



## CONSTRUCTION WORK BEGINS ON BENIN-ASABA DUAL CARRIAGE WAY

... TWENTY KILOMETERS TO BE COMPLETED BY DECEMBER

Edo State Governor, His Excellency, Senator Monday Okpebholo on Wednesday, undertook a comprehensive inspection tour of critical infrastructure projects across Benin City, the State Capital, and declared them as tangible fruits of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda.

During the inspection, Mr. K. V. Rao, Project Director for Africa Plus Partners and the Benin-Asaba Expressway Concession

Company Limited, said about 20 kilometers of the dual-carriage 10 lane expressway, are projected to be completed before the Christmas of 2025.

Governor Okpebholo's inspection highlighted the monumental expansion of the Benin-Asaba expressway, the reconstruction of Amufi Road, and the ongoing flyover construction at Ramat Park, all poised to redefine connectivity and economic vibrancy in the region.

The centerpiece of the inspection was the ambitious Benin-Asaba expressway, a project Governor Okpebholo hailed as a cornerstone of the President's vision.

Governor Okpebholo, visibly impressed by the progress and the scale of the project, articulated the federal government's commitment to delivering on its promises.

*continue on pg 3*

# 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



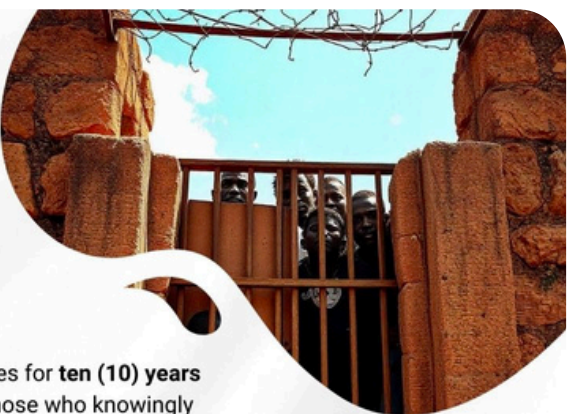
3

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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## CONSTRUCTION WORK BEGINS ON BENIN-ASABA ..CONT'D



He affirmed: "Well, this is part of the Renewed Hope Agenda of Mr. President. He is taking this road straight to Asaba. It is going to be 10 lanes. Five on one side, five on the other side."

The Governor further underscored the project's significance as a direct outcome of high-level government engagements.

He noted: "Remember when this road was flagged off a few months ago, the Minister for Works was here. The Minister for Finance was also here. And I was here. This is the fruit of that flag-off. And this is the demonstration of Mr. President's Renewed Hope Agenda for our people."

Beyond the expressway, the Governor also reviewed the progress on Amufi Road in the Agbor Road area, which connects four communities (Amufi, Okpagha, Iyanomo, and Egiekpe Communities).

Governor Okpebholo also reviewed the progress on the vital flyover project at Ramat Park.

These urban infrastructural developments are set to complement the expressway, alleviating traffic bottlenecks and enhancing the daily lives of Benin City residents.

Mr. Rio explained: "What is currently going on right now is a palliative work to divert the entire traffic on the right-hand side of the road."

He then unveiled the exciting timeline, "Real work is going to commence on August 5th, 2025."

This "real work," he elaborated, "will transform the existing road into a ten-lane, featuring two main carriageways with two lanes left, two lanes right, and two dedicated service roads on both sides."

The Governor's inspection served as a powerful declaration that the "Renewed Hope Agenda" is not just a slogan but a blueprint for tangible development, with the people of Edo State ready to be among its primary beneficiaries.

Signed:

Fred Itua,

The Chief Press Secretary to Governor Monday Okpebholo of Edo State.

Wednesday, 30 July, 2025.



# EDO ANTI-CULTISM WAR: JUDGES, LEGAL PRACTITIONERS BACK GOV OKPEBHOLO



The judiciary and legal practitioners in Edo State have declared their full support for Governor Monday Okpebholo's ongoing battle against cultism and kidnapping.

The endorsement was the highlight of a high-level meeting held on Tuesday at the Government House in Benin City, when Governor Okpebholo received the Chief Judge of Edo State, Hon. Justice Daniel Iyobosa Okungbowa, alongside a delegation, comprising judges and members of the legal profession in the State.

Presiding over the meeting, Governor Okpebholo emphasized the need for closer collaboration between the executive and the judiciary, describing their relationship as "very cordial."

The Governor remarked: "I appreciate the synergy we have enjoyed so far. I usually get quick and helpful responses whenever I seek legal advice."

Governor Okpebholo reiterated his firm stance against rising insecurity in the State, particularly the menace of cultism and kidnapping. He appealed to the judiciary for continued cooperation in the enforcement of law and order.

He said: "There is a fight against cultism, and I am taking it very seriously. I need your cooperation. These crimes are a major setback to our economic development. We must bring them down to the barest minimum so we can feel safe again, our children can invest here, and their investments will be protected."

The Governor's renewed call for a joint action comes on the heels of recent legislative reforms aimed at curbing insecurity.

Earlier this year, he signed into law the Secret Cult and Similar Activities (Prohibition) Law, 2025, and the Kidnapping Prohibition (Amendment) Law, 2025.

The laws impose strict penalties including a mandatory 10-year jail term for anyone who harbors cultists; 21 years for cultists who cause injury or damage property; and the death penalty for kidnappers in cases where victims lose their lives.

In a bid to strengthen the judicial system's ability to administer justice swiftly and fairly, Governor Okpebholo also pledged his administration's support for addressing critical institutional needs, including the recruitment of additional judicial staff.

Earlier in the meeting, Chief Judge Okungbowa had informed the Governor of the judiciary's staffing challenges, noting that several professionals had left in search of better opportunities abroad.

Governor Okpebholo responded positively, acknowledging the urgent need to equip the judiciary with adequate human resources to also ensure effective prosecution of cases related to insecurity.

The Chief Judge was accompanied by a delegation of judges and other judicial officers, symbolizing a unified commitment from Edo's legal community to uphold peace, justice, and security in the State.

The meeting ultimately reaffirmed a shared resolve between the executive and judicial arms of the government to rid Edo State of criminal elements and ensure a safe environment for all.

