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EXCLUSIVE STORY

TRANSFORMING THE LANDSCAPE: A NEW ERA OF ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN EDO STATE

After years of neglect, Governor Okpebholo's administration has embarked on an ambitious road infrastructure development project, achieving a significant breakthrough in a region long plagued by devastating erosion, transforming the once-dilapidated roads into smooth, modern highways, and the impact on the immediate residents has been profound.

- Edo harps on quality education, employment opportunities for visually-impaired persons
- Edo To Rank Among Top States in Agriculture Production, Business - Deputy Governor

"We are a peace-loving people in Edo State. We love those living with us in the State. Kano and Edo State have been collaborating in the area of commerce and industry."

- GOVERNOR MONDAY OKPEBHOLO



MONDAY OKPEBHOLO BUILDS IMPROVED HEALTHCARE ARCHITECTURE

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Gov Okpebholo: Because I Am Involved

At every defining moment in a nation's journey, the call to give account of stewardship becomes not just necessary but inevitable. This duty is more profound for those whom providence has favoured to sit at the helm, guiding the affairs of the state and shaping the future of the people. In 1989, the late Ikemba Nnewi, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, published "Because I Am Involved", a 208-page introspective chronicle that offered a gripping account of his political convictions, nationalist ideals, reflections on Nigeria's unrealized potentials, and the personal sacrifices he made for a country he so deeply loved.

In that same spirit, this article borrows its title and energy from Ojukwu's classic. "Because I Am Involved" is not merely a declaration; it is a commitment. Today, in Edo State, Governor Monday Okpebholo personifies that commitment. Since he assumed office, it is no longer business as usual. The tides have shifted, and the wheels of governance are now being turned by a sense of duty, urgency, and resolve. Because Governor Monday Okpebholo is Involved, educational transformation is underway, and a solid foundation is being built for tomorrow's leaders. Governor Okpebholo's approach to education is holistic and strategic. His administration is actively implementing a three-pronged intervention model: infrastructure, manpower, and pedagogy.

Firstly, several dilapidated schools across the three senatorial districts are undergoing comprehensive rehabilitation to create safe and conducive learning environments. Secondly, the recruitment of qualified teachers is ongoing to plug manpower deficits in critical subjects. Thirdly, the retraining and retooling of educators is being carried out to align teaching methodologies with 21st-century pedagogical standards, including digital literacy and learner-centered techniques.

Continue on page 9

CONTENTS



FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Gov Okpebholo: Because I Am Involved

page 2 & 9



EXCLUSIVE STORY

Transforming the Landscape: A New Era of Road Infrastructure Development in Edo State

page 4



OTHER STORIES

Redefining The Role of Opposition Politics in Edo State

page 6

Monday Okpebholo builds improved healthcare architecture

page 7

Edo harps on quality education, employment opportunities for visually impaired persons

page 8

Edo To Rank Among Top States in Agriculture Production, Business - Deputy Governor

page 10

Promise Kept

page 11

Edo State to Maximize Army Recruitment Quota Governor Okpebholo

page 12

Edo, Federal Government Move to Curb Insecurity

page 13

A Royal Endorsement: Reasons Oba is pleased with Sen. Okpebholo

page 15

Essential Tips

page 16

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TRANSFORMING THE LANDSCAPE:

A New Era of Road Infrastructure Development in Edo State

After years of neglect, Governor Okpebholo's administration has embarked on an ambitious road infrastructure development project, achieving a significant breakthrough in a region long plagued by devastating erosion, transforming the once dilapidated roads into smooth, modern highways, and the impact on the immediate residents has been profound.

His Excellency's eventful days in office has been characterized by significant impact, marked by relentless activities and tangible achievements; a commitment to addressing the State's pressing road infrastructure challenges, and delivering measurable progress, silencing critics, where he is now nicknamed the "Wakawaka Governor".



This is evident in his administration's efforts to improve road construction and rehabilitation, as well as securing the lives and property of Edo people.

One notable project is the two-phased segment 7.2km Temboga-Ekiuwa road construction, which includes storm water channelization. The second phase, which is more complicated and devastating, has now been addressed by the Monday Okpebholo-led administration. The Upper Temboga-Ekiuwa road comprising three communities, including Uteh, Ekiuwa, and Erediauwa, faced the worst erosion problem, particularly gully erosion, exacerbated by urbanization and improper drainage, impacting urban infrastructure and posing risks to residents and property.

Residents had fled to safety to other locations in the neighbouring areas when the ravaging erosion became so deadly and swept their buildings into 100 feet below the earth surface. Many landlords abandoned their homes and went to rent temporary apartments, hoping for government's intervention spanning decades and more.



"Once upon a time, we had a government in Edo State that used to place signboards across all federal roads with the inscription 'this is federal road, bear with us'. But today, we know Edo people ply these roads and it is now Edo roads and by the grace of God, we will continue to move forward to see that our people enjoy good roads across the State."

-Sen. Monday Okpebholo

His swift actions have demonstrated that good governance can be a powerful tool for healing, building and shaping the future.

The improved roads have brought a sense of pride and renewed hope to the community. Residents no longer have to navigate treacherous terrain, and the reduced travel time has increased productivity and connectivity. Local businesses are thriving, and the area is attracting new investments.

Years before the administration of Governor Monday Okpebholo, Pa Edward Ugboyovbi, a landlord in Upper Temboga-Ekiuwa road when cornered in his lamenting state, gave an account of how devastating they have lived as a result of the gully erosion. He said the community has been deserted because of the perennial flooding and its adverse effects on the lives of the inhabitants and their livelihoods.

Ugboyovbi also said that landlords in the community have become tenants in other communities because of how badly the place has become due to the gully. The upgraded roads have also led to a surge in economic activity. Farmers can now transport their produce to markets more efficiently, and entrepreneurs are taking advantage of the improved infrastructure to establish new ventures. The increased economic activity has created jobs and stimulated growth. His words: "I am very happy at the pace of work of reclamation going on here. For a very long time, we have not been able to access our houses, but now, those who left before are coming back to their abandoned houses. With the progress of work on the road and when completed, it will boost the economy of the area." He noted that a good road network is a sinequanon to economic development of any given place.

It was catastrophic with no end in sight when the fleeing inhabitants would return to their abode, but Okpebholo, during his electioneering campaign in 2024, visited the areas and assured them that if elected Governor of the State, he would reclaim the areas within his first 100 days in office. In fulfilling his campaign promises, Okpebholo, within 24 hours of taking the oath of office, initiated moves to award the contracts for the reclamation of the gully seated site under the supervision of the State Ministry of Works. Earth-moving equipment were moved into site by Hartland Construction Company, contracted by the State Government, which has reclaimed over 90 percent of the horrible ravaged community. The administration's efforts to reclaim land and prevent further erosion have yielded impressive results, particularly in the Temboga Upper Mission Road Extension area.

Besides the reclamation works in Temboga Uteh Road, the repairs of critical portions of the Benin-Auchi road near Obadan junction, which became a nightmare for road users and commuters for more than eight years got the urgent attention of Governor Monday Okpebholo. The upgraded roads have also led to a surge in economic activity. Farmers can now transport their produce to markets more efficiently, and entrepreneurs are taking advantage of the improved infrastructure to establish new ventures. The increased economic activity has created jobs and stimulated growth.

The flyover project aimed at decongesting the Ikpoba market, Aduwawa residence, and Agbor park axis took off after Governor Okpebholo signed a ground breaking flag-off that was widely celebrated by bystanders and connecting communities. The introduction of flyovers within the metropolis, beginning with the Ramat Park Oregbeni axis in Ikpoba Hill, marks a significant milestone in the transformation efforts of the administration in the area of infrastructure modernization. As cities around the world are evolving to accommodate increasing populations and complex transport needs, it is crucial for Edo State to keep pace with these developments. The construction of the flyover is not just about building a structure, but it represents a vision of progress, safety, and connectivity that will benefit residents and travellers alike.

The flyover bridges which would be strategically located at Ramat Park, Akpakpava by Dawson Road and Sapele Road by Adesuwa Road are designed to streamline traffic flow, reduce travel times and enhance the overall efficiency of the transportation system. Furthermore, the Okpebholo administration has also successfully completed remedial works on the 55km Benin-Iruekpen federal road. The fact remains that Governor Okpebholo personally inspects these projects, demonstrating his commitment to addressing the region's environmental challenges. This proactive approach has not only improved infrastructure but also mitigated the risks associated with erosion and poor access to road networks in the state. This achievement has significantly enhanced road safety, and reclaiming land already lost to gully erosion has been particularly effective, filling in the gullies and enabling vehicle passage.

As the communities continue to flourish, residents are optimistic about the future. Governor Okpebholo's commitment to infrastructure development has set a new standard for governance, and the people are eager to see what other positive changes his administration will bring.

Redefining The Role of Opposition Politics in Edo State

The article, titled Redefining the Role of Opposition Politics in Edo State, by Fred Itua, the Chief Press Secretary to Governor Monday Okpebholo, exposes issues around redefining opposition politics in Edo State after the recent tribunal victory. Itua emphasizes the need for constructive criticism and responsible opposition, prioritizing the state's development and stability over acrimony and divisive rhetoric.

Below are significant models from the article;

Constructive Criticism: Opposition should provide meaningful policy alternatives; ensuring governance is accountable and people-centered.

Responsible Opposition: Focus on rebuilding, strengthening grassroots engagement, and preparing robust policy proposals for future elections.

Collaborative Governance: Ruling party and opposition should work together, prioritizing Edo State's interests and citizens' well-being.

Issues-Based Politics: Encourage debates focused on economic development, infrastructure, education, security, and healthcare, rather than personal or party rivalries.

Itua highlights the importance of opposition playing a crucial role in strengthening democracy, while also acknowledging the need for cooperation and innovative thinking to address Edo State's challenges. By shifting the focus from post-election bitterness to responsible opposition politics, the state can move forward with development and progress.



MONDAY OKPEBHOLO BUILDS IMPROVED HEALTHCARE ARCHITECTURE



The Edo State Government has continued to garner commendation and praises from school students and administrators following the ongoing inspection of schools across the state, as Okpebholo has shown a commitment to delivering quality healthcare, leading to improved healthcare infrastructure, increased access to medical services and enhanced patient care.

During one of such visits to the Edo State School of Health Sciences in Benin, Commissioner for Education, Dr. Paddy Iyamu, encountered some brilliant female students whose passionate remarks left a lasting impression on the visiting team.

Responding to the student's remarks, Dr. Iyamu expressed deep satisfaction. "You are a testament to what Governor Okpebholo's vision is producing in our schools. This government is committed to raising the bar in education, and your brilliance today is proof that we are on the right path." he said.

The Commissioner's inspection tour is part of a broader initiative to evaluate infrastructure, staff engagement, and student performance, with the goal of revitalizing public education across Edo State. Governor Okpebholo has been lauded for his strategic investments in education, including school rehabilitation, teacher training, and improved learning environments, which have begun yielding visible results.

The video of the student's spirited eulogy has since gone viral, serving as a compelling symbol of hope and the positive impact of governance on young lives.



With boldness and confidence, one of the student openly praised Governor Monday Okpebholo, describing him as "the best Governor Edo State has ever had." Her commendation centered on the visible transformation and renewed attention the education sector has received under the current administration.

The students chanted, "na our papa be this o, we no want another one, na our papa be this o!!!" , openly endorsing the governor as the father of educational transformation in the state. Their performance drew cheers and admiration from onlookers, further reinforcing public support for the governor's policies.

EDO HARPS ON QUALITY EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR VISUALLY-IMPAIRED PERSONS



The Edo State Government has reiterated its commitment to providing quality education and employment opportunities for the visually impaired persons in the state. The government further pledged to protect, uphold, and give special consideration to the well-being and livelihood of the visually impaired citizens and residents of the state. The state deputy governor, Rt. Hon. Dennis Idahosa made the commitments when he hosted members of the Nigeria Association of the Blind, Edo state Chapter, led by its Chairman, Evang. Lucky Imafidon, at the Government House, Benin City.

The deputy governor highlighted the importance of the virtually challenged persons and their significant contributions to the economic development of the state. According to him, "We understand the challenges you are facing. We acknowledge that visually impaired persons are a significant part of our society.

"The Edo State Government affirms its commitment to quality education and employment opportunities for visually impaired persons, we are committed, and we will stand by you as you go on with your business and different activities of your life." Furthermore Idahosa stated that the administration understands the role of government in a very crucial aspect like this, continuing that Senator Monday Okpebholo is a listening governor, and by the grace of God, they will have the opportunity later on, to discuss the visit, and hold follow up meetings.

"I want you to know that you are of priority to us as a government, and we are going to match words with action. So, on behalf of the government, and the good people of Edo state, I want to thank you for this visit, and pray that God Almighty will first and foremost meet your needs while the state government will do its part." Idahosa reassured.

Earlier in his address, the chairman of the association, Imafidon, congratulated Idahosa and Okpebholo on their electoral victory, noting that the association was optimistic that the Monday Okpebholo-led administration would pay special attention to the challenges, needs, and yearnings of the blind and visually impaired citizens and residents of the state, while the General Secretary, Akhabue Matthew, commended the deputy governor for prioritising and awarding the association a special recognition just within a few months of assumption of office.



Gov Okpebholo: *Because I Am Involved*

Because he is involved, agriculture has received unprecedented attention. Governor Okpebholo's administration has significantly increased budgetary allocation to the agricultural sector. Over 3,000 hectares of arable farmland are being cultivated under various agricultural empowerment initiatives. Beyond mere cultivation, partnerships with private investors are being explored to establish agro-processing hubs that will reduce post-harvest losses, promote value addition, and create employment opportunities, especially for youth and women in rural areas.

Governor Okpebholo has embarked on an ambitious infrastructural renewal program, particularly in road construction. His administration has flagged off several strategic road projects that serve as vital arteries, linking communities, enhancing commerce, and easing transportation. Among these are the Ekpoma-Uromi-Ubiaja Road and the Uromi-Onewa-Udomi-Ibhiolulu-Afuda-Idumoza axis, all crucial to inter-community trade. Urban renewal projects in Benin City are also receiving a facelift, with several roads being re-asphalted, drainages reconstructed, and streetlights installed for enhanced security and aesthetics.

Because he is involved, security is being tackled both in policy and practice. Governor Okpebholo has led the enactment of anti-cultism and anti-kidnapping laws to strengthen the legal framework for fighting insecurity. Complementing this legislative stance is the purchase of thousands of operational vehicles and logistics support for the Nigeria Police and other security agencies across the state. Community policing structures are being revived, and a feedback mechanism has been introduced where citizens can report threats anonymously to a centralized command center.

In the health sector, the renovation of primary health care centers and recruitment of frontline health workers have been intensified. Governor Okpebholo's administration is also working toward the expansion of the Edo Health Insurance Scheme to cover more vulnerable populations. His interest in digital governance is birthing innovations that streamline internal processes, curb leakages, and promote transparency. This includes the digitization of land administration, tax payments, and record-keeping for government workers.

Ojukwu once wrote, "I do not seek to please, I seek to serve." Governor Monday Okpebholo, through his visible and people-centered governance, has made it clear: he is not in power for fanfare or personal gain. He is in office because he is involved - involved in the pains of his people, the cries of rural dwellers, the frustrations of commuters, the dreams of school children, and the aspirations of a new Edo State.

The journey is not without its challenges, but one truth is undeniable: under Governor Monday Okpebholo, Edo State is no longer on autopilot. There is direction. There is purpose. Above all, there is involvement.

Fred Itua

Chief Press Secretary to the Edo State Governor and Editor-in-Chief, Edo Government House Newsletter

EDO TO RANK AMONG TOP STATES IN AGRICULTURE PRODUCTION, BUSINESS - DEPUTY GOVERNOR



The Edo State deputy governor, Rt. Hon. Dennis Idahosa expressed that the Senator Monday Okpebholo-led administration had been working to stimulate agricultural production through various initiatives. According to the statement by his Chief Press Secretary, the deputy governor said those initiatives would place Edo among top states in agricultural production in the fullest of time.

Idahosa disclosed this in Benin, when he played host to the executives and members of the All Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN), Edo State Chapter, led by the president, Alhaji Ebiredelu Dogwo Bako. While noting that the state is blessed with agricultural land and also has the prospect of significantly increasing the state's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Idahosa reminded that the sector was among the five-point agenda of Okpebholo-led administration.

"Having food security as a key component of the five point agenda, the administration will remain committed to revamping the sector and improving the livelihood of its citizenry as well as residents. For the first time in the history of Edo State we have placed so much emphasis on agriculture, leading to over N70 Billion allocated for the sector in the budget. We are blessed with fertile land, and before the advent of petroleum, agriculture was the major source of revenue generation, and we were doing extremely well before it was abandoned for crude oil discovery, leading us where we are right now. In line with the President's agenda, directing every state to focus on agriculture, I can assure you, by the grace of God, Edo will rank top state in agriculture production and business," he stated.

Idahosa, who assured the farmers of the state's collaboration in strengthening the association, also noted the government's effort to tame insecurity, especially farmers-herders clashes, and ensure peace and stability working with security agencies.

"On behalf of my principal, I can assure you that there is going to be a strong collaboration between the government and AFAN. Be assured that farmers will now go back to their farms, and they will be safe and secured with their families."

Earlier in his address, the Chairman AFAN, Bako, commended the contributions of the deputy governor over the years in strengthening the association, providing large-scale inputs to farmers, to increase productivity. He further solicited the state government's support and collaboration in repositioning the association and providing solutions to farmers/herders crisis.



PROMISE KEPT !



Responding on behalf of the family, Mrs. Helen Eboigbodin, widow of the late Comrade Eboigbodin, expressed deep gratitude to the Governor for the compassionate gesture. She thanked him for fulfilling all promises made to the family, including the employment offered to her daughter. She also prayed for God's guidance and strength for the Governor as he continues to steer the affairs of the state.

Following his demonstration of his commitment to the welfare of pensioners and their families in Edo State, the Executive Governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo, has fulfilled his pledge by approving the payment of gratuity and death benefits to the family of the late Comrade Kaduna Eboigbodin, a former Chairman of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) in the state. The Governor, represented by the Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Sir (Dr.) Lucky Esegbe, made this presentation at the Ministry's premises in Benin City. He reaffirmed his administration's resolve to prioritize the payment of pensions and gratuities across the state, devoid of political considerations.

Governor Okpebholo emphasized that despite inheriting a backlog of unpaid gratuities, his administration remains determined to ensure that retirees are duly compensated for their service while still alive. As part of this commitment, the state government has increased its monthly allocation for pension payments from N100 million to N1 billion. "The ongoing disbursement includes pensioners from the 2012 batch, and we are making preparations to begin payment for the 2013 batch and subsequent years in the coming months," he stated. He added that subsequent cheque distributions would continue at the Local Government Staff Pensions Board, noting that all other beneficiaries will receive their cheques as additional batches are compiled.

The Chairman of the Nigeria Union of Pensioners (NUP) in Edo State, Comrade Samuel Okhuelegbe, commended the Governor for the humane and responsive action, describing it as a sign of a government that values its senior citizens and keeps its word. Also speaking, a representative of the Civil Society Community in Edo State, Comrade Ogbidi Emmanuel, applauded Governor Okpebholo for leading with integrity. He also called for the immortalization of the late Comrade Eboigbodin in recognition of his contributions to the labour movement.

The event was witnessed by key stakeholders, including the Chairman of the Local Government Service Commission, Hon. Francis Akhigbe, management staff of the Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, officials of the Local Government Staff Pensions Board, executives of the Nigeria Union of Pensioners (NUP); members of the Local Government Pensioners Association of Nigeria (LOGPENAS), Chairman of Edo State Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), Comrade Bernard Joman, Chairman of the Public Service Negotiating Council (JNC), Comrade Godwin Oisamaiye, and members of the civil society.

EDO STATE TO MAXIMIZE ARMY RECRUITMENT QUOTA – GOVERNOR OKPEBHOLO

Edo State Governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo, has reiterated his administration's commitment to mobilizing citizens to fully utilize the state's recruitment quota in the Nigerian Army, as part of efforts to strengthen national security. Speaking through his Chief of Staff, Gani Audu, the governor said his government will intensify sensitization campaigns across the state to encourage young people to enlist in the Nigerian Army. He gave the assurance while receiving a delegation from the Chief of Army Staff, during the sensitization tour of states in the Niger Delta.

Governor Okpebholo disclosed that the state will collaborate with the Brigade Commander to form a sensitization team that will visit all 18 local government areas of Edo State to ensure the state's recruitment quota is met.

"We will work closely with the Brigade Commander to set up a team that will take this message to every local government area in Edo. This is a critical step towards achieving full utilization of our recruitment quota in the Nigerian Army," he said.



The purpose of the delegation, led by Brigadier General Wiito Nzidee, Director of Supply and Transport Services is part of a broader campaign to raise awareness among youths in the Niger Delta about available opportunities in the Army. Brig. General Nzidee explained that Edo State has been underperforming in recruitment, prompting the Army's intervention to increase awareness, especially with the ongoing application for the 89 Regular Recruit Intake.

Supporting the initiative, Commander of 4 Brigade of the Nigerian Army, Brigadier General Ebenezer Oduyebo emphasized that increased enlistment will not only enhance security but also provide employment opportunities for Edo youths. Current recruitment figures show a significant gap, while Kaduna has registered 2,393 applicants, Adamawa 1,701, Plateau 1,400, and Bauchi 1,136, Edo has only 194 candidates out of its 2,000 allocated slots for the 89 Regular Recruit Intake.

EDO, FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MOVE TO CURB INSECURITY



Edo State Governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo has disclosed that the Federal Government, in collaboration with the Edo State Government, have set up a fact-finding Committee to look into the circumstances surrounding the recent killings of some hunters in Uromi, Edo State.

This initiative between Edo State and Federal government aims to address security concerns from the recent Uromi killings through collaborative efforts, by pooling resources and expertise to develop effective strategies to enhance public safety and stability.

Governor Okpebholo stated this on Thursday when he received a high-powered delegation from Kano State, led by the Deputy Governor of the State, Comrade Aminu Abdulsalam Gwarzo at the Government House in Benin City.

The Governor said President Bola Ahmed Tinubu is not happy over what happened in Uromi and he is determined to ensure the State and nation are safe for everybody to live and do business.

"This incident has opened our eyes and we are ready to address a lot of issues about the country and how to make life better for us all. The president is not happy with what has happened and he wants us to see to the end of this dastardly act.

"The President personally wants to see to the end of this issue. I want to also let you know that the President and Edo State Government have set up a committee to find out the remote cause(s) of the incident and put a lasting solution to the issue.

"This report you have submitted will actually help us so that we do not have to worry you. A lot will be done and made open to the public to know what the committee is doing on the issue.

"We are a peace-loving people in Edo State. We love those living with us in the State. Kano and Edo State have been collaborating in the area of commerce and industry," he stated.

The Deputy Governor of Kano State, Comrade Aminu Abdussalam Gwarzo appreciated Governor Okpebholo for his earlier visit to Kano.

He noted that the delegation was in Edo State to thank the Governor for the peaceful steps he took when he came to Kano State in regards to the Uromi incident.

"The Governor of Kano State set up a Committee to screen and verify, to establish the names, numbers, next of kin and those who survived the attack. We have been able to carry out these activities and we have come out with a report which we are here to submit to your Excellency.

"You promised us that justice will be done and we believe you on this Mr. Governor. We need a transparent process on this issue. Sixteen persons lost their dear lives from five local government areas of Kano State," he explained.

Present during the visit were the Deputy Governor of Edo State, Hon. Dennis Idahosa; Speaker Edo State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon Blessing Agbebaku; security heads in the State, senior government officials, both from Kano and Edo State, among others.

Governor Okpebholo and the delegation from Kano also visited Uromi, where they met with members of Hausa Community in the area.



A Royal Endorsement: Reasons Oba is pleased with Sen. Okpebholo



As a symbol of tradition and community, a monarch's endorsement can carry significant weight. When a political leader performs well, it is not uncommon for a Royal Majesty to express satisfaction. Unlike the view of the opposition party who politicized a genuine support of the Oba of Benin Kingdom to His Excellency, Senator Monday Okpebholo, some have described it a rare Grace, a moment His Royal Majesty, Oba Ewuare II, rose from the throne to honour His Excellency, Governor Monday Okpebholo by embracing his warmth arms, a moment that left people emotional, and further develop love for a man ready to give the state a benefiting developmental feat.

His Excellency was embraced by His Royal Majesty because of his demonstration of effective governance, including, improved infrastructure, roads, schools, and healthcare facilities that benefit the community. On Economic growth, Okpebholo has created Jobs, this is one of the greatest investments in the people, and his poverty reduction initiatives are a thing to reckon with. Okpebholo has endeared himself to the Oba of Benin Kingdom following his transparent and accountability culture, he has not only been transparent in his decision-making but accountable to the people.

A servant leader who has respect for culture and tradition, he ensures that thrones are preserved and history and traditions promoted; a man who supports local initiatives by encouraging and investing in community projects such as education and healthcare.

His is wired to promote unity and inclusivity, encouraging diversity among community members besides, he has demonstrated integrity, shows honesty, humility, and a strong work ethic, accessible and approachable, a man who listens to the concerns of community members and is willing to engage in dialogue, a visionary, who has a clear vision for the community's future and works towards achieving it.

By demonstrating these qualities, His Excellency, Senator Monday Okpebholo has earned the respect and admiration of His Royal Majesty, Oba of Benin Kingdom, leading to a positive and productive father and son relationship.



ESSENTIAL TIPS

Here's what governments can do to end female genital mutilation:

Engage communities



Train health workers



Invest in prevention



Enact anti-FGM legislation



Excruciatingly painful and internationally condemned, female genital mutilation (FGM) remains a frightening reality for girls and women around the world. At least 200 million women and girls worldwide are living with the lifelong consequences of this gender-based violence. In most cases, girls are mutilated before their fifth birthday. **- UNICEF**