revel in its intensification. Hunger is a condition no human can survive, yet our leaders compel us to endure it.

The Nigerian economy is in dire state because the government is being run by the incompetent, corrupt, unscrupulous, and among the least qualified. One thing I'm certain of is that Nigerian politicians would rather sell their country for power and wealth than pave the way for the poor.

Nigeria's leaders have turned governance into a tool for personal enrichment. Public funds meant for healthcare, education, and infrastructure vanish into private accounts, leaving citizens to endure crumbling hospitals, overcrowded schools, and impassable roads. While politicians flaunt luxury cars and foreign estates, millions struggle to afford one meal a day. This intentional neglect ensures the masses remain too desperate to challenge their oppressors.

Coming back to the basics, in the past before the 2023 general election, the nation's current president, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, had been weaponizing hope with the slogan "let the poor breathe". Do the poor people actually breathe? And when are they going to breathe in this country of plenty?

Nigerian politicians are so used to using fake campaign promises to lobby votes from the poor masses, but once the election is over, they are nowhere to be found, and those campaign promises become unfulfilled. All my life, I've never seen people as shameless as Nigerian politicians. After all the fake promises, they still return during another election cycle with more fake promises. Are you not ashamed of yourselves at all?

Nigerian politicians hoard resources for themselves, raises their own salaries and silence dissent with violence. Meanwhile, families starve, workers go unpaid, pensioners are left starving, and youth lose hope. Until Nigerians unite to reject this cycle of greed, suffering will remain our nation's legacy.



SPORTS

BY MUHAMMAD KUKURI,
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Man U in battle for last 16



Manchester City are fighting for Champions League survival and a place in the last 16 after Jude Bellingham's injury-time winner settled a tense play-off first leg in Real Madrid's favour.

Pep Guardiola's side rediscovered more of their true form early on at Etihad Stadium as Jack Grealish and Josko Gvardiol combined to set up Erling Haaland for a confident finish after 19 minutes.

Grealish, who had made a fine start, then went off injured and after Haaland hit the bar shortly after the break, Real took control.

Real let City off the hook by failing to take their chances until Kylian Mbappe scrambled home a close-range finish on the hour.

They continued to squander opportunities, including two for Bellingham, and were punished when Haaland put City back in front from the spot after 80 minutes following Dani Ceballos' foul on Phil Foden.

Real, however, hit back with four minutes left, former City man Brahim Diaz equalising before Bellingham finally hit the target, sliding in from close range to leave the holders as firm favourites to reach the knockout stage in next week's second leg at The Bernabeu.

UCL Playoff: Dembele stars again as PSG beat Brest in Champions League

The French international forward now has 23 goals for the season, including 18 in 11 appearances over the last two months.

Paris Saint-Germain's French forward #10 Ousmane Dembele celebrates with teammates after scoring his team's third goal during the UEFA Champions League knockout phase play-off 1st leg football match between Stade Brestois 29 (Brest) and Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) at the Roudourou Stadium in Guingamp, western France, on February 11, 2025. (Photo by FRED TANNEAU / AFP)

Ousmane Dembele kept up his remarkable form in front of goal with a double as Paris Saint-Germain took a big step towards qualifying for the last 16 of the Champions League with a 3-0 win over French rivals Brest in the first leg of their play-off tie on Tuesday.

PSG were overwhelming favourites coming into this tie against opponents who had never taken part in European competition

before this season, and there seems little prospect of Brest recovering from this loss in next week's second leg.

Vitinha opened the scoring for PSG at the Stade de Roudourou in Guingamp with a penalty just before the midway point in the first half, and Dembele swept in a second on the stroke of half-time before netting again on 66 minutes.

The French international forward now has 23 goals for the season, including 18 in 11 appearances over the last two months.

Indeed he has 10 goals in just the last four games, a run which includes a hat-trick against Brest in Ligue 1 only 10 days ago.

He is irresistible just now, and Luis Enrique's side are unbeatable at the moment against French opponents, against whom they have not lost since last May.

The teams will meet again in the return leg of this knockout phase play-off tie next Wednesday in Paris, with the winners advancing to a last-16 showdown with either Liverpool or Barcelona.



Manchester City fans displayed a Rodri banner inside the stadium before the match

Real Madrid forward Vinicius Jr said the display of a banner highlighting Rodri's Ballon d'Or win before kick-off at Manchester City motivated him even more to win the Champions League play-off first leg.

Spain midfielder Rodri claimed the prestigious honour ahead of the Brazil winger last October, with Real boycotting the ceremony in Paris because they felt their player had deserved the award.