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



# WORLD HEPATITIS DAY COMMEMORATION: EDO STATE GOVT REITERATES COMMITMENT TO HEALTHCARE

*By Gloria Osemudiamhen*

As part of activities marking the year 2025 World Hepatitis Day, the Edo State Government through its Office of the First Lady has reaffirmed its commitment to enhancing the well-being of residents through comprehensive health reforms, strategic policies, and innovative programmes that ensure access to quality and affordable healthcare services in the State.

The Coordinator, Office of the Edo State First Lady, Mrs. Edesili Okpebholo Anani, gave the assurance while addressing staff in her office as part of activities marking the World Hepatitis Day, themed "Let's Break it Down", at the Government House in Benin City. She stressed the importance of health as it relates to the overall well-being of the State and its development.

According to Mrs. Anani, "As we gather today, I want to take a moment to talk about a critical health issue that affects us all, either directly or indirectly; Hepatitis. I believe it is essential that we prioritize this topic. Hepatitis is often misunderstood as just a single condition, but it encompasses a group of infectious diseases that cause liver inflammation and damage. The most common types are Hepatitis A, B, and C; each with different modes of transmission and affects on the body. Understanding the differences between these types is crucial in tackling the disease effectively".

Mrs. Anani enumerated some of the symptoms and advised a quick medical attention to prevent deterioration, saying, "The symptoms

of Hepatitis can be subtle at first, making it challenging to detect. Fatigue, jaundice, abdominal pain, loss of appetite and nausea are common signs that should not be ignored. If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, I encourage you to seek medical attention promptly. Early detection and treatment can significantly improve outcomes and prevent long-term liver damage".

She further emphasized the significance of strict adherence to basic health principles as a control measure and urged everyone to cascade the knowledge received to others. She said, "Prevention is key in the fight against Hepatitis. Vaccines are available for Hepatitis A and B, and practicing good hygiene, such as washing your hands regularly and thoroughly, can go a long way in reducing the risk of transmission. For Hepatitis C, which is primarily spread through blood-to-blood contact, avoiding sharing of needles or personal items that may have come into contact with infected blood is crucial. By taking these simple precautions, we can significantly reduce the risk of infection.



**PHOTO CAPTION**  
The Coordinator, Office of the First Lady, Edo State, Mrs. Edesili Okpebholo Anani.

"As members of staff, you are not only ambassadors of our organization but also influencers within your families and communities. I urge you to share the knowledge you have gained today with your loved ones and encourage them to take proactive steps in protecting their health. Together, we can create a ripple effect of awareness and education that will have a lasting impact on our community. Let us work together to promote a culture of health and wellness within our organization. By prioritizing Hepatitis awareness and education, we can take a significant step towards creating a healthier, more informed community". She added.

The staff expressed profound gratitude for her time and valuable insights, acknowledging the prevalent low awareness of the infection. They also pledged commitment to disseminating the knowledge to their family, friends, and the wider community.

# DR. OKUNGBOWA REAFFIRMS GOV OKPEBHOLO'S COMMITMENT TO HEALTHCARE WORKERS' WELFARE

*Violet Osatohanmwon Obamwonyi*



## PHOTO CAPTION

Middle: Dr. Anthony Okungbowa, Edo State Head of Service; 6th Right: Barr. (Mrs) Priscilla Aziegbemhin, Permanent Secretary Directorate of General Services Office of the Head of Service; 5th Right: Mrs. Bose Igbinobaro, Permanent Secretary Directorate of Human Resources, Office of the Head of Service; 4th Right: Mr. Oaikhena Edionnweme, Director of Shared Services Office of the Head of Service; 2nd Right: Mr. Victor Okenini, Director of Establishments Labour and Productivity with members of MDCAN, ARDN and JOHESU during a meeting held at Government House in Benin City.

The Edo State Head of Service, Dr. Anthony Okungbowa, has reaffirmed the commitment of Governor Monday Okpebholo's administration to the welfare of healthcare workers across the State, assuring them of ongoing efforts to address their concerns.

Speaking during a meeting held at his Office in Benin City with representatives of various health associations, including Joint Health Sector Unions (JOHESU), Medical and Dental Consultants' Association of Nigeria (MDCAN) and Association of Resident Doctors, Dr. Okungbowa described them as indispensable to the system, emphasizing the State Government's readiness to ease their burdens and improve working conditions.

The Head of Service acknowledged the critical role medical personnel play in the State's healthcare system, highlighting the alarming rate of brain drain in the sector due to the "Japa syndrome". He hinted that the Government is making conscious efforts to provide timely promotions, entitlements and improved salaries for healthcare workers, calling for

greater recognition and appreciation of medical professionals who opt to remain in the system despite having opportunities to migrate.

According to him, "We welcome your concerns and recognize the validity of your requests. This administration under the leadership of Senator Monday Okpebholo is committed to ensuring you feel the full support of government. Staff attrition is a widespread problem across sectors but the loss of medical personnel in the Health Sector hits harder because of the crucial role they play in saving lives. While we cannot completely stop people from leaving, we must do everything possible to retain those who choose to stay.

"Other countries and the Private Sector highly value your expertise and we must do more to keep you here, not by force but through meaningful incentives".

The Head of Service also disclosed that the State Government is considering a review of the retirement age for medical personnel, citing advances in

medical science and the longer life expectancy due to these improvements.

It does not make sense to invest in training a doctor or nurse only to lose them at 60 years to the private sector. We must fully utilize their expertise for the benefit of our system". He explained.

Dr. Okungbowa further assured them that the recruitment exercise conducted in May 2025 would be finalized soon, stressing that the administration is aware of the strain on existing personnel.

"We understand the consequences of staffing gaps. No one should be overworked to the point of risking their own health. That issue is being addressed with urgency. Every worker in Edo State today can be confident in the Government's dedication to their welfare and professional development". He concluded.

# GOV OKPEBHOLO, WIKE, OSHIOMHOLE COMMISSION NEW EDO LINE

... INSIST ON SECURITY PROTOCOLS FOR HIGH PROFILE NIGERIANS



Edo State Governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo; Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike; former governor of Edo State and Senator representing Edo North Senatorial District, Comrade Adams Oshiomhole; and other top government dignitaries across the country, on Tuesday, commissioned the New Edo Line Transport Service.

FCT Minister, Nyson Wike who was the guest of honour at the commissioning of the New Edo Line Transport Service, backed Governor Monday Okpebholo on security protocols for high profile Nigerians, like the former governor of Anambra State, Mr. Peter Obi.

Wike insisted that high-profile Nigerians like Peter Obi need to inform the Governor of any State about his visit to ensure his security is guaranteed.

