



BENIN FLOODING: GOV OKPEBHOLO INTERVENES

...HIRES EXPERTS TO UNDERSTUDY PRONE AREAS, REPLICATE AKWA IBOM MODEL

Determined to address the perennial flooding challenges confronting Edo State, particularly the State capital, Benin City, Governor Monday Okpebholo has commissioned a team of environmental and hydrology experts to understudy the acclaimed flood control strategy implemented in Akwa Ibom and Rivers States, during the administrations of Godswill Akpabio and Nyesom Wike as governors respectively.

This initiative underscores

Governor Okpebholo's pragmatic approach to governance, premised on learning from working models, and replicating tested solutions that deliver real results for the people.

The Akwa Ibom and Rivers States' models, widely acknowledged for transforming some of Nigeria's most flood-prone areas into States with efficient flood management systems, stand as credible blueprints for what is possible in Edo State.

With the rainy season already tilting towards its peak, the timing of the exercise is strategic. It provides the experts with a unique opportunity to observe and assess the true extent of flooding in real time across Benin City and other vulnerable parts of the State.

The focus will be on understanding the terrain, existing drainage infrastructure, and recurring flashpoints of overflow and erosion.

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SECRET CULT & SIMILAR ACTIVITIES (PROHIBITION) LAW 2025



FOUR THINGS YOU NEED TO
KNOW ABOUT THE EDO STATE

Secret Cult and Similar Activities (Prohibition) Law 2025

1



The Bill was passed into Law by
the Edo State House of
Assembly and signed by His
Excellency, **Senator Monday
Okpebholo**

2



The Law took effect from **24th
of January, 2025** and confers
stiffer penalties for anyone
found guilty of secret cult
related offences in the State

3



The Law provides for **twenty-one (21) years
imprisonment** for financial and material sponsors
of secret cults; without an option of fine and in the
case of any fatality, the perpetrator (s) shall be
liable to death upon conviction. Any properties in
his name as well as his place of residence shall be
confiscated and demolished by the State
Government

4



Also, the Law provides for **ten (10) years
imprisonment** for those who knowingly
harbor members of a secret cult or permit a
secret cult meeting or activities to be held in
a house, building or place over which they
have control. Such person (s) properties will
be confiscated and demolished by the State
Government

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BENIN FLOODING: GOV OKPEBHOLO ...CONT'D



execution, and diversion of funds under the guise of erosion control, this new initiative will be comprehensive, transparent, and targeted at delivering a permanent fix.

The Governor has made it clear that there will be zero tolerance for corruption or cosmetic solutions. Every kobo earmarked for the projects will be accounted for and directed solely toward its intended purpose — the protection of lives, properties, and the environment.

Governor Okpebholo remains unwavering in his pledge to make Benin City and its environs more resilient, livable, and economically viable. This bold intervention is part of his broader development agenda to reposition Edo State as a model of modern urban infrastructure and environmental planning in Nigeria.

The technical team from four companies will conduct comprehensive feasibility studies and environmental assessments aimed at designing a permanent and sustainable solution to Benin City's flood problem.

Their findings and recommendations will be submitted to the Governor for thorough evaluation and subsequent implementation.

Similarly, private and commercial houses built along waterways will be demolished by the administration to pave the way for proper surface and underground drainages, especially in Government Reservation Areas in Benin City.

Property owners with verified documents will be compensated by the Government, while others will be relocated to safe areas.

Governor Okpebholo's bold multifaceted flood control project across the State capital will commence after the heavy rains, and the project will be completed in no distant time.

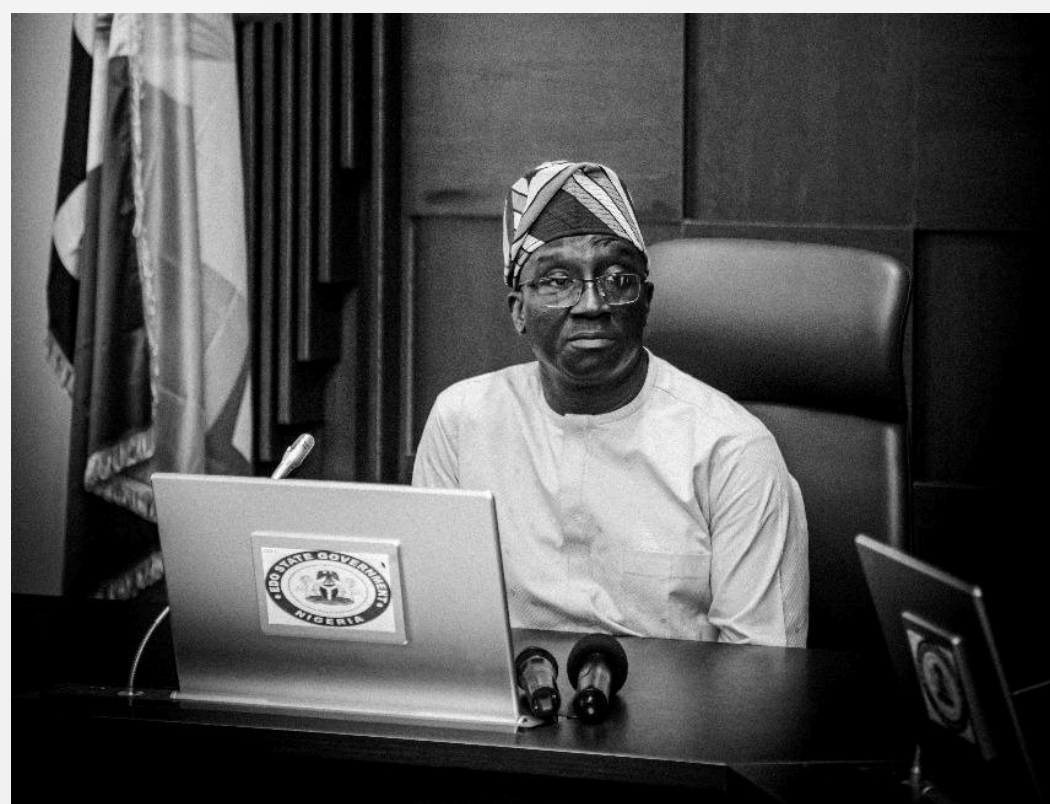
The Government is committed to ensuring that this process is neither cosmetic nor politicized but rather driven by empirical data and genuine concern for the safety and wellbeing of Edo residents.

Unlike the intervention by the last administration that was marred by mismanagement, half-hearted

The era of seasonal flooding, paralyzing communities, and threatening livelihoods in Edo is coming to an end.

The administration of Governor Okpebholo is taking firm steps to deliver a future where residents will no longer live in fear each time it rains. The people of Edo can look forward to a new lease of life marked by proactive leadership and responsive governance.

Signed:
Fred Itua,
The Chief Press Secretary to Governor Monday Okpebholo of Edo State.



OLYMPIC DAY RUN COMMEMORATION WILL BOOST SPORT DEVELOPMENT IN EDO - OKPEBHOLO

By Godfrey Osejele



The Governor of Edo State, Sen. Monday Okpebholo has asserted that the State Exercise in commemoration of the year 2025 International Olympic Day Run is a morale to the development of sport in the State.

Sen. Okpebholo, represented by the Deputy Governor Rt. Hon. Dennis Idahosa, extolled the vision of the Founder, Pierre De Coubertin, whose aspiration was to enhance the world through the transformative power of sport. He asserted that engaging in sports fortifies the mind and body, which promotes robust health and wellbeing. Appreciating participants, he recommended them to strive for excellence and to fuel their aspirations, saying that sports ignite dreams, disseminate joy and foster unity among people.

The Governor asserted that the event consistently cultivates connections and solidarity which is the profound essence and magnificence of sport. He added that such propels the world into motion, transcending geographical boundaries and embracing expressions of movement. On expectations from the Edo State Sports Commission, he commended the Chairman, Hon. Amadin Desmond Enabulele and the Board for their capabilities and concluded that Edo is in the right direction sport-wise.

Hon Enabulele, who led the exercise with athletes, coaches, secretaries, staff of the State's Sport Commission and the general public, said it is not about winning, but about participation, being active and also about coming together as a community. He stated that it is a reminder that sport belongs to everyone regardless of age, background and ability. He appreciated all the participants, saying that their presence is a testament to their commitment to health, sportsmanship, and unity. He disclosed that he had proposed to the Governor about holding the Governor's fitness day every third Saturday of the month and expecting approval.

The exercise which lasted for an hour, started from the Samuel Ogbemudia Stadium, through Ekenhua Road, through Plymouth Road, through Akenzua Road and back to the Stadium. Highpoint

of the event was the presentation of the certificate of participation to the Governor, by an Olympian, who participated in the 1972 Olympic Tournament, Coach Isaac Iguorie. Other recipients of the certificate of participation included the Permanent Secretary of the Edo State Sports Commission, Mrs. A. P. Efe Amenze amongst others.



EDO STATE DEPUTY GOV ASSURES RESPONSIVE, RESILIENT HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

By Godspower Eguasa

... AS EDSG CONVENES PHCS' 2ND QUARTER TASK FORCE MEETING



The Edo State Deputy Governor, Rt. Hon. Dennis Idahosa has reiterated the Sen. Monday Okpebholo-led administration's commitment to prioritizing the health and well-being of residents in the State, assuring a more responsive and resilient primary healthcare system that will cater for the health needs of residents across the three senatorial districts of the State.

Rt. Hon. Idahosa made this known in a statement endorsed by his Chief Press Secretary, Friday Aghedo, during the second quarter meeting of the Task Force on Primary Health Care, which held on Thursday, 19th of June, 2025, at the new Festival Hall of the Edo State Government House in Benin City.

The Deputy Governor solicited the collective efforts and collaboration of key stakeholders, especially council chairmen of the 18 local government areas of the State on the fight against the new disease outbreak, including diphtheria and dengue fever among children, and young adults. He commended the efforts of development partners, such as the World Health Organization (WHO); the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); among others, in joining the State to achieve greater results in health care responses.

In his words, "It is with great honour and appreciation that I welcome you all to this second quarterly PHC Task Force meeting. Your collective dedication and unwavering commitments to strengthening primary health care (PHC's) services in Edo State, do not go unnoticed. From policy makers to frontline health workers; from community leaders to development partners; you all are driving change, ensuring that Edo health care system evolves to meet the needs of our people.

"Looking back at the inaugural meeting, we came together as a unifying front, recognizing the urgency of our mission to build a more efficient, accessible, and well-coordinated PHC system. That meeting sets a foundation for collaborative efforts, guiding

us to think critically about the gap within our health care system and the practical steps needed to address it. Today, we reconvene not only to reflect, but to evaluate our progress, identify challenges, and recalibrate where necessary.

"I request that all stakeholders provide updates on actions taken since our last meeting, offering insights into progress achieved, barriers encountered, and areas requiring stronger interventions. It is through this discussion that we all refine our collective approach and ensure a resilient and responsive PHC system in Edo State".

Rt. Hon. Idahosa, who commended the strategic approach of Sen. Monday Okpebholo to repositioning the health care system of the State, noted he was optimistic that with interventions currently in the works, the Primary Health Care System will be a game changer in responding to the health needs of residents in the State.

The Commissioner for Health, Dr. Cyril Oshiomole highlighted the status and active measures ongoing in the State in addressing and protecting the health of residents against diphtheria and dengue fever outbreak, which is ravaging the Country. He commended the effort of the Governor, development partners, and that of the State's Health Surveillance Team in ensuring a safe state for residents.

Dr. Oshimole said, "When we held our inaugural meeting, we set a clear vision to build a responsive, resilient, and people-centered primary health care system in our State. Today, we are faced with a true test of that vision; a diphtheria outbreak spreading across several local governments in the Country, including ours; an emerging threat of dengue fever in our communities. As at June 18th, we had recorded seven confirmed cases of dengue fever at Irrua Specialist Hospital. At the same time, we are actively battling an ongoing diphtheria outbreak, which has already affected vulnerable populations and claimed three lives.

"In response, we have commenced reactive diphtheria vaccination for children aged five to 14 years in the affected areas. I want to commend our Surveillance officers, Routine Immunization Team, and Disease Control Unit for rising to this occasion. But we cannot do this alone. We must act together. We must act now".

EDO STATE GOVT GUARANTEES N100BN CREDIT FACILITY FOR CONTRACTORS



We wish to state unequivocally that while the Edo State House of Assembly has indeed granted its approval for a facility amounting to N100 billion, the Edo State Government is not obtaining a loan of N100 billion.

Rather, the Edo State Government is strategically positioned as a guarantor for contractors handling critical infrastructural projects across the State. The guarantee will then secure the necessary funding for project execution from First Bank Plc.

This clarification is crucial to correct any misconception arising from reports suggesting that the Governor had directly obtained an approval to borrow the aforementioned sum.

The arrangement is specifically a contractor loan facility designed to empower nominated contractors with direct access to capital for their projects, with the State's guarantee underpinning the financial transaction.

This innovative approach is a deliberate move by Governor Okpebholo's administration to accelerate the development of key infrastructure across Edo State. The funds, which will be disbursed by First Bank Plc directly to the contractors based on their project demands, have a tenure of 40 months.