The large banner unfurled by City fans on Tuesday night at Etihad Stadium showed Rodri kissing the Ballon d'Or alongside the words "Stop crying your heart out".

However, a last-minute Jude Bellingham goal ensured it was

Real who were celebrating at full-time as they won 3-2.

"I saw the banner," Vinicius Jr told Movistar.

"Whenever the opposing fans do things like that they give me more strength to have a great game and here I have done it."

This was the fourth successive season - and the fifth in six - that the two teams have met in the knockout stages of the tournament.

Real won on penalties when the pair faced off in the quarter-finals last year and Carlo Ancelotti's side went on to win their 15th title.

"They know our history, everything we do in this competition," Vinicius Jr added.

"It is the fifth time we come here, it is always very cold, but this time we have won and we have to continue this."

The two sides meet in Madrid in the second leg next Wednesday.

Bellingham delivers more last-gasp heroics

Bellingham memorably scored a last-minute goal for England against Slovakia to send their Euro 2024 last-16 match into extra time, and he delivered the late heroics once again in Manchester.

"It was a big goal," Real boss Carlo Ancelotti told Amazon Prime.

"He played a fantastic game and was always dangerous. It was a top game for him."

Bellingham, who has scored

11 goals in all competitions this season, added: "It was a weird one. We played some of our best football of the season and ended up behind."

"I don't care what form City are in they are still an unbelievable team. It's always tricky to play against them and we finally took the chance at the end."

On next week's second leg, he added: "It's always good to take a lead back home and I'm sure the Bernabeu will come through for us."

"It seems like there is up and downs in these knockout games. It's not just game management, it's tactical and it's psychological as well."

Man City run out of steam – and luck

Manchester City's big Champions League night started with flashes of the old form re-emerging, only to end in bitter disappointment as the failings that have characterised their disappointing season surfaced once more.

With Grealish probing and Haaland providing the cutting edge, City made the perfect start. It was a bitter blow when the former went off injured after half an hour.

Real had already started to pose a threat through the pace of Mbappe and the trickery of Rodrygo and Vinicius Junior, but the pivotal moment for City came when Haaland's deflected shot bounced back off the bar. A two-goal lead might have made a significant difference.

The 15-time champions then started to apply remorseless pressure on City, who were

overcome by tired legs and were actually labouring badly when Haaland put them back in front against the run of play late on.

Once again, key men such as Bernardo Silva and Kevin De Bruyne looked like players with too many miles on the clock, while Ruben Dias and John Stones have been managing their game time carefully.

And in that agonising conclusion, City went from thinking they might take a lead to The Bernabeu, to settling for a draw, then suffering the pain of defeat.

City now face a mammoth task to take this stuttering Champions League campaign beyond the play-off stage.

[2/12, 9:06 AM] Kukuri Mohd: Rodri banner gave Vinicius Jr 'more strength' v Man City



FAMILY DYNAMICS & CUISINES

• WITH

• AISHA AUYO,
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Cucumber Salad Recipe by Auyo's Cuisines

Ingredients

1. 2 large cucumbers
2. Half a cup of thinly sliced onions
3. half a cup of thinly sliced tomato
4. 2 tablespoons lemon juice
5. 1 tablespoon olive oil
6. 1 teaspoon sugar (optional)
7. 1/2 teaspoon salt
8. 1/4 teaspoon black pepper

Instructions

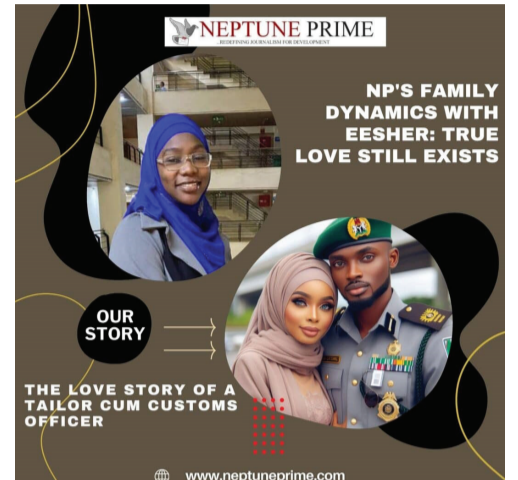
1. In a large bowl, combine the sliced cucumbers, tomato and onion.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together vinegar, olive oil, sugar, salt, and black pepper.
3. Pour the dressing over the cucumbers and onions. Toss well to coat.
4. Let it sit for at least 10 minutes in the freezer to allow the flavours to blend.