He noted that when Obi visited him while he was the Governor of Rivers States, he secured a permit before embarking on that journey. He wondered why he did not observe the same protocol when he visited Edo State.

"I thank God for the people of Edo State for standing firm during the election of Monday Okpebholo. The Governor has prepared himself as far as I am concerned. He is focused on making sure he delivers the dividends of democracy to the people.

"The Governor refused to be distracted, and in eight months, he has done so much for Edo people. Just like what Mr. President did immediately, he was inaugurated. He hit the ground running. That is what Senator Okpebholo has done today by making sure there are no excuses.

"Assuming that the Supreme Court had ruled against him, what it would have meant is that for a few months, he showed the people of Edo that he was committed to work for them.

"I do not identify with failure. I identify with people who mean well for their people. One of the things that you have done for bringing back this new Edo line is to solve the problem of insecurity.



*continue on pg 8*

# GOV OKPEBHOLO, WIKE, OSHIOMHOLE COMMISSION NEW EDO ...CONT'D

"You have also resolved the problem of students, women and men traveling. You have actually shown your support for our President in practical terms in performance. Your performance will give you the confidence to always come home even after your tenure as Governor.

"I have come to identify with you because you mean well for the people of Edo State. Leadership is not easy because people will throw all kinds of things at you."

Governor Okpebholo, in his remarks, thanked President Bola Ahmed Tinubu for his support, which has continuously translated into growth and development for Edo people.

He commended Edo people for the opportunity given to him as their Governor

and expressed readiness to serve them, as they will continue to see and experience remarkable projects that will touch their lives for the better.

Governor Okpebholo said he will continue with his developmental projects that will change Edo State and improve the lives of Edo people for the better. He promised not to be distracted with criticism coming from the social media, following his statement on Mr. Peter Obi.

He noted that his statement on Mr Peter Obi is not a threat, but advice that is meant for his own good. "What I said was an advice to him, and it was never a threat.

"Do not come to Edo without telling me. This is a clear statement. I am not here to only work for Edo people but also in government to protect Edo people and visitors coming to the State.



"I only told Mr. Peter Obi to notify me as the Chief Security Officer of Edo State when coming to the State. Is that a crime?." He recalled the incident that led to the death of one of his security details. "I remember when I came into Edo State during the administration of Godwin Obaseki.

"The Commissioner of Police asked me to remain at the Benin Airport when I arrived at Benin City, and I was attacked at the airport as one of my security guards was shot dead right in my presence.

"I had a security report and advised the former governor of Anambra State to inform me whenever he is coming to Edo State. If he likes, let him take my advice.

"I will continue to thank President Bola Ahmed Tinubu because he loves Edo so much, and Edo people are enjoying his support, which has transformed into developmental strides," he noted. He assured the President that in 2027, Edo State will give him 2.5 million votes to ensure he returns for a second term in office to continue his good works of development.

Dignitaries at the commissioning include the Speaker of Edo State House of Assembly, Blessing Agbebaku; Secretary to Edo State Government, Barr. Umar Musa Ikhilor; Head of Service, Dr. Anthony Okungbowa; Chief of Staff to the Governor, Gani Audu; former Deputy Governors of Edo State, Pius Odubu and Lucky Imasuen; Gen. Cecil Esekhaigbe (rtd); Pastor Osagie Ize-Iyamu; APC stakeholders; representatives of security agencies, market women, youths, transportation stakeholders, amongst others.

Signed:

Fred Itua,

The Chief Press Secretary to Governor Monday Okpebholo of Edo State.

# EDSG REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO COMBATTING GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

*By Gloria Osemudiamhen*



The Edo State Government through the Office of the First Lady, has reiterated its commitment to combating Gender-based Violence (GBV), particularly against women in the State as part of efforts to enhance the well-being of residents.

The commitment was reaffirmed by the Coordinator of the Office of the First Lady, Mrs. Edesili Okpebholo Anani, during a meeting with GBV survivors and beneficiaries of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) at the Government House in Benin City.

In her address, Mrs. Anani stated that the Sen. Monday Okpebholo-led administration has a zero-tolerance policy for violence against women and Edo people at large, and prioritizes empowering women to enhance their self-sufficiency. According to her, "The Government of the day under the leadership of Sen. Monday Okpebholo, has zero tolerance against any kind of violence against the woman, in fact against anybody. It is also our duty to empower the women. You know when you are empowered you are self-sufficient. You are able to take care of yourself and take care of your family.

"I thank you for sharing your story. I always say that when justice is delayed, it looks like it has been denied. It is important that you speak out no matter how bad it looks. The first step is speaking out and then every other thing follows. I am happy that collectively, individually you were able to pick up the pieces, the scar might still be there but you are picking your life back again. As I said, the ideal is to help women. It is to make sure that we are able to have a voice".

Mrs. Anani advised beneficiaries to make prudent use of the resources and avoid unnecessary expenditures, saying, "Honestly speaking, I pray that whatever they give to you will be used wisely. The ideal is not to have money and buy wrappers, it is for you to plant the money and water it, so that it can multiply and grow, and that is my prayer for everyone here. That the money that was given to you as a start-up, the Lord will bless and multiply it, so that you will have enough to give to other persons and be a support system to another woman".

The beneficiaries expressed gratitude to Mrs. Anani for her unwavering support and encouragement, which according to them, had significantly impacted their lives. They promised to make the most of the opportunities provided, utilizing the resources wisely to achieve their goals and become a source of inspiration to others.



## PHOTO CAPTION

**Middle: Mrs. Edesili Okpebholo Anani, Coordinator, Office of the First Lady, with GBV survivors and beneficiaries of IOM empowerment programme, during a meeting at Government House in Benin City.**

# COMMISSIONER ADVOCATES FOR STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP TO DEVELOP EDO STATE

*Aichienede Akhabue Goodluck*



## PHOTO CAPTION

*Commissioner for Information and Communication, Hon. Paul Ohonbamu.*

Edo State Commissioner for Information and Communication, Hon. Paul Ohonbamu has advocated for strategic partnership between the private sector and the Government to drive meaningful development in the State.

Hon. Ohonbamu made the call while playing host to the Proprietor of Liberty American Leadership Academy, Mr. Okenfe Aigbe Liberty and his Team, who were on a courtesy visit to the Ministry in Benin City. He commended Mr. Okenfe for his foresight in giving back to the society by establishing a citadel of learning for residents of the State.