The Edo State Government is fully committed to fulfilling its guarantee obligations by ensuring timely payments to the bank as agreed, thereby guaranteeing the seamless and expeditious execution of these vital projects.

Among the priority projects earmarked for execution under this funding mechanism are: Construction of a flyover bridge at Adesuwa Road; Construction of Evbhukhu-Sapele Road with surface and underground drainage system in Oredo LGA; Construction of Eguador-Iguomo-Uvbenisi-Oza Road with Spur to Ohe community in Uhunwonde LGA; Construction of Okpagha-Amufi Road with Spur to AG Bonze Street, Daddy J Road, and Michael Agbedon Street in Uhunwonde/Ikpoba Okha LGA; Construction of inter roads in Ogbege and Old Sapele Road, including associated hydrology structure in Benin City; Construction of Uhie Road off Sapele Road, Benin City; Construction of internal roads in Ugieda village, South Ibie, Etsako West LGA; Construction of a single carriage way of Ekpoma-Uromi-Ubiaja road in Esan, among others.

This pragmatic and fiscally responsible model underscores Governor Okpebholo's strong commitment to delivering on his mandate for infrastructural development, ensuring that contractors are well-resourced to complete projects efficiently, and ultimately improving the lives of Edo citizens.

Signed,

Fred Itua,

The Chief Press Secretary to Governor Monday Okpebholo.

EDO STATE GOVT EMPOWERS WIDOWS IN COMMEMORATION OF INTERNATIONAL WIDOWS DAY

By Wisdom Agbonta



In commemoration of year 2025 International Widows Day, the Edo State Government through its Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, has empowered widows in line with the theme, "Access to Justice and Empowerment for Vulnerable Widows," across the three senatorial districts of the State.

At the Victor Uwaifo Creative Hub in Benin City and venue for the Edo South Senatorial District, the Coordinator of the Office of The First Lady, Mrs. Edesili Okpebholo Anani, represented by the wife of the Secretary to the State Government, Barr. Nimata Umar Ikhilor, highlighted the need to support and empower widows in the State.

Mrs. Anani stated, "As the Coordinator, Office of the First Lady in Edo State, I have witnessed firsthand the impact of widowhood in women. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that widows receive the support and empowerment they deserve". Let us work together to create a society where widows are valued, respected and empowered to live fulfilling lives."

In a welcome address, the Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Chief Bisi Idaomi, highlighted the significance of the event to include identifying with the resilience and strength of widows, citing them as a powerful inspiration to communities. She stated, "Today marks a significant milestone in our collective commitment to supporting one of the most vulnerable yet resilient segment of our society. As we commemorate the International Widows Day, we gather not just to acknowledge their struggles, but to celebrate their strength, resilience and invaluable contributions to our communities.

Today's empowerment programme is a testament to our Government's recognition of these qualities and our determination to provide the necessary support. This programme involves keynote addresses that is geared towards strengthening the resilience of our widows and the distribution of various empowerment items to boost their businesses".

Chief Idaomi asserted that the theme resonates with the Ministry's mission, saying, "It emphasizes the urgent need to

address the systemic inequalities that disproportionately affect widows and to create pathways for their economic empowerment and social inclusion. Under the Sen. Monday Okpebholo's leadership, the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development has consistently prioritized enhancing the lives of women, especially the vulnerable.

"Today, we are not just offering temporary relief, we are investing in sustainable solutions. This programme is not a one-time event, but the beginning of a comprehensive support system with other widows to use these resources to rebuild, grow and shape their future. Let me again thank our donors, partners, security services and staff."

Highlight of the event was the presentation of empowerment

materials to widows, who were chosen through an open ballot process. The items included wet grinding machines, dry grinding machines, popcorn making machines, industrial burner, point of sale (POS) machines, coolers, amongst others. The beneficiaries were overjoyed, expressing heartfelt gratitude and praise on the State Government for its thoughtful initiative, which will transform their lives.

Present at the event were the Chairman of Ikpoba-Okha Local Government Area, Hon. Jolly Ogbeide; the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry, Mrs. Joy Ihensekhien; Directors of the Ministry; the wife of Edo State Commissioner of Police; Mrs. Ada Helen Agbonika; representatives of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), amongst others.



OKPEBHOLO'S CIVIL SERVICE TRANSFORMATION SHINES AT MAIDEN INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE CONFERENCE

By Violet Osatohanmwon Obamwonyi

...GOV OKPEBHOLO IS DELIBERATE AND STRATEGIC IN CIVIL SERVICE REFORMS – HOS



The myriads of reforms in the Edo State Civil Service under the administration of Governor Monday Okpebholo has been represented by the State Head of Service (HOS), Dr. Anthony Okungbowa at the maiden edition of the International Civil Service (ICS) Conference, which held from 25th to 26th June 2025 at the Eagle Square, Abuja.

According to Dr. Okungbowa, the Conference themed, “Rejuvenate, Innovate and Accelerate,” as organised by the Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation (OHCSF) is aimed at strengthening public sector governance and enhancing service delivery. The Edo State Civil Service was part of other sub-national governments and international partners, including Ghana, Morocco, Kenya, South Africa, the United Kingdom, the United States, amongst others, which participated in the event

The forum provided a platform for cross-border dialogue, experience-sharing, and capacity-building, aimed at repositioning the Public Service as a driver of inclusive development and national transformation. The Edo State delegation, led by the HOS, Dr. Okungbowa, was among key stakeholders at the event, signaling the State's strong alignment with the reform agenda championed at the Federal level.

Commending the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation, Mrs. Didi Esther Walson-Jack, for her visionary leadership in convening the inaugural Conference, Dr. Okungbowa described the initiative as a landmark in the evolution of Nigeria's Civil Service. He lauded Mrs. Walson-Jack for her exemplary role in fostering innovation, professionalism, and intergovernmental collaboration within the Public Sector.

“I must thank the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation for this innovative platform. Since assuming office, she has

demonstrated outstanding leadership not only in reforming the Federal Civil Service but in supporting the growth of state-level services across the Country,” Dr. Okungbowa stated.

Reflecting on the objectives of the Conference, Dr. Okungbowa emphasized its relevance to the Edo State's ongoing reforms, noting that lessons from the forum would inform strategic improvements in governance and service delivery back home. In his words, “We are here to listen, participate, and learn so we can replicate these transformative ideas within our own Civil Service. As heads of service in subnational governments, it is our duty to leverage the insights from such engagements to elevate our systems and better serve the people.”



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EDO STATE GOVERNMENT MOBILIZES ROAD CONTRACTORS ACROSS THE STATE - OHONBAMU



Edo State Governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo came into office to provide visionary leadership by working round the clock, just as Road Contractors have been mobilized to commence work across the state

The Commissioner for Information and Communication, Hon Paul Ohonbamu who disclosed this in Benin City, said that the administration has mobilized all contractors handling road projects approved for construction and rehabilitation across the state with the mandatory twenty five percent mobilization.

According to him, "Governor Okpebholo is working round the clock to ensure the successful implementation of approved projects.

" Whatever the Governor says, he makes sure it is well implemented. In the area of disaster management, public security, infrastructure, Education and human capital development across the eighteen local governments, the Governor has made indelible impacts.

"The Executive Council Meeting held earlier this week approved the Renovation and remodeling of sixteen

Secondary Schools throughout the three senatorial districts of the state.

"Some of the schools include Edo College, Benin City, Evbareke Secondary School, Benin City, St. David Mixed Model School, Evboneka, St. Maria Goretti Secondary School and many others.

"All is now set for the successful takeoff of the New Edo Line Transport on the 27th of June, 2025, with all the terminals in Port Harcourt, Warri, Lagos, Abuja, Calabar and other states now ready.

"The Disbursement of the N1Billion promised to farmers, traders, and Market women by Governor Okpebholo during the International Women Day has commenced.

" Some of the newly trained Edo State Security Corps have been deployed, while others are still undergoing training at the NYSC Camp, Okada."

The Commissioner noted that the Governor is working round the clock to ensure Edo people get the dividends of democracy.

OKPEBHOLO'S CIVIL SERVICE TRANSFORMATION SHINES AT MAIDEN INTERNATIONAL ...CONT'D



Dr. Okungbowa reiterated the Edo State Government's commitment to deepening reforms under the administration of His Excellency, Sen. Monday Okpebholo. According to him, the Governor has demonstrated a clear and deliberate focus on strengthening the Civil Service as the core vehicle for delivering government programmes, policies, and projects.

"The Governor is intentional and deliberate about building a modern and efficient Service. Several strategic interventions have been deployed to enhance human capital development because we recognize that a well-equipped workforce is central to effective and efficient public governance," he remarked.

Highlighting some recent reforms, Dr. Okungbowa referenced the payment of a 13th month salary to workers in December, 2024; ongoing training of Civil servants; prompt salary payments; and expedited promotion processes; as tangible demonstrations of the Government's prioritization of welfare and productivity in the Public Sector. He submitted "We are fortunate to have a Governor who listens and understands the pivotal role of the Civil Service and is poised to making it work more effectively and adequately for the people of Edo State.

"We acknowledge that challenges exist, but we choose to see them as opportunities for improvement. Governor Okpebholo's administration has embraced innovation and responsiveness in dealing with Civil Service matters. While political leadership may change over time, the Civil Service remains the enduring Institution that sustains government operations, thus, justifying the investment in its growth and development.

The Edo State delegates included the Permanent Secretary, Directorate of Human Resources, Office of the Head of Service, Mrs. Bose Igbinobaro; the Permanent Secretary, Directorate of Corporate Change Communication and Performance Management, Office of the Head of Service, Dr. Mrs. Joy Akhigbe Esq.; the Permanent Secretary, Pension Bureau, Mr. Washington Abbe; the Director of Shared Services, Office of the Head of Service, Mr. Edwin Oaikhen Edionnweme; the Director of Labour and Productivity, Victor Okenini Esq., amongst others.

EDO STATE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY CONFIRMS OMONZANE AS SUBEB CHAIRMAN



The Edo State House of Assembly has confirmed Hon. Ebanehita Sonia Omonzane as the Executive Chairman of the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), following an overwhelming majority voice vote by members during plenary as presided by the Speaker, Hon. Blessing Agbebaku, on Monday, 23rd June, 2025 in Benin City.

Speaking shortly after her confirmation, Hon. Omonzane expressed gratitude to God and appreciated the State Governor, Sen. Monday Okpebholo for the opportunity given her to serve in such a critical role. In her words, "I am deeply honoured by the trust and confidence reposed in me by His Excellency, the Governor, and the Edo State House of Assembly."

Prior her confirmation, Hon. Omonzane has been the functioning Executive Chairman of Edo SUBEB. She has served the State and some private organisations of high repute in several managerial capacities, including being the immediate past Chairman of the Edo State Senior Secondary Education Board.

Hon. Omonzane reaffirmed her commitment to advancing the Governor's vision of ensuring that every child in Edo State has access to quality and inclusive basic education. She emphasized her focus on strengthening teacher capacity, improving learning environments, and promoting accountability in the delivery of education services across the State.

ESOPP INVESTORS REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO AGRICULTURAL GROWTH IN EDO STATE

By Ogbebor Ikponmwosa



The Edo State Oil Palm Programme (ESOPP) Independent Implementation Office in partnership with leading ESOPP Investors, has restated their dedication to the sustainable development of the Agricultural Sector in the State.

The delegates reiterated their commitments during a visit to the Deputy Governor of the State, His Excellency, Hon. Dennis Idahosa in his Office at the Government House in Benin City. Hon. Idahosa appreciated the delegation for choosing Edo as its investment destination and applauded their contributions to rural development. He commended the Investors' confidence as indigenes of Edo State and emphasized that the administration of Governor Monday Okpebholo remains fully committed to promoting sustainable Agricultural growth, while ensuring that the rights and livelihoods of local farmers are protected.

The Secretary to the State Government, Hon. Musa Ikhilor lauded the Investors and describe the relationship between the investors and the State as "Partners in progress," assuring them of the State's continued support. He reiterated that the Government is determined to address the challenges raised and emphasized the goal of transforming Edo into the leading hub for oil palm development in Nigeria and across Africa.

In his opening remarks, the Chairman of ESOPP Investors Group, Mr. Joseph Umolu appreciated the Edo State Government for its unwavering support and the investment-friendly environment it has created. He commended the Governor, His Excellency Sen. Okpebholo, for placing Agriculture at the heart of the State's economic development agenda.

Mr. Umolu highlighted several community development projects already undertaken by ESOPP Investors across host

communities in the State, which included the construction of access roads; building and renovation of schools; provision of electricity; and installation of pipe-borne water facilities; aimed at improving the quality of life in rural areas and ensuring that local communities benefit directly from the projects.

While stressing the need for continued collaboration between the Investors and the State Government, Mr. Umolu noted some challenges currently faced by the ESOPP Investors Group and solicited the intervention and support of the State Government in resolving them.

Among the delegation were representatives from major ESOPP Investors including Saro Oil Palm, Dufil, Flour Mills of Nigeria, Bragav Nigeria Limited, Nimbel Shaw, Fayus Nigeria Limited, and Steve Integrated Services.

The engagement concluded with renewed assurances of mutual cooperation and a shared vision to drive Edo State's Agricultural transformation for the benefits of the State, the Investors and local communities.

Other State functionaries who engaged with the delegation included the Chief of Staff to the Governor, Hon. Gani Audu; the Chairman of the Edo State Forestry Commission, Hon. Valentine Asuen; amongst others.



EDO STATE CIVIL AND PUBLIC SERVANTS LAUD GOVERNOR MONDAY OKPEBHOLO FOR HIS EXEMPLARY COMMITMENT TO WORKERS' WELFARE



On behalf of the entire Edo State Civil and Public Service, I convey our profound gratitude to His Excellency, Senator Monday Okpebholo, Governor of Edo State, for his exceptional and steadfast commitment to the welfare, dignity, and professional elevation of the workforce.

In a remarkably brief span of just seven months in office, Your Excellency has exhibited a rare and commendable dedication to enhancing both the quality of life and the operational conditions of civil and public servants. Your proactive governance and empathetic leadership have rekindled hope and confidence throughout the service.

A most illustrative testament to this commitment is the recent elevation of the minimum wage from ₦70,000 to ₦75,000—an impactful policy shift that underscores Your Excellency's cognizance of the indispensable role played by the civil service in fostering good governance and sustainable socio-economic development in Edo State.

Moreover, the continuation and expansion of the health insurance initiative—originally inaugurated by the preceding administration—to now include orphans and other vulnerable members of society, reflects a deeply inclusive and humane vision. This extension affirms Your Excellency's people-centric approach to governance and public health.

Of considerable note is the regularization of cleaners who were previously employed through outsourced arrangements. These individuals, now integrated into the civil service as full-time employees, benefit from the enhanced minimum wage and, more importantly, long-awaited job security. This laudable decision has resulted in the formal employment of 1,000 cleaners. Additionally, over 500 graduates have been recruited to fill critical vacancies, thereby enriching the service with professionals including educators, engineers, architects, legal practitioners, human resource experts, and health professionals.

In a similarly bold and restorative measure, Your Excellency facilitated the reinstatement of over 2,000 workers whose

appointments were made in the final phase of the previous administration. This act of administrative justice has not only restored livelihoods but has also reinforced public trust in the credibility of government.

Under Your Excellency's stewardship, salary payments have been unwaveringly punctual—consistently disbursed on or before the 26th of each month. Of particular significance was the prompt payment of November salaries just days after assuming office, and the early payment during the holy month of Ramadan, notwithstanding the increased wage bill occasioned by recent recruitments.

Your dedication to digital governance also deserves commendation. The ongoing evaluation of the e-Government and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) is a strategic initiative aimed at resolving systemic inefficiencies, diminishing over-reliance on external consultants, and cultivating robust internal capacity for enhanced service delivery.

Furthermore, the elevation of seven senior civil servants to the rank of Permanent Secretary has fortified leadership across Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs). Simultaneously, the renewed investment in the John Odigie Oyegun Public Service Academy (JOOPSA) has ushered in a new era of practical, workplace-focused training, drawing upon the wealth of expertise available within the service itself.

The policy of automatic employment for First Class graduates has not only been preserved but significantly enriched. These high-achieving individuals are now supported in their pursuit of postgraduate education—demonstrating Your Excellency's commitment to cultivating a highly intellectual and globally competitive public service.

Infrastructure development is also underway, with the ongoing reconstruction of two major civil service buildings on Ezoti Street. This project will markedly improve the physical working environment and office accommodations for government personnel.

Your Excellency, we wholeheartedly commend your visionary leadership, reformist zeal, and deep-seated concern for the well-being of the civil service. Your actions have rejuvenated morale and invigorated our collective resolve to serve the people of Edo State with excellence, professionalism, and patriotic pride.

We pledge our unwavering loyalty and support as Your Excellency continues to advance a prosperous, inclusive, and people-focused Edo State.

God Bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

God Bless Edo State.

Anthony Okungbowa, Esq.Ph.D (Constitutional Law) ; MBA (Artificial Intelligence)
Head of Service, Edo State.

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT ON THE EDO STATE GRADUATE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (GDP)



In light of recent misleading narratives circulating in the public domain regarding the Edo State Graduate Development Programme (GDP), it has become necessary to provide accurate information and set the records straight.

Upon assuming office in November 2024, the Governor of Edo State, His Excellency, Distinguished Senator Monday Okpebholo, readily approved the continuation of the Edo State Graduate Development Programme without hesitation.

The initiative was conceived to attract the brightest minds into the State's workforce and to strengthen governance and service delivery across Edo State by granting automatic employment to first-class graduates of Edo origin. This applies to those who studied both within Nigeria and in the diaspora, with a focus on graduates from the year 2020 to date.

The expansion of the GDP is a visionary move by His Excellency to enhance long-term performance and foster the career growth and development of enrollees. This initiative is designed to ensure that these exceptional individuals deliver high-quality service once absorbed into the civil/public service.

This upgrade reflects the Governor's unwavering commitment not only to continuity in governance but also to the strengthening of the civil/public service as an institution, ensuring its growth, resilience, and operational maturity.

Following the approval for the recruitment of Cohort 3 of the GDP in November 2024, Governor Okpebholo introduced a significant enhancement to the programme. Under this enhancement, selected enrollees are granted full government sponsorship for master's degree programmes, covering tuition and monthly stipends, prior to their official absorption into the State's workforce.

To the best of our knowledge, and we welcome correction, no other state government in Nigeria currently offers such a comprehensive and forward-thinking initiative.

To ensure a holistic implementation, applications from eligible candidates were received and compiled as they came in. A comprehensive list was subsequently finalized and presented to the

Governor, who, without delay, approved the issuance of appointment letters to successful candidates in February 2025.

It is common knowledge that the civil/public service operates under strict rules, including a requirement that new entrants must complete two years of service before qualifying for in-service training, subject to satisfactory conduct and performance. However, Mr. Governor, in his characteristic empathy and foresight, reasoned that rather than stifle the academic advancement of these fresh graduates, they should be allowed to pursue their postgraduate education before assuming duties. To eliminate any financial burden, he further approved government funding for their tuition and stipends.

Significantly, Mr. Governor even offered to personally bear the costs of tuition and allowances should it prove legally impossible for the government to do so.

Throughout this period, open and consistent communication, both online and offline, was maintained with the enrollees to provide updates on the enhancement of the programme. It was during these interactions that we learned that some enrollees had already obtained their master's degrees. This information was relayed to the Governor, who immediately directed that those individuals assume duty without further delay.

Consequently, enrollees who already possess their master's degrees were instructed to resume duty on Monday, June 24, 2025, and some have already complied. Others will proceed with their government-sponsored postgraduate studies.

Enrollees who are yet to secure admission for their master's programmes are advised to forward their admission letters to the Office of the Head of Service as soon as they receive them for necessary processing under the new arrangement.

The Governor of Edo State, Distinguished Senator Monday Okpebholo, and the entire government remain resolute in building a knowledge-driven and progressive civil/public service. His Excellency is fully committed to leaving no stone unturned in realizing this vision.

I must, therefore, commend His Excellency for his keen attention to the growth and development of the Service, including the Graduate Development Programme, since assuming office.

Finally, let me assure the general public that the Graduate Development Programme is firmly on course. Given the clear sense of purpose and commitment demonstrated by Governor Okpebholo, it is evident that this programme, and others aimed at strengthening the Service, will record remarkable success under this administration.

All enquiries and correspondences concerning the Graduate Development Programme or other civil/public service initiatives should be directed to the Office of the Head of Service. We also respectfully urge members of the media to seek and obtain clarification from the Office of the Head of Service before publication, in the interest of balanced and accurate reporting.

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OKPEBHOLO, STAKEHOLDERS OFFER FREE VACCINATION AGAINST DIPHTHERIA – ANANI

By Gloria Osemudiamhen



The Coordinator, Office of the Edo State First Lady, Mrs. Edesili Okpebholo Anani, has asserted that the Edo State Government, under the leadership of Sen. Monday Okpebholo, has partnered with stakeholders to offer free vaccines against diphtheria in the State.

Mrs. Anani made the assertion while addressing guests and staff at the Government House in Benin City. She solicited for proactive measures to mitigate the impact of diphtheria, stressing the severity of the disease outbreak on the State. She recommended early detection and treatment as key measures of effectively managing the disease and encouraged individuals displaying symptoms to seek immediate medical attention.

According to Mrs. Anani, "Diphtheria is a deadly disease. Those having symptoms should seek medical attention

promptly. By following public health guidelines and reporting suspected cases, we can all play a part in containing this outbreak; by staying up-to-date on vaccinations, families can significantly reduce the risk of diphtheria and other vaccine-preventable diseases. This proactive approach is essential in protecting not only individuals but also the broader community from the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases.

"The Diphtheria vaccine helps to prevent the infection, reduce severity of symptoms and prevent transmission. Regular check-up and timely vaccinations are essential. Vaccination is key to shielding ourselves, children and communities from this potentially deadly disease. Let us prioritize vaccination, especially for our children, it is very important."



Mrs. Anani highlighted the significance of collaboration between government agencies, healthcare workers, and communities in effectively combating the diphtheria outbreak. She emphasized that a collective effort is crucial in preventing the spread of the disease, promoting public awareness, and ensuring timely treatment for affected people. "I encourage everyone to visit the closest designated centre and get vaccinated for free. Let us intensify vaccination efforts, spread awareness, and quickly identify and report suspected cases," she concluded.

Highpoint of the engagement was the administration of the Diphtheria vaccine on Mrs. Anani, members of staff within the Government House, amongst others.



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EDO STATE GOVT INTENSIFIES EFFORTS AGAINST DRUG ABUSE, RECEIVES RECOGNITION

By Gloria Osemudiamhen



The Edo State Government under the leadership of the Governor, Sen. Monday Okpebholo, has reiterated its commitments to combating drug abuse and illicit trafficking among residents in the State.

Sen. Okpebholo made the emphasis during a Programme in commemoration of the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, as organized by the State Government through the Office of the Special Adviser to the Edo State Governor on Drug and Illicit Trafficking Control, in collaboration with the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), held at the New Festival Hall, Government House, Benin City.

In an address, Sen. Okpebholo, represented by the Secretary to the State Government, Umar Musa Ikhlor Esq., stressed the importance of prioritizing prevention over cure, while highlighting the potential dangers of drug abuse. In his words, "The International Day for Drug Abuse is more than a ceremonial observance. It is a global call to action, a reminder that drug abuse is not a distant crisis, but a persistent threat within our



communities, our schools, our homes and our professional spaces. Government at all levels should not turn a blind eye.

"Through strategic policies, tighter border controls and surveillance, rehabilitation programmes and educational campaigns, we are seeing a stronger push towards prevention, treatment and reintegration. But we must do more. It is important to state that It is now necessary for us to focus on prevention rather than cure, because it has become too expensive and too difficult to fight drug abuse through our conventional method. Prevention is the way. That's what we have to push."

Similarly, the Coordinator of the Office of the Edo State First Lady, Mrs. Edesili Okpebholo Anani, highlighted the crucial role of parents, especially mothers, in educating their children about the dangers of drug abuse. She said, "The new Edo we are building is the Edo without drugs. My advice to parents is to educate your children. Education starts from home, not from school. It is our responsibility to talk to our children about the consequences of being high on drugs. My



advice is that every youth should stay away from drugs. The high cost of drugs and substance abuse is enormous."

Mrs. Anani condemned the reckless use of drugs and emphasized the importance of mothers closely monitoring their children's medication and substance use, saying, "Something we rarely discuss is drug use, which has become a menace in society. Sometimes, many mothers are taking drugs and become addicted. It is important that we talk about this issue. As mothers, it is crucial that we monitor what our children take at home. We are collaborating with the NDLEA and will soon launch a Programme to educate mothers particularly. There is a shift from men and boys to young girls taking drugs."

The Commander of Narcotics, Edo State Command of the NDLEA, Commander Mitchell Ofoyeju, harped on the need for a collective collaboration in the fight against drug abuse. According to him, "The fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking is not an isolated struggle; it calls for a united front. I have directed all my Field commanders to leave no stone unturned in apprehending drug barons and their associates. They either quit the criminal act or be arrested and made to face the law."

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EDO STATE GOVT PARTNERS STAKEHOLDERS ON CHILDREN'S IMMUNIZATION AGAINST POLIO

By Gloria Osemudiamhen



The Edo State Government through its Primary Health Care Development Agency (EDSPHCDA), in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Children's Education Fund (UNICEF), and other stakeholders, has launched the second round of the National Immunization Plus Days (NIPDs) campaign at Ugbekun Primary Health Care Centre in Benin City, the State Capital.

At the flag-off ceremony, the Coordinator, Office of the Edo State First Lady, Mrs. Edesili Okpebholo Anani, commended mothers who brought their babies for immunization, and emphasized the importance of leveraging the free healthcare opportunity for their children's well-being. According to her, "Immunization is crucial for a child's well-being. Polio virus can lead to paralysis which can impact a child's walking ability. Fortunately, polio is preventable through immunization."



Mrs. Anani commended the investments of the Sen. Okpebholo-led Government in the Health Sector and reiterated its commitment to promoting the well-being of mothers and children in the State. She asserted, "These children are the leaders of tomorrow; from these children will emerge future governors, honourable members, councilors, and first ladies. That's why we are ensuring their health through immunization, which will help them grow into healthy individuals. The Polio Vaccine is administered orally, and it doesn't cause fever or side effects."

She sensitized mothers on the Diphtheria disease outbreak, highlighting its symptoms. She advised on the importance of regular handwashing, even for their babies, and encouraged mothers to take advantage of the free vaccination against the disease.

In a remark, the Edo State Commissioner for Health, Dr. Cyril Adams Oshiomole, represented by the Permanent Secretary,



Ministry of Health, Dr. Stanley Ehiarimwian, explained the effectiveness of the vaccine in the protection of children against Polio Virus. According to him, "The novel oral Polio vaccine type '2' to be administered, is an improved type of polio vaccine that is highly effective at protecting children from the Polio Virus and permanent paralysis. The novel oral Polio vaccine, along with the existing Polio vaccines, is recommended by WHO and the Nigerian National Agency for Food, Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), as the safest and the most proven method to protect children from polio."

"During this exercise, children 0-59 months, that is children less than 5 years, will be administered two drops of the Oral Polio Vaccine. This is to help eradicate the virus amongst children and also reduce childhood illnesses and deaths."

EDO STATE GOVT PARTNERS STAKEHOLDERS ON CHILDREN'S IMMUNIZATION ... CONT'D



The State Coordinator of WHO, Dr. Nora Eyo, highlighted the urgent need to eliminate all forms of poliovirus, including the circulating variant poliovirus type '2' (cVDPV2). She urged parents, guardians, and caregivers to cooperate fully with the Vaccination Team, saying, "Starting Saturday, 28th June, 2025, our trained Vaccination teams will be at your doorsteps; in your schools, churches, mosques, markets and designated primary health centres. These dedicated men and women are our foot soldiers in this critical battle for health. Please welcome them; present your children aged 0-5 years and ensure they receive the two crucial drops of the oral polio vaccine. It is safe, effective and completely free.

"Additionally, I urge you to bring your children's vaccination cards to your nearest Primary Healthcare Centre, as this campaign also offers a valuable opportunity to receive other essential routine vaccines your child may have missed."

EDO STATE GOVT INTENSIFIES EFFORTS AGAINST DRUG ABUSE ... CONT'D



"The Edo State Command within the last six months has successfully arrested 209 suspected drug traffickers across the State, consisting of 129 males and 80 females. We also intercepted 53,520.80kg of drugs. We discovered and destroyed 18 cannabis farms and won the conviction of 24 drug offenders, comprising 20 males and four females."

The Senior Special Adviser to the Governor on Drug and Illicit Trafficking Control, Mr. Andrew Efe, expressed gratitude to the Governor for championing the fight against drug abuse and providing unwavering support. According to him, "Under the leadership of his Excellency Sen. Monday Okpebholo, this Sector has been given a major priority, purpose and power. His Excellency has not only acknowledged the problem, he has also acted; he has not only supported our work, he has also led in the front."

The event featured a quiz competition and drama presentation after which awards of recognition were presented to the Governor, amongst other dignitaries. The highpoint of the event was the administration of the Drug Abuse Abstinence Oath on Sen. Okpebholo and all present, by Mr. Andrew Efe.

World Drug Day, also known as the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, which is celebrated annually on 26th June, was established by the United Nations General Assembly on 7th December, 1987 to raise awareness of global drug crises and promote multilateral action toward prevention, treatment, and research toward achieving a drug-free society. The year 2025 theme is "Break the Cycle. #StopOrganisedCrime".

EDO STATE GOVERNMENT SCALES UP FLOOD CONTROL EFFORTS THROUGH COMPPAS INITIATIVE IN SADOH DRIVE AND BEYOND

By Folake Adebudo



As the rainy season intensifies, Edo State Government through the Edo State Flood, Erosion and Watershed Management Agency (EdoFEWMA) is intensifying its flood mitigation strategy through targeted desilting exercises, infrastructure maintenance, and an inclusive Community engagement initiative.

Central to this approach is the Community Palliative Participatory Intervention Scheme (COMPPAS), a bold initiative driving sustainable flood control through grassroots collaboration. COMPPAS is not just a Government action, but a community-led initiative that EdoFEWMA is propagating. It is an initiative by the Agency to encourage Communities to be a visible part of the control of flood and erosion.

What distinguishes the Sadoh Drive project is not just Government's intervention, but a show of responsibility and ownership by the residents.

Last year, before Government involvement, residents in the area took proactive steps following EdoFEWMA's COMPPAS, to address the flooding challenge. They collectively funded the desilting of the drainage systems and a lowest point in the area where water naturally flows to, with a joint effort of a local contractor to restore the water channels. This demonstration of civic responsibility and environmental ownership has become a model for COMPPAS.

"We decided not to wait for the floods to get worse. We acted last year. Our resources were not enough, but our effort had an impact. This year that Governor Okphebholo is here to support us, we are seeing significant change. It is encouraging, and we are staying involved, a resident who begged anonymity."

This reflects the core philosophy of COMPPAS, which seeks to create a sustainable model for emergency flood response by combining Community resources and local knowledge with EdoFEWMA's technical expertise.

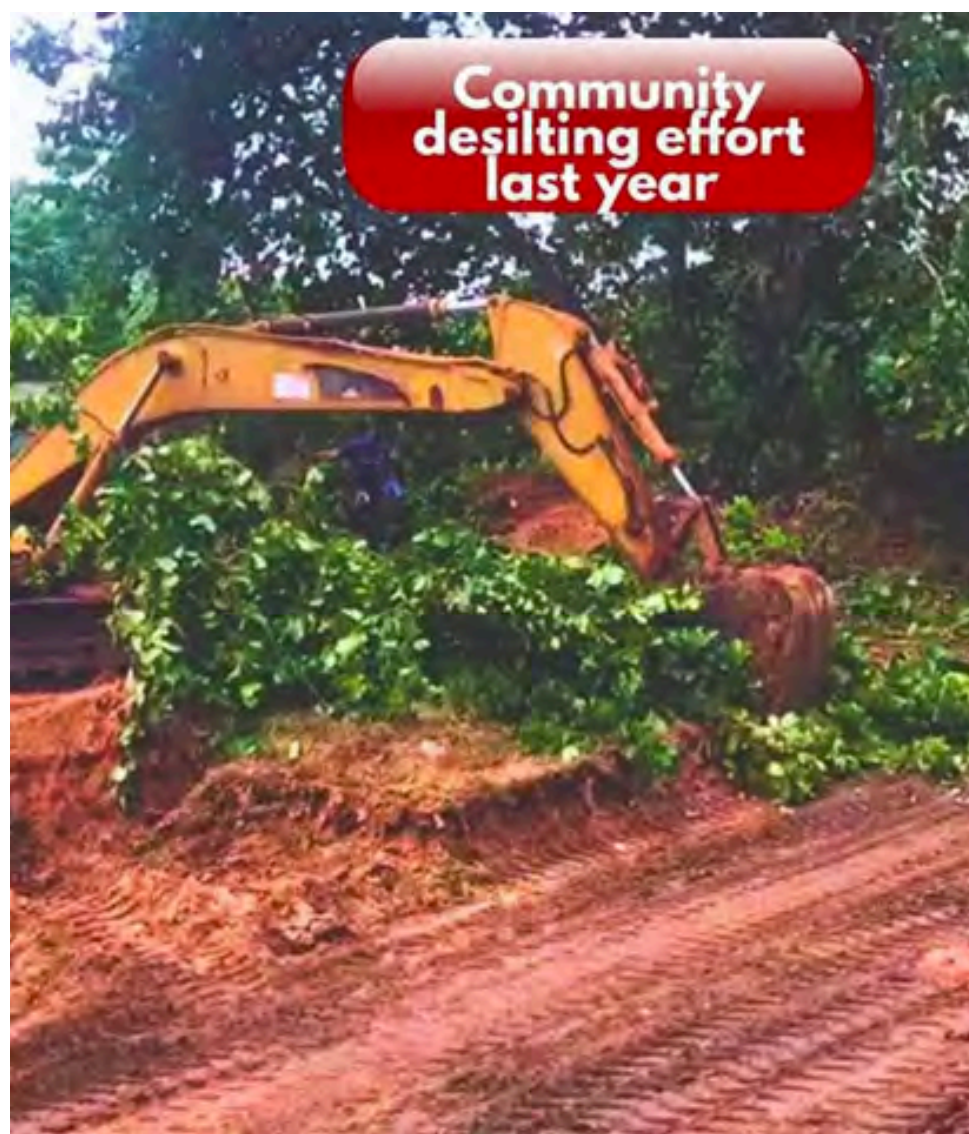
Some Community interventions require palliative interventions, while others are a major overhaul. COMPPAS encourages the Communities with less interventions to take initiative, with the agency stepping in to scale and support their efforts.

"Sadoh Drive exemplifies what COMPPAS stands for," said Hon. Ahmed Musa Momoh, Chief Executive Officer of EdoFEWMA. "This is not just about desilting. It is about building a culture of shared responsibility. Through door-to-door engagement, town halls, and media campaigns, we are promoting environmental stewardship and active community participation."

"Governor Monday Okphebholo's administration has prioritised flood control and resilience building through data-backed infrastructure development and people-centered interventions. Under his leadership, EdoFEWMA is not only deploying technical solutions but also deepening public awareness and ownership of climate adaptation strategies, Momoh added."

As desilting and maintenance exercise continue across the State, the agency is committed to expanding COMPPAS to more Communities. The model demonstrated in Sadoh Drive and Okpe street off Ekehuan road are proof that when Government and citizens work hand-in-hand, meaningful and lasting environmental impact is possible.

EdoFEWMA continues to call on Communities across the State to take ownership of flood water infrastructures and key into the COMPPAS initiative to create a sustainable environment in Edo State.



EDSG EDUCATES LIVESTOCK STAKEHOLDERS ON HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA PREVENTION

By Okojie Francisca



The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Dr. Peter Osagie has reiterated that the State Government is committed to safeguarding human and animal health, as well as working to strengthen surveillance to ensure stakeholders are well equipped to act swiftly and responsibly.

He made the assertion while declaring a one-day workshop organized by the Department of Veterinary Services open. The workshop which was entitled, "Strengthening Collaboration for Disease Prevention", was held at the Agriculture Hub in Benin City.

Dr. Osagie further disclosed that the event was borne out of concern over threat of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) to public health and poultry operators, as well as food security, emphasizing the need for stakeholders to align strategies for effective HPAI prevention, detection, and response in the State.

In a remark, the Director, Veterinary Services Department of the Ministry, Dr. Thomas Haruna, represented by the Deputy Director, Dr. Joseph Odiaua stressed the need for Veterinary Doctors to avoid prescription by proxy as it was unethical.

Delivering the topic, Biosecurity for successful poultry, in a technical session, the first resource person, Dr. James Igenzoza called on Farmers to adopt precautionary measures to keep their farms clean in order to ensure production of healthy birds, safeguard themselves and ensure disease free environment.

On the topic, Poultry Disease Surveillance, another Resource Person, Dr. Ayanfe Ogbeifun, enlightened

participants on practical ways to continually monitor their birds for early disease detection. Her counterpart, Dr. Joseph Odiaua taught the farmers the processes of decontaminating poultry farms and their environment, especially after an outbreak to avoid reoccurrence as well as precautionary measures to take to ensure their safety during decontamination.

The workshop also featured interactive sessions where participants brainstormed over the efficacy of alternative medicine and stressed the need for them to be standardized.

For two participants, Mrs Adesuwa Jesuroboh and Mr. Anthony Agbonoga, the workshop was apt and expository as they were now better equipped for more successful poultry farming.

There were also goodwill messages from the Chairman, Poultry Association of Nigeria (PAN), Mr. Jolly Idelegbagbon, President, Pig Farmers Association of Nigeria, Mr. Uwa Oviawe and other stakeholders.



THE DESIRE OF GOV OKPEBHOLO IS TO TRANSFORM EDO TO A PORTABLE PARADISE-- OHONBAMU



Edo State Commissioner for Information and Communication, Hon Paul Ohonbamu has disclosed that the desire of Governor Monday Okpebholo is to spread development to the three Senatorial districts of the state.

The Commissioner who disclosed this in Benin City said the Governor who is the Chairman in Council, during Executive Council Meetings is very concerned that all parts of the state receive developmental attention.

According to him, Governor Monday Okpebholo has assured that all decisions taken by the government would be for the wellness of all Edo Citizens across the three senatorial districts.

"The government is ready and will continue to do all that is necessary to develop all areas that require attention.

"The desire of the chairman in Council, is that at the end of the day the entire state is transformed to a portable paradise.

" The Governor Okpebholo led administration has approved construction of Roads, renovation and remodelling of Schools across the state, abandoned by the past government.

" With these interventions, It is obvious Edo State now has an action governor who is working for the people," he added.

The Commissioner further disclosed that approvals and mobilization have been given for Construction of internal roads at Ogheghe Community and the old Sapele road, Construction of Iyioha Street and Isiweme Street, in Ikpoba Okha local government area and three spurs at Aho Irrua in Esan Central local government area.

"There is also the construction of Uhie Road, off Sapele road, Oghenesi Oza road with spurs to Uhi Community in Uhunmwonde Local government area, the construction of Amosi Okpaga road with spurs to Agbonze street, Daddy J. Road and Michael Aigbedion street in Uhunmwonde Local government area and Ikpoba Okha local government area totalling 8.3 kilometres.

"The government is also renovating and remodelling Uhonmora Senior Secondary School at Uhonmora, Owan West local government area, renovation and remodelling of Afokpela Secondary School in Etsako East Local government area, renovation and remodelling of Agba Grammar School in Esan North East Local government, renovation and remodelling of Fugar Mixed Secondary School, Fugar in Etsako Central local government area, renovation and remodelling of Iduwele Secondary School in Esan Central.

"Others are the renovation and remodeling of Ubiaza Secondary School in Ubiaja, Esan South East Local area, renovation and remodelling of Oredo Girls Secondary School in Oredo local government area, renovation and remodelling of Army Day Secondary School, Ikpoba Okha local government area and renovation and remodelling of Ososo Grammar School in Ososo, Akoko Edo local government area.

"Also for renovation and remodeling include Edo College Benin City, Evbareke Secondary School, Benin City, St David mixed model School, Evboneka and St. Maria Gorreti Girls Secondary School, Benin City," the Commissioner added.

While noting that the contractors have been mobilized, Hon Ohonbamu, said that Senator Okpebholo is a listening Governor who desires life to be meaningful for the people.

EDO SUBEB, WORLD BANK DEEPEN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ON GBV RESPONSE IN SCHOOLS

By Ebuaneke Joy



The Edo State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) in partnership with the World Bank, has brought together community leaders and school based management committee (SBMC) to deliberate on the Violence Against Learners Response System (VALRS) and the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM).

Reaffirming the Board's commitment to strengthening GRM across basic schools in Edo State, the SUBEB functioning Chairman, Hon. Sonia Ebanehita, represented by the Board Secretary, Mrs. Ada Oluku, assured the World Bank's GBV consultant, Dr. Asmau Leo of robust partnership on making schools more conducive and convenient for learners. Edo SUBEB pledged to continue community consultations aimed towards refining and expanding GBV response initiatives, ensuring that every learner can pursue their education in a safe and supportive environment.



At the event, Dr. Leo delivered a presentation on the various forms of GBV to include physical, emotional, sexual, and economical. She urged community leaders to establish clear, sensitive reporting mechanisms on GBV cases, emphasizing that boys and men could also be victims of GBV, and called for comprehensive awareness campaigns to ensure that survivors feel empowered to report incidents.

Following the stakeholders' engagement, the World Bank delegation visited the Itohan Girls' Grammar School, where pupils were part of interactive sessions on understanding their rights and what constitute GBV; and identifying safe channels for reporting GBV cases. Teachers received strategic training on implementing a confidential, school-based reporting system and responding promptly to disclosures.



The engagements continued with a tour of the Edo State Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC). Dr. Leo and the SUBEB Team were guided through the Centre's counseling, medical, and legal support departments to gain insights of the multidisciplinary care available to survivors. Expressing satisfaction, Dr. Leo stated that the reason for coming was to access the success so far recorded in the reportage of GBV cases concerning adults and girls in schools in the State and to see how it could be refined and used to model other states. She concluded that projects conceived without genuine community inputs are unlikely to succeed.

The stakeholders' engagement, which commenced at Oluku School Community underscored the critical role of consultation and community participation in combating GBV in schools and host communities across Edo State.

SMAGOGA CLASS OF '85 DONATES SICK BAY IN COMMEMORATION OF 40TH ANNIVERSARY



In commemoration of its 40th Anniversary, the Saint Maria Goretti Old Girls Association (SMAGOGA), Class of 1985 also known as the Tulips, has donated a fully equipped sick bay to the Saint Maria Goretti Girls School in Benin City.

On behalf of the Edo State Governor, Sen. Monday Okpebholo, the Chairman of the Edo State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), Hon. Ebanehita Sonia Omonzane, appreciated the Association, saying, “I am so happy to be here again, and I want to thank you for this wonderful donation made to our children. This donation is a symbol of care; it means you have passion for our children, it means you care for them. On behalf of His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Edo State, Sen. Monday Okpebholo, and the Honourable Commissioner for Education, Dr. Paddy Iyamu, we say thank you and God bless you for what you have done.”

Hon. Omonzane appealed to the teaching staff of the School to make full and proper use of the Facility, emphasizing that its effective utilization would showcase its value to all visitors. She also expressed gratitude to the Association for employing a nurse whose salary will be covered by the Tulips for one year.

The Global President of SMAGOGA, Mrs. Jesurobo Angela reflecting on the day’s significance, stated, “Today is a joyful and historic day for us in our Alma Mater. It is with deep gratitude to God and immense pride that I stand here as the Global President of SMAGOGA. On behalf of the Global Body, I want to sincerely commend the Class of 1985 for this noble and impactful gesture. You have not only given back to our School but also invested in the health, safety and future of Goretti Girls yet unborn. This is a legacy that will live long after today.”

Mrs. Jesurobo emphasizing the vital role of the Sick Bay in a school environment, said, “The importance of a sick bay cannot be overemphasized. It serves as a sanctuary for students in times of sudden illness, emergencies or minor health issues. It provides first aid, reassurance and immediate care before professional medical attention is sought when necessary. A sick bay is not just a room; it is a place of hope, comfort and sometimes life-saving intervention. With this Facility in place, our students can learn in an environment where their health needs are prioritized.”

Joined by the Board members representing Edo South and Edo North senatorial districts in company of directors and members of SMAGOGA Tulips, the Executive Chairman performed the ribbon-cutting ceremony. The gathering broke into enthusiastic applause as the Sick Bay was officially commissioned.

Student representatives from the junior and senior schools expressed appreciation for the Alumni’s generosity. They described the new facility as a vital addition to the School’s infrastructure and a testament to the Tulips’ unwavering commitment to pupils’ welfare.

The new facility, fitted with medical beds, first-aid supplies and a private consultation room, is designed to provide prompt, on-the-spot healthcare services for pupils and staff of Saint Maria Goretti Girls School. The fully operational Sick Bay stands as a testament to four decades of unity, compassion, service and enduring gift from one generation of Tulips to others.

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION SET TO PARTNER WITH CONGO

By Ilobekemen Mary



The Commissioner for Information and Communication, Hon. Paul Ohonbamu, has disclosed the plans of the Ministry to collaborate with the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations (CONGO) in the propagation of the activities of Edo State Government.

Hon. Ohonbamu who made this disclosure while hosting them at the Ministry's premises in Benin City, explained that the partnership aims to foster transparency and awareness among citizens, adding that Governor Monday Okpebholo is an intelligent Man with integrity to pilot the affairs of the State.

The Commissioner said that, since Governor Monday Okpebholo took office in November 2024, Edo State has experienced a significant reduction in violence and insecurity, attributing this peace to the Governor's decisive action against kidnappers, cultists and other related issues, warning that anyone involved in violent behavior, including physical fights or gun violence and other serious crimes, will be dealt with according to the Law.

Hon. Ohonbamu asserted that the Education Sector had been revamped, as the subvention of Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma had been increased from forty one million Naira to five hundred million Naira, explaining that

the State Government was one that places premium on education, hence its move towards the accreditation of several courses in the State Polytechnic and the induction of Medical Graduates who could not be inducted earlier, for lack of accreditation in the past administration.

Earlier, the President, Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations (CONGO), Comrade Dr. Bartholomew Okondo, congratulated the Commissioner on his appointment, noting that the Ministry is now fulfilling its core role of promoting Edo State Government's activities. He added that there's now effective communication between Edo Citizens and the Government, with messages being delivered and feedback received.

Dr. Okondo further commended Governor Monday Okpebholo's efforts, highlighting the visible progress in education, road infrastructure, security and health as malaria treatment is now free at all Government Hospitals. He expressed appreciation for the Governor's initiatives and announced that CONGO would collaborate with the Ministry to share the Government's achievements with various communities across the State.

JOOPSA TRAINS PUBLIC WORKERS ON EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SPEAKING, SPEECH WRITING

By Violet Osatohanmwen Obamwonyi

...WE MUST PASS ON A BANNER WITHOUT STAIN TO THE NEXT GENERATION - HOS



The Edo State Government under the administration of Sen. Monday Okpebholo, through its Academy, the John Odigie Oyegun Public Service Academy (JOOPSA), has concluded a three-day training on Effective Public Speaking and Speech Writing for Civil and Public servants in the State.

At the opening of the training which spanned from Wednesday, 18th to Friday, 20th June, 2025, in Benin City, the Head of Service (HOS), Dr. Anthony Okungbowa reiterated the Edo State Government's commitment to capacity development and called for collective responsibility in preserving the integrity of the Civil Service. While describing public speaking as a science and an art that could be developed over time, he emphasized that Civil and Public servants could only become proficient in speech writing and delivery through consistent practice.

Dr. Okungbowa stressed the importance of Civil and Public servants being equipped with communication skills, as many are required to draft speeches for senior officials or deliver presentations themselves. He cautioned against digressing from assigned topics, highlighting the necessity for professionalism as implementers of Government policies.

"Speaking is both an art and a science. It is a science because it follows rules and a methodology; it is an art because it is expressive, beautiful and powerful. Public speaking is like a demonstration of faith, so keep at it even when it is tough at the beginning. Every next time presents another opportunity to do better. There is a science behind presentations, regardless of the discipline or profession. That is why we are here to teach our people how to write and deliver effective speeches. This will significantly improve their output, whether writing for their superiors or speaking for themselves," the HOS explained.

The HOS admonished, "You must learn to be relevant, avoid jargon, respect order of precedence, and speak with clarity. No matter how beautiful a speech is, if it's off-topic or hard to

understand, it fails. Respect the order of precedence. It is a serious error in public speaking to ignore it. If you are unsure, ask questions. Avoid using jargon; speak and write in a way that is clear and comprehensible. Let the dictionary guide you, and remember, we use the British version of the English language, not the American."

Dr. Okungbowa stated that the State Government is investing hugely on human capacity development, especially in the Civil and Public Service, to ensure that the next generation inherits a system of excellence. He appreciated the Director-General (DG) of JOOPSA, Mrs. Gina Otamere, for introducing trainings focused on practical aspects of service delivery. "We must pass on a banner without stain to the next generation of Civil and Public servants. We will not sit idly by and watch the Service we've laboured for, to build be compromised," he said amongst other.



continue on pg 9

JOOPSA TRAINS PUBLIC WORKERS ON EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SPEAKING ...CONT'D



Earlier, in a welcome address, the DG of JOOPSA, Mrs. Otamere, emphasized that the essence of the training was to equip senior and top-level officers with the technical communication skills required for effective interaction across different tiers of government.

She stated, “The essence of this training is to develop effective communication skills needed to convey ideas, persuade audiences, and inspire action with confidence and clarity among representatives of government. As Civil and Public servants, we are responsible for crafting speeches, preparing official documents, and informing the public about government initiatives and activities while also encouraging citizens’ participation.”

Mrs. Otamere noted that many public servants shy away from speaking role due to the technical nature of public communication, compounded by the outdated notion that public servants should be seen and not heard. She stated, “Many people avoid public speaking because of its technical demands. Traditionally, public servants were expected to be silent operators, but today, we live in a very vocal world. We now have a new generation of bureaucrats who are also vocal, and they must be guided, trained, and empowered to express themselves effectively within the Civil and Public Service space.

“By the end of this training, regardless of your specialization or your cadre in the Service, you should be able to take up the responsibility of preparing a well-crafted speech on government activities and enlightening the public on what government is doing.”



In a lecture, the facilitator, Dr. Lois Otse Adams-Osigbemhe, emphasized the importance of equipping Civil and Public servants with the skills needed for effective speech delivery. She noted that building confidence in public speaking is crucial for leaving a positive impact on the Service and for preparing officers to thrive beyond their active years in government.

The Facilitator encouraged participants to embrace their full potentials and not to underestimate themselves due to untapped talents, reminding them that developing strong communication skills is not just beneficial for their current roles

but will also serve them in their post-service life.

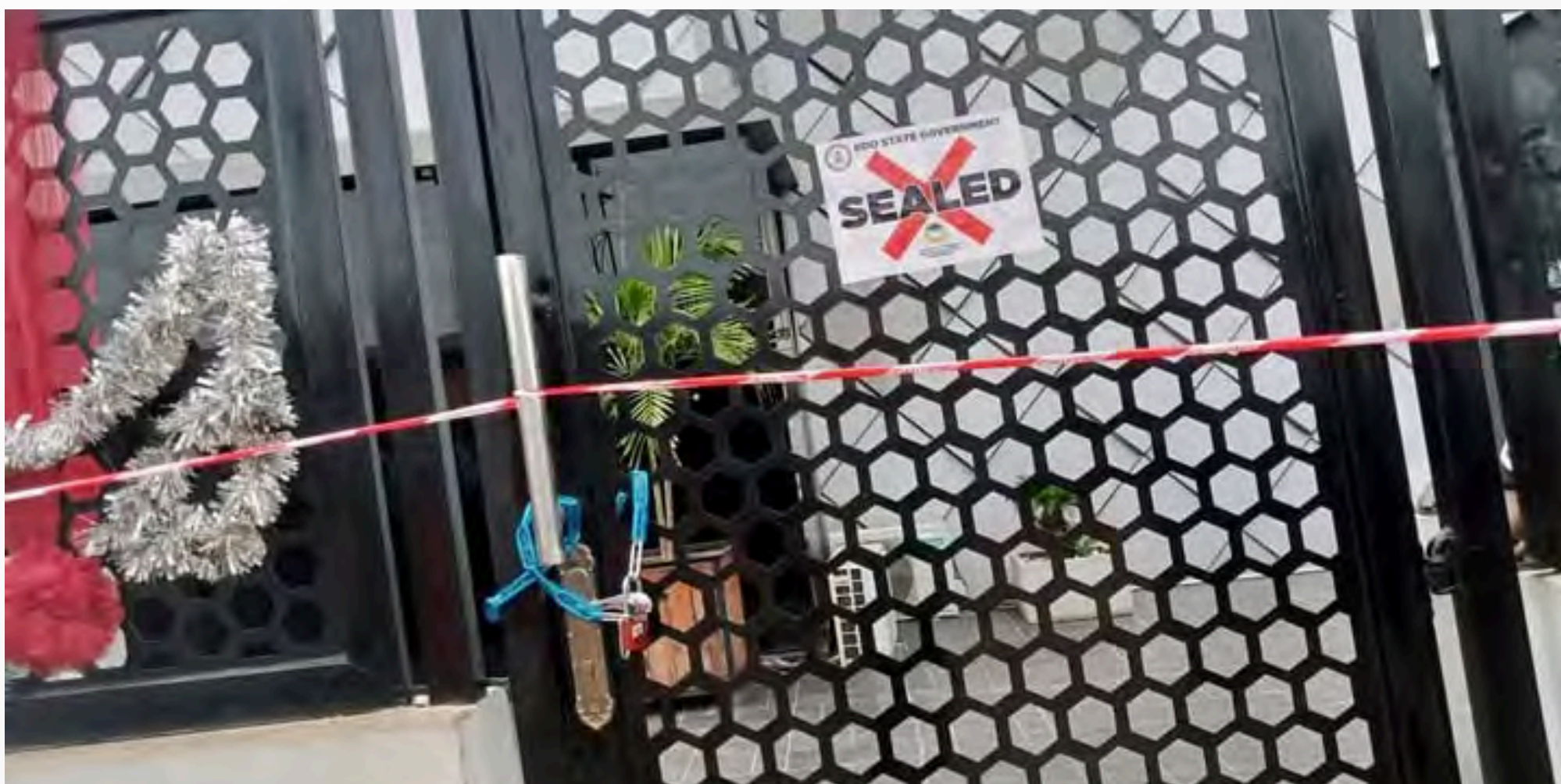
According to Dr. Adams-Osigbemhe, “This training is designed to make you better public servants. You do not need complex vocabulary or a foreign accent to be effective. Your natural accent is good enough. What matters most is simplicity, clarity and confidence.” The art of public speaking involves more than just words, it must include storytelling techniques, vocal variety, body language and authenticity. “Learn to craft your message well. Vary your tone and pitch. Use your body language meaningfully. Be authentic and always seek feedbacks,” she advised.

Expressing appreciation, a participant, Joy Musa Aghedo, reflected on the personal relevance of the training, especially as a journalist working within the Public Service, said, “As a journalist building my own voice, my responsibility to deliver that message accurately and to do this requires an in-depth understanding of what the Government wants to convey and the ability to present that information in a way the public can easily understand. I learnt that I must go the extra mile to ensure that I am giving the right information, to the right people and in the right way.”

The training was organised for officers on Salary Grade levels 10 to 17 in the Civil and Public Service and in attendance were the functioning Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Youth and Humanitarian Affairs, Balogun Aiyegbeni; the Director of Labour and Productivity, Mr. Victor Okenini; the Director of Cabinet Affairs, Mr. Ibizugbe Osadolor Lawrence, amongst others.

EDSG SEALS LOUNGES, CLUBS OVER NOISE POLLUTION, PERMIT VIOLATIONS

By Evelyn Unuigbe



Edo State Government has commenced the sealing of lounges, clubs and outdoor bars in the Government Reservation Area (GRA) in Benin City due to rampant noise pollution and non-compliance with building permit regulations.

The Managing Director of the Edo State Development and Building Control Agency, Hon. Igabali Imoisili Darlington, who led the enforcement team, explained that the exercise follows numerous petitions and complaints from residents regarding excessive noise emanating from these establishments.

"We have received a series of petitions concerning lounges and clubs, particularly around the Government Reserved Area (GRA), some houses originally designated for residential purposes have been converted into clubs and lounges, leading to loud music, improper parking and, in many cases, lack of appropriate permits for such commercial operations". He said.

He further decried the persistent noise and the miscreants these establishments often attract, noting that many operate without the necessary building permits and other relevant documents.

The Managing Director emphasized that certain areas are strictly residential and not zoned for commercial activities. This enforcement drive, he added, is part of the State's efforts to sanitize the city and ensure development aligns with its original master plans.

Hon. Igabali confirmed that the Agency had previously issued notices to the business owners, requiring them to present their development permits for verification. Facilities that failed to provide the required documentation were subsequently sealed.

Regarding the reopening of sealed facilities, Hon. Igabali stated that penalties would be imposed for these infractions, as the establishments had earlier been given a fourteen day notice to comply.

On his part, Town Planner Nosa Asemota, Director of Planning Permits, highlighted that the Agency's were in line with Governor Monday Okpebholo's "SHINE Agenda", which prioritizes security and health. He emphasized that curbing noise pollution is crucial for public health and safety, asserting that the exercise is focused on urban sanity and not revenue generation.

In a related development, the State Government also sealed an ongoing construction site for building too close to high-tension power lines and failing to adhere to building codes at Etete.

The Managing Director indicated that a portion of the building would be demolished before any negotiations for approval could commence.

EDSG TRAINS 1,979 SECURITY CORPS MEMBERS

By Elizabeth Kadiri



As part of efforts to ensure safety and security of lives and property, the Edo State Government under the leadership of Senator Monday Okpebholo has recruited and trained a total number of one thousand, nine hundred and seventy nine State Security Corps personnel to synergize with the Police and other security agencies in the fight against crimes and other social vices.

The Governor, Who was represented by the State Secretary to the Government, Umar Musa Ikhlor, Esq during the passing out parade of the Batch B trainees at the the Edo State Police Training School Headquarters at Ogida in Benin City, stated that security is one of the top mandates of his SHINE Agenda, disclosing that the State must be free from crimes and other social vices bedeviling it and must be a beehive of economic growth, development and investments.

"One thousand four hundred and seventy two were trained from the Nigerian Army at the NYSC Orientation Camp on the 5th of June, 2025 and today, we are gathered here to witness the passing out of a second batch of five hundred and seven recruits trained by the Nigerian Police, bringing the total number so far to, one thousand nine hundred and seventy nine recruits". He said.

The Governor further complemented the Nigerian Army and Police for their tireless efforts at ensuring that the

trainees are able to discharge their duties in the most professional manner when discharged to function as security personnel in the various Local Government Areas.

"With the numbers trained by the Army and Police, we can confidently say that the new security outfit is operationally ready for deployments to various Local Government Areas in the State. It's my expectation that the new Corps will do well to consolidate on the existing arrangements put in place to address Security challenges in the State". He added.

Governor Okpebholo admonished the recruits to be of good conduct in acting courageously with determination and professionalism in their assignments, promising the recruits that every trained State Security Corps member would be enrolled into the State Government payroll and the State Health Insurance Scheme coverage.

He appreciated the Inspector General of Police, the Chairman and members of the Committee on the restructuring and re- organization of the State Security Corps, which included, Major Gen. Ebhaleme (Rtd), Air Vice Marshall Charles Oghomen (Rtd), Brigadier Gen. Greg Omorogbe (Rtd) and Col. Kole Omomia (Rtd), while extending his appreciation to the Commandant of the Nigerian Police Training School, ACP Aigbe Aghahowa and other team of instructors.

EDSG HAS AWARDED 29 ROAD PROJECTS ACROSS THE STATE – DR. OBANOR

By Olotu Henrietta



Edo State Government under the leadership of Senator Monday Okpebholo has awarded a total of 29 road projects across the State spanning over 200km accumulatively.

The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Works, Engr. Dr. John Obanor made this known in a Media Parley with Pressmen on road construction projects in the State.

Engr. Dr. Obanor said that contractors had been duly mobilized and are fully on ground and working round the clock to ensure that the roads meet world class standard and are delivered at the time given to them.

He said that the seven road projects inherited from previous administration are getting attention, as some have been completed, some outrightly terminated and re-awarded while some are still in the process of being re-awarded. He maintained that the Okpagha- Amufi Road had been re-awarded while Mechanic Road is in view.

The Permanent Secretary cleared the air on the Evbuotubu- Owina road project as well as the Ewah road project, noting that the State government will leave no stone unturned to ensure that the roads are constructed.

Engr. Dr. Obanor in company of Directors of the Ministry led the Pressmen on an inspection visit to road construction sites in the metropolis immediately after the Media Parley.

After the inspection, the Permanent Secretary commended Senator Monday Okpebholo for his unwavering support by meeting up with his own part of the obligation in being up to date with payment of contractors. He reaffirmed Government's preparedness to complete projects irrespective of the rains.

The contractors handling the Ramat Park projects (China Civil Engineering Construction Company, CCECC) and that of Ekiuwa -University of Benin Road (Heartland Construction Company) visited appreciated the Governor for his commitment so far in terms of payments and assured that the projects will reflect specified quality and meet with completion date.



COMMISSIONER SEEKS COLLABORATION WITH HAUSA LEADERS TO TACKLE STREET BEGGING, CRIMINALITY

By Peace Osemwegie



The Edo State Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Chief Bisi Idaomi has paid a courtesy visit on the Sarki-Hausa, Alhaji Isa Adamu, in his office on Mission Road, Benin City, to partner on filtering out criminal elements, who may be disguising themselves as beggars in the State.

Expressing concerns over the menace of criminals, under the guise of begging in certain areas of Benin City, including Mission Road, Ring Road, Akpakpava, and Ikpoba Hill, Chief Idaomi emphasised the need for collective action to sanitise the City to be free from such criminal elements.

Chief Idaomi while harping on the importance of responsibility and accountability, stated, "Our Sons and daughters are complaining about the state of affairs in connection with increasing rate of criminality in certain areas of our City." She maintained that the State Government hopes to achieve the objective of reducing criminality to its barest minimum without misunderstandings or conflicts among residents in the State and beyond. She disclosed that the initiative is part of the State Government's efforts to address social issues and to promote a safer Benin City.

Alhaji Adamu appreciated the Commissioner and her Team for the proposed collaboration on eradicating criminals,

who pose as beggars in the State. He pledged cooperation and collaboration in the crusade, asserting that the initiative would ensure a safe and secured environment for residents.



AKOKO-EDO COUNCIL CHAIRMAN PLEDGES CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURES AT UKPE K'EMA FESTIVAL

By Okolo Jonathan Okhavhe



The Akoko-Edo Local Government Council (LGC) Chairman, Rt. Hon. Alabi Bliss Oshionogue has stated his administration's resolve to renovate the Community Basic School and the Primary Healthcare Centre in Uneme Erhurun Community as a demonstration of practical governance in line with the SHINE Agenda of Edo State Government.

Rt. Hon. Oshionogue made the pledge when he attended the 2025 Ukpe K'ema Festival as put together by the Erhurun Uneme National Development Association (EUNDA) at Uneme Erhurun community. Speaking at the ceremony the Council Boss said the need to identify with the Community was to promote cultural heritage being a critical component of his administration. He disclosed that plans have been perfected to grade roads in the coming days.

Addressing guest on behalf of the Community Head, HRH Oba MOA Braimoh, the Ogienoruele of Central Uneme, the National President of EUNDA, Mr. Festus Ariyo Ojo, disclosed that the ceremony was an annual event that

attracts sons and daughters from within the Country and the diaspora to brainstorm on ways to move the Community forward and to promote continuous peaceful coexistence amongst locals.

Highpoint of the ceremony was the admonition of the Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Barr. Olabisi Idaomi, who solicited for synergy across the

various levels of government to achieve sustainable development in her country-home as well as the presentation of food items and cash donations to vulnerable people in the Community.

The ceremony was attended by the Zaiki of Ikpeshe, HRH. Oba Lukman Odamah; HRH. Oba Felix Agbamudu of Uneme-Nekua; the Jagaban of Auchi Kingdom, Alhaji Chief Aliu Hassan; the Commander of MoPol 60, A.C. Okoye, the Leader of Akoko-Edo Legislative Arm, Rt. Hon. Nicholas Akosile Imashimi; the Councilor representing ward two and Majority Leader of the House, Rt. Hon. Pendo Eshovo; the Special Adviser to the LGC on Political Matters, Hon. S. O. Ehihi; amongst others.



EDO STATE EODB COUNCIL ENGAGES STAKEHOLDERS ON NAVIGATING GOVERNMENT PROCESSES

By Mary Omogbare



Towards achieving a collective commitment to driving sustainable economic growth through inclusive and strategic reforms, the Edo State Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) Council, through its operational office, the EoDB/State Action on Business Enabling Reforms (SABER) Secretariat, has organized a one-day stakeholders' engagement Workshop to update the private sector on implemented reforms and to provide practical guidance for navigating government processes in business.

The workshop which held in Benin City, brought together stakeholders from Government ministries, private sector players, and business associations, to review reform progress under the 2024 Business Enabling Reform Action Plan (BERAP) and to initiate dialogue toward the development of the 2026 BERAP.

According to the Chairman of the Edo State EoDB Council, Engr. Emmanuel Okoebor, the Workshop was aimed at strengthening collaboration with public, private, and business membership organizations (BMOs) to improve the State's business environment.

"This engagement is not only to showcase the achievements recorded so far but also to solicit input from critical stakeholders as we prepare the groundwork for the 2026 BERAP. It reflects our collective commitment to driving sustainable economic growth through inclusive and strategic reforms." Engr. Okoebor asserted.

Milestone achievements reported by the Edo State SABER Focal Person, Mr. Bright Omorogbe, included quick determination of commercial disputes; improved access to investment and business information to boost investment inflows; enhanced efficiency and sustainability in land-based investment processes; strengthening Public-Private Governance and Fiscal Responsibility, amongst others.

Mr. Omorogbe stated that the reforms were made possible through collaboration among ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs), with technical support from the Nigerian Governors' Forum (NGF) and the Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC).

The Team Lead of the Edo State EoDB Secretariat, Miss. Mary Omogbare, shared ongoing efforts by the Edo State Investment Promotion Office (ESIPO) to engage the private sector to include visits to the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), Okomu Oil Palm Company, and Presco Plc, underscoring the state's commitment to proactive collaboration. She disclosed plans for a Street-to-Street micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) engagement campaign across all 18 LGAs in the next quarter, saying the initiative aims to identify and address challenges faced by MSMEs directly within their operating environments.

Representatives of BMOs, including the President of the Nigeria Association of Small Scale Industrialists (NASSI) and the State Coordinator of the Edo Exporters Cluster, shared their expectations for continued government support, improved policy implementation, and sustained public-private dialogue.

The Engagement reaffirmed the Edo State Government's resolve to create an enabling environment for businesses to thrive and highlighted the essential role of cross-sector collaboration in achieving reform sustainability.



IMPROPER WASTE DISPOSAL, AKIN TO FLOOD AND EROSION CHALLENGES – HON. AHMED MOMOH.

By Winifred Inarumen



As Nigeria joined the International Community to mark World Environment Day 2025, the Chief Executive Officer of the Edo State Flood, Erosion and Watershed Management Agency (EdoFEWMA), Hon. Ahmed Musa Momoh, has issued a stark warning; until improper waste disposal is addressed, the twin challenges of flooding and erosion will remain unresolved.

Represented by the Agency's Lead Fiduciary Officer, Mrs. Osasumwen Okenini, at a Roadshow Sensitisation event organised in partnership with several State Ministries, Agencies and some Non-Governmental Organisations, Hon. Momoh stressed that indiscriminate dumping of waste, especially plastics, is a primary driver of blocked drainage systems, which leads to flash floods and widespread erosion.

"We cannot overcome the challenges of flood and erosion without first tackling the issue of improper waste disposal," he said in his message. "When plastic wastes clog our drains, stormwater has nowhere to go. The result is flooded streets, damaged infrastructure, and deepening erosion."

Hon. Momoh emphasised that residents must properly bag their waste and resist the harmful practice of dumping refuse, especially by market women, into drains during rainfall. "Water will always find a path. When drains are blocked, that path becomes our roads and homes," he warned.

He also revealed that EdoFEWMA is actively desilting and maintaining drainages across the state in anticipation of this year's flood season, as predicted in the 2025 Annual Flood Outlook released by the Nigeria Hydrological Services Agency (NIHSA). The forecast identifies over 1,200 communities nationwide, including parts of Edo State, as high-risk areas for flooding.

"We have locally identified those high-risk communities in Edo State and are already sending early warnings to affected communities to prevent any tragic disaster. We call on everyone to join in this effort," Momoh added. "The government cannot do it alone. When you litter or dump plastic in a drain, you're contributing to the problem".

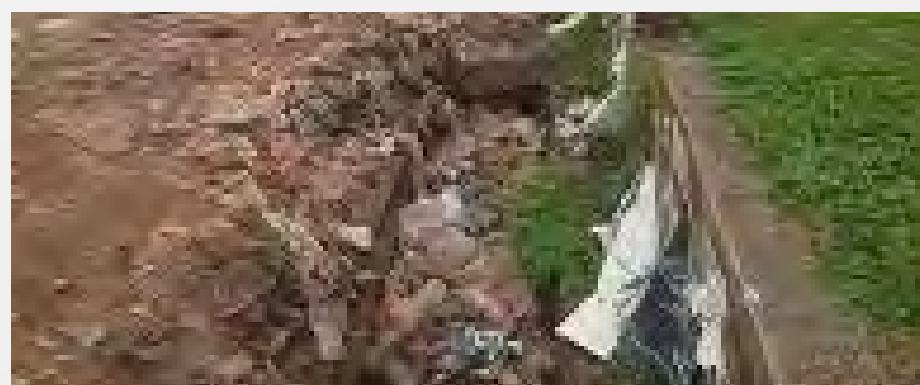
In his remarks, Mr. Jude Ebodaghe Ekpu, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainability, called on citizens to begin segregating waste, keeping plastics separate from biodegradable materials to aid recycling efforts and prevent drain blockages.

"Plastic toxins eventually travel up the food chain. Fish ingest microplastics, and we eat those fish," Ekpu cautioned. "It's a serious health risk. Protecting the environment also means protecting ourselves."

While plastics are synthetic materials that do not naturally decompose but break down instead into microplastics that persist in the environment for hundreds to thousands of years and pose significant risks to ecosystems and human health, plastic waste itself is not inherently harmful. It becomes problematic when it enters waterways. However, with proper management, plastic waste can be repurposed into valuable products such as clothing, handbags, furniture, carpets, tiles, and sneakers.

"Plastic waste is an opportunity," said EdoFEWMA Boss. "If we manage it well, we protect our environment and create income streams."

As Edo State moves towards a circular economy and continues its fight against environmental degradation, the message of this World Environment Day is loud and clear: sustainable waste management is not optional—it is essential if we are to end plastic pollution.



COUNCIL BOSS FLAGS OFF SECOND ROUND OF NATIONAL IMMUNIZATION PLUS DAYS

By Okolo Jonathan Okhavhe



The Akoko-Edo Local Government Council Chairman, Rt. Hon. Alabi Bliss Oshionogue has flagged off the second round of the National Immunization Plus Days (NIPDS) at the Council's Health Centre in Igarra, the Headquarters of the Council Area.

Rt. Hon. Oshionogue who disclosed that with the exercise, he aimed to demonstrate publicly, his administration's readiness to take ownership of the programme, stating that the exercise was to vaccinate targeted children of 0 - 59 months across various communities of the Local Government Area.

The Council Chairman pointed out that the strategies to be used are house to house, temporary and fixed posts, adding that the vaccination would begin 28th June, to 3rd July, 2025, from 7.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. daily. He urged stakeholders to be up and doing to ensure a seamless exercise, explaining that the vaccines are free, safe and without serious side effects. He reiterated the Council's zero tolerance for non-compliance on the part of parents, guardians and caregivers.

He commended health workers' preparedness for the programme, promising adequate deployment of counterpart funds and logistics. He maintained that he would personally monitor the exercise and coordinate review meetings. He also appreciated the Federal and the State Governments as well as development partners for their supports.

Rt. Hon. Oshionogue called for synergy to be able to attain a better Akoko-Edo, calling for feedbacks as a tool to assess his administration, noting that he does not believe in procrastination but determined to mitigate the plight of residents, using the instrumentality of government.

Speaking earlier, the Medical Officer of Health (MOH), Abu Agbokhade, appreciated the large turnout of dignitaries, mothers and caregivers for the exercise. He advised regular vaccination to forestall further disease outbreak in the locality. The Health Educator, Mr. Ajakaiye Jackson sued for consistent Local Council's collaborations to foster more infrastructural development in enhancing quality health care delivery in the Area.



AKOKO-EDO COUNCIL BOSS TASKS BEDC ON IMPROVED POWER SUPPLY

By Okolo Jonathan Okhavhe



The Akoko-Edo Local Government Council Chairman, Rt. Hon. Alabi Bliss Oshionogue has held a stakeholders' engagement with the Benin Electricity Distribution Company (BEDC) personnel in his Office with the aim of boosting electricity power supply in Igarra and environs.

Rt. Hon. Oshionogue stated that the meeting was apt as a pathway to finding lasting solutions to the challenges of abysmal electric power supply in the area. He asserted that no meaningful investment and development can take place with the poor power supply, noting that the Local Government is strategic, being a gateway to the South-South, South-East, South-West and the Northern part of the Country.

The Council Boss alleged that power supply to a very large extent, has been monopolized in the absence of alternative power solutions. He promised that his Administration was ready to render any support that could enhance the BEDC's effective service delivery in his locality.

Rt. Hon. Oshionogue pledged synergy between his Office and the Service Provider, pointing out that electricity is a critical component of practical governance of the SHINE agenda initiative of the Edo State Governor, His Excellency, Distinguished Sen. Monday Okpebholo. He concluded, "We need each other as partners in progress so that we can make appreciable difference and improve on our public delivery ethos; considering the poor nature of electricity supply here."

The Vice Chairman of the Council, Rt. Hon. Tope Jacob commended the practical approach of the Council Boss since assumption of office, stressing that people must have value for their money. He reiterated the stance of his Principal, stating that the Local Council is open to partnerships to guarantee uninterrupted power supply in the area.

The Secretary to the Council, Hon. Topa John Okomayin urged the BEDC personnel to work extra hard to ensure improved electricity supply to the area, blaming the situation on internal sabotage.

Responding, the Maintenance Engineer, (ME) Mr. Aliu Yakubu explained that the 33 KVA power line from Okene in Kogi State was responsible for the supply of electricity to Igarra and environs, saying that it had become obsolete and very sensitive. He recommended assistance from various levels of government for proper maintenance of the service lines to boost electricity supply to the area.

Mr. Yakubu solicited continuous positive relationship of the Council with the Transmission Company at Okene for improved service. Present at the meeting were the Senior Commercial Manager, Mr. Yahaya Nurudeen, amongst others.

OKPEBHOLO COMMITTED TO SAFETY, DIGNITY OF OUR SPECIAL-NEEDS LEARNERS – EDUCATION PRINCIPALS

By Ebuaneke Joy



The Edo State Commissioner for Education, Dr. Paddy Iyamu and the functioning Executive Chairman of Edo State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), Hon. Ebanehita Sonia Omonzane, have unanimously pledged the commitment of the State Governor, Sen. Monday Okpebholo to ensuring the safety and dignity of special-needs learners in the State.

The State Education principals made the pledge during an on-the-spot assessment of the Special School for the Visually Impaired, Hearing Impaired and Developmentally Challenged pupils, located on the premises of Ivbiore Primary School on Friday, June 20, 2025, in Benin City.

The Team of Education experts was conducted around the School facilities by the Head Teacher of Ivbiore Primary School, Mrs. Omonedo Eunice, in company of the School Based Management Committee (SBMC) Chairman, Mr. Nosa Obadagbonyi. The Team observed dilapidated classrooms, abandoned buildings, and widespread vandalism of school structures and equipment meant for learners with special needs. It was confirmed that pupils had vacated the premises for safety, leaving the School complex empty and vulnerable to further damage.

Dr. Iyamu reaffirming the State Governor's passion for inclusive education, stated, "We are optimistic that a swift and positive outcome will emerge from this assessment. An immediate investigation will be launched to determine why construction stalled, why vandalism has been allowed to occur, and to ensure the safety and dignity of our special-needs learners."

In an interview, the functioning Executive Chairman of Edo SUBEB described the scene as displeasing, and expressed deep concerns over the interruption of the pupils' education. She stated, "His Excellency, Sen. Monday Okpebholo, the Governor of Edo State is deeply committed to the welfare and quality education for all Edo children. We will brief him on the deplorable state of this Facility, and I believe that, very soon, positive action will be taken to restore and complete the necessary infrastructure."

Other key stakeholders in the delegation included the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Mrs. Edith Ebomoyi; the Edo SUBEB Board Member representing Edo South Senatorial District, Pastor (Mrs.) Angela Okpamen; the Director of Special Programme, Mrs. Eunice Onuabhagbe; amongst others.



ANANI CONDEMNS HARMFUL WIDOWHOOD PRACTICES, CALLS FOR SUPPORT, EMPOWERMENT

By Gloria Osemudiamhen



The Coordinator, Office of the Edo State First Lady, Mrs. Edesili Okpebholo Anani, has condemned the outrageous and harmful practices inflicted upon widows in the society and advocated empathy and economic empowerment to support them in coping with the loss of their spouses.

Mrs. Anani made the declarations during a widows' empowerment programme organised by the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development in commemoration of the year 2025 International Widows' Day, held at the Victor Uwaifo Creative Hub in Benin City.

Citing some traditional rituals and rites imposed on widows following the demise of their husbands, Mrs. Anani, represented by the wife of the Secretary to the State Government, Barr. Nimata Umar Ikhilor, decried the unfavourable and oppressive nature of such practices. According to her, "This occasion serves as a poignant reminder of the challenges many widows face in our society including poverty, social isolation and lack of access to justice.

"Let us say no to harmful widowhood practices (HWP) in our communities. HWP are obnoxious inhuman treatment of women following the deaths of their husbands. These HWPs involve dehumanizing rites and rituals that women are mandated to follow. Widowhood is often the beginning of life-long oppression and misery for women.

"As the Coordinator, Office of the First Lady Edo State, I have witnessed first-hand, the impact of widowhood on women. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that widows receive the support and empowerment they deserve. We must work tirelessly to ensure that widows have access to legal aid, property rights and other essential services that promote their well-being. Initiatives that provide economic support, such as

skills acquisition programmes and financial assistance, can help widows become self-sufficient."

Mrs. Anani solicited for collaboration among relevant stakeholders in providing necessary support for widows, to enable them live fulfilling lives. She highlighted the need to create a supportive environment where widows can access healthcare, education, and social services without facing stigma or discrimination.

The Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Chief Bisi Idaomi, highlighted the significance of the programme and emphasised its importance in addressing the challenges faced by widows in society, as well as creating economic and social opportunities for them, among other key objectives. According to her, "Today marks a significant milestone in our collective commitment to supporting one of the most vulnerable yet resilient segments of our society.

"As we commemorate the International Widows' Day, we gather not just to acknowledge their struggles, but to celebrate their strength, resilience and invaluable contributions to our communities. The theme for this year resonates deeply with our mission, access to justice and empowerment for vulnerable widows. It emphasises the urgent need to address the systemic inequalities that disproportionately affect widows and to create pathways for their economic empowerment and social inclusion."

In her remarks, the wife of the Commissioner of Police, Edo State, Mrs. Helen Agbonika, emphasized that widowhood is a phase, not a disease, and urged the beneficiaries to utilize the items wisely for wealth creation, cautioning them against selling the items.

Highpoint of the event was the distribution of empowerment items including sewing machines, popcorn-making machines, point of sale (POS) machines, 80-litre coolers with umbrellas and chairs, among other items, which were allocated to the beneficiaries through a balloting process.



EDO STATE GOVERNMENT PLEDGES SUPPORT FOR FARMERS

By Gloria Osemudiamhen



Alhaji Dogwo highlighted the numerous achievements of the Association over time and appealed to Mrs. Anani for continued support and collaboration. The highlight of the event was the presentation of awards to Mrs. Anani, the Edo State Deputy Governor, Rt. Hon. Dennis Idahosa, the Chief of Staff to the Edo State Governor, Hon. Gani Audu, amongst others, for their contributions to the growth of the Association.

As part of its commitments to ensuring food security in the State, the Edo State Government, through the Office of the First Lady led by the Coordinator, Mrs. Edesili Okpebholo Anani, has pledged more support for farmers in the State.

The commitment was reaffirmed by Mrs. Anani during an event at the Federal Ministry of Agriculture in Benin City, organized by the All Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN) in recognition of the huge contributions to the Agriculture Sector by key personalities as patrons and matrons of the Association.

Speaking at the event, Mrs. Anani, represented by the Oredo Women Leader of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Mrs. Esther Kolade, commended the farmers for their unwavering commitment to agro-production and food security in the State. In her words, "I would like to say a very big thank you to the farmers here today. Without you, we wouldn't have food on our tables. With the passion you have shown in this work, I pray that God will bless your efforts and grant you greater success, giving you good yields from your farming".

Mrs. Anani listed numerous opportunities in farming and emphasised their potentials to drive the State economic growth. She expressed her Office's readiness to collaborate with the Association, stating that agricultural empowerment initiatives will be launched soon, which will greatly benefit farmers in the State. She admonished individuals to be passionate about their chosen occupation, saying that dedication brings rewards.

In a remark, the State Chairman of the Association, HRH Alhaji Bako Dogwo, commended Mrs. Anani for her support since assuming office. He stated, "Today is a day that everyone of us has come together to honour some illustrious sons and daughters because of what they have done for farmers and their contributions in Edo State. Like the First Lady, she has done so much for women farmers that is why she is among the awardees today. We are grateful having her as our mother and we also thank her"



MINISTRY OF WOMEN AFFAIRS AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS YOUTH PARLIAMENT ON GIRLS' EMPOWERMENT

By Wisdom Agbonta



Towards supporting the girl child in achieving full potentials in society, the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development has welcomed collaboration with the Edo State Youth Parliament on an initiative tagged, "From Fear to Fierce; Empowering the Girl Child."

The partnership was the outcome of the Ministry's engagement with the Parliament at the Ministry's Premises in Benin City. The Commissioner, Chief Bisi Idaomi, represented by the Permanent Secretary, Mrs. Joy Ihensekhien, appreciated the initiative of empowering every girl child in the State, stating its alignment with the Ministry's mandate.

While emphasizing the importance of girls embracing leadership roles, making informed decisions, and knowing their rights, Chief Idaomi highlighted the remarkable progress being made by the Ministry towards empowering the girl child.

She asserted that women are increasingly taking centre stage and assuming leadership roles, saying that the development boosts the Ministry's unwavering commitment to amplifying the voices of women and girls, ensuring they are heard and valued.

While reiterating the importance of mentorship as part of empowerment for the girl child, Chief Idaomi stated, "The leaders of tomorrow start today. So, when you catch them young at this age, they will do exploits and they will become wonderful in the future."

In a remark, the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament, Hon. Ohangbon Lisa Ebuwa, appreciated the impactful works of the State Government, particularly in advocating for the protection of the girl child and combating GBV in the State.

Hon. Ohangbon outlined the key objectives of the Initiative which included educating young girls about their rights and safety, as well as raising awareness about GBV and early exploitation.

She emphasized the importance of collaborating with the Ministry and solicited endorsement and technical support to ensure the success of the Initiative.

Present at the engagement were the Director of Shared Services, Mrs. Juliet Ehigie; the Director of Rehabilitation, Mr. Okoeguale Sylvester; the Director of Women Affairs, Mrs. Florence Nwaozor; the Director of Finance, Mrs. Mary A. Ikhaijagbe; amongst others.





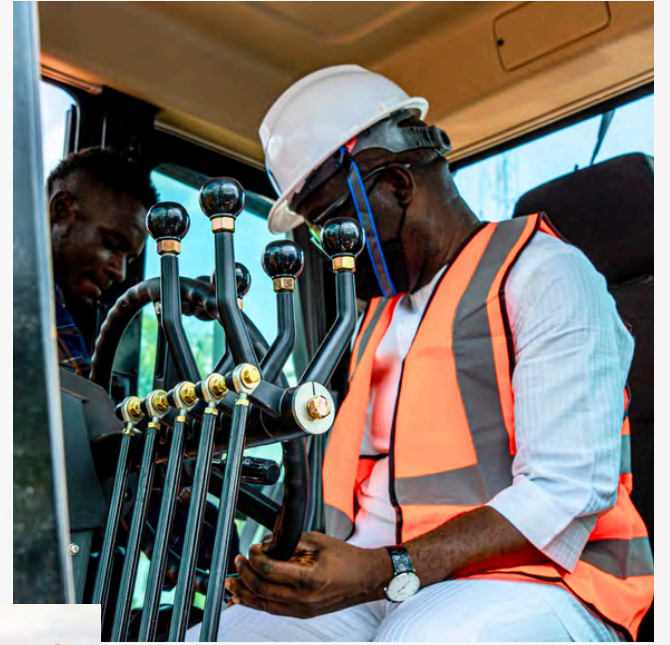
Ministry of Information and Communication

FACTS ABOUT DIPHTHERIA AND DENGUE FEVER

- Diphtheria is a contagious bacteria infection that affects the nose and throat. It is vaccine-preventable.
- Symptoms include fever, sore throat, difficulty in breathing and swallowing, swollen neck, running nose, thick white/grey patch around the throat.
- Spread through close contact with infected persons and objects, sneeze and coughs and wounds.
- Prevention by vaccination, regular hand washing, avoid close contact with sick people.

#Anewedoising
#stopdiphtheria
#Denguefever

PICTURES FROM THE GOVERNOR'S DESK



PRACTICAL GOVERNANCE IN VISUALS



Office of the
CHIEF PRESS SECRETARY

PHOTO NEWS

YOU MUST ADHERE TO JOB SPECIFICATIONS - GOV OKPEBHOLO CHARGES CONTRACTORS

Edo State Governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo has given marching orders to contractors handling various projects across the State to ensure they work according to specifications and deliver quality jobs to the people. The Governor said he is accountable to Edo people as he will give account to them on how his administration utilizes Funds from the Federal Account Allocation Committee (FAAC).



and Communication

" You remember during my campaign to this community, I promised that I was coming to fix this road . It is about seven months into our administration now. We are here to officially flag-off this 14 kilometer road and nine other surrounding communities"

Sen. Monday Okpebholo #RenewedDedication #Anewedohasrisen

The Edo State Government is partnering with Fujian Jiangxia University, China, to enhance collaboration in education, culture, and technology. Governor Okpebholo, highlighted the mutual benefits of knowledge exchange and Edo's rich cultural heritage.



ECO NEWS

Hon. Dennis Idahosa welcomes investors to Edo, applauds their role in rural development, and reaffirms Gov. Okpebholo's commitment to sustainable agriculture and protecting local farmers' rights.



ECO NEWS

Edo education officials pledge urgent action after inspecting the vandalized Special School for Visually and Hearing Impaired pupils in Benin. Dr. Iyamu assures swift investigation to restore safety and dignity for special-needs learners.



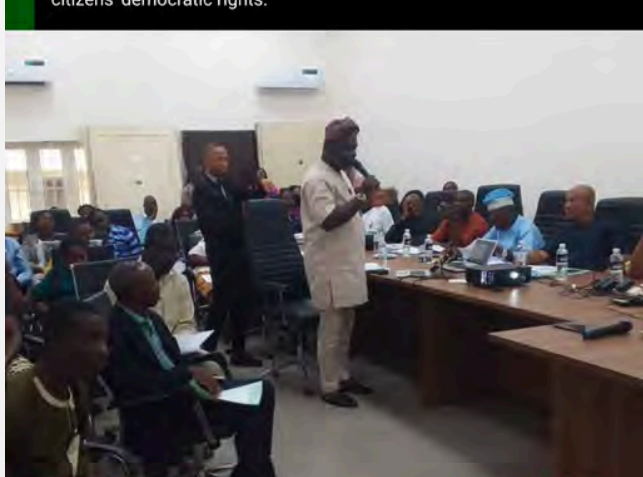
ECO NEWS



" You remember during my campaign to this community, I promised that I was coming to fix this road . It is about seven months into our administration now. We are here to officially flag-off this 14 kilometer road and nine other surrounding communities"

ECO NEWS

EDSIEC Commissioner, Dr. Suleman Ikhuria, underscores the vital role of State Electoral Commissions in grassroots democracy, stressing their duty to ensure credible local elections and protect citizens' democratic rights.



ECO NEWS

Edo Deputy Governor calls for joint action with council chairmen to combat diphtheria and dengue outbreaks, commends WHO, UNICEF, and other partners for supporting the state's healthcare efforts.



ECO NEWS

To promote peace and development in Akoko-Edo LGA, Council Chairman Rt. Hon. Alabi Bliss Oshionogwe has directed a free and fair election to resolve leadership disputes within the Heavy-duty Truck Drivers' Union in Igarra.



ECO NEWS

PRACTICAL GOVERNANCE IN VISUALS

Edo State Deputy Gov assures responsive, resilient Health Care System

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ECO NEWS

EDSIEC holds one day retreat to enhance grassroot Democracy

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ECO NEWS

Hon. Dennis Idahosa welcomes investors to Edo, applauds their role in rural development, and reaffirms Gov. Okpebholo's commitment to sustainable agriculture and protecting local farmers' rights.



ECO NEWS

The Edo State Commissioner for Women Affairs, has announced that the government will prioritize the empowerment of widows to make them self-reliant. She also reaffirmed the state's commitment to protecting women from gender-based violence and related crimes.



ECO NEWS



"With the kick _off of disbursement of N1 billion interest-free loan to Edo traders, my administration has not only fulfilled a key campaign promise but also laid a robust foundation for inclusive economic growth, providing a brighter future for the people of Edo State"

Sen. Monday Okpebholo
The Executive Governor, Edo State

#RenewedDedication
#Anewedohasrisen
#Practicalgovernance



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