Serve chilled..... enjoy your refreshing cucumber salad!



WHAT TO KNOW:

- *TRUE LOVE STILL EXISTS, WITH EESHER: THE STORY OF A TAILOR CUM CUSTOMS OFFICER*



In this episode of NP'S Family Dynamics with Eesher, an officer shared with us his love story rooted in perseverance and loyalty.

"Dear Sis Eesher I started dating my wife (then girlfriend) in 2014. I was 19 years old and in my first year at Polytechnic, while she was 15 years old and in SS1.

After 9 wonderful years, we got married in January 2023. When she finished secondary school, she got admission into a university far from my state. Even though I didn't see her every day, I used to visit her house at least once a week and spend a few minutes in the place where we used to hang out.

That was the only thing that gave me relief. There was a time her friend called me from school on the first of April, telling me that my girlfriend had died. She was sick at the time, and I almost fainted. Her friend had to tell me the truth—that it was an April Fool's joke—before I came back to my senses. Sometimes, when the longing became too much, I would start having palpitations and chest pains, just like in the movies.

On her part, it took her almost one session to start concentrating in school because she missed me so much. After a full session, we were finally able to start coping well. She was in her final year at university when I formally asked for her hand in marriage, though everyone in her house already knew me.

I was a tailor, and she came from a well-to-do family, MashaAllah. Her family is polygamous, full of competition between wives and siblings. There were rich and classy suitors interested in her, but she always declined their requests because of me. I'm a hustler—I sponsored myself from my diploma to my first degree with money from my tailoring work. In her family, only her mum genuinely supported our relationship, but her stepmothers were happy that she was going to marry a tailor and "suffer in poverty." After our wedding was fixed, I got an offer from the Nigeria Customs Service, which led to postponing the date because I had to attend training. It was after I passed out from training that the wedding finally took place.

Many people were talking behind our backs, saying the classy and wealthy girl was going to end up with a tailor, not knowing I had become a commissioned officer.

We are now happily married. Not every man is this lucky, as my wife is extremely caring and respectful. She's religious, God-fearing, and an excellent cook. She prepares numerous dishes with passion, and if I ate ten times a day, she would willingly cook ten different delicacies. May Allah continue to bless my beautiful wife and our union in general."

Dear Anonymous

Thank you for sharing such a touching and inspiring story. It's rare to come across a love that endures trials, distance, and external pressures as beautifully as yours has.

Your journey from being a hardworking tailor to becoming a commissioned officer while holding on to the love of your life is truly remarkable.

Your relationship was built on genuine love, mutual respect, and patience. The loyalty your wife showed through the years, choosing you despite the pressures from suitors and her family's expectations, speaks volumes about the deep connection you both share. And for you, the way you hustled to build a future and remained devoted to her, even in difficult times, is a testament to your strength and character. May Allah continue to bless your marriage with happiness, love, and understanding.

SOCIALS/FASHION

BY JANE AISO
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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

Colour red and the season of love

Red is the colour of our blood and our hearts and has symbolizes love and fidelity in cultures across the world for centuries.

Red is a powerful colour that elicits powerful emotions associated with love, passion and desire, and emotions associated with anger, hatred, aggression and war.

Shades of red are crimson, maroon, salmon, tomato, fire brick, coral and orange red.

Primary reds works well with yellow, white, tawny-orange, green, blue and black. Tomato red works well with cyan, mint green, sand creamy, white and grey, light orange, sandy, pale yellow and beige. Raspberry red can work well with white, black and Damask rose

Facts about red

1. Red is the first colour that humans can perceive.
 2. It's at the far end of visible spectrum.
 3. The oldest cave painting is a red dot.
 4. Iron is why human blood is red.
 5. Finding the colour red attractive may be part of human biology
 6. It is the most common colour on national flags.
- It is the colour of roses, the symbol of love and it has been used to show love and devotion on Valentine's Day and special love dates for generation.



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TECH WORLD

BY JANE AISO, JanetAiso@neptuneprime.com.ng

GAMESCIENE

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

GADGETADDICT

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

web update

Google to invest \$75 bn in capital expenditures for 2025

Google parent company, Alphabet, has announced plans to invest approximately \$75 billion in capital expenditures for 2025 as part of its ongoing growth strategy.

The tech giant made this disclosure in its fourth-quarter earnings report for 2024.

Chief Executive Officer, Sundar Pichai, expressed confidence in the company's prospects, stating, "We are confident about the opportunities ahead, and to accelerate our progress, we expect to invest approximately \$75bn in capital expenditures in 2025."

