

OurNigeria

June 2026

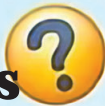
NEWS MAGAZINE
Out Of Many, One (e pluribus unum)

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the Tides:
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Celebrates
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on Culture,
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Constitution of Nigeria

Constitution of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended). This is the official text of the Constitution of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended). It is the supreme law of the country and governs the relationship between the state and its citizens.

Sec. 137

Sec. 137 of the Constitution of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended). This section deals with the powers of the President of Nigeria.



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Between Reform and Reality

Nigeria today stands at a delicate intersection between aspiration and accountability. Across politics, healthcare, security, education, culture, and economic survival, the country continues to wrestle with an urgent question: are reforms truly reaching the ordinary citizen, or are they remaining trapped within policy documents and political speeches? This edition of OurNigeria News Magazine confronts that question directly through stories that reflect both the promises and contradictions shaping the nation's present reality.

Three years into the administration of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, Nigerians remain sharply divided between hope and frustration. Government officials point to reforms, strategic blueprints, and institutional restructuring as signs of progress. Yet on the streets, in rural communities, and inside overcrowded hospitals, many citizens continue to measure governance not by announcements but by lived experience.

Our cover stories this month reveal this tension with unmistakable clarity.

On one hand, there are visible efforts toward reform. In the health sector, ambitious initiatives around universal healthcare, workforce expansion, infrastructure renewal, and local pharmaceutical production indicate a government attempting a more coordinated strategy than in previous years. Security operations have intensified across regions battling insurgency, banditry, kidnapping, and oil theft. Educational interventions like NELFUND seek to widen access and reposition young Nigerians as assets rather than burdens to national development. These are not insignificant efforts.

But reforms mean little if they fail to translate into visible relief for citizens.

What does healthcare reform mean

to a pregnant woman forced to choose between survival and hospital bills? What does economic policy mean to families struggling daily under inflation and rising living costs? What does security strategy mean to farming communities still sleeping in fear of midnight attacks? What does democratic governance mean to young people increasingly disconnected from institutions they no longer trust?

These are the realities this edition interrogates.

Particularly alarming is the continued erosion of public systems. Our report on Nigeria's healthcare sector exposes a dangerous trajectory where public hospitals are increasingly overwhelmed while private healthcare becomes the reluctant refuge for those who can somehow afford it. The migration of doctors and nurses abroad has created an alarming vacuum that no short-term recruitment can immediately replace. The consequences are not abstract statistics; they are human tragedies unfolding quietly across communities.

Equally concerning is the persistence of insecurity despite intensified military operations. While there have been gains against insurgents and criminal networks, violence continues to reshape ordinary existence across several parts of the country. Entire communities now live within a permanent psychology of uncertainty. Farmers abandon land. Businesses close early. Parents raise children under the shadow of fear. A nation cannot sustainably develop where safety itself feels temporary.

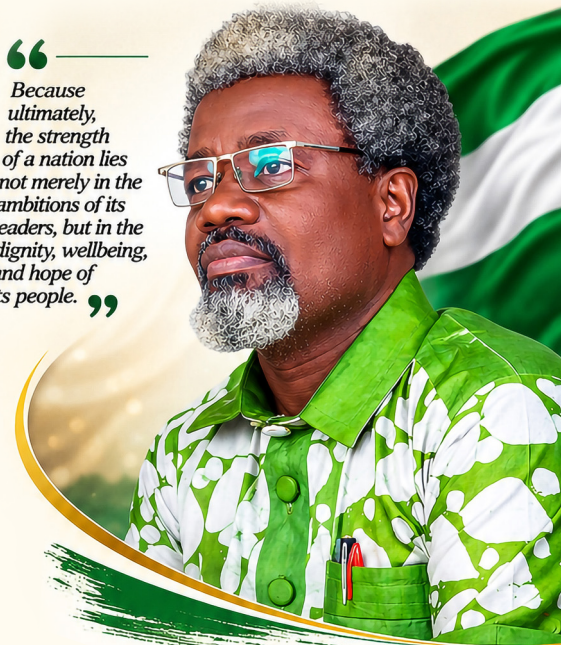
Yet amid these sobering realities, there are still reasons for cautious optimism.

One of the strongest themes emerging from this edition is the growing recognition that development must become more human-centred. Across our interviews, features, and opinion pieces, there is increasing emphasis on inclusion, youth empowerment, cultural diplomacy, education, creativity, and sustainable partnerships. Whether through international cooperation, arts and literature, technology-driven governance, or grassroots innovation, Nigerians continue to demonstrate resilience and imagination in the face of structural challenges.

Indeed, perhaps Nigeria's greatest strength remains its people.

From healthcare professionals struggling

“Because ultimately, the strength of a nation lies not merely in the ambitions of its leaders, but in the dignity, wellbeing, and hope of its people.”



within broken systems, to artists preserving cultural memory, to young innovators navigating uncertain futures, there remains an enduring refusal to surrender completely to despair. That resilience deserves more than admiration; it deserves leadership capable of matching the sacrifices citizens already make daily.

The truth is simple: governance cannot survive on rhetoric alone. Citizens increasingly demand measurable outcomes, transparency, competence, and empathy. Nigerians are no longer satisfied with promises detached from reality. They want functioning institutions, accessible healthcare, safe communities, quality education, accountable leadership, and opportunities that reward merit rather than connections.

As this edition demonstrates, Nigeria's future will not be determined solely by political declarations or economic forecasts. It will be determined by whether reforms can genuinely touch ordinary lives.

At OurNigeria News Magazine, we remain committed to documenting that journey honestly — celebrating progress where it exists, interrogating failure where it persists, and amplifying conversations that matter to national development.

Because ultimately, the strength of a nation lies not merely in the ambitions of its leaders, but in the dignity, wellbeing, and hope of its people.



Om'Oba Jerry Adesewo

Editor-in-Chief
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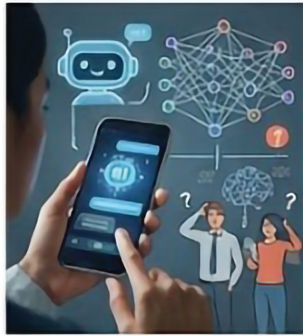
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FOR THE RECORD

1 AI Is Everywhere. Understanding Is Not. Global | Technology

AI tools reached billions of users by 2026, yet digital literacy lagged far behind. Most people use AI daily but can't explain how it works, spot hallucinations, or manage data risks. Access outpaced comprehension, creating a new kind of digital divide between users and informed users



2 Water Stress Is the New Oil Shock Middle East & South Asia | Environment

Aquifer depletion and shifting rainfall patterns made water scarcity the top geopolitical risk for 2026. Unlike oil, water can't be shipped easily or stockpiled. The countries adapting fastest are winning agricultural stability, while others face migration and conflict driven by drought.



3 Remote Work Ended. Hybrid Won. Global | Work & Economy

The debate between fully remote and office-only largely ended by 2026. Companies that survived kept 3-day hybrid models tied to team function, not policy. Productivity gains stuck where managers measured output, not hours. The office returned, but as a collaboration hub, not a requirement.



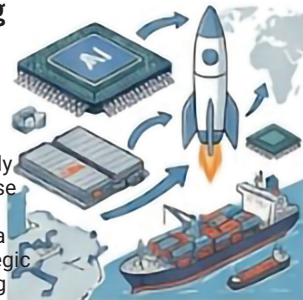
4 Mental Health Funding Can't Keep Up With Demand OECD Countries | Health

Public spending on mental health rose 18% since 2022, but wait times and youth crisis rates kept climbing. Social media, economic pressure, and fragmented services outpaced the system's capacity. Prevention programmes show promise, but treatment remains reactive and overloaded.



5 Manufacturing Is Coming Home—Selectively US, EU, India | Trade & Industry

Reshoring and "friendshoring" accelerated after 2023, but only for chips, batteries, and defense tech. Labor-intensive goods stayed offshore. The result is a two-speed supply chain: strategic goods are localised, everything else still follows cost.



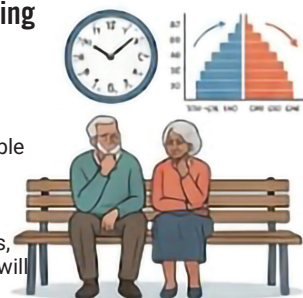
6 Youth Culture Is Fragmenting Faster Than Algorithms Can Track Global | Culture & Media

By 2026, no single platform or trend dominates globally. TikTok, YouTube Shorts, and local apps splinter audiences by language, niche, and micro-community. Marketers and politicians struggle to reach "everyone" because "everyone" no longer shares the same feed.



7 Pension Systems Are Hitting the Demographic Wall Europe & East Asia | Demographics

Aging populations pushed dependency ratios past sustainable levels in Italy, Japan, and South Korea. Retirement ages crept up, but birth rates didn't recover. The quiet crisis is fiscal: more retirees, fewer workers, and less political will to cut benefits or raise taxes



8 Cybersecurity Is Now a Boardroom Metric Global | Business & Tech

After repeated attacks on critical infrastructure, cyber risk became a standard board agenda item by 2026. Insurance premiums, incident response times, and third-party vendor audits now influence valuations. Security shifted from IT's problem to a CEO-level liability.



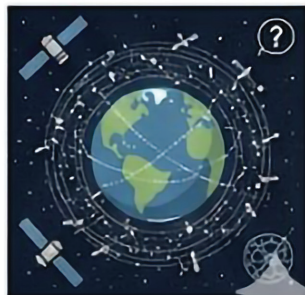
9 Food Prices Stabilised. Nutrition Didn't. Sub-Saharan Africa | Food Security

Global grain prices eased after 2024, but dietary diversity worsened in low-income regions. Households substituted calories for nutrients to cope with years of high costs. Stunting and micronutrient deficiencies persist even where hunger numbers look better on paper.



10 Space Is Crowded, Rules Are Not Global | Science & Geopolitics

Low Earth orbit hosts over 15,000 active satellites as of 2026. Commercial launches outpace regulatory frameworks, raising collision risks and signal interference. The race isn't just to orbit anymore; it's to define who governs it before it gets unusable.



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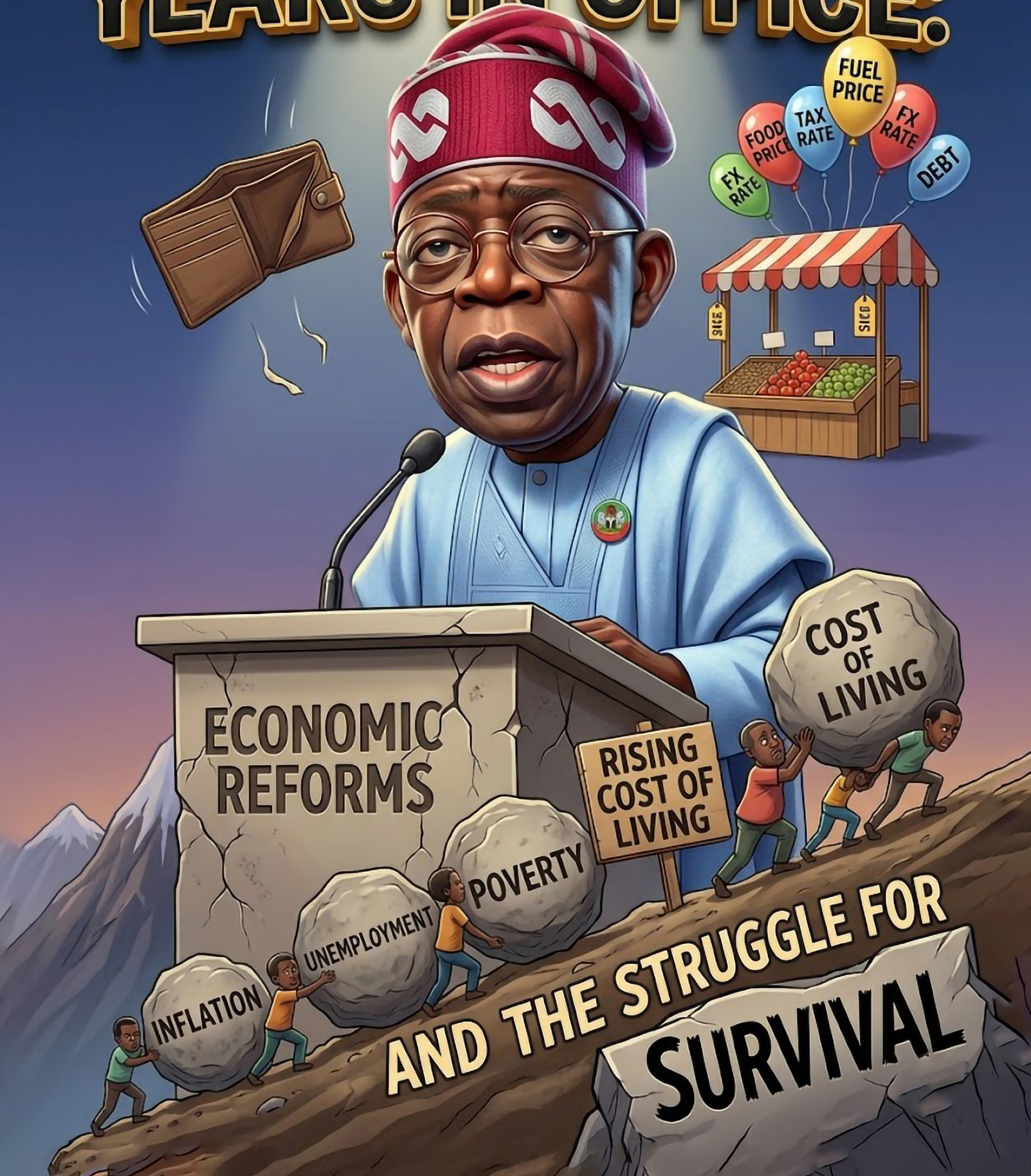
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SCAN ME

TINUBU'S THREE YEARS IN OFFICE:



Economic Reforms, Rising Cost of Living, and the Struggle for Survival

By Matthew Eloyi

Three years into President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's administration, Nigeria's economic story is increasingly defined not by technical reforms or macroeconomic indicators, but by a harsh reality that millions of citizens say they confront daily: life has become more expensive, more uncertain, and more difficult to sustain.

From the moment the administration announced the removal of fuel subsidy in May 2023, the economy entered a new phase of disruption. What followed was a rapid escalation in transport fares, food prices, rent, and general cost of living. The government framed the policy as a necessary correction to decades of fiscal inefficiency, but for many Nigerians, it marked the beginning of sustained economic hardship.

The simultaneous liberalization of the foreign exchange market compounded the situation. The naira weakened significantly, and the cost of imported goods rose sharply. Inflation accelerated, eroding purchasing power and pushing households into difficult adjustments that have now become part of everyday survival.