"What you have done is not an accident of history, it is a true Edo reality and so I must commend you. I will urge you for collaborative work and areas of interest with any MDA which will enable the people and the Government to feel your impact. When we collaborate, gray areas will be taken care of". The Commissioner said.

He urged all well-meaning Edo sons and daughters, particularly those in diaspora to always give back to the society, through their resources and expertise for the growth and development of the State.

Earlier in his remark, Mr. Okenfe commended the Commissioner and the State Government for the seamless access to information as well as the various developmental strides of the Governor Monday Okpebholo-led administration in the State.

Mr. Okenfe noted that his studies in the United States and work experience in campaign administration, government and community affairs had motivated him to give back and impact lives positively, especially in Edo State, which is his place of origin. He formally invited the Commissioner for the first Graduation Ceremony of Liberty American Leadership Academy, scheduled to hold on the 22nd of July, 2025, in Benin City.

## COMMIT TO HIGH STANDARD OF PROFESSIONALISM, PERMANENT SECRETARY CHARGES STAFF

*Aichienede Akhabue Goodluck*



### PHOTO CAPTION

*The Functioning Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information and Communication, Mrs. Rose Imonikhe addressing staff of the Ministry during a meeting held at the Ministry's premises in Benin City.*

Staff of the Ministry of Information and Communication has been charged to conduct themselves and discharge their official activities with high professional standards.

This call was made by the Functioning Permanent Secretary of the Ministry, Mrs. Rose Imonikhe during a meeting with staff at the Ministry's Conference Room in Benin City.

Mrs. Imonikhe noted that the meeting became necessary in view of growing concerns of indiscipline and other related unprofessional conduct among some Civil and Public Servants in the State.

She noted that, the Civil Service rules frowns at any act of indiscipline and as such staff must at all times uphold the tenets of the Civil Service.

"As a Civil Servants you are to respect your seniors in service and shun any act of insubordination or disrespect. You must work and have mutual respect for each other.

"Lateness to work and absenteeism is a serious offense and has stiff penalties. The official resumption time is 8am". She noted.

Mrs. Imonikhe warned staff not to engage in drug abuse or drinking during office hours, stressing that any officer caught will be made to face the consequence in accordance with the Civil Service Rules, urging staff to learn to keep official information confidential.

The Functioning Permanent Secretary also used the occasion to commend staff for their support and dedication towards the various Stakeholder's Engagement and Sensitization Workshops carried out by the Ministry in recent times.

The meeting also provided opportunity for staff of the Ministry to ask questions and seek clarifications on certain issues as it affects their job functions.

## EDSG PARTNERS SEPLAT ON GROUNDBREAKING REFORESTATION PROJECT

*By Osamwonyi Osagiede*

**... TARGETS ONE MILLION TREES ON 6,000 HECTARES OF FORESTS LANDS IN THREE YEARS**



### PHOTO CAPTION

*L-R: Consultant to Seplat, Mrs Sarah Ajoose Adeogun; Chairman of Edo State Forestry Commission, Hon. Asuen Valentine Owamagbe during the tree planting exercise at Obagie Forest Reserves, located in Uhumwonde Local Government Area of Edo State.*

Edo State Government in collaboration with Seplat Consultancy, has planted 50,000 trees in the Obagie Forest Reserves, located in Uhumwonde Local Government Area of Edo State.

During a recent inspection of the project, the Chairman of the Edo State Forestry Commission, Hon. Valentine Asuen Owamagbe, expressed satisfaction over the level of work done by Seplat Consultancy. He urged other public-private organizations to key into the reforestation programme of the Edo State Government, emphasizing the importance of collaborative efforts in promoting sustainable environmental practices as part of efforts to mitigate global warming.

Hon. Asuen stated, "This is a major step towards enhancing environmental sustainability and we are calling on other public-private partners to collaborate with us to achieve more".

The consultant to Seplat on the Tree for Life Initiative Project, Mrs. Sarah Adeogun, disclosed that the Initiative aims to plant a million indigenous trees over the next three years. "Globally, trees sustain life. In Edo State, we will ensure that we restore the trees we have lost to guarantee sustainability". She stated.

The Tree planting initiative underscores the Edo State Government's commitment to preserving and restoring the natural ecosystems in the State.

# EDO STATE GOVT PARTNERS NBTI ON EMPOWERING YOUTHS WITH DIGITAL SKILLS

*By Godfrey Osejele*



**PHOTO CAPTION**

*Participants at the NBTI's three day training on Youth digital, entrepreneurial skills program in Benin City, Edo State*

The Edo State Government through its Ministry of Information and Communications in collaboration with the National Board for Technology Incubation (NBTI), South-South Zone, has organised a three-day intensive training on digital skills and entrepreneurship for youths in the State.

The training, themed “Empowering Youths with Digital and Entrepreneurship Skills for Global Relevance”, was held at ARDP Building in Benin City from the 16th through 18th July, 2025.

The Commissioner for Information and Communications, Hon. Paul Ohonbamu, represented by the Ministry’s Permanent Secretary, Mrs. Rose Imonikhe, asserted that a lot was happening in the digital space and that the participants should take advantage of the training to equip themselves with the requisite skills needed to be at the top of their game.