As part of its strategic shift, Alphabet is speeding up the expansion of its data centres, focusing on next-generation AI infrastructure.

Microsoft, similarly, has allocated \$80bn for AI-related capital expenditures in its current fiscal year.

Meanwhile, Alphabet reported a 12 per cent increase in consolidated revenues for the fourth quarter, totalling \$96.5bn.

Google Services led the way with \$84.1bn in revenues, a 10 per cent year-over-year increase, driven by robust growth in Google Search and YouTube advertising.

Pichai commented on the company's momentum, saying, "Q4 was a strong quarter driven by our leadership in AI and overall business momentum. We are building, testing, and launching products and models faster than ever, making significant strides in computing and driving efficiencies."

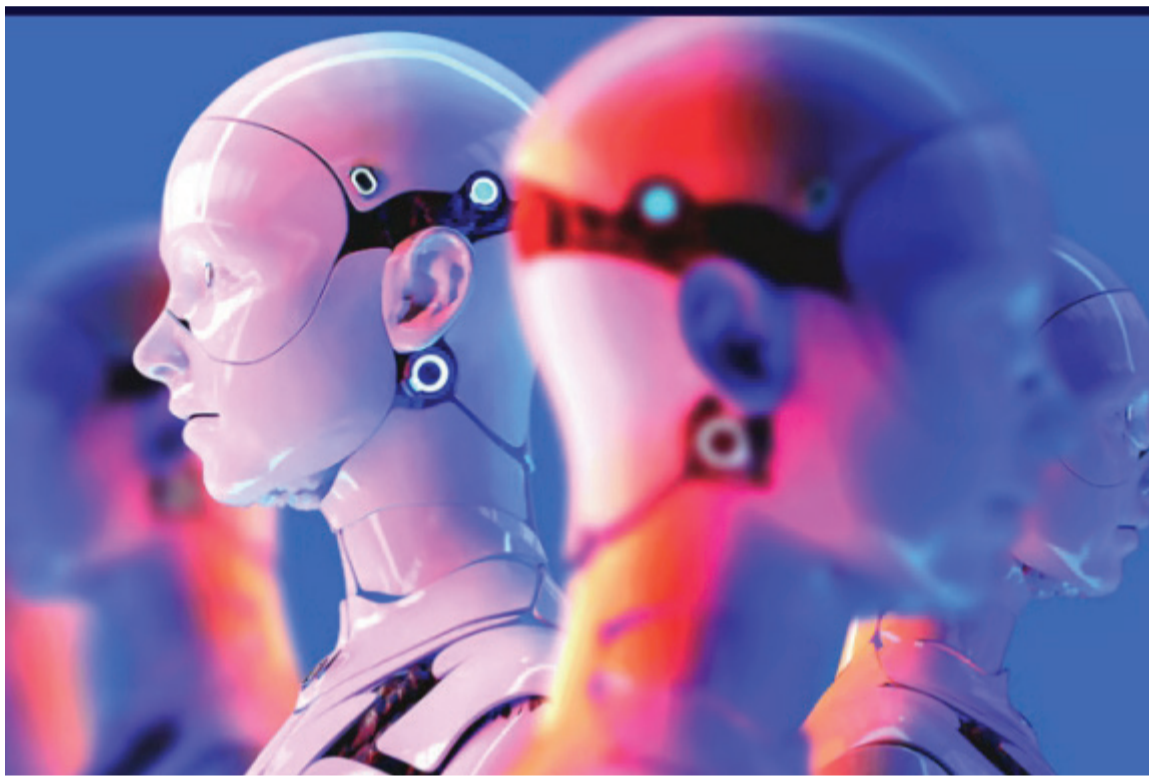
He further noted, "In Search, innovations like AI Overviews and Circle to Search are boosting user engagement. Our AI-powered Google Cloud portfolio is seeing stronger customer demand, while YouTube remains a leader in streaming watch time and podcasts."

"Together, Cloud and YouTube closed 2024 with an annual revenue run rate of \$110 billion. Our results underscore the power of our full-stack approach to AI innovation and the continued strength of our core businesses," Pichai added.

Top 26 humanoid robots in use right now

Humanoid robots mimic human expressions and movements and employ AI technologies to navigate complex environments and interactions. These are some of the top humanoid robots being used today.

While many humanoid robots are still in the early stages of development, a few have escaped research and development, entering the real world as bartenders, concierges, deep-sea divers and as companions for older adults. Some work in warehouses and factories, assisting humans in logistics and manufacturing. And others seem to offer more novelty and awe than anything else, conducting orchestras and greeting guests at conferences.