Across the country, the impact has been visible and widespread. In urban centres like Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt, transport costs have multiplied several times compared to pre-2023 levels. Food inflation has forced many families to reduce consumption, substitute meals, or depend on cheaper alternatives. Small businesses, particularly those dependent on fuel and imported inputs, have

struggled to remain afloat under rising operating costs.

Critics argue that while the administration pursued bold reforms, it failed to adequately cushion their immediate impact on citizens. The removal of subsidies and currency reforms were implemented almost simultaneously, a decision many economists say intensified inflationary pressures and deepened economic distress.

Labour groups and civil society organisations have repeatedly warned that the reforms, without strong social safety nets, have widened inequality and worsened poverty levels. Many households, especially in the informal sector, have seen incomes stagnate while expenses continue to rise.

Although government officials insist that the reforms were unavoidable and necessary to prevent long-term economic collapse, critics say the approach reflects a disconnect between policy design and lived realities. They argue that macroeconomic stability is being pursued at the expense of social welfare.

Inflation remains one of the most pressing challenges. Even where there are claims of gradual moderation, prices of essential goods remain far above what most households earned in previous years. Food inflation, in particular, continues to place severe pressure on families, with basic staples becoming increasingly unaffordable for low-income earners.

The administration has pointed

to improved fiscal revenues and foreign exchange stability as signs of progress. However, these indicators have not translated into visible relief for the majority of citizens. Instead, many Nigerians describe the period as one of "economic survival," where planning for the future has been replaced by daily adjustment to rising costs.

The widening gap between economic statistics and everyday experience has become a central criticism of the government's economic direction. While official reports highlight reforms and structural adjustments, public sentiment remains largely shaped by the rising cost of living.

As the country gradually moves toward the 2027 political cycle, economic hardship is expected to remain a defining issue. The administration's challenge is no longer only about defending its reforms, but about convincing citizens that the pain of adjustment will eventually lead to tangible improvement in their living standards.

For now, however, the dominant narrative across many households remains one of strain, frustration, and economic fatigue in the face of policies that have reshaped Nigeria's economic landscape without yet delivering broad relief.

‘Eight Years or Four?’

What the Constitution Really Says About Tinubu’s Tenure



The debate over whether President Bola Tinubu should complete eight years in office has intensified across Nigeria’s political landscape. Supporters frame it as a matter of constitutional right and political balance. Critics insist that democracy does not guarantee any leader automatic renewal. Beneath the rhetoric lies a more precise legal and democratic question: what does the Constitution actually provide?

The starting point is the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Section 135 establishes that a President holds office for a term of four years beginning from the date he takes the oath. Section 137 limits any individual to a maximum of two such terms.

The legal interpretation is straightforward: the

Constitution permits a president to serve up to eight years — but only if re-elected.

It does not confer an automatic eight-year entitlement. The first four years are constitutionally protected once a candidate is duly elected and sworn in. The second four years are contingent on the sovereign will of the electorate.

This distinction matters.

Supporters of Tinubu's potential eight-year tenure advance three principal arguments.

First is constitutional stability. Once elected, a president must be allowed to govern without extra-constitutional disruption. Democratic order depends on respecting electoral outcomes and tenure provisions. Any attempt to prematurely truncate a lawful mandate without impeachment or other constitutional mechanisms undermines institutional stability.

Second is policy continuity. Structural reforms — fiscal realignment, subsidy removal, security restructuring, infrastructure modernization — typically require time horizons that extend beyond a single term. Political science research consistently shows that abrupt leadership turnover can interrupt reform cycles and weaken investor confidence. A second term, supporters argue, allows consolidation rather than perpetual restart.

Third is the informal but longstanding principle of rotational politics. Since 1999, Nigeria's major parties have often alternated presidential power between North and South as a means of managing diversity in a deeply plural federation. Proponents maintain that completing a southern presidency for two terms strengthens national balance after eight years of northern leadership.

However, critics counter with equally weighty democratic concerns.

Foremost is constitutional purism. Nowhere does the Constitution recognize zoning or rotation. It recognizes universal suffrage and competitive elections. To treat a

second term as predetermined, opponents argue, risks elevating political convention above constitutional democracy.

Celebrity politicians like the former Vice President and serial presidential candidate, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, have argued that no office in a republic is regionally reserved or politically guaranteed. Elections, not elite agreements, determine legitimacy.

A second concern is accountability. Democratic theory rests on retrospective judgment: citizens evaluate performance and decide whether to renew a mandate. Civil society organizations, including Amnesty International, have raised concerns on governance and rights issues during the current administration. While such criticisms do not bar re-election, they reinforce the principle that renewal must be earned, not presumed.

Finally, framing a second term as inevitable can weaken competitive democracy. Healthy political systems require credible opposition, open contestation, and voter choice. Democracy thrives not on entitlement but on persuasion.

So where does that leave the country?

The constitutionally sound position is clear. President Tinubu has the full right to serve his current four-year term. He has the constitutional right to seek a second term. Nigerians have the equally constitutional right to grant or deny that request at the ballot box.

Eight years is a possibility under the law, not a guarantee. The Constitution provides the ceiling; the voters determine whether it is reached.

In the end, the question is not whether Tinubu should be “allowed” eight years. It is whether, in 2027, Nigerians will judge his first term worthy of renewal. That decision belongs not to party strategists, regional advocates, or opposition figures but to the electorate itself.

That is how constitutional democracy is meant to function.



INSIDE NIGERIA'S INSECURITY CRISIS:

How Violence is Destroying Ordinary Lives and Communities

Comfort Pius

The sound of gunshots shattered the midnight silence as terrified residents fled into nearby bushes carrying crying children and whatever belongings they could grab. Within minutes, homes were burning, motorcycles roared through narrow village paths, and frightened families watched helplessly as armed men disappeared into the darkness with several kidnapped villagers.

By dawn, the once peaceful farming community in northern Nigeria had become another entry in a growing national tragedy.

Across villages, towns, and highways, insecurity is no longer a distant headline. It is a lived reality shaping how ordinary Nigerians sleep, travel, work, and survive. Banditry, kidnapping, terrorism, and violent attacks have become constant threats to community life.

A crisis backed by rising numbers

Recent security data shows the depth of the problem. Between mid-2024 and mid-2025, Nigeria recorded about 4,722 abductions in nearly 1,000 incidents, with kidnappers reportedly collecting over ₦2.5 billion in ransom payments. In 2025 alone, the country also witnessed more than 3,000 kidnapping cases and over

4,600 violent deaths, driven largely by banditry and terrorism.

These figures are not just statistics; they represent shattered families, abandoned communities, and disrupted livelihoods.

Lives behind the violence

In rural communities, insecurity has become a permanent shadow over daily life. Farmer Musa Ibrahim recalls the night armed men invaded his village. "They came shooting everywhere," he said quietly. "We ran into the bush. My brother was taken, and we sold our land to pay the ransom."

Even after his return, life did not return to normal. Fear remains constant, and many families in his community now sleep in anxiety, unsure of what tomorrow brings.

Security analyst James Samuel explains the deeper damage:

"Insecurity affects people psychologically long after attacks end. Many victims continue living with trauma, fear, and emotional instability, especially children."

Farming communities under pressure

Agriculture, the backbone of rural Nigeria, is under severe strain.

In many states, farmers now

abandon fertile land due to repeated attacks by armed groups. This reduction in farming activity has contributed to declining food production and rising prices across the country.

Markets in affected areas also operate under fear, with shortened hours and reduced activity. Transport routes once bustling with trade are now avoided, especially at night.

For trader Zainab Yusuf, survival has become uncertain.

"Before, I sold vegetables every day," she said. "Now people are afraid to come to the market. Everything has changed."

Terrorism and displacement

In the North-East, terrorism continues to leave deep scars on communities. Entire villages have been destroyed, forcing thousands of families into displacement camps. These camps, though providing temporary shelter, often lack adequate food, healthcare, and education. Many children have grown up knowing only conflict, displacement, and instability.

Security reports show Nigeria remains one of the countries most affected by terrorism-related violence in recent years, with ongoing attacks continuing to displace communities and disrupt

development.

Military operations and security response

The Nigerian military and other security agencies have intensified operations across affected regions. These include air raids, ground offensives, and coordinated missions targeting criminal hideouts in forests and remote communities.

Several hostages have been

at night, monitor movements, and alert authorities to suspicious activity.

Traditional rulers and religious leaders also play key roles in encouraging peace and reporting threats.

But security experts warn that without proper training and regulation, community defence structures may create unintended risks.

environment where criminal groups can recruit, expand, and operate with relative ease.

The human cost

Beyond statistics and policy discussions, insecurity is silently dismantling ordinary life.

Families are separated. Children grow up in fear. Farmers abandon their land. Communities lose trust in safety systems. Economic activities shrink in affected regions.

What remains is a population adapting to uncertainty as part of daily existence.

A nation at a crossroads

Despite ongoing military operations and government interventions, insecurity continues to evolve and spread across regions.

Experts insist that lasting solutions must go beyond force. Investments in education,

job creation, rural development, and stronger community-based intelligence systems are essential to breaking the cycle of violence.

For now, however, many Nigerians continue to live with uncertainty. In villages and cities alike, insecurity has become more than a disruption; it has become a way of life. And in many communities, the most haunting question remains unanswered:

Will tomorrow finally be safe?



rescued, and some bandit camps have been destroyed in the process, but, despite these efforts, insecurity persists in many areas.

Experts argue that military force alone cannot end the crisis without stronger intelligence gathering, improved coordination, and deeper community cooperation.

Communities taking security into their own hands

In response, many communities have formed local vigilante groups to support official security efforts. Young men now patrol villages

Why insecurity persists

Analysts consistently point to deeper structural issues:

- Widespread poverty and unemployment
- Weak governance and corruption concerns
- Limited rural infrastructure and development
- Poor intelligence coordination
- Easy access to illegal weapons

These factors create an

BEYOND RHETORIC: HOW GOOD GOVERNANCE TRANSFORMS YOUTH DEVELOPMENT —THE NELFUND PARADIGM

Comrade Philip O. Ikodor

In the realm of public policy, governance is often defined as the machinery, the rules, institutions, and processes that determine “who gets what, when, and how.” For the youth

demographic, this definition carries the weight of destiny. At its best, good governance acts as a bridge, transforming lofty policy intentions into tangible life opportunities. At its worst, bad

governance reduces the aspirations of a generation to mere headlines and empty press releases.

**The Governance-Youth Nexus:
Three Pillars of Impact**
To understand how good



governance shapes the future of young people, we must examine the intersection of trust, resource management, and strategic coherence.

1. Reclaiming Trust through Participation

The relationship between youth and the state is often defined by a “trust deficit.” Data from the OECD indicates that in 2019, only 45.6% of young people in member countries expressed confidence in their national governments. When young people perceive institutions as opaque or unresponsive, they retreat from the civic space, resulting in low voter turnout and political apathy. Good governance reverses this trend by moving beyond tokenism. By creating formal channels for youth input and, crucially, demonstrating that this input leads to policy shifts, governments can transform cynical bystanders into active stakeholders.

2. Accountability in Resource Allocation

History is littered with well-intentioned youth programs that withered due to fund diversion and lack of follow-through. Governance mechanisms, such as independent audits, real-time public reporting, and youth-led advisory boards, act as the “guardrails” of development. A recent example can be seen in Ekiti State, where a ₦29 million youth empowerment disbursement was explicitly tied to strict transparency protocols. When every naira is accounted for, the “leakage” that typically plagues public initiatives is minimized, ensuring that capital reaches the hands of those it was intended to empower.

3. The Power of Policy Coherence

Youth development cannot thrive in a vacuum. Effective governance breaks down the “silos” between education, vocational training, and the labor market. The ultimate goal of coherent governance is to ensure that a young person’s

education is not a road to nowhere, but a pathway to a productive future within their own borders, mitigating the “brain drain” that currently depletes emerging economies.

NELFUND: A Masterclass in Governance-Driven Development

The Nigerian Education Loan Fund (NELFUND), launched under the “Renewed Hope Agenda,” serves as a potent case study in how deliberate governance design dictates impact. Far from being just another fund, NELFUND’s architecture reflects a shift toward institutional excellence.

A Robust Legal Foundation: The transition from the 2023 Student Loan Act to the comprehensive 2024 NELFUND Act provided the legal stability necessary to mitigate political risk. By expanding coverage to include not just tuition but also upkeep and vocational training (TVET), the law acknowledged the holistic needs of the modern student.

Execution at Scale: The numbers tell a story of efficiency. By 2026, NELFUND had processed over 1 million applications and disbursed more than ₦116 billion to 396,000+ students. Furthermore, the approval of ₦120 billion for TVET programs signals a shift toward closing the critical skills gap.

Economic Alignment: NELFUND has moved Nigeria away from “degrees for degrees’ sake.” By targeting high-demand sectors like tech, healthcare, and agripreneurship, the fund ensures that beneficiaries are not just graduates, but employable assets in a digital economy.

Leadership and Mandate: Under the direct oversight of the Presidency and led by a management team with private-sector discipline, the fund has prioritized the meritocratic ideal: that access to opportunity should be dictated by ability and

aspiration, not by background or “connection.”

The Path Forward: Strengthening the Framework

While NELFUND has set a new standard, the journey toward perfect governance is iterative. To ensure long-term sustainability, four key areas must be prioritized:

Institutionalized Youth Representation: Moving from being beneficiaries to being monitors. A formal Youth Advisory Body should be integrated to identify “on-the-ground” barriers to access.

Digital Transparency: The adoption of real-time dashboards to track disbursements and repayment rates will bolster public confidence and prevent future corruption.

Cross-Program Integration: NELFUND should not exist in isolation. Linking beneficiaries directly to entrepreneurship funds (like NYIF) and digital skills initiatives (like 3MTT and iDICE) will ensure that loans are seamlessly converted into jobs.

Decentralized Outreach: Governance must reach the “last mile,” ensuring that rural and low-income students have the same digital literacy and support to apply as their urban counterparts.

Conclusion: From Demographic Risk to Dividend
NELFUND proves that when good governance prioritizes accountability and market alignment, the results are immediate and transformative. Good governance does more than just fund youth; it validates them as the foundation of national growth. If Nigeria can maintain and expand these principles, it will successfully pivot its massive youth population from a potential “youth bulge” risk into a permanent demographic dividend.

The message is clear: when the rules of the game are fair, transparent, and efficient, everyone wins.

Inside Tinubu's Health Sector Reforms:

Dr. Ovuoraye on Universal Healthcare, Workforce Crisis and Nigeria's Renewed Health Agenda

By Jerry Adesewo and Philip Ikodor

As President Bola Ahmed Tinubu marks three years in office, few sectors have carried as much public expectation — and scrutiny — as healthcare.

From the migration of doctors and nurses abroad to overstretched hospitals, rising treatment costs, and widening rural healthcare gaps, Nigeria's health sector remains both a reflection of national struggles and a test of government credibility.

Yet within the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, officials insist the current administration is attempting something more ambitious than isolated interventions: a structural reset of the Nigerian healthcare system under what the government describes as the “Renewed Health Agenda”, being strategically led by the visionary Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Mohammed Ali Pate.