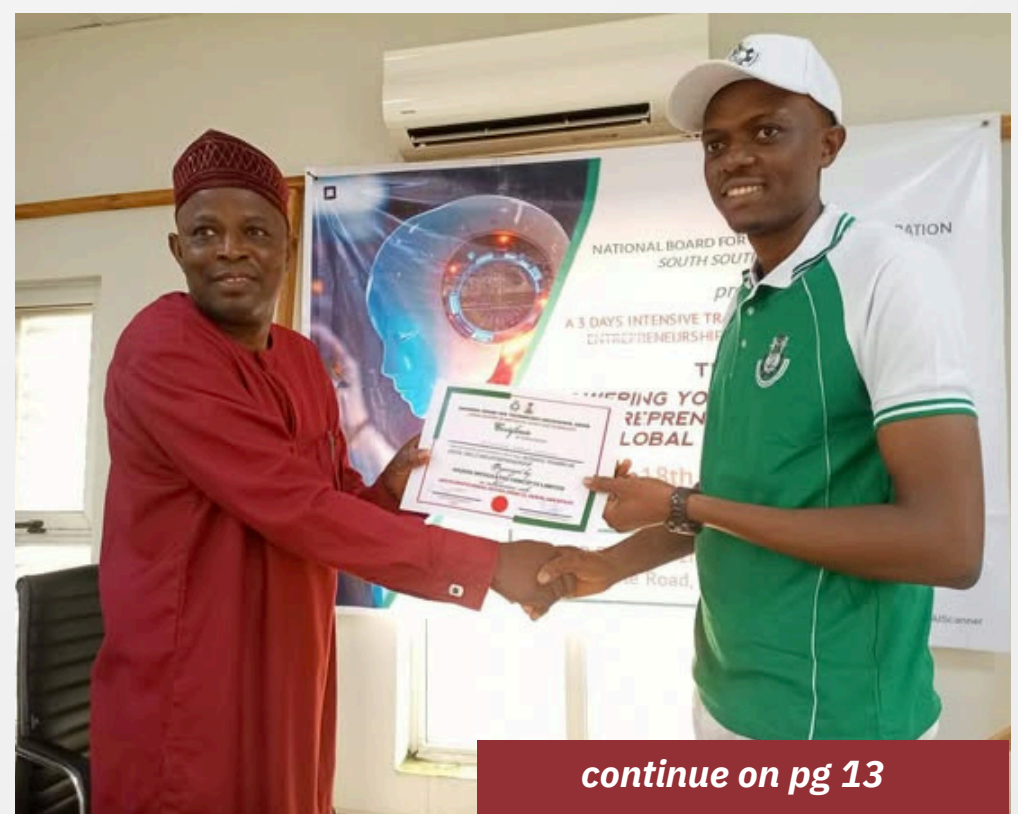
Hon. Ohonbamu, while appreciating NBTI for the initiative, reiterated the Edo State Government’s commitment to the welfare of the people, especially the youth and that the initiative will complement the Government’s programmes on youth empowerment.

The Functioning Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Science and Technology, Mr. Jonathan Ukpebor appreciated NBTI and emphasised the need for youths to upgrade digitally with the caution that considering contemporary trends, persons without digital skills may not gain employment.

In an opening speech, Mr. Diekedie stated that the world is at digital age and that there was need for everyone to be digitally

compliant in order to make positive impact globally. He emphasized the need for everyone to be reeducated; become digital literates regardless of educational qualifications, stating that Nigeria is endowed with one of the largest youth populations globally and that the Nation has to be repositioned through digital skills’ acquisition.

Courses featured at the training included Digital Marketing Skills, Copywriting and Content Writing, Entrepreneurial Skills, How to Maximize Artificial Intelligence Tools such as ChatGPT, amongst others.



*continue on pg 13*

## EDO STATE GOVT PARTNERS NBTI ON EMPOWERING YOUTHS WITH ... CONT'D

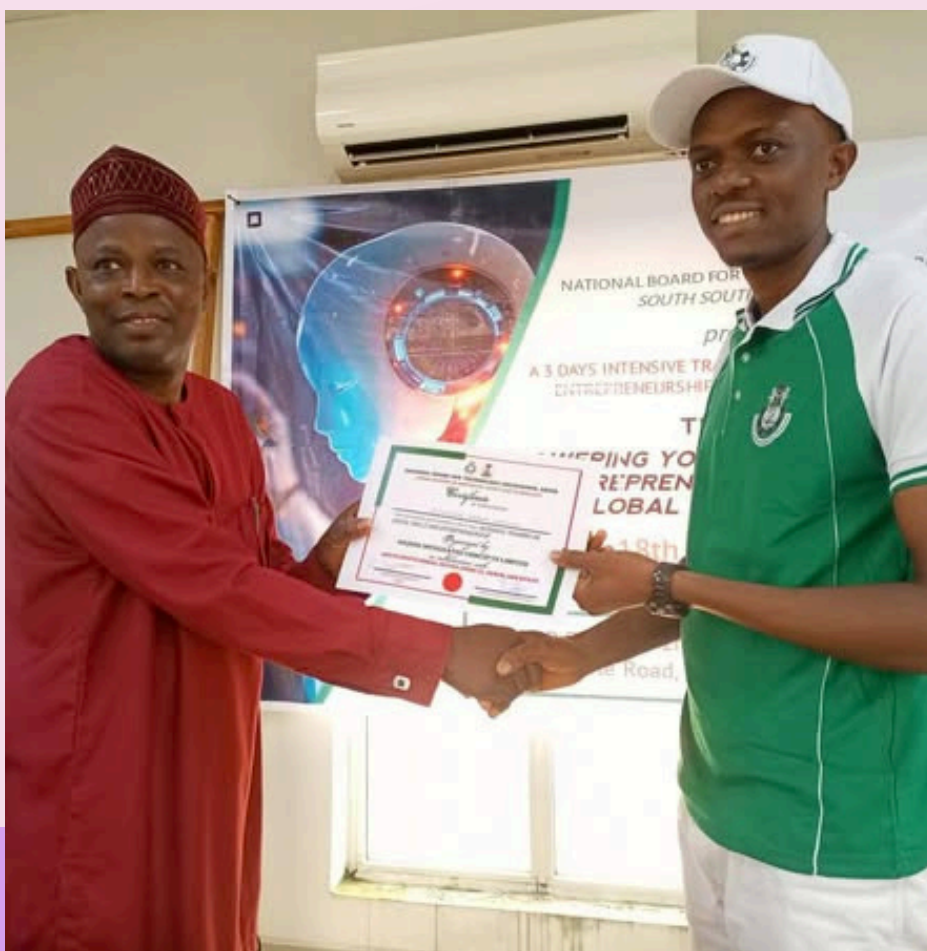
Facilitators at the training were Mrs. Eno George Ikerelo, who dwelt on “Digital Marketing for Business Growth”, Ogheneruemusua Gbakeji took the session on “Graphic Design and Visual Communications”, Mr. Diekedie delivered a lecture titled, “Empowering Youth with Digital and Entrepreneurial Skills”. Favour Iloma trained on “Copywriting and content writing” while Mirabel N. Iyamu took the session on “Artificial Intelligence (AI) Technology: Nano Tips for Using ChatGPT for Business”.

The position of the Best Performing Participant was keenly contested with nine out of the 40 participants, having a tie of 24 points out of 25 at the first stage.