What Are Humanoid Robots?

Humanoid robots are robots that resemble and act like humans. Typically engineered to imitate authentic human expressions, interactions and movements, these robots are often outfitted with an array of cameras, sensors and AI and machine learning technologies.

How Are Humanoid Robots Being Used Today?

While more humanoid robots are being introduced into the world and making a positive impact in industries like logistics, manufacturing, healthcare and hospitality, their use is still limited, and development costs are high.

That said, the sector is expected to grow. The humanoid robot market was valued at \$2.03 billion in 2024 and is predicted to increase to more than \$13 billion by 2029, according to research firm MarketsandMarkets. Fueling that growth and demand will be advanced humanoid robots with greater AI capabilities and human-like features that can take on more duties in the service industry, education and healthcare.

In light of recent investments, the dawn of complex humanoid robots may come sooner than later. Google-backed Aptronik announced a Series A funding round of \$350 million, increasing the startup's capacity to produce its Apollo humanoid robots on a larger

scale. Seeing the promise that this industry holds, Apple is even considering a pivot to building humanoid robots. These developments come in the face of Tesla continuing to refine its Optimus robot, accelerating the race to deploy humanoid robots in the workforce.

How Are Humanoid Robots Being Used?

Hospitality: Some humanoid robots, like Kime, are pouring and serving customer drinks and snacks at self-contained kiosks in Spain. Some are even working as hotel concierges and in other

customer-facing roles.

Education: Humanoid Robots NAO and Pepper are working with students in educational settings, creating content and teaching programming.

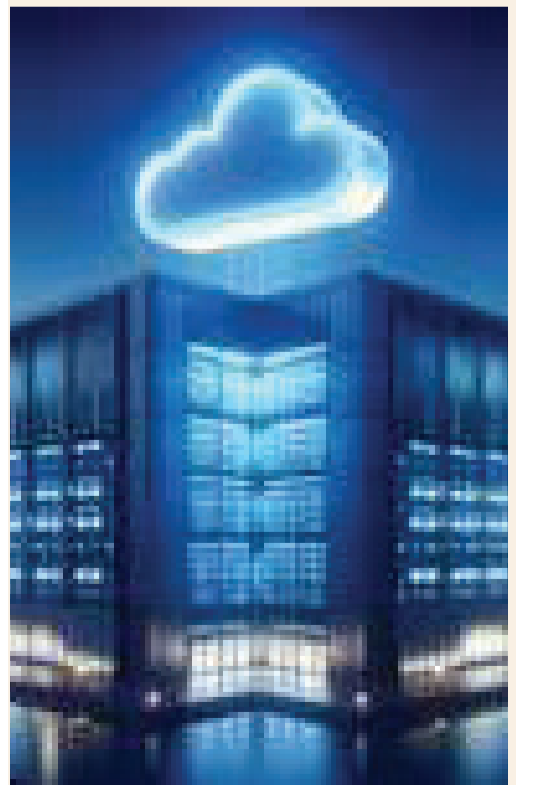
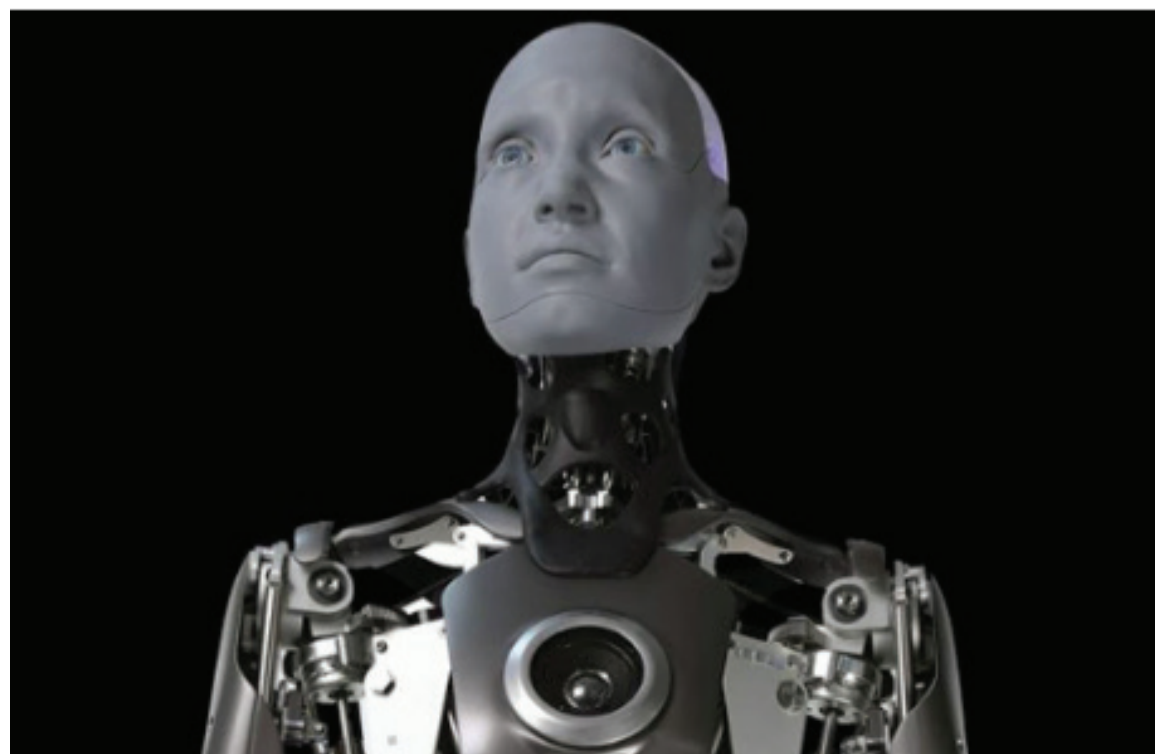
Healthcare: Other humanoid robots are providing services in healthcare settings, like communicating patient information and measuring vital signs.