Dr. John Ajiwohwodoma Ovuoraye, Director of Health Planning, Research and Statistics at the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, said emphatically that, judging by steps currently being taken by the President and Commander in Chief through the Honourable Minister of Health, Nigeria will



in no distant time move closer to achieving its health vision for Nigerians.

Soft-spoken but deeply policy-driven, Dr. Ovuoraye represents the technocratic layer of Nigeria's healthcare system often hidden behind ministerial headlines and political announcements. A distinguished medical doctor, public health expert, researcher,

Before assuming his current role, he served as Director and Head of the Gender, Adolescent, School Health and Elderly (GASHE) Division and later as Director of Family Health Services. Over the years, he has represented Nigeria at major global platforms, including the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York and the

of Social Policy and Intervention, where he shared Nigeria's experience in translating public policy into measurable health interventions.

In an exclusive assessment interview with OurNigeria News Magazine, Dr. Ovuoraye described the Tinubu administration's healthcare reforms as an evolving attempt to rethink coordination,



Photo Credit: News Agency of Nigeria

and fellow of the West African College of Physicians in Family Medicine, his career spans more than two decades across reproductive health, maternal care, adolescent health, school health, nutrition, elderly care, and health systems development.

United Nations Commission on Population and Development.

He also served on the Global Steering Committee to End Female Genital Mutilation between 2023 and 2024 and was a guest speaker at Oxford University's Department

financing, inclusiveness, and delivery across the sector.

"One of the things governance requires is periodic reflection and assessment," he said. "You must know where you are, where you intend to be, and what you must

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do to get there faster.”

According to him, one of the administration’s major shifts has been the replacement of the traditional National Health Development Plan framework with a broader National Health Sector Strategic Blueprint built around what the government calls a “sector-wide approach.”

The intention, he explained, is to reduce fragmentation in healthcare interventions and ensure that donor support, government funding, and partner contributions align more strategically around national priorities rather than isolated projects.

“We discovered that resources were often fragmented,” he explained. “Partners may want to support a specific area, but national needs may exist elsewhere. The sector-wide approach allows us to pool resources more effectively and target priority interventions.”

At the centre of the reforms is the administration’s emphasis on Universal Health Coverage — the principle that healthcare should not be determined by income, geography, disability, or social class.

But perhaps no challenge threatens that ambition more directly than the migration of healthcare workers abroad.

The “Japa” phenomenon has significantly affected Nigeria’s healthcare workforce, with doctors, nurses, and specialists leaving in increasing numbers for Europe, North America, and the Middle East.

Dr. Ovuoraye acknowledged the scale of the crisis candidly.

“Some facilities that had maybe six or seven professionals suddenly find themselves left with two,” he said. “That reality forced the government to begin thinking differently.”

Government’s response has

Training institutions are similarly being strengthened to increase the volume of graduating healthcare professionals, while salary reviews and welfare discussions have become part of broader attempts to reduce industrial unrest across medical unions.



Photo Credit: Voice of Nigeria

included waivers for emergency recruitment within health institutions, allowing facilities facing workforce shortages to recruit more rapidly.

The administration also launched the Health Fellowship initiative to mobilise young Nigerians into grassroots health interventions and community support systems.

According to Dr. Ovuoraye, another key pillar of the administration’s reforms involves infrastructure renewal.

The government’s ongoing renovation of thousands of primary healthcare centres nationwide under the Basic Healthcare Provision Fund

framework aims to improve accessibility, quality of care, and patient experience at community level.

The reforms, he stressed, go beyond simply erecting buildings.

“If people enter a facility



with leaking roofs or poor environments, they may never return there again,” he explained. “Healthcare delivery must also consider dignity and experience.”

The administration’s use of the 1% Consolidated Revenue Fund allocation to healthcare was also presented as a major financing innovation intended to support

grassroots healthcare access more sustainably.

But perhaps one of the ministry’s most quietly transformative areas has been disability inclusion.

Under Dr. Ovuoraye’s coordination, the ministry established a Ministerial Steering Committee on Disability Inclusiveness to ensure implementation of health-related provisions within Nigeria’s disability framework.

The committee includes representatives of disability commissions, vulnerable groups, development partners, and technical stakeholders working to improve accessibility standards, ramps, disability-sensitive healthcare guidelines, and inclusive policy implementation.

For a technocrat whose career has consistently intersected with vulnerable populations — women, adolescents, children, and the elderly — the emphasis appears deeply

personal as much as institutional.

Digital transformation has also emerged as a major feature of the reforms.

Nigeria is now adapting global digital health strategies locally, particularly around telemedicine, health information systems, and technology-driven coordination

intended to bridge expertise gaps across underserved areas.

Yet beneath the optimism of policy conversations remains the larger national reality: healthcare in Nigeria is still under pressure.

Hospitals remain overcrowded. Rural communities remain underserved. Treatment costs remain difficult for many households already struggling under inflation and economic hardship.

That is why, ultimately, the Tinubu administration’s healthcare reforms will not be judged merely by policy frameworks or international engagements.

They will be judged by lived experience.

Can Nigerians access care more easily?
Can hospitals function better?
Will healthcare workers stay?
Can treatment become affordable?

Those are the questions shaping public perception far more than government blueprints.

Still, even critics increasingly acknowledge that the administration appears to be attempting a more coordinated healthcare strategy than previous years — particularly around financing, workforce planning, infrastructure renewal, and inclusive health governance.

For Dr. Ovuoraye and the ministry, however, the challenge ahead is clear: to ensure that reform moves beyond conference rooms and policy documents into the everyday realities of ordinary Nigerians struggling to survive.

PUBLIC HEALTHCARE IN NIGERIA: THE QUIET COLLAPSE AND THE THE PRIVATE SHIFT

An assessment of three years under
the Tinubu administration

By Ameh Abraham



The Architecture of Abandonment

There is a particular exhaustion that comes from navigating Nigeria's public healthcare system. It is not merely the fatigue of illness. It is the layered weariness of waiting, hours that stretch into entire days, of being turned away because beds do not exist, of watching overworked nurses juggle impossibly long queues, and of eventually surrendering to the quiet calculation: Perhaps the private hospital, expensive as it is, will be faster.

This is not an abstract complaint. It is the lived reality of millions. A video report from Bwari General Hospital showed a woman hospitalized for three days in extreme distress, highlighting the pervasive lack of basic care and attention from medical staff. Similarly, a Radio Nigeria investigation into FCT public hospitals confirmed a system in "crisis," citing poor infrastructure, drug shortages, and demotivated personnel. One resident captured

the despair succinctly: "We are losing babies" due to the lack of an upgraded clinic.

The trend is unmistakable. Just as the public school system has been abandoned by those who can afford alternatives, the public healthcare system is following the same trajectory. The wealthy and middle class have long retreated to private facilities. Now, even lower-income households are making painful calculations, choosing between food and faster medical attention. This article examines the data behind this quiet collapse and what three years of the Tinubu administration have meant for the health and well-being of ordinary Nigerians.

The Data of Distress: Brain Drain in Unprecedented Numbers

The most devastating statistic of the past three years concerns the exodus of health professionals. Between 2023 and 2024 alone, a staggering 43,221 doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and medical laboratory scientists migrated out of Nigeria, representing a 200 per cent surge in health worker emigration across all cadres within just two years.

In 2024 alone, 4,193 doctors and dentists left the country, with approximately 66 per cent relocating to the United Kingdom. The destinations are telling: Canada (934 doctors), the United

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«We are losing babies» due to the lack of an upgraded clinic.



States (561), Australia (188), the UAE (140), and Ireland (113). Nurses and midwives have fled even faster; over 23,000 have migrated abroad, leaving hospital wards critically understaffed.

The current doctor-to-population ratio stands at approximately 1:5,000, drastically below the WHO recommendation of 1:600. The nurse-to-population ratio is 1:2,000, compared to the recommended 1:300. These figures represent empty consulting

the global average of 2.7.

To put this in perspective, a hospital like LUTH has fewer than 1,000 beds, but a source noted it should have between 5,000 and 10,000 beds. The consequence, as the Fortren report notes bluntly, is that “patients are bounced from facility to facility, referrals overwhelm the system, and delays in treatment often prove fatal.”

This crisis is acutely felt in Bwari. Reports have consistently highlighted overcrowded wards

many to seek costly private care.

Cost and Access: The Private Shift

The erosion of public infrastructure has triggered a quiet shift: Nigerians are abandoning public facilities for private alternatives, at whatever cost they can afford. Data from the WHO confirms the private sector accounts for 71 per cent of total health expenditure in Nigeria. This is not because Nigerians prefer private care but because public care has become functionally unavailable.

The 2023-2024 Demographic and Health Survey paint a sobering picture: only 43 per cent of women deliver in a health facility, and merely 46 per cent are attended by a skilled provider. Coverage for the recommended four antenatal care visits stands at only 52 per cent, far below the WHO's 95 per cent target. For pregnant women in the FCT, this means a stark choice: navigate overcrowded public facilities or pay out-of-pocket for private care.



rooms and exhausted staff. While the Federal Government claims to have recruited over 37,000 healthcare workers since 2023, this recruitment is dwarfed by attrition. Furthermore, distribution remains skewed; 75 per cent of health workers are concentrated in urban areas, serving just 45 per cent of the population.

The Infrastructure Collapse

According to a 2025 report by Fortren and Company, only eight per cent of the over 40,000 registered health facilities across Nigeria have substantial inpatient bed capacity that meets global standards. The national bed-to-patient ratio stands at 0.25 beds per 1,000 people, far below Africa's average of 1 per 1,000 and

and patients treated on stretchers in corridors. One tragic incident captured on social media showed how a rejected cashless policy contributed to the death of a woman in Bwari hospital, while another X post by The ICIR revealed that many government hospitals in Abuja still reject digital payment options, forcing critically ill patients to scramble for cash in life-threatening moments.

Even the security situation has compounded the crisis. A Daily Trust report on the Bwari crisis noted 18 recorded casualties from communal clashes, but survivors complained that the nearest public hospital was too ill-equipped to treat trauma wounds, forcing

The Strike Cycle and Primary Healthcare Neglect

No assessment is complete without addressing the recurring industrial action. From MDCAN to JOHESU, strikes have paralysed delivery. In November 2024, MDCAN declared a 7-day warning strike over non-implementation of CONMESS. In August 2025, LAUTECH consultants began an indefinite strike over the same issues. Each strike adds another layer of abandonment.

Meanwhile, primary healthcare, the intended first point of contact, is in an even more precarious state. The 2023-2024 DHS indicates that while 63 per cent of pregnant women received antenatal care from a skilled provider, this figure is actually lower than the 67 per

cent achieved in 2018. Progress has reversed. In the FCT, rural residents frequently report local PHCs lacking basic medicines, functioning equipment, or even staffing.

The Tinubu Administration: New Initiatives Amid Old Crises

It would be incomplete to assess the past three years without acknowledging that the current administration has launched significant policy responses, even if their impact has yet to reach many facilities.

A major milestone was President Tinubu's Executive Order, signed in June 2024 and operationalised in October 2024, aimed at improving healthcare affordability and positioning Nigeria as a hub for health product manufacturing. As reported by Nigeria Health Watch, the order removes tariffs, excise duties, and VAT on pharmaceutical machinery, active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs), and rapid diagnostic kits. Dr. Abdu Mukhtar, National PVAC Coordinator, noted that the goal is to reduce the over \$1 billion annual medical tourism outflow and create jobs across the value chain.

Additionally, the State House announced that the President launched healthcare initiatives to establish ten oncology and diagnostic facilities and retrain 120,000 health workers. The Punch newspaper, in its "Anatomy of Tinubu's Gains in the Health Sector," highlighted that over N98 billion has been injected into Nigeria's primary health sector, the largest single investment in decades. A report by SocioCapital also catalogued key reforms, including the revitalisation of the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) and the

deployment of digital health records.

Furthermore, The Guardian reported on how the administration has transformed Northern Nigeria's healthcare services in two years, focusing on maternal and child health clinics in underserved states. The Federal Ministry of Health also announced an end to blackouts in tertiary hospitals, with Tinubu prioritising reliable power for healthcare services through a dedicated off-grid energy initiative.

The Fiscal Reality: Private Expenditure Rising

Despite these initiatives, the shift toward private healthcare is accelerating. Over the past decade, the share of private health expenditure in Nigeria has increased incrementally from 76.17 per cent in 2013 to 78.1 per cent in 2023. The WHO notes that "as a result of inadequate government investment, many people incur catastrophic health costs," expenditure that pushes a household below the poverty line.

For a family in a typical rural community in the FCT, choosing between a private clinic visit and buying food is a calculation made daily. And increasingly, healthcare loses.

Comparison with Education: The Parallel Collapse

The analogy with public education is instructive. Over the past two decades, Nigeria's public school system has seen a mass exodus of the middle class into private institutions. The same pattern is now established in healthcare. Those who can afford it exit the public system. Those who cannot remain, and face a system increasingly unable to serve them adequately. This two-tier reality entrenches inequality and abandons the most vulnerable.

Behind every statistic is a human story. The woman who lost her baby because the ambulance from Bwari General Hospital arrived with no fuel. The father who sold his plot of land to pay for a private hospital after his child was turned away due to lack of bed space. The elderly man with hypertension who stopped taking his medication because the public pharmacy has been out of stock for months.

These stories are the truest measure of failure. Over the past three years, the Tinubu administration has inherited a system in crisis and has taken some steps the executive order, the N98 billion injection, the retraining of 120,000 workers. But the scale of the crisis far exceeds the scale of the response. The WHO-recommended 15 per cent of GDP spending on health remains a distant dream, with Nigeria currently spending only 4-5 per cent.

Conclusion: The Road Not Taken

Three years into the Tinubu administration, the public healthcare system remains in critical condition. The brain drain has accelerated. Bed shortages have worsened. Strikes continue. And Nigerians have voted with their feet and their wallets retreating into a private system that strains household budgets but at least offers the possibility of care.

Until massive investment in infrastructure, competitive remuneration, and a resolution of the strike cycle materialise, the General Hospitals in our communities will remain what they have become: symbols not of healing, but of abandonment. The quiet collapse will continue one patient, one family, one preventable tragedy at a time. A mother in Bwari should not have to choose between her baby's life and her rent. But today, she does.

‘TINUBU AT 3: SEVEN AGENCIES DRIVING NIGERIA’S RENEWED HOPE AGENDA’

By Charity Onah & Jerry Adesewo



As President Bola Ahmed Tinubu’s administration marks three years in office, a handful of federal agencies have stood out for their proactive reforms, revenue drive, and citizen-focused interventions.

While the past 36 months have been marked by tough economic choices—fuel subsidy removal, forex unification, and cost-of-living pressures—several government bodies have translated the “Renewed Hope” agenda into measurable action. Here are seven progressively active agencies reshaping governance.

1. Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) – Tax Revolution
Under Chairman Zacch Adedeji,

FIRS has shattered collection records without introducing major new taxes. By leveraging technology and blocking leakages, it grew 2024 collections to over ₦12 trillion—exceeding targets. The agency’s automated tax administration system (ATAS) and aggressive but business-friendly compliance drives have expanded the tax net significantly, funding infrastructure without excessive borrowing.

2. Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) – Digital Guardian

The NCC has enforced stricter Quality of Service (QoS) standards, leading to noticeable improvements in call drops and data speeds. It pushed through the 2024–2025 spectrum licensing reforms, attracted new investments in 5G rollout, and championed consumer protection via the 622 toll-free complaint line. Its active role in protecting telecom infrastructure from vandalism has

kept millions connected despite economic headwinds.

3. Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM) – Global Engagement Engine

NIDCOM has stepped up its engagement with the estimated 17 million Nigerians abroad. The commission, led by Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, has facilitated the rescue of stranded citizens, brokered investment summits that attracted over \$2 billion in diaspora remittance-linked projects, and streamlined the “Nigerians in Diaspora Investment Trust” fund. Its proactive response to consular emergencies and its push for diaspora voting rights have kept the diaspora community centrally involved in national development.

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Its proactive response to consular emergencies and its push for diaspora voting rights have kept the diaspora community centrally involved in national development.

4. Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC) – Oil Sector Transformer

NUPRC has actively implemented the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA). It increased crude oil production to nearly 1.7 million barrels per day (excluding condensates) by mid-2025 through a rigorous campaign against theft and divestment oversight. The commission’s

transparent licensing rounds for new oil blocks—and its push for host community development funds—have begun restoring investor confidence.

5. Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC) – Non-Oil Driver

NEPC, led by Dr. Ezra Yakusak, has aggressively pursued the “Operation Double Your Exports” initiative. It facilitated Nigeria’s first non-oil export to the United States under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) in years, supported smallholder farmers with global certification, and launched zero-oil industrial clusters. Non-oil export earnings rose by over 25% in 2024, reducing pressure on the naira.

6. National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) – Tech Enabler

NITDA has pushed a progressive startup-friendly regulatory framework, fast-tracked the Nigeria Startup Act’s implementation, and trained over 100,000 citizens in digital skills through its hubs. Its efforts to localize data storage and promote indigenous software have saved billions in foreign exchange. The agency’s active monitoring of data privacy compliance has also set new standards for fintech and social media firms.

7. Nigeria Tourism Development Authority (NTDA) – Hospitality Revitalizer (especially active in the last 6 months under Dr. Ola Awakan)

In just half a year, Dr. Ola Awakan has injected new energy into the NTDA. Since late 2025, the Authority has launched the “Discover Nigeria” domestic tourism campaign, reopened major tourism circuits (Yankari, Obudu, and Sukur) with improved security and facilities, and introduced a

digital licensing portal that cut the time to register tour operators by 70%. Dr. Awakan also brokered a partnership with the private sector to upgrade hospitality infrastructure in 10 states, and successfully hosted the first International Tourism Investment Summit in Abuja, attracting interest from South African and UAE investors. These rapid moves have positioned tourism as a potential non-oil revenue earner for the first time in years.

Other Agencies Making Strides

Beyond the spotlight, several other bodies have shown notable progress. NAFDAC continues its crackdown on fake drugs and unwholesome food, maintaining port vigilance. NFIU has steadily monitored public sector cash flows, pushing state governments toward greater transparency. The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) has sustained its offensive against cartels, while the National Automotive Design and Development Council (NADDCC) is driving the adoption of CNG-powered vehicles under the Presidential Compressed Natural Gas Initiative.

Progress Amid Pain

Three years into the Tinubu administration, these agencies have moved beyond bureaucracy to deliver measurable results—from record tax revenues and better telecoms to diaspora engagement and a revitalized tourism sector under fresh leadership. While citizens continue to feel economic strain, the proactive stance of these bodies offers evidence that institutional reforms can succeed. Sustaining and scaling their impact—especially the promising turnaround at NTDA—will be key to turning the “Renewed Hope” agenda into lasting prosperity.



Tinubu's National Security Agenda: Gains, Challenges, and the Road Ahead

By Richard Akintade, Osogbo

There is no gainsaying that since assuming office in May 2023, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has placed national security at the centre of his administration's priorities, confronting a complex web of threats ranging from terrorism and banditry to oil theft, kidnapping, separatist agitations, and communal conflicts.

Many Nigerians have continued to ask whether criminal elements are gradually overpowering the nation's security agencies or whether there are still gaps in Nigeria's intelligence-driven security architecture.

Before Tinubu's emergence, Nigeria's security landscape was already under severe strain, with persistent attacks in the North-East, widespread abductions in the North-West and North-Central, oil pipeline vandalism in the Niger Delta, and rising violent crimes across



urban centres. Upon assuming office, the administration promised a more coordinated, technology-driven, and intelligence-led approach to national security management.

One of the administration's earliest moves was the restructuring of the nation's security leadership by appointing new Service Chiefs with a mandate to strengthen operational efficiency and improve inter-agency collaboration.

The administration placed strong emphasis on synergy among the military, the police, the Department of State Services (DSS), the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), and other security agencies.

The collaborative framework was designed to improve intelligence gathering, rapid-response operations, and coordinated offensives against criminal networks across the country.

Security analysts argue that improved communication and coordination among agencies have contributed to several successful operations against insurgents, kidnappers, and oil thieves in different parts of the federation.

Under Tinubu's administration, military operations against terrorist groups and armed bandits have intensified, particularly in the North-East and North-West regions.

The Nigerian military has sustained aerial bombardments and ground offensives targeting insurgent hideouts, logistics bases and bandit camps. Several high-profile terrorist commanders have reportedly been neutralised, while hundreds of kidnapped victims have been rescued through coordinated operations.

The administration has also strengthened intelligence-sharing mechanisms with neighbouring countries within the Lake Chad Basin to combat cross-border terrorism, arms trafficking, and organised criminal activities.

Despite these gains, security experts maintain that insurgency remains a serious challenge, especially in rural communities where criminal groups continue to exploit weak local security structures and poor socio-economic conditions.

In the Niger Delta, the Tinubu administration has intensified efforts to curb crude oil theft and

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The collaborative framework was designed to improve intelligence gathering, rapid-response operations, and coordinated offensives against criminal networks across the country.

pipeline vandalism — crimes that have significantly affected Nigeria's economy and oil production capacity.

Security agencies, working alongside private security contractors and local surveillance groups, have reportedly dismantled several illegal refining sites and arrested suspects linked to oil theft operations.

The Federal Government has

repeatedly described oil theft as both an economic and national security threat, warning that sabotage of critical infrastructure undermines national development, government revenue, and investor confidence.

Improved protection of oil facilities has also contributed to gradual increases in Nigeria's crude oil output in recent months, according to government officials.

Police Reforms and Internal Security

The administration has also pledged reforms within the Nigeria Police Force aimed at improving internal security and restoring public confidence.

Efforts have focused on recruitment, training, personnel welfare, and the modernisation of policing methods. The Federal Government has repeatedly stressed the importance of community policing as a grassroots strategy for tackling insecurity.

However, challenges such as inadequate manpower, poor logistics, funding gaps, and allegations of misconduct continue to affect the effectiveness of policing across several states.

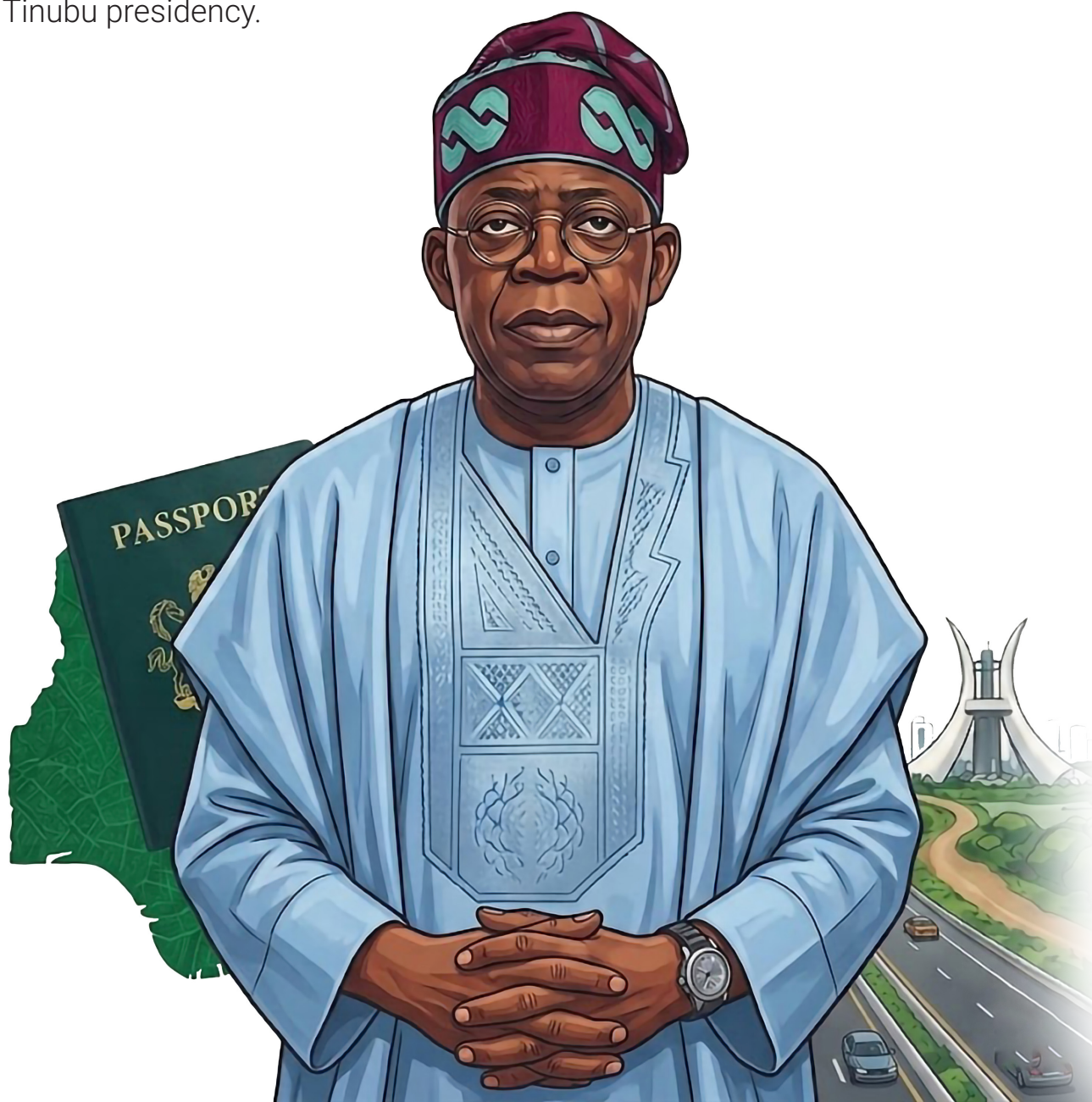
Tinubu's security agenda has increasingly emphasised the deployment of technology and intelligence gathering in combating crime.



THE MINISTERS DEFINING AN UNEVEN PRESIDENCY

Every administration eventually becomes remembered through a handful of figures who shape its public image more visibly than others. Three years into the presidency of Bola Ahmed Tinubu, amid economic hardship, reform controversies, and rising political tensions, a select group of ministers has emerged as the operational backbone of the government.

Some are reformers. Some are political enforcers. Some are technocrats. Others are master communicators. Together, they represent the most visible faces of the Tinubu presidency.



OLUBUNMI TUNJI-OJO

Minister of Interior

At the forefront is Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo, the Minister of Interior whose aggressive reforms have transformed one of Nigeria's most bureaucratically frustrating ministries into one of the administration's most active institutions.

Under Tunji-Ojo, passport administration underwent rapid digitization, including contactless passport applications for Nigerians abroad and major reductions in passport backlogs. Immigration reforms, correctional service restructuring, personnel promotions, and prison decongestion initiatives helped reposition the ministry as one of the government's most visibly energetic reform spaces.

For many younger Nigerians, Tunji-Ojo symbolizes a new generation of governance — technology-driven, media-visible, and administratively assertive.



NYESOM WIKE

Federal Capital Territory

Then there is Nyesom Wike, arguably the administration's most politically dominant minister.

Since taking charge of the Federal Capital Territory, Wike has governed Abuja with unusual intensity. Road construction accelerated. Long-abandoned projects resurfaced. Enforcement of land regulations became more aggressive. The capital city began visibly changing under his watch.

Supporters praise his decisiveness and delivery speed. Critics accuse him of excessive political influence and combative governance.

But either way, Minister Wike, as he is now fondly known, has ensured that the FCT remains constantly visible within national discourse — something previous administrations often struggled to achieve.



Festus Keyamo

Minister of Aviation

In the aviation sector, Festus Keyamo has emerged as one of the administration's strongest communicators and one of its most publicly accessible ministers.

Beyond media visibility, Keyamo's ministry has pursued efforts around airport modernization, improved airline regulatory coordination, expansion of bilateral air agreements, and the revival of conversations around Nigeria's aviation infrastructure competitiveness.

The Cape Town Convention discount framework, which improved aircraft leasing confidence for Nigerian airlines, became one of the ministry's significant policy achievements. The administration also pushed continued rehabilitation of major airports while attempting to stabilize operational standards within the aviation sector.

In many ways, Keyamo combines politics and policy more effectively than most ministers within the cabinet.



MUHAMMAD ALI PATE

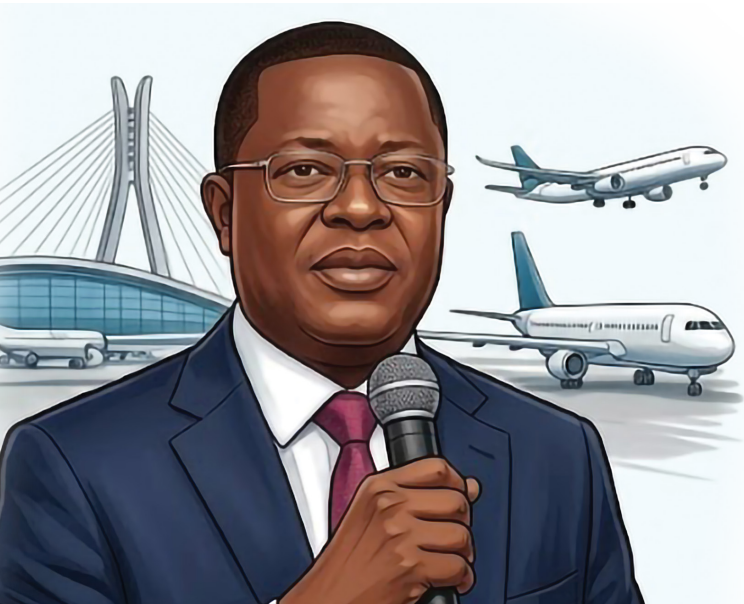
Health Minister

The Health Minister, Muhammad Ali Pate represents another critical pillar of the administration.