The second stage of the test saw the emergence of another tie by two participants; Goodluck Aichienede and Mr. Joseph Anthanacious Eshiolese. The third stage saw the emergence of Akhabue as the winner and was presented with a gift.

Highpoint of the training was the presentation of certificates of participation to participants by Mr. Ukpebor.

The Winner, Aichienede while giving the vote of thanks, appreciated NBTI for the opportunity and the platform provided for participants to be exposed to essential digital skills that would help them thrive and give them a competitive edge in the business world.

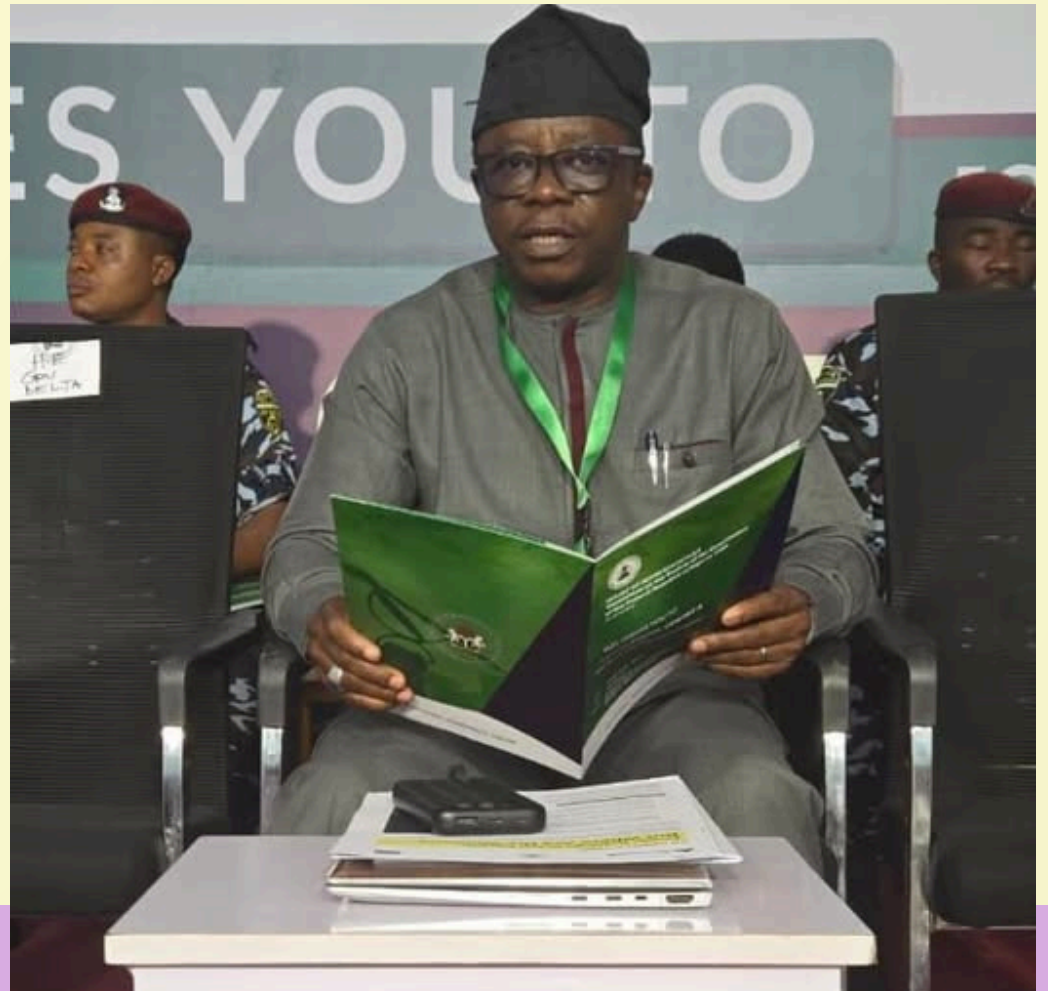


### PHOTO CAPTION

**L-R: The Functioning Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Science and Technology, Mr. Jonathan Ukpebor presenting a gift to the best Performing Participant, Mr. GoodLuck Aichienede at the NBTI's three day training on Youth digital, entrepreneurial skills program held in Benin City.**

## EDO STATE GOVERNMENT MAKES KEY PROPOSALS FOR CONSTITUTION REVIEW

*By Clementina Agweda*



### PHOTO CAPTION

**The Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, Edo State, Dr. Samson Osagie during the public hearing in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.**

The Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, Edo State, Dr. Samson Osagie, has presented the State's position on constitutional review to the House of Representatives Committee on Constitution Review.

This presentation was made during a public hearing in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, where on behalf of the State, the Attorney General advocated for crucial reforms to enhance Nigeria's governance and security framework, emphasising the need for State Police, citing the importance of additional security layers to complement Federal Agencies.

He also called for judicial independence, stressing that the judiciary should be free from external influences to ensure fair dispensation of Justice, noting that under the leadership of Governor Monday Okpebholo, the Edo State Government is committed to contributing to the constitutional review process.

Dr. Osagie further highlighted the State's proposals, which include electoral reforms, inclusive governance and fiscal federalism. These reforms, he argued, would promote transparency, accountability and equitable distribution of resources.

Notably, the Edo State Government opposed the creation of new states by carving out portions of existing states, particularly any proposal involving parts of Edo State and also underscored the importance of preserving the State's traditional boundaries and ancestral heritage.

The State's input is expected to shape the constitutional review exercise, ensuring that Nigeria's fundamental laws reflect the aspirations of its people.

# EDO STATE BEGINS SUPPORTIVE SUPERVISION OF PRIMARY HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

*By Nene Olaye*



## PHOTO CAPTION

*L-R: The representative of the State Project Implementation Unit (PIU), Dr. Efeomon Eseigbe, the representative of the National team, Dr. Iriah Akhere- Ogbesia, the Executive Secretary, EDSPHCDA, Dr. Coulson Oahimire Osoikhia, representative of the State Project Implementation Unit (PIU), Dr. Idemudia Osayomore During a Debriefing Meeting with the Executive Secretary EDSPHCDA at his office in Benin-City.*

From July 14th to 18th, 2025, Edo State conducted a Supportive Supervision of Primary Healthcare Facilities under the Immunization Plus and Malaria Progress by Accelerating Coverage and Transforming Services (IMPACT) Project. This initiative was carried out in collaboration with the State Government and the World Bank.

The goal of this exercise was to ensure that the Primary Healthcare facilities had the right equipment, job aids, color-coded bins and guidelines in place to provide quality healthcare. This was part of the ongoing effort to maintain standards in Primary Healthcare service delivery.

On Friday, the 18th of July, 2025, the National and State Supervisors visited the Executive Secretary, Edo State Primary Healthcare Development Agency (EDSPHCDA), Dr. Coulson Oahimire Osoikhia at his office in Benin City for a debrief meeting to present their findings. The team included Dr. Iriah Akhere-Ogbesia, who represented the National team, Dr. Idemudia Osayomore and Dr. Efeomon Eseigbe, who represented the State Project Implementation Unit (PIU) for the IMPACT Project.

The team reported that they visited 27 facilities across 5 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Edo namely Akoko Edo, Ikpoba-Okha, Esan South East, Orhiomnwon, and Etsako West. The supportive supervision involved mentoring and

coaching for healthcare workers. The team was made up of members from the National Primary Healthcare Development Agency (NPHCDA), the State IMPACT Project Implementation Unit and State Clinical Mentors.

One of the key findings was the availability of essential medicines and equipment at the Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF)/IMPACT facilities, which the team noted was commendable. It was also noted that the health facilities had job guidelines in place, thanks to a training session held earlier in the year for frontline healthcare workers. However, it was observed that job aids had not yet been pasted at the facilities. The team recommended that this issue be addressed.

In response, Dr. Osoikhia expressed his gratitude to the team for their hard work.

“Thank you for your efforts. We will ensure that the job aids are printed and pasted at the facilities as soon as possible.

“It is the goal of His Excellency, Governor Monday Okphebholo, that Edo State sets the standard for Primary Healthcare. His support which is demonstrated through the collaboration with the World Bank, is essential to ensuring quality healthcare for Edo people”.

# EDSG REITERATES COMMITMENT TO HOMEGROWN INITIATIVES, PLEDGES SUPPORT TO GRASSROOTS EMPOWERMENT

*Violet Osatohammwen Obamwonyi*

Edo State Government has reiterated its commitment to promoting homegrown initiatives and supporting grassroots economic empowerment through strategic partnerships.

This renewed stance was made known by the Edo State Head of Service (HOS), Dr. Anthony Okungbowa Esq. during a meeting with a delegation from the Lift Above Poverty Organization (LAPO) Microfinance Bank at his office in Government House, Benin City.

Dr. Okungbowa Esq. emphasized that Governor Monday Okpebholo remains deeply committed to grassroots-focused and locally-rooted solutions, revealing that the proposed partnership with LAPO would mark a bold step towards enhancing the State's Public Sector space and broadening the financial inclusion of Civil and Public Servants.

"Our Governor is very unique. He believes in homegrown systems, in the way he runs government, in the way he empowers people and in how he has structured the Civil and Public Service. That principle has always guided him, and this is why initiatives like LAPO which started here in Edo, deserve priority, visibility and prominence". He said.

Reaffirming the Governor's support, the HOS assured the delegation that the State would back LAPO's efforts to provide financial services to Civil and Public Servants. He also advised the LAPO team to ensure that their products and rates remain competitive.

"We will support this venture to ensure its success. Yes, there are many financial institutions, but LAPO stands out. It has a good story and I believe it will deliver in a unique way.

"This is a highly competitive space. What you put on the table, the offerings, will determine how our officers engage with you. It's not just about business, impact matters too". Dr. Okungbowa added.



## PHOTO CAPTION

1. 4th Right: The Head of Service, Edo State, Dr. Anthony Okungbowa Esq; 4th Left; the Head of Communication, Lift Above Poverty Organization, Mr. Oluremi Akande flanked by officials of LAPO during a meeting held at the Office of the Head of Service, Edo State.
2. R-L: The Head of Service, Edo State, Dr. Anthony Okungbowa Esq. and the Head of Communication, Lift Above Poverty Organization, Mr. Oluremi Akande in a hand shake during a meeting held at the Office of the Head of Service, Edo State.

The Head of Service further noted that LAPO's roots in Edo State are not only a point of pride but also a reason to trust the organization's capacity to deliver sustainable and impactful services to Civil and Public Servants, while commending the Founder's values and legacy.

"When LAPO comes on stream to offer services, we know the quality that went into building it and how well LAPO has proven itself over time.

"Undisputedly, LAPO has been a leader in microfinance industry in Nigeria. I know the Founder personally. His work ethics and integrity are the very things every worker should emulate. I have a lot of respect for him". He said.

On his part, the Head of Communication, Lift Above Poverty Organization, Mr. Oluremi Akande expressed appreciation for the warm reception and reiterated the institution's commitment to empowering Edo State employees and grassroots communities, while explaining that LAPO's renewed engagement with the State was

aimed at providing affordable financial services that would help Civil Servants meet their obligations without financial strain.

"LAPO is a household name in Edo State. We are proud of our roots here and the transformative leadership of the State Government. We recognize the Government's efforts to improve Civil and Public Servants' welfare, and we believe public-private partnerships such as this is crucial to sustaining that progress.

"This visit is to reintroduce our business through your office and make Civil and Public Servants aware of loan products that are accessible, fairly priced and tailored to improve their well-being. A happy Civil Servant means better productivity and sustainable service to the State.

"We are passionate about economic empowerment and social intervention. LAPO has awarded scholarships to over 3,000 people and provided skills training to over 1,500 beneficiaries, many of which are from Edo State". Mr. Akande noted.

# EDO GOVT EYES GREEN TRANSPORT REVOLUTION, EXPLORES PARTNERSHIP WITH OANDO FOR ELECTRIC BUS SYSTEM

*By Abdul-Kadir Abdullah*



## PHOTO CAPTION

**L-R: Gbolahan Kolawole, Data Analyst, Oando; Babatunde Obadina, Head of Operations LBSL, Oando; Harold Okonoboh, Project Manager, Oando; Kizito Okpebholo, Special Adviser to Edo State Governor on Finance Investment and Revenue Generation; Olayemi Olomo, Corporate Services, Oando; Amen Odigie, Managing Director of Edo State Investment Promotion Office (ESIPO) and Hadiza Adukonu, Vice President, Opportunity maturation & New Ventures OCEL during a strategic visit to Oando Clean Energy Limited to witness implementation of their electric bus transportation system in Lagos as a blueprint to revolutionize public transportation system in Edo State.**

Edo State Government is considering and evaluating a groundbreaking collaboration with Oando Clean Energy LTD to revolutionize its public transportation system with electric buses, marking a significant step towards a greener and more modern Edo.

This strategic engagement follows a series of discussions around Oando's potential investments in the State, including a previous visit by the Managing Director and CEO of Oando Energy Resources LTD, Dr Ainojie Alex Irune to Governor Monday Okpebholo last month.

A high-powered Edo State delegation, which included Kizito Okpebholo, Special Adviser to the Governor on Finance, Investments and Revenue Generation and Amen Odigie, Managing Director of Edo State Investment Promotion Office (ESIPO), Ease of Doing Business Secretariat recently concluded a strategic visit to Oando Clean Energy's Lagos office to witness firsthand the successful implementation of their electric bus transportation system in Lagos State.

The visit focused on exploring a possible Public-Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement to introduce similar mass transit solutions in Edo State.

Kizito Okpebholo and Amen Odigie shared their observations from the visit.

According to Kizito, "We witnessed the electric bus, their charging systems and others. We have told them that we will need to discuss with our critical stakeholders, which include the

Edo State Transport Authority (ESTA) and Edo City Transport Service (ECTS) among others, to understand how this works for us in Edo".

Amen Odigie, MD of ESIPO underscored the significance of the visit, emphasizing Edo State's proactive approach to economic growth.

Mr. Odigie noted, "That we were there for this purpose is an indication that Edo State is vigorously pursuing all partnerships that could translate into tangible results for economic growth in the State.

"The transport sector is key for us because we are a logistics hub also". He said.

The proposed project aligns with Edo State's commitment to go green in the coming years and significantly reduce carbon emissions.

Recently , the New Edo Line was revamped by Governor Okpebholo with over 100 new buses ready to take off.

Through upgrading the existing Edo City Transport Service (ECTS) to a modern electric bus system, the State aims to enhance efficiency, improve public welfare and contribute to environmental sustainability.

Discussions are ongoing with key stakeholders to finalize the framework for this potentially transformative partnership.

# EDO STATE GOVT, FG DELIVER FRESH RELIEF TO GBELEBU, MADOTI COMMUNITIES

*Edeniyere Abraham Osose*

**... REAFFIRM COMMITMENTS TO POST-CRISIS RECOVERY**



**PHOTO CAPTION**

**2nd Left: Executive Secretary, EdoSEMA, Hon. Jerry Idahosa presenting relief materials to Beneficiaries of Gbelebu and Madoti Communities at Ovia South-West Local Government Area in Edo State.**

The Edo State Government in collaboration with the Federal Government, has delivered another round of relief materials to Gbelebu and Madoti communities in Ovia South-West Local Government Area (LGA) of Edo State, as part of ongoing efforts to support victims of the communal crisis that ravaged the communities earlier this year.

According to the Executive Secretary of EdoSEMA, Hon. Jerry Idahosa, the intervention was facilitated by the Edo State Emergency Management Agency (EdoSEMA) in collaboration with the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), consequent upon the devastating conflict that led to the loss of lives, destruction of property, and displacement of residents across several communities. He stated that the distribution is part of the administration of the Edo State Governor, Sen. Monday Okpebholo's commitment to the welfare and security of citizens across the State.

Hon. Idahosa added that the initiative aligns with the State Government's development agenda as enshrined in Project SHINE, which prioritises security, grassroots development, and citizens' welfare, in accordance with the President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda. He restated how the Governor responded swiftly to the crisis by visiting the affected communities, engaging in peace dialogues, deploying security operatives, and delivering another cache of relief aimed at supporting the well-being of residents in the communities.

The Chairman of Ovia South-West LGA, Hon. Osadolor Edozor,

commended the Governor's prompt response and practical approach to governance. He described the interventions as unprecedented in the history of the LGA, where a sitting governor not only visited victims but also fulfilled his promises promptly.

The Bale of Madoti, Chief Bazuaye, appreciated the Governor, the Deputy Governor, EdoSEMA, NEMA, Political and Traditional stakeholders, who contributed to the Community's recovery. He stated that the Governor had fulfilled all commitments made during his visit, including the provision of ₦20 million as financial aid, a security post, and now a second phase of relief materials. According to him, these efforts reverted the displacements and further sufferings of the Community members.



*continue on pg 19*

# NEW ONCOLOGY CENTRE OPENS AT UBTH, BENIN CITY

*Adesuwa Edokpayi*



**PHOTO CAPTION**

*Facility at the new Oncology Center at the University of Benin Teaching Hospital in Benin City.*

The Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare has commissioned a new Oncology Centre at the University of Benin Teaching Hospital (UBTH), marking a major step in the Federal Government's efforts to strengthen cancer care in the country.

The commissioning, which took place this Thursday, was led by the Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Prof. Muhammad Ali Pate. He was joined by the Minister of Finance, Chief Wale Edun, Minister of Information, Mohammed Idris and the Executive Governor of Edo State, Sen. Monday Okpebholo who was represented by the Deputy Governor, Hon. Dennis Idahosa.

Other dignitaries present at the event included the Chief of Staff to the Edo State Governor, Chief Gani Audu, Edo State Commissioner for Health, Dr. Cyril Adams Oshiomhole, traditional leaders, and other senior officials from the Health Sector.

Professor Ali Pate described the UBTH Centre as part of the first phase in a national network of 10 oncology and diagnostic units. The Centres aim to serve about two thousand (2,000) cancer patients and handle around three hundred and fifty thousand (350,000) diagnostic cases each year.

Minister of Finance, Chief Wale Edun, expressed confidence in President Bola Ahmed Tinubu led administration's vision, saying it is now the responsibility of all stakeholders to sustain progress on health infrastructure.

The Executive Governor of Edo State, Sen. Monday Okpebholo noted that the Centre is not just for Edo residents, but for the entire South-South region, expressing appreciation to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu for his leadership. He also assured that Edo State remains committed to supporting health development now and in future years.

On his part, the Chief Medical Director of UBTH, Professor Darlington Obaseki, highlighted the rising cases of cancer and the impact it has had on the hospital's mortality rate. He explained that the new Centre was built to provide full cancer treatment services with modern equipment, praising the partnerships that made the project possible.

The UBTH Oncology Centre is one of three newly commissioned facilities in Nigeria. Others are located in Enugu and Katsina. Together, they are expected to serve thousands of cancer patients and support the training of hundreds of