But before companies can fully unleash their humanoid robots, pilot programs testing their ability to safely work and collaborate alongside human counterparts on factory floors, warehouses and elsewhere will have to be conducted. As part of these efforts,

UBTech has partnered with Foxconn to explore using humanoid robots to help assemble iPhones.

It's unclear how well humanoid robots will integrate into society and how well humans will accept their help. While some people will see the proliferation of these robots as creepy, dangerous or unneeded competition in the labor market, the potential benefits like increased efficiency and safety may outweigh many of the perceived consequences.

Either way, humanoid robots are poised to have a tremendous impact, and there are already some among us that we can look to for guidance. Here are a few examples of the top humanoid robots working in our world today.



WORLD NEWS

BY GIFT LUCKSON
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American female teacher surrenders following sexual affairs with student

A Texas high school teacher accused of having sex with a male student turned herself in to police custody this week, one year after she was indicted and a warrant was issued for her arrest.

Molly Colleen Spears, 35, an arts and language teacher at Barbers Hill School in Mont Belvieu, was arrested Tuesday and charged with second-degree improper relationship between educator and student for an incident on June 12, 2023, according to court records and local outlets.

She is also accused of contacting the student — whose age was not revealed — through text to meet up.

Spears, who started working at the Barbers Hill Independent School District in August 2021, resigned from her position in June 2023, the district announced, KPRC 2 reported.

"Molly Spears worked as a high school teacher for Barbers Hill ISD from August 2021 to June 2023. She resigned earlier this month," a district spokesperson told the outlet at the time.

"Per policy, the district will not confirm any internal investigation into any matter."

State records show her teaching certificate has been listed as "inactive" since September 2024, with the educator under investigation for alleged misconduct, according to Texas Education Agency records.

The now-former teacher was indicted by a Chambers County grand jury on Feb. 8, 2024, with a warrant for her arrest issued a few days later, court records show.

It remains unclear why she wasn't taken into custody at the time.

"Ms. Spears was first notified of the charges two days ago and we acted immediately to get the bond set up and in place," defense attorney Christopher L. Tritico told KPRC2.

"I cannot speak to why it sat for so dormant for so long. That is a question for the other side of the isle [sic]. Ms. Spears looks forward to having an opportunity to confront the allegations and to finally put this matter behind her."

The Barbers Hill ISD Police Department did not immediately respond to The Post's request for comment.

"The sicko teacher surrendered to the Chambers County Jail on Tuesday and was released on \$50,000 bond, the outlet reported.

If convicted, she could spend up to 20 years behind bars.

The school district previously made headlines when a black student with dreadlocks was suspended for violating the institution's dress code.



Hamas releases names of hostages for release on Saturday

Hamas has released the names of three hostages due to be freed on Saturday in exchange for Palestinian prisoners in Israel, after days of fears over the future of the ceasefire.

They are Russian-Israeli Alexander Troufanov, Argentinian-Israeli Yair Horn, and US-Israeli Sagui Dekel-Chen.

Israel has said it will resume bombing if the three are not released on time. The warning came after Hamas said it was postponing the releases in response to alleged Israeli violations of the ceasefire.