At a time when Nigeria continues facing severe healthcare workforce shortages caused by the migration of doctors and nurses abroad, Pate's ministry has focused heavily on healthcare system restructuring, workforce retention, universal health coverage, and primary healthcare revitalization.

The government's push to renovate thousands of primary healthcare centres nationwide, strengthen digital health systems, recruit health fellows, and expand healthcare financing through the Basic Healthcare Provision Fund all became central features of the ministry's reform narrative.

Though Nigeria's health challenges remain enormous, Pate is widely regarded as one of the administration's more policy-oriented technocrats.



DAVID UMAHI

Infrastructure Sector

In the infrastructure sector, David Umahi has become closely associated with some of the administration's most ambitious road projects.

The Lagos-Calabar Coastal Highway, despite criticism over cost and procurement concerns, became one of the signature infrastructure projects of the Tinubu years. Umahi has also overseen federal highway reconstruction efforts across multiple regions while projecting himself as one of the administration's most loyal and outspoken cabinet defenders.

YUSUF TUGGAR

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Then comes the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yusuf Tuggar, whose resignation quietly marked one of the administration's most intellectually significant exits.

A former ambassador to Germany, Tuggar brought diplomatic sophistication into Nigeria's foreign policy environment. Under him, Nigeria pursued stronger economic diplomacy conversations, deeper continental engagement, and more active participation in international forums during a difficult economic transition period.

Unlike more politically dramatic ministers, Tuggar operated largely through diplomacy rather than publicity. His exit therefore raised quiet speculation within diplomatic and policy circles about possible internal tensions within the administration's foreign policy direction.



BOSUN TIJANI

The seventh figure is Bosun Tijani, who has increasingly become the face of Nigeria's digital economy ambitions.

Coming from the private technology ecosystem into government, Tijani brought startup-sector credibility into the cabinet. Under his watch, conversations around innovation, digital infrastructure, artificial intelligence, broadband expansion, and technology investment gained stronger visibility within national policy discussions.

His presence also reflected the administration's attempt to project itself as economically modern and innovation-friendly despite broader economic difficulties.



Beyond these seven, other ministers have contributed significantly in varying ways.

Coordinating Economic Minister Taiwo Oyedele has emerged as the administration's new fiscal reform face following his rise from tax reform leadership into the finance ministry. Education Minister Tahir Mamman also drove reforms around student loans and university policy before his eventual exit.

Together, these ministers reveal both the strength and contradiction of the Tinubu presidency.

The administration clearly possesses energetic and visible performers. Yet their successes continue to exist alongside deep economic pain, inflation, insecurity, and public frustration.

That tension defines Tinubu's first three years.

There are ministers Nigerians can point to as active and reform-minded. But there is also a population still waiting for governance improvements to translate fully into everyday relief.

And ultimately, that is how governments are judged — not merely by activity at the top, but by conditions at the bottom.



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NIGERIA CELEBRATES 70 YEARS OF NAVAL MASTERY



VICE ADMIRAL IDI ABBAS: A Career Defined by Professionalism, Strategy, and Service.

By Jerry Adesewo

In the annals of the Nigerian Navy, few officers embody the virtues of discipline, professionalism, and strategic leadership as profoundly as Vice Admiral Idi Abbas, the current Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS). His appointment to the highest office in the Nigerian Navy marked the culmination of nearly four decades of dedicated service, distinguished command appointments, and unwavering commitment to safeguarding Nigeria's maritime interests.

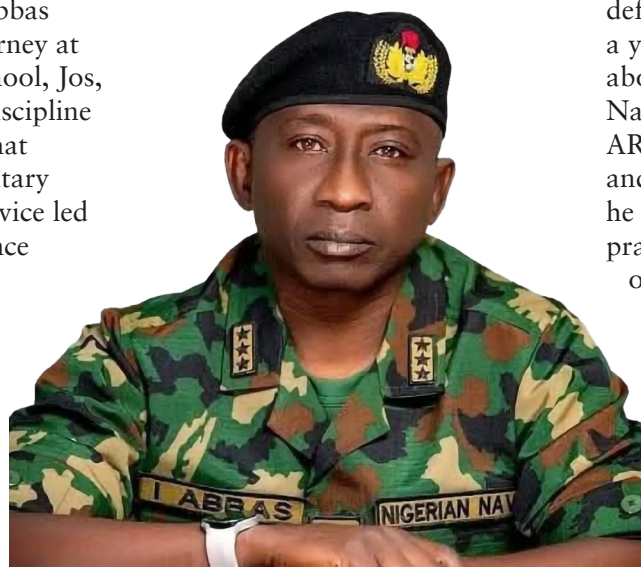
Born on September 20, 1969, in Nassarawa Local Government Area of Kano State, Idi Abbas began his educational journey at the Air Force Military School, Jos, where he developed the discipline and leadership qualities that would later define his military career. His passion for service led him to the Nigerian Defence Academy (NDA), where he joined the prestigious 40 Regular Course in September 1987.

Upon graduation, he earned a Bachelor's Degree in Chemistry and was commissioned into the Nigerian Navy as a Sub-Lieutenant on September 10, 1993. An Above Water Warfare specialist, Abbas steadily built a reputation as a highly skilled naval officer with exceptional operational competence. Recognizing the importance of intellectual development alongside military professionalism, he pursued advanced academic qualifications, obtaining a Postgraduate Diploma in Management from the

University of Calabar, a Master's Degree in International Affairs and Diplomacy from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, a Master's Degree in Political Economy and Development Studies from the University of Abuja, and a Master's Degree in Strategic Studies from the United States Air War College, Alabama.

Throughout his career, Vice Admiral Abbas served in a variety of operational, instructional, and command positions that broadened his experience and deepened his understanding of maritime security and defence administration. As a young officer, he served aboard several Nigerian Navy ships, including NNS ARADU, NNS DAMISA, and NNS AYAM, where he gained invaluable practical experience in naval operations.

His career progression reflected a pattern of excellence. He



served as Staff Officer at Naval Headquarters, Gunnery Officer aboard naval vessels, and later as Commanding Officer of the Burma Battalion at the Nigerian Defence Academy. His leadership abilities earned him increasingly strategic assignments, including Naval Contingent Commander of the Joint Task Force Operation SAFE HAVEN and Maritime Guard Commander for the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA). These assignments exposed him to complex security challenges and inter-agency coordination at the highest levels.

Admiral Abbas also distinguished himself in operational command. As Commander Task Group of Operation Tsare-Teku and later as Flag Officer Commanding Central Naval Command in Yenagoa, he played significant roles in efforts to secure Nigeria's maritime domain, combat oil theft, and strengthen maritime surveillance. His operational successes reinforced his reputation as a calm, strategic, and result-oriented commander.

His expertise extended beyond the Navy. He served as Chief of Naval Safety and Standards at Naval Headquarters, Chief of Defence Civil-Military Relations at Defence Headquarters, and Senior Research Fellow at the Nigerian Army Heritage Centre. These appointments highlighted his versatility as a military professional capable of bridging operational command with strategic policy development and civil-military engagement.

Over the years, Vice

Admiral Abbas attended numerous military and professional courses both within Nigeria and internationally, including the Junior and Senior Staff Courses at the Armed Forces Command and Staff College, Jaji, the United Nations Military Observer Course in Tanzania, and the prestigious National Defence Course in Abuja. These experiences enriched his strategic outlook and prepared him for the highest responsibilities in military leadership.

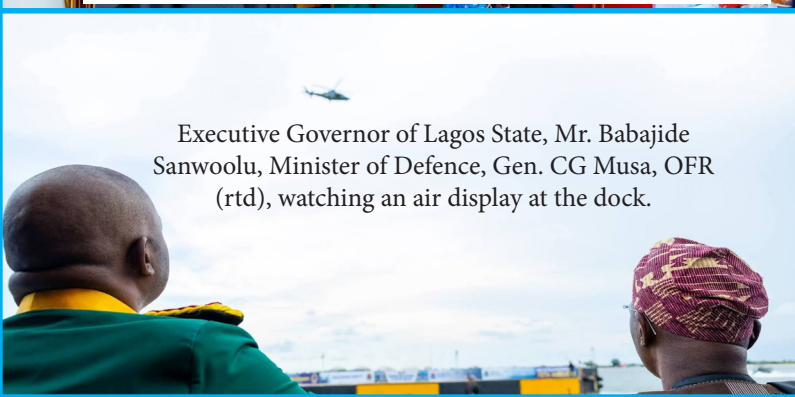
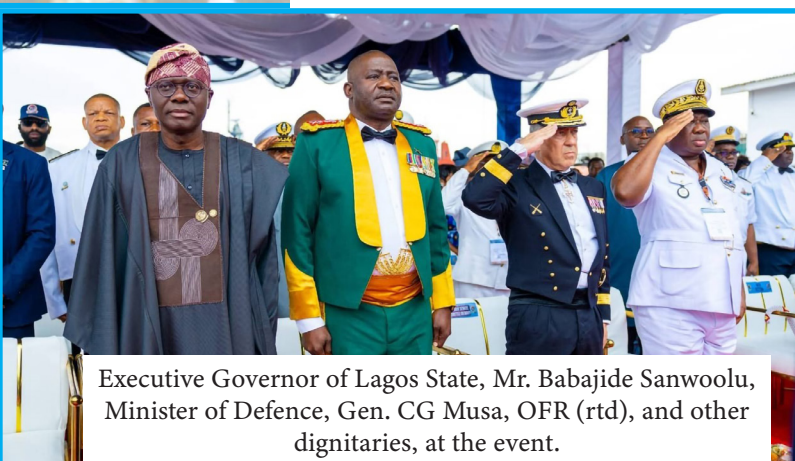
On October 24, 2025, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu appointed him Chief of the Naval Staff as part of a major restructuring of Nigeria's military leadership. Following his appointment and subsequent promotion to the rank of Vice Admiral, Abbas assumed command of the Nigerian Navy with a mandate to strengthen maritime security, modernize naval operations, deepen international partnerships, and contribute to the growth of Nigeria's blue economy. Decorated with numerous honours, including the Forces Service Star, Meritorious Service Star, Distinguished Service Star, Grand Service Star, and Defence General Staff Medal, Vice Admiral Abbas has built a career characterized by integrity, competence, and patriotism.

Today, as Chief of the Naval Staff, he stands at the forefront of Nigeria's maritime security architecture, leading a modern Navy tasked with protecting the nation's vast maritime resources, securing its territorial waters, and supporting national economic prosperity. His journey from a young cadet at the Nigerian Defence Academy to the apex of naval leadership remains a testament to the values of hard work, professionalism, and unwavering dedication to national service.



**CEREMONIAL SUNSET: FORMAL DINNER AND AWARDSS
CEREMONY IN COMMEMORATION OF NIBGERIA NAVY'S 70TH
ANNIVERSARY HELD AT THE NAVY DOCKYARD LIMITED ON
THURSDAY JUNE 4, 2026, IN LAGOS, NIGERIA.**

Photo Credit: Akhimien Godfrey





Minister of Defence, Gen. CG Musa, OFR (rtd), the Executive Governor of Lagos State, Mr. Babajide Sanwoolu, and the Chief of Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Idi Abbas looks.



A cross section of guests at the event, performing ceremonial function



A cross section of guests at the event, in a group photograph



Wife of CNS, Mrs. Aisha Abass, the CNS, Vice Admiral Idi Abass and the Minister of Defence, Gen. CG Musa, OFR (rtd)



Officers on Ceremonial Parade



Gen. CG Musa, OFR (rtd), delivering his keynote address at the event

A Titan of the Tides:

From Humble Coastal Patrols to Africa's Most Formidable Maritime Force

By Jerry Adesewo

In the shimmering waters of the Lagos coastline, a powerful display of naval aviation and fleet maneuvers recently marked a significant milestone. As the sun glinted off the hulls of brand-new warships — the NNS Ikogosi, NNS Faro, and NNS Shere —

This declaration came during the Navy's 70th-anniversary celebration — a week-long event that was less a birthday party and more a global power audition. Dignitaries from across the globe, including naval chiefs from Ghana, Cameroon, Brazil, and the United

wealth and projecting power across the entire West African coast.

A Storied Evolution: From the Creeks to the High Seas

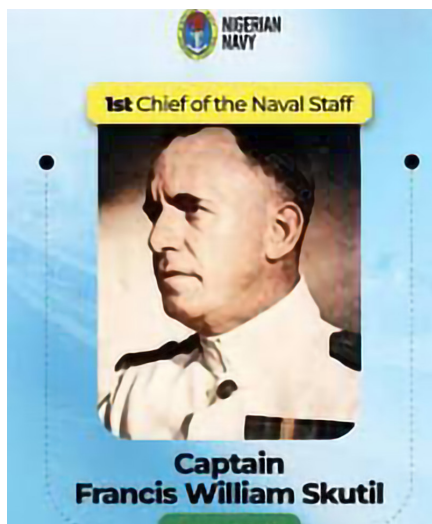
The journey of the Nigerian Navy is a mirror of Nigeria's own



President Bola Ahmed Tinubu delivered a verdict that resonated across the Gulf of Guinea: the Nigerian Navy has officially emerged as the most formidable naval force in Africa.

States, watched as the Navy, which began as a colonial marine unit in 1956 with just 250 personnel and a handful of small patrol boats, showcased a modern fleet capable of securing the nation's vast oil

complex history — a story of colonial birth, post-independence ambition, civil war trial, and democratic renewal.



Colonial Origins (1914–1956): The earliest roots of the Nigerian Navy can be traced to the Nigerian Marine Department, established in 1914 following the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates. This department was responsible for harbors, lighthouses, and ferries — not warfare. It operated small vessels like the SS MacGregor and SS Gold Coast, moving colonial administrators and trade goods along the West African coast.

Formal Establishment (1956): The modern Nigerian Navy was formally established as the Nigerian Naval Force (NNF) on June 1, 1956, by the Colonial Office in London. It was a modest force of just 250 personnel, primarily tasked with policing the creeks and territorial waters against smuggling and illegal fishing. Its first vessels were hand-me-downs from the British Royal Navy — small patrol boats like the NS Enugu and NS Kaduna.

Independence and Republic (1960–1966): Upon Nigeria's independence in 1960, the force was renamed the Royal Nigerian Navy (R.N.N.), reflecting the nation's membership in the British Commonwealth. The "Royal" title was dropped in 1963 when Nigeria became a Republic, leaving simply

the Nigerian Navy. During these early years, the Navy focused on building indigenous leadership, sending young officers to training institutions in the United Kingdom, India, and Ghana.

The Civil War Crucible (1967–1970): The Nigerian Civil War served as a brutal baptism by



Commodore Joseph Edet Akinwande Wey
First Indigenous Chief of Naval Staff

fire. The Navy was tasked with enforcing a blockade against the breakaway Republic of Biafra, cutting off sea-borne supplies and arms. Naval operations in the Bonny River and the capture of ports like Calabar and Port Harcourt proved decisive in the federal victory. The war highlighted critical gaps in Nigeria's naval capabilities — gaps that would drive modernization efforts for decades to come.

Post-War Expansion (1970–1990): The post-war era saw the Navy transform from a symbolic institution into a strategic necessity. New vessels were acquired from West Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and the United States. Naval bases were established in Calabar, Warri, and eventually Brass. The Navy also

began developing its own special forces — the Naval Special Boat Service (NSBS) — for amphibious and covert operations.

Democracy and Regional Leadership (1999–Present): Since the return to democracy in 1999, the Nigerian Navy has expanded its reach far beyond traditional warfare. It has become a critical tool for foreign policy, participating in peacekeeping missions in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sudan, and Lebanon. Notably, in 2017, the Navy deployed a naval task force to The Gambia during the political impasse that forced former President Yahya Jammeh into exile — a demonstration of Nigeria's willingness to use naval power for regional stability.

Yet, it was the battle against internal criminality — piracy, oil theft, and illegal fishing — that truly forged the modern Navy into the force it is today.



Vice Admiral Augustus Aikhomu

Leadership Through the Ages: Commanding the Tides

The evolution of the Nigerian Navy has been guided by visionary leaders at the helm. Each Chief of Naval Staff (CNS) has left an

indelible mark on the institution, responding to the threats of their era.

Vice Admiral Joseph Wey (1966–1973): Wey led the Navy through the Civil War, overseeing the critical blockade of Biafran ports. He is remembered for building the Navy’s operational doctrine from scratch.

Vice Admiral Augustus Aikhomu (1984–1986): Aikhomu, who later became Chief of General Staff and de facto Vice President under General Ibrahim Babangida, prioritized fleet rehabilitation and the acquisition of new offshore patrol vessels.

Vice Admiral Mike Akhigbe (1996–1999): Akhigbe, another naval officer who rose to Vice President, focused on welfare and infrastructure, building new naval barracks and hospitals.

Vice Admiral Samuel Afolayan (2008–2010): Afolayan initiated the first comprehensive Naval Transformation Plan, a 30-year roadmap for modernizing the fleet and doctrine.

Vice Admiral Dele Ezeoba (2012–2014): Ezeoba, a submarine warfare specialist, prioritized the development of Nigeria’s

underwater warfare capabilities and strengthened the Navy’s role in the fight against oil theft.

Vice Admiral Ibok-Ete Ibas (2015–2021): Ibas led the Navy through the peak of the Gulf of Guinea piracy crisis, launching aggressive patrols and international collaborations that began to turn the tide against sea robbers.

Vice Admiral Awwal Zubairu Gambo (2021–2023): Gambo oversaw the acquisition of several major platforms, including the NNS Kada, NNS Ibadan, and NNS Sokoto, continuing the fleet recapitalization agenda.

Vice Admiral Emmanuel Ikechukwu Ogalla (2023–2025): Appointed by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, Ogalla’s two-year tenure was defined by aggressive anti-crude oil theft operations under “Operation Delta Sanity.” A hydrographer by training and a holder of the Sword of Honour from the Nigerian Defence Academy, Ogalla brought a scientific precision to the fight against economic saboteurs. His leadership saw the destruction of over 800 illegal refining sites and the arrest of hundreds of vessels and suspects.

In a strategic move in October 2025, President Tinubu appointed Rear Admiral Idi Abbas as the new Chief of Naval Staff. A distinguished officer from Kano State and a member of the 40th Regular Course

The Turning Tide: Three Years of

Unprecedented Gains

While the 70th anniversary is a celebration of history, the most thrilling chapter is being written ‘right now’. In the last three years, under the leadership of Vice Admiral Ogalla and continuing under Rear Admiral Abbas, the Navy has recorded what can



only be described as a security renaissance.

Operation Delta Sanity: War on Economic Saboteurs

Launched in early 2024, Operation Delta Sanity declared total war on illegal oil refining and crude oil theft — criminal enterprises that cost Nigeria billions of dollars annually. The results, as presented at the Naval Headquarters, are staggering:

Economic Impact: The Navy has successfully denied oil thieves



Vice Admiral EI OGALLA AM CDS (ret) Rtd MR
CHIEF OF THE NAVAL STAFF

and smugglers access to goods valued at over ₦34.5 billion (approximately \$45 million USD). This includes intercepting millions of liters of stolen crude and destroyed illegal refining sites.

- Arrests and Seizures: In two years, the Navy arrested 76



vessels and 242 suspects, while deactivating over 2,400 wooden boats used for illegal bunkering. More than 8,000 metric tons of stolen crude were recovered.

- Production Rebound: These aggressive patrols have directly contributed to the rebound of Nigeria's crude oil production, which rose from a low of 1.3 million barrels per day to approximately 1.7 million barrels per day — a 30 percent increase that has significantly boosted national revenue.

Zero Piracy: A Continental First

Perhaps the most celebrated achievement of the Nigerian Navy is the near-total eradication of piracy in Nigerian waters. For over three years, Nigeria has recorded a 'zero-piracy incident' rate in its territorial waters and the Gulf of Guinea.

This feat is not merely statistical. It has real economic consequences. The removal of Nigeria from the International Maritime Bureau's list of piracy-prone nations has drastically reduced war risk insurance premiums for ships coming to Lagos, Port Harcourt, and Onne — saving shipping companies and Nigerian importers millions of dollars annually.

The Navy's strategy combined aggressive patrols, improved intelligence sharing, the deployment of the Falcon Eye maritime domain awareness system, and unprecedented international collaboration.

International Recognition: The World Applauds

The global maritime community has taken notice of Nigeria's transformation. In October 2025, the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), Arsenio Domínguez, paid an official visit to Nigeria — his first visit to West Africa since assuming office.

Mr. Domínguez did not just sit

in a boardroom in Abuja. He toured the NNS Lana, a state-of-the-art hydrographic vessel used for mapping Nigeria's seabed and territorial waters. He visited the Maritime Academy of Nigeria in Oron, Akwa Ibom State, which has been rebranded as a Center of Excellence for maritime training in Africa. He also inspected the Regional Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre in Kirikiri, Lagos.

The IMO Secretary-General was effusive in his praise, commending Nigeria's "robust maritime safety frameworks" and noting that the nation's security assets reflect "a level of preparedness that aligns with the best global practices." He specifically highlighted Nigeria's leadership in the fight against piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, describing it as a "model for other nations to follow."

African Union Strategic Sealift Provider

This international confidence has translated into concrete strategic partnerships. In a landmark development, the Nigerian Navy recently signed a Strategic Sealift Memorandum of Understanding with the African Union, designating Nigeria as the official maritime transport provider for African Union peacekeeping missions and disaster response operations across the continent.

Under this agreement, the Nigerian Navy will deploy its vessels and personnel to support AU missions in Somalia, Sudan, and the Sahel region — moving troops, equipment, and humanitarian supplies by sea. This designation is a powerful endorsement of Nigeria's operational capacity and reliability.

Bilateral and Multilateral Exercises

The Navy has also strengthened ties with traditional and emerging partners. In the last three years, Nigeria has hosted or participated in major naval exercises, including:

- Exercise Obangame Express (US Naval Forces Africa)
- Exercise Grand African Nemo (Spanish-led counter-piracy)
- Exercise Sea Guardian (Turkish Navy cooperation)
- Exercise NEMO (Portuguese-led maritime security)

These exercises have enhanced interoperability and positioned the Nigerian Navy as the go-to partner for maritime security in West Africa.

Fleet Recapitalization: New Ships, New Horizon

To mark the 70th anniversary, President Tinubu commissioned three new vessels: NNS Ikogosi, NNS Faro, and NNS Shere, alongside AW139 Trekker helicopters and Agusta 109 Power attack helicopters. These platforms are not for show; they are equipped with modern surveillance technology, including electro-optical sensors and automatic identification system (AIS) trackers designed to identify “dark vessels” that turn off their transmitters to steal oil.

The new vessels are named after natural landmarks in Nigeria — Ikogosi Warm Spring in Ekiti State, Faro River in Taraba State, and Shere Hills in Plateau State — reflecting the Navy’s commitment to national unity and representation.

But the Navy is not just buying ships; it is now building them. The Naval Dockyard Limited in Lagos, a shipbuilding and repair

facility, is currently constructing two Seaward Defence Boats (SDB IV & V) with indigenous labor and materials. The dockyard has also ventured into international refitting, recently completing major repairs and upgrades for neighboring Benin Republic’s naval assets — a significant foreign exchange earner.

The Future: The Combined Maritime Task Force

Looking ahead, the 70th-anniversary celebration was not just about the past but about the future of the Gulf of Guinea. The Navy launched the Combined Maritime Task Force (CMTF), a multinational rapid-response force comprising Nigeria, Ghana, Gambia, Liberia, and Sierra Leone.

This force is designed to be a “fire brigade” for the region — capable of responding to emerging maritime threats within 48 hours. Whether it is a piracy attack, an oil spill, or a humanitarian crisis, the CMTF will coordinate assets and personnel across borders, a move that solidifies Nigeria’s role as the “Gendarme of the Gulf.”

Conclusion: A Navy That Commands Respect

As the Nigerian Navy sails into its eighth decade, the message from President Tinubu, Chief of Naval Staff Rear Admiral Idi Abbas, and the entire naval community is clear. From a colonial afterthought with 250 personnel to a continental leader with over 20,000 officers and ratings, the Nigerian Navy has proven that with the right investment, political will, and professional leadership, the nation can not only police its waters but also command the respect of the world.

The next decade will bring new

challenges — climate change, underwater warfare, cyber threats to shipping, and the exploitation of deep-sea resources. But if the last three years are any indication, the Nigerian Navy is ready.

The titan of the tides has arrived.

Key Achievements at a Glance (2023–2026)

Piracy Status - Zero incidents for 36+ months; removed from IMB watch-list

Anti-Oil Theft - 800+ illegal refineries destroyed; production rose from 1.3m to 1.7m bpd

Economic Value Denied - Over ₦34.5 billion

Vessels Arrested - 76 vessels; 242 suspects

Fleet Upgrade - NNS Ikogosi, NNS Faro, NNS Shere; AW139 helicopters

International Role - African Union Strategic Sealift Provider

IMO Recognition - Commendation from Secretary-General Arsenio Domínguez

New Leadership - Rear Admiral Idi Abbas appointed CNS (October 2025)

Multinational Force - Combined Maritime Task Force (CMTF) launched with 5 nations.



■ Beyond Borders: Maricel Romero on Culture, Cooperation and the Colombia–Nigeria Connection

“

“My passion is God,” she says. “And I believe strongly in the power of art and culture to bring people together.”

In an increasingly interconnected world, diplomacy is no longer confined to embassies, boardrooms, or formal treaties. Increasingly, culture, creativity, education, and people-to-people engagement are becoming powerful instruments of international cooperation.

For Maricel Romero, diplomacy is deeply human — rooted in

relationships, shared histories, creativity, and mutual growth.

A Latin American professional who has spent the last seventeen years living and working in Nigeria, Maricel, who came to Nigeria as an intern, has developed a profound appreciation for Nigerian culture, its people, and the possibilities of stronger cooperation between Africa and Latin America. Through her experiences in education, culture, development initiatives, and international engagement, she has emerged as a passionate advocate for sustained Colombia–Nigeria collaboration.

In this first-of-its-kind, exclusive interview with our Editor-in-Chief, Om’Oba Jerry Adesewo, on cultural diplomacy, South-South

cooperation, education, youth development, stereotypes, tourism, sustainability, and why she believes Africa and Latin America are natural partners for the future.

On discovering Nigeria and finding connection

Maricel describes her journey to Nigeria as one that evolved beyond professional engagement into something deeply personal and transformative.

“My passion is God,” she says. “And I believe strongly in the power of art and culture to bring people together.”

Although her position as the Honorary Consul of Colombia to Nigeria became official only a few years ago, she explains that her interest in global cultural

exchange had existed long before then. Through her marriage to a Nigerian from Plateau State, which earns the name ‘Naija Wife’, she says she discovered not just a country, but the “soul of Nigerian culture.”

“Since then, I have developed a deep love for Nigeria,” she says. “The experience has been beautiful — spiritually, culturally, and personally.”

According to her, Nigeria offered her an environment where identity, diversity, and heritage are celebrated openly.

“I have African heritage, Asian heritage, and European heritage,” she explains. “That is why I connect emotionally with Nigeria. I feel comfortable here because I understand what it means to belong to multiple identities.”

Diplomacy beyond politics

For Maricel, diplomacy is first and foremost about relationships.

“When we talk about cultural diplomacy, we are talking about cultural leadership,” she explains. “It is about representing a nation’s identity while building bridges that connect people, institutions, and societies.”

She believes diplomacy must move beyond ceremonial exchanges into deeper human interaction.

“It is about identifying similarities and differences, learning from each other, and creating systems where that exchange becomes continuous,” she says.

According to her, curiosity, empathy, openness, and a sense of belonging are essential ingredients for meaningful diplomacy.

“You must love both your country and the country that welcomes you,” she notes.

Colombia and Nigeria: Shared realities, shared futures

Maricel believes Colombia and Nigeria possess striking similarities — culturally, demographically, and economically.

“Both countries are rich in culture, youthful energy, entrepreneurship,



and creativity,” she says. “We are societies full of resilience and possibilities.”

She points to agriculture, energy, tourism, textiles, and creative industries as areas with strong potential for bilateral collaboration.

“Coffee, cacao, bananas, cassava, bioenergy, textiles — there are many areas where both regions can cooperate strategically,” she says.

She also highlights the need for stronger structural connections between Africa and Latin America, including direct flights, trade systems, educational exchanges, and investment channels.

“We need direct supply chains, direct air connectivity, stronger financial systems, and long-term partnerships,” she says. “The opportunity already exists. We simply need to institutionalize it.”

Moving from isolated partnerships to sustainable systems

One of Maricel’s strongest points throughout the conversation is the importance of sustainability in international cooperation.

“The goal now is to create frameworks that make collaboration constant,” she explains. “We want to move from isolated cultural events to active and continuous engagement.”

According to her, partnerships between Nigeria and Colombia should include: Student exchange programmes, Language education initiatives, Research collaborations, Cultural institutions, Educational partnerships, Community-driven projects.

“It must become something institutionalized — something that survives beyond one event or one administration,” she says.

She stresses that South-South cooperation between Africa and Latin America cannot remain theoretical.

“We cannot continue treating cooperation as temporary,” she argues. “Today we collaborate, tomorrow everything disappears. That must change.” For Maricel, the future lies in long-term systems rooted in continuity and shared development.

Challenging stereotypes through culture

Maricel acknowledges that both Colombia and Nigeria often struggle against international stereotypes. However, she believes genuine cultural exchange can transform perceptions.

“Many people only know our countries through headlines,” she

says. “But once Colombians and Nigerians truly discover each other, they realize how much we have in common.”

She describes both societies as deeply hospitable, expressive, and community-oriented.

“There is creativity, warmth, resilience, and hospitality in our people,” she says. “Visitors are welcomed openly in both cultures.”

She particularly admires the confidence Nigerians express through fashion, music, and artistic identity.

“I love the colourfulness of Nigerian attire,” she says. “People wear their culture proudly.”

According to her, culture in both regions is not merely symbolic — it is economic, social, and deeply integrated into daily life.

“Culture becomes part of the city itself,” she explains. “It influences tourism, creativity, commerce, and community.”

Youth, education, and human-centred development

She also speaks passionately about education and youth empowerment, particularly through creative and community-based learning systems.

“For the past seven years, we have been working on innovative approaches to education,” she says.

She explains that her initiatives have explored integrating creativity, emotional learning, and community engagement into educational systems.

“We believe emotional and physical learning are essential parts of development,” she notes.

Although she acknowledges the growing role of Artificial Intelligence, she insists that human creativity and emotional intelligence remain irreplaceable.

“AI cannot replace empathy, creativity, or human connection,” she says.

Current efforts, she explains, are now extending into sports and scholarship programmes aimed at helping students from underserved communities access opportunities.

“We want students from untapped communities to discover their potential and gain access to



scholarships, mentorship, and sustainable opportunities,” she says.

For her, education must help young people understand not only academic knowledge, but also identity, confidence, and self-worth.

Leadership, sustainability, and the future of cooperation

Speaking on governance and international development, she argues that modern leadership must become more human-centred and sustainability-driven.

“The world today is no longer about the survival of the fittest,” she says. “It is becoming about the survival of all.”

She believes governments, institutions, and businesses must

focus not only on profit, but also on long-term social impact.

“Leadership should measure success by how deeply communities are positively affected,” she argues.

She also calls for better resource management, inclusive systems, and global cooperation that prioritizes collective wellbeing.

“Our planet faces shared challenges,” she says. “We need systems that allow everyone to move forward together.”

Inviting Africa to discover Colombia

Maricel concludes with a warm invitation to Africans and Nigerians to explore Colombia beyond stereotypes.

“Come and discover Colombia,” she says.

“Experience the culture, the adventure, the music, the people, and the beauty of the country.”

She describes Colombia as a country of diversity — from coastal relaxation and cultural festivals to urban innovation and renewable energy development.

“There is something for everyone,” she says. “Nature, technology, creativity, innovation, hospitality — all of it exists together.”

Ultimately, her message throughout the interview remains clear: Africa and Latin America are not distant strangers, but connected societies with shared histories, shared energies, and shared futures.

“We are family,” she says with a smile. “And the future depends on how we continue building together.”

Serving the Nation: Exploring Mandatory Military Service for Nigerian Youth – Book Review

BOOK REVIEW

Title: Serving the Nation: Exploring Mandatory Military Service for Nigerian Youth
Author: Dr. M. S. Abubakar
Publisher: Sprezzatura Publishing Limited, Abuja
Year: 2025
Length: 288 pages
ISBN: 978-978-61705
Reviewer: Major General Lawrence Onoja (Rtd.), PhD, mni, CFN

Introduction

Serving the Nation: Exploring Mandatory Military Service for Nigerian Youth is a timely, ambitious, and intellectually grounded intervention in one of the most consequential debates confronting contemporary Nigeria: how to reconcile youth development, national cohesion, and internal security within a rapidly evolving threat environment. Authored by Dr. M. S. Abubakar, a scholar with a clear grasp of Nigeria's socio-political and security realities, the book advances a carefully structured argument in favour of mandatory military service as a strategic instrument for nation-building, patriotism, and collective security responsibility. The book is dedicated to Lt. Gen. Tukur Yusuf Buratai (Rtd),

formal Chief of Army Staff, whose Foreword situates the work firmly within the lived realities of military leadership and national defence. This association alone signals the seriousness of the project and its intended contribution to policy,



Gen (dr.) Lawrence Onoja, rtd,

doctrine, and national discourse.

Structure and Thematic Development

The book is organized into twelve well-sequenced chapters, preceded by a lucid introduction and complemented by a reflective preface authored by the writer himself. The introduction clearly frames the conceptual, moral, and strategic debates surrounding

compulsory military service, acknowledging both its advocates and critics while establishing the author's normative position.

Chapter One, The Call to Arms, sets the philosophical tone, invoking civic duty, sacrifice, and the historical responsibility of citizens in defending the state. This is followed by Chapter ethnic, political, and security landscape: an essential corrective to the uncritical transplantation of foreign models.

One of the book's strongest empirical contributions appears in Chapter Three, which presents a survey-based assessment of Nigeria perceptions of mandatory military service. This chapter is particularly commendable

for moving beyond conjecture and anchoring the debate in data, revealing nuanced public attitudes that challenge simplistic assumptions about your resistance or apathy.

Chapters Four and Five, on *Pathways to implementation and Leadership in Military Training* and Service demonstrate the

author's practical sensibility, rather than advocating an abstract policy ideal. Dr. Abubakar confronts institutional realities: command responsibility, civil-military relations, training ethics, and leadership culture. These chapters will resonate determined by leadership quality and institutional discipline.

Read Also: From Policy to Practice: How Nigeria is Strengthening Revenue Drive Through the Mining Sector

Military Service as Education and socialization

Perhaps the most innovative section of the book lies in Chapter Six, When the Uniform Becomes a Classroom. Here, the author reconceptualises military service not merely as combat preparation but as a structured system of civic education, discipline, skills acquisition, and character formation. This argument is further enriched by Chapter Seven's engagement with traditional stories, which situates military values within indigenous Nigerian moral frameworks, thereby countering the notion that discipline and patriotism are foreign imposition.

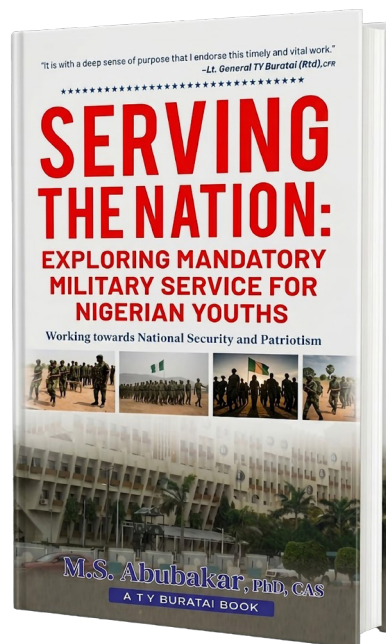
Chapter Eight. Creating a culture of Patriotism, and Chapter Nine, Youth Empowerment through Service, collectively articulate the social dividends of compulsory service: national integration, reduction of youth unemployment, leadership grooming, and the internalization of national rather than sectional identity.

Addressing Criticism and National Security Imperatives

To the author's credit, Chapter Ten directly confronts concerns and misconceptions surrounding

mandatory military service such as human rights, militarization of society, economic const. and political abuse. The discussion is measured rather than defensive, reflecting intellectual honesty and policy maturity.

The book reaches its strategic apex in Chapter



Eleven, Winning the Fight against insecurity in Nigeria. Here, Dr. Abubakar advances a compelling thesis: that national security cannot remain the exclusive burden of the armed forces but must evolve into a shared civic enterprises. This argument aligns closely with modern security thinking, where resilience, intelligence, and societal participation are as decisive as firepower.

Chapter Twelve, Embracing the Call. serves as a reflective conclusion, urging policy makers, military leaders, and citizens alike to reimagine service as honour rather than compulsion.

Scholarly Merit and Contribution.

The book is well-referenced, drawing on both Nigerian and international scholarship across military sociology, security studies, and civic education. This grounding enhances its credibility and positions it as a serious academic contribution rather than a polemical tract.

From the standpoint of a senior retired military officer, the book's greatest strength lies in its balanced fusion of strategic realism and civic idealism. It neither romanticises the military nor trivialises the complexity of implementation. Instead, it treats mandatory service as a policy option deserving rigorous debate, thoughtful design, and ethical leadership.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Serving the Nation is a significant addition to Nigeria's national security literature. It will be of value to:

- Senior military officers and defence policymakers
- Legislators and strategic planners
- Scholars of security and civil military relations
- Educators and youth development stakeholders

While one may disagree with aspect of its prescriptions, the book succeeds in elevating the conversation beyond emotion and ideology into the realm of structured national thinking. For a nation grappling with insecurity, youth disaffection, and fragile patriotism, Dr. M. S. Abubakar has offered a serious, courageous, and intellectually responsible work.

It deserves careful reading and thoughtful response at the highest levels of national leadership.

Cybersecurity Is Now a Weapon Against Terrorism

By Abuh Ibrahim Sani

When people think about terrorism, the image that comes to mind is often physical violence. Explosions, armed attacks, and military confrontations dominate public perception. That picture is no longer complete. Today, terrorism has expanded into a digital space where influence, coordination, and disruption happen quietly but effectively. Groups such as Boko Haram and Islamic State West

Africa Province have adapted to this shift. They now operate in ways that blend physical violence with a strong digital presence.

The Digital Evolution of Terrorist Operations

Modern extremist groups no longer rely only on physical territory. They build influence online. Encrypted messaging platforms allow them to communicate securely, making it

difficult for authorities to intercept plans. Social media platforms are used to spread propaganda, often packaged in emotionally compelling videos that target vulnerable individuals. These campaigns are not random. They are structured, consistent, and designed to recruit, radicalise, and retain followers.

Financing has also moved into the digital space. Terrorist



networks now explore anonymous transactions, digital wallets, and informal online fundraising channels. This reduces their dependence on traditional financial systems and makes tracking funds more complex. The result is a more resilient and harder-to-detect network that can operate across borders without physical presence.

Why Cybersecurity Has Become Essential

In this new reality, cybersecurity is no longer just about protecting systems from hackers. It has become a frontline defence against terrorism. The ability to monitor, detect, and respond to suspicious digital activity is now as important as traditional intelligence gathering. Without strong cyber capabilities, critical warning signs can be missed.

“

Terrorist networks now explore anonymous transactions, digital wallets, and informal online fundraising channels. This reduces their dependence on traditional financial systems and makes tracking funds more complex.

For a country like Nigeria, this shift demands a change in strategy. Military strength alone cannot address a threat that operates both physically and digitally. Security agencies need the tools and expertise to track online behaviour, identify hidden networks, and disrupt digital operations before

they translate into real-world attacks.

The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Threat Detection

Artificial Intelligence introduces a new dimension of precision and speed in cybersecurity. It can process large volumes of data in ways that humans cannot manage efficiently. Through pattern recognition, AI systems can detect unusual behaviours that may indicate emerging threats.

For example, AI can analyse communication patterns across platforms and identify coordinated messaging campaigns linked to extremist groups. It can detect spikes in recruitment content, flag suspicious interactions, and help authorities respond earlier. This moves counterterrorism from a reactive approach to a more proactive one.

AI also supports intelligence-led policing. Instead of relying only on physical patrols or delayed reports, agencies can act based on real-time insights drawn from data. This improves response time and increases the chances of preventing attacks rather than responding after damage has occurred.

The Importance of International Cyber Cooperation

Terrorism no longer respects borders, and neither does cyber activity. A message sent in one country can influence individuals in another within seconds. This makes international cooperation essential. Nigeria cannot operate in isolation when dealing with digitally connected threats.

Collaboration with regional and global partners allows for intelligence sharing, joint monitoring, and coordinated responses. When countries share data about suspicious activities, recruitment patterns, or emerging

threats, the overall response becomes stronger and more effective. Cybersecurity, in this sense, becomes a collective defence effort rather than a national one.

Balancing Security with Human Rights

While the use of AI and cybersecurity tools offers clear advantages, it also raises important concerns. Monitoring digital activity can affect privacy. Data collection, if not properly managed, can lead to misuse or overreach. This is why strong legal frameworks and oversight mechanisms are necessary.

Security measures must be balanced with respect for human rights. Citizens need to trust that surveillance systems are used responsibly and that their personal freedoms are protected. Transparency, accountability, and clear policies are critical in maintaining this balance.

The Future of Counterterrorism

Technology will not solve terrorism on its own. Social, economic, and political factors still play a major role in driving conflict. However, ignoring the digital dimension of modern terrorism creates a serious gap in national security.

The fight against terrorism has changed. It now includes tracking data flows, analysing digital behaviour, and disrupting online networks. Weapons are no longer limited to physical tools. Data, algorithms, and intelligence systems have become just as important.

To remain effective, Nigeria must continue to modernise its approach. Strengthening cybersecurity is not optional. It is a necessary step in adapting to a threat that is constantly evolving and increasingly digital.

Orthodox Denominations Will Do Better with Doctrine than Dogma

By Ugochukwu Ugwuanyi

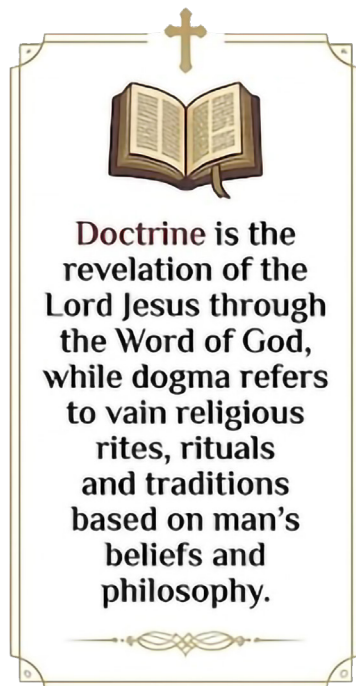
Nostalgia drove yours sincerely to St Andrew's Church, Ogudu, Lagos, on Wednesday evening for a feel of the good old Passion Week. During the service, I was pleasantly surprised to hear the preacher chide those who cling to religion as a means to salvation. Here I was thinking that religiosity is the currency by which the denomination operates. This man of the cloth must be cut from a different cloth, I muttered to myself.

While preaching on "betrayal and being on the Lord's side", the reverend canon warned against recourse to religion, pointing out that those who worship idols are equally religious. Therefore, according to him, Christians who relate with God based on religion aren't different from the animists. He warned the congregation against being like Judas Iscariot, who, though religious, disbelieved in Jesus and quickly traded the Master for 30 pieces of silver. This and more were unpacked within 15 minutes.

Before going any further, let's properly situate the caption: I'm essentially saying that the conservative Christian community will do more in expanding God's kingdom on earth by devoting themselves to doctrine than dogma. Doctrine is the revelation

Word of God, while dogma refers to vain religious rites, rituals and traditions based on man's beliefs and philosophy.

Paul, the Apostle, succinctly differentiated the two when he wrote in Colossians 2:8: "Don't let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-



sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ." (NLT). While dogma illustrates religion, doctrine illuminates the Word of God in man's heart.

As I was saying, it was heartwarming to hear an avant-garde priest preach the unusual in an Anglican Order, which is deemed to be highly religious. But what can one say? As their liturgy reads: the Spirit moves us in sundry places. It pleased the Holy Ghost to teach the congregation in that instant that God is seeking those who would worship and relate with Him in spirit and truth, not guided by irritating religion.

The spiritual nourishment I came away with from that service sans Holy Communion sharply contrasts with the disappointment of the lady who recently returned from a Mass and went online to express how the homily left her hollow. Here's partly how she explained her feeling "cheated" (to borrow from NKJV rendition of the above scripture): "Coming back from church, and I feel like my spirit was not fed today. Honestly, the gospel in the Catholic Church doesn't cut it for me. Catholic priests should go for pastoral teachings to learn how to dissect the Bible in order to satisfy their parishioners spiritually."

The Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church are believed to be on the same pedestal in terms of high orthodoxy. One of the respondents to the young woman's POV, @OlusolaAR, noted

this much by tweeting: “She is saying the truth and it’s not just Catholic even Anglican, most of the priests there are not biblically sound and don’t know how to pass their message. It’s more of ceremonial events than spiritual these days.” An interesting retort came from @Danielbeloved28, who argued that, “Saying that Catholic priests should go for pastoral school is the funniest joke of the century. So the 10 years they spend in seminary school learning the Bible in Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic, Latin etc. is not enough pastoral school? I think there’s something inhibiting most Catholic priests from crossing their limits perhaps.”

The inhibition is caused by dogma. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that the years of training priests undergo in the seminary pale into

insignificance before a Spirit-led pastor. This conclusion is because the Holy Ghost has been proven to be the best teacher (John 14:26, Luke 12:12). Actually, prolonged training only yields philosophies that propel the dogma we are discussing. By the way, what’s the essence of studying the Bible in different ancient languages if that knowledge cannot be applied to rightly dividing the Word of Truth for the spiritual nourishment of parishioners?

Given the similarities between both denominations, if an assisting priest in St Andrew’s Archdeaconry could have the

latitude to correct how most of the laity serve God (he even cited those who don’t eat meat during the Holy Week as a way of identifying with Jesus’s passion), reverend fathers should as well go off the cuff and be enlivening in their homilies through the Holy Ghost. Thankfully, the popular @FrEvaristus Bassey didn’t consider the lady’s truth as a rebellion but provided incisive insight and context to the matter. He stated by saying, “One thing we learned in school is that we cannot argue with religious experience because it is subjective. So this lady may be speaking her truth. There may

while he walked the earth. Not even the time He spent working miracles (bread for the children) compares to how engrossed he was with teaching the crowd about the Kingdom of God whenever the opportunity presented itself.

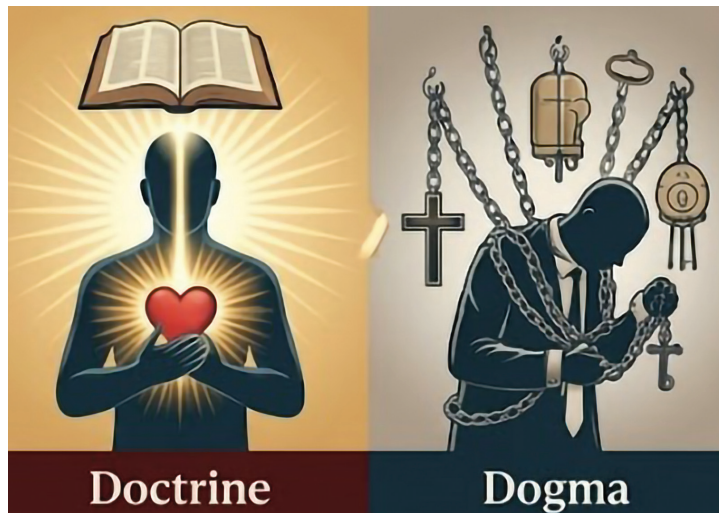
Pray, how do we reconcile the Eucharist being the summit of the Catholic faith with the Master’s assertion that “man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God”? Despite the Lord demanding that we “do this in remembrance of me,” religious ritual can’t override the crux of

John 6:63, “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” Well, it’s relieving to hear that lengthy preaching still features in the Catholic Church during retreats and other programmes.

Father Bassey did the Lord’s work by charging his colleagues to “prepare prayerfully for the sermon, no matter how brief it is. He (the priest) should speak to the soul and spirit of the person, and this can only be done with the unction that

comes from the Holy Spirit.” That’s how doctrine can prevail over dogma in the conservative Church so that parishioners won’t feel empathy after coming before the Lord. This calls to mind Apostle Paul’s admonition in 1 Timothy 5:17, “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.”

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or may not be others in the parish who feel the same way.”

The cleric went on to say, “In the Catholic Church, worship is divided principally into two segments: the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist (Holy Communion). Most Catholics have grown up being satisfied with the nourishment that comes from the brief sermons and the Holy Communion they receive each time they go to church. The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Catholic faith...” There goes dogma being placed over doctrine. The standard flies in the face of Jesus’s preoccupation

The Mercosur-European Union Agreement and Brazil's new phase in the Global South Market

Ronaldo Vieira & Baiena Souto

The Mercosur-European Union Agreement is widely recognised as a trade and cooperation treaty that establishes the largest free trade area ever negotiated by Brazil within the Mercosur framework. It links the vast European consumer market to the economies of the South American bloc. After nearly two decades of negotiation, the agreement will enter into force provisionally and gradually in 2026, once the ratification procedures required by both blocs are completed. From that moment on, tariffs will begin to fall, and new regulatory rules will take effect. The central objective is to expand trade, facilitate investment, harmonise technical standards, and strengthen production chains, creating a more predictable and competitive environment for companies on both sides.

The treaty is the largest inter-bloc agreement in the Western world and represents a historic milestone capable of reshaping relations between emerging economies and industrial powers. Yet it arrives in an international landscape very different from the one in which it was conceived 20 years later. In this new context, it places Mercosur at the centre of debates on the need to revitalise multilateralism. It highlights the Global South as a strategic actor amid intensifying geopolitical competition, where instability has

become part of the commercial game. Countries of the Global South are seeking greater agency, and China occupies a central position in this rearrangement.

Although the agreement is gaining renewed appeal at this moment, being described as historic for multilateralism and as a gesture of confidence in international trade as a driver of economic growth, it is legitimate to question whether it can truly address all the challenges faced by Mercosur or whether its benefits will be unevenly distributed. The question is

unavoidable: will the agreement genuinely support the





traditionally weaker side of the relationship, or could it deepen existing asymmetries?

Answering these questions is essential for understanding Brazil's strategic role in global trade and for shaping policies that ensure the agreement becomes a vector for sustainable development rather than another chapter in the long history of international commercial imbalances.

While the Mercosur-EU Agreement represents a historic opportunity for economic, technological, and regulatory integration, its ability to strategically reposition Mercosur countries and strengthen the Global South depends less on the treaty's text and more on the strategies adopted by developing nations themselves. The warning is clear: the agreement does not

automatically reduce asymmetries. It may even widen them if the Global South fails to organise itself to fully seize advantages such as preferential access to the European market, productive modernisation, and investment attraction.

Coordinated industrial policies, regional integration, stronger value chains, and regulatory harmonisation can transform the agreement into an instrument of sustainable development. These elements can help historically marginalised countries move into more advantageous positions in global trade. In other words, the agreement is not inherently beneficial to the weaker side, but it can become a powerful lever if the Global South acts in a coordinated strategic manner focused on generating added value.

Initially, it is understandable that many Brazilian companies tend to view the agreement simply as an opportunity for direct business with Europe, focusing on market access, tariff reductions and export expansion. Although accurate, this perspective is limited and captures only part of the treaty's transformative potential. Brazil occupies a unique position to serve as a bridge between the Global South and the European market within the framework of the agreement. Its ability to move with legitimacy across Latin America, Africa, and Europe gives the country a strategic role in shaping economic, technological, and cultural flows that transcend regional boundaries.

The agreement offers Brazil direct advantages that strengthen its competitiveness and expand its international reach. Tariff reductions for thousands of products, access to a market of

more than 450 million consumers, and integration into European production chains reinforce sectors such as agribusiness, manufacturing, energy, technology, and the creative economy.

The country is also likely to attract European investment in infrastructure, innovation, and energy transition, which can modernise industry and generate added value. The agreement gains relevance by promoting renewable technologies and unlocking investment in critical minerals, reinforcing Brazil's role as a leader in the global energy transition. With one of the cleanest energy matrices in the world and vast reserves of strategic minerals and rare earths, the country has a unique opportunity to connect Mercosur to the global decarbonisation agenda.

Regulatory predictability and the possibility of participating in European public procurement create a favourable environment for Brazilian companies to expand internationally sustainably and competitively. The same applies to European companies in Brazilian tenders under equivalent conditions. To mitigate historical inequalities, the agreement includes mechanisms to balance market opening with the preservation of national technological sovereignty, including offset clauses requiring technology transfer or local production.

By assuming this bridging role, Brazil can extend the agreement's benefits to other countries in the Global South, including Nigeria. Regional productive integration allows inputs, components, and services from African and Latin American countries to be incorporated into Brazilian

industrial chains destined for the European market. European investment attracted to Brazil can also generate trilateral projects with Global South partners in renewable energy, logistics, sustainable agriculture, and digitalisation. Regulatory harmonisation led by Brazil can help third countries meet European standards, reducing technical barriers and increasing regional competitiveness.

It is also important to recognise that the Mercosur–EU Agreement is only one of several instruments shaping relations between Europe and the Global South. It coexists with intracommonwealth agreements, bilateral treaties between African, Asian, and Latin American countries and European states, and multilateral mechanisms for trade and investment facilitation. In this complex environment, the Global South cannot act in a fragmented manner. It must organise itself strategically to operate within this ecosystem of agreements, harmonise regulatory standards, strengthen regional production chains, and expand its negotiating capacity.

Coordinated participation by the Global South is essential for these instruments, including the Mercosur–EU Agreement, to move beyond formal opportunities and become real tools for sustainable development capable of generating added value, technological innovation, productive inclusion, and greater international presence for developing countries.

By articulating these dimensions, Brazil helps the Global South participate more effectively and more strategically in international trade. Here is

where the opportunities for Nigerian companies lie. The country transforms its role in the agreement into a platform for cooperation, development, and innovation, expanding the collective presence of the Global South in the European market. In this process, the agreement ceases to be merely a commercial instrument and becomes a catalyst for regional transformation. The Global South emerges as a central stakeholder between hemispheres, repositioning itself on the global stage with greater strength, greater voice, and greater ambition.

Author Bios:

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Baiena Souto is a consultant with a master's in population studies and social research at Escola Nacional de Ciências Estatísticas do IBGE. She has a bachelor's degree in social sciences from the Universidade Federal da Bahia – UFBA. She also specialises in developing databases and matrices of social indicators and human rights. Besides, Baiena works with social, economic, and demographic research. She has experience with statistical software and geoprocessing. Currently, her activity is linked to consulting activities in the coordination of multidisciplinary technical teams and in the development of projects in the public and private sectors, including trade, evaluation, and monitoring of public policies, analysis of social policies, territorial development plans, business plans, tax reforms, sectoral plans, organisational restructuring, and strategic planning (baiena.souto1@gmail.com).

ARTETA'S YOUNG ARSENAL: *After 22 Years, a* **A NEW GENERATION** *Finally Touches Glory*

Patience Bitrus

For more than two decades, Arsenal F.C. lived in the shadow of its own history.

The club remained globally loved, commercially powerful, and emotionally relevant, yet every passing season seemed to deepen the distance between memory and reality. Older supporters spoke endlessly of the Invincibles era under Arsène Wenger. Younger fans inherited stories of greatness they had never personally experienced.

Now, after 22 painful years, Arsenal are champions of England again.

And perhaps the most remarkable part of this triumph is not simply that they won the Premier League, but how they won it — through the patient construction of one of the youngest, boldest, and most emotionally connected squads in modern English football.

This title belongs first and foremost to Mikel Arteta and the extraordinary young team he assembled.

When Arteta arrived in 2019, Arsenal were unstable both structurally and psychologically. The club had lost competitive identity. Recruitment lacked direction. Dressing-room discipline was inconsistent. Fans had grown exhausted from repeated cycles of disappointment.

The challenge before Arteta was enormous.

He was not merely rebuilding a squad. He was rebuilding belief.

What followed was one of the most deliberate football reconstructions England has seen in recent years. Instead of chasing short-term glamour, Arsenal invested in youth, character, tactical intelligence, and long-term chemistry. Player by player, the team took shape. Bukayo Saka emerged as the emotional heartbeat of the side. Martin Øde-

gaard brought elegance and leadership. William Saliba transformed the defence with calm authority. Gabriel Magalhães added steel. Declan Rice arrived with maturity and midfield control. Around them, Arteta built a side that was technically gifted, tactically disciplined, emotionally resilient, and visibly united.

For years, Arsenal were accused of being soft under pressure. This team changed that narrative.

They learned through heartbreak. Previous title races collapsed painfully. Critics questioned whether the young squad had the mentality to survive a full championship battle, especially against the machine-like dominance of Manchester City F.C..

But instead of collapsing psychologically, Arsenal matured. That maturity became the defining feature of this title-winning campaign.

There were no panic reactions. No emotional implosions. No surrender when pressure intensified. Arteta's side played with a calmness that reflected years of careful development rather than sudden ambition.

And for younger Arsenal supporters across the world, this title means something profoundly personal.

An entire generation of fans had grown up without ever seeing Arsenal crowned league champions. Many knew the club only through nostalgia, social media banter, and endless references to 2004. Rival supporters mocked Arsenal's history-heavy identity because recent silverware rarely matched the size of the club's reputation.

Now, that generation finally has its own moment. Their own team. Their own heroes. Their own memories.

Not Thierry Henry clips on YouTube. Not stories from parents about Wen-

gerball.

Not old photographs of Patrick Vieira lifting trophies.

This generation now has Arteta's Arsenal.

And that matters deeply in football culture.

Because football loyalty is often inherited long before success arrives. Millions of young Arsenal fans stayed emotionally invested through years of ridicule, inconsistency, and frustration without ever experiencing the reward older supporters once took for granted.

This title validates that patience.

It also signals something larger about Arsenal's future.

Unlike aging championship sides built around temporary peaks, this Arsenal team still feels unfinished — young enough to evolve, improve, and potentially dominate further. Most of the core players are entering, rather than exiting, their prime years.

That reality makes this title feel less like the end of a journey and more like the beginning of a new era.

For Arteta personally, the triumph represents vindication of a philosophy many doubted. He trusted youth when immediate results were demanded. He protected players through criticism. He imposed discipline ruthlessly. He endured difficult periods while insisting on a long-term football identity.

Now, after 23 years of waiting, Arsenal stand at the summit of English football again, with one hand on another possible trophy as the battle PSG for the UCL trophy on May 30 in Budapest.

And this time, the glory does not belong to memory. It belongs to a fearless young team that built its own history.



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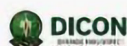


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