President Donald Trump said the ceasefire should be scrapped if Hamas did not release all the hostages held in Gaza by midday on Saturday.

Since the ceasefire began on 19 January, 16 Israeli and five Thai hostages have been released in exchange for 566 prisoners.

During the first six-week phase of the ceasefire, a total of 33 hostages should be freed in exchange for around 1,900 Palestinian prisoners and detainees in Israel.

The war was triggered by Hamas's attack on Israel on 7 October 2023, when gunmen killed about 1,200 people and took 251 hostages.

More than 48,230 people have been killed by the Israel offensive in Gaza since then, according to the territory's Hamas-run health ministry.

The ceasefire has been under strain since it began, with each side taking reciprocal action over alleged violations. Intense efforts by mediators US, Egypt and Qatar have managed to stop it from collapsing.

Israel has been especially infuriated by the staged way hostages have been released - publicly displayed on platforms alongside gunmen and in front of crowds of spectators, before being handed over to the Red Cross in chaotic scenes.

For its part, Hamas has accused Israel of preventing what the group says are the amount of tents and aid lorries required to be let into Gaza under the terms of the ceasefire.



How USAID funded Boko Haram, other terrorist groups

US Congressman Scott Perry has alleged that the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) inadvertently provided funding to terrorist organisations, including Boko Haram.

Perry, a Republican representing Pennsylvania, made the claim during the inaugural hearing of the Subcommittee on Delivering on Government Efficiency on Thursday.

The session, titled "The War on Waste: Stamping Out the Scourge of Improper Payments and Fraud," focused on alleged misappropriations of taxpayer funds.

"Who gets some of that money? Does that name ring a bell to anybody in the room? Because your money, your money, \$697 million annually, plus the shipments of cash funds in Madrasas, ISIS, Al-Qaeda, Boko Haram, ISIS Khorasan, terrorist training camps. That's what it's funding," Perry said.

According to the subcommittee's website, it will "actively work with President Trump's Department of Government Efficiency to root out waste, shore up vulnerable payment systems, and fully investigate schemes to defraud taxpayers."

Perry further cited USAID's reported funding of \$136 million for building 120 schools in Pakistan, alleging that there was "zero evidence" of the schools' construction.

Perry added, "If you think that the programme under Operation Enduring Sentinel entitled Women's Scholarship Endowment, which receives \$60 million annually, or the Young Women Lead, which gets about \$5 million annually, is going to women who, by the way, if you read the Inspector General's report, is telling you that the Taliban does not allow women to speak in public, yet somehow you're believing, and American people are supposed to believe, that this money is going for the betterment of the women in Afghanistan. It is not."

"You are funding terrorism, and it's coming through USAID. And it's not just Afghanistan, because Pakistan's right next door."

"USAID spent \$840 million in the last year, the last 20 years, on Pakistan's education-related programme. It includes \$136 million to build 120 schools, of which there is zero evidence that any of them were built. Why would there be any evidence? The Inspector General can't get in to see them."

"But you know what? We doubled down and spent \$20 million from USAID to create educational television programs for children unable to attend physical school. Yeah, they can't attend it, because it doesn't exist. You paid for it."

"Somebody else got the money. You are paying for terrorism. This has got to end."

US President Donald Trump has previously called for the closure of USAID, accusing the agency of corruption in a post on his Truth Social platform.

The move is part of Trump's, and his billionaire ally Elon Musk's, drive to shrink the US government.

Musk, whom Trump appointed to lead the Department of Government Efficiency, has also criticised USAID, alleging that it engages in rogue operations.

Musk has called USAID "a viper's nest of radical-left Marxists who hate America" and has vowed to shut it down.

SPACE
AVAILABLE

The Arbiter

BY HASSAN GIMBA
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Can Buni tame the Lake Chad curse?

That is the question. Perhaps we should first take a look at Lake Chad and Mai Mala Buni, the governor of Yobe State and current chairman of the Lake Chad Basin Governors' Forum.

The Lake Chad Basin is an area of about 2,434,000 square kilometres (940,000 square miles), roughly 8 per cent of Africa. It includes parts of Cameroon, Chad, Nigeria, and Niger and is fed by the Chari, Logone, and Yobe Rivers.

There are around 30 million inhabitants and over 70 ethnic groups, with their primary sources of livelihood being farming, fishing, and animal husbandry. The lakeside is rich in reeds and swamps, while the plains along the lake are fertile, making it an important area for irrigated agriculture. The lake is abundant in aquatic resources and is one of the key freshwater fish-producing regions in Africa. It is an important ecological site for thousands of migratory birds, with over 350 species listed.

However, the shrinking of the lake and insurgency have adversely affected this economic zone. It has harmed the economic fortunes of Borno and Yobe, the two Nigerian states bordering it, as well as those of the other countries sharing the lake.

Any population faced with hunger due to a natural phenomenon, such as the shrinking of the lake, and a man-made disaster, like insurgency, will undoubtedly struggle for survival. Sometimes, when such a population is spread across countries, the nations involved may become suspicious of one another, potentially leading to conflict if not handled with maturity.

These are some of the reasons why Sir Tafawa Balewa, Prime Minister of Nigeria, François Tombalbaye of Chad, Hamani Diori of Niger, and Ahmadu Ahidjo of Cameroon came together



to establish the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) on 22 May 1964, with its headquarters in N'Djamena, Chad. This made the LCBC Africa's oldest river or lake basin organisation, funded through contributions from member states.

They created it as an intergovernmental organisation to manage Lake Chad and its shared resources, preserve the ecosystems of the Basin, promote regional integration, peace, and security, and examine complaints and settle disputes.

The membership later expanded to include Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria, Algeria, the Central African Republic, Libya, and Sudan. The Central African Republic joined the organisation in 1996, and Libya was admitted in 2008.

The late Libyan leader, Mu'ammarr Ghaddafi, had the vision to make the LCBC purposeful for the benefit of the region, thereby pumping needed funds into its running. However, his assassination in October 2011, derailed that march causing a lull in its activities.

To resuscitate the ideals

behind setting it, the LCBC Governors' Forum was established in 2018 as a regional initiative that aims to promote dialogue and cooperation in the Lake Chad Basin. Established by governors from areas affected by Boko Haram, it is an annual platform for governors and other stakeholders to discuss ways to improve the region's security, trade, and economic recovery.

Therefore with the mandate to be a key platform for promoting peace and addressing the region's humanitarian crises, it is

an important political and pivotal platform for uniting regional stakeholders and visionaries to confront the intersecting challenges of human development. The forum encourages cross-border cooperation and security and provides a space for dialogue and coordination between member states.

However, all these lofty ideals cannot be achieved as long as there is mutual suspicion and unhealthy competition among member states. One could say there is no love lost between Nigeria and Niger at the moment. Cameroon has been our eternal "Derby partner," our relationship with Chad is not at the level it should be, and now Niger is veering down a questionable path. The truth is that a country's security and economic well-being are closely linked to the quality of its relations with its neighbours.

Just before the LCBC 5th Governors' Forum, held between 29 and 31 January this year in Maiduguri and hosted by the Yobe State Government, where Governor Mai Mala Buni emerged as the chairman, Nigeria and Niger Republic could hardly be described as the best of friends.

General Abdourahamane Tchiani, the leader of Niger, had accused his Nigerian counterpart, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, of conspiring with the French government of Emmanuel Macron to destabilise his country, an allegation the Nigerian government has stoutly denied.

This accusation and the rebuttal threaten to sour the otherwise friendly and brotherly relations between the citizens of Niger and Nigeria. Some local singers on both sides of the divide have since begun hurling insults at each other. With a shrinking asset and the scourge of insecurity threatening agricultural activities, this is one unwelcome distraction too many.

Generally, such altercations are instigated internally by fifth columnists on the payroll of neo-colonialists, who would never want to see Africa united, at peace with itself, and developed. If left unchecked, the exchange of words could escalate into violent conflict. Unrest, lawlessness, and anarchy could paralyse states, and upheavals in the name of revolutions may take hold. With the breakdown of law and order, societies and nations are lost. We have witnessed this in Somalia, Iraq, Libya, Sudan, and now Syria.

This is where the LCBC Governors come in with their mandate. However, navigating such terrain to bring peace, unity, security, and ultimately economic prosperity can be a daunting task, one that will put to test the leadership skills, political acumen, diplomatic finesse, and bridge-building capacity of Mai Mala Buni, the chairman of that forum.

Fortunately, he has experience; he has done it before. When his party, the All Progressives Congress (APC), was on the brink of collapse, it was to him that the party turned. He was able to stabilise it, expand it, reconcile warring factions, unite it, and strengthen it, allowing it to retain power in the last elections.

Can he replicate that success - that Midas touch that reignited the APC - at a multilateral forum such as the LCBC, plagued by the eyes and conflicting interests of the international community? Only time will tell. But whatever the outcome, both Buni and the LCBC will never be the same again by the end of his two-year tenure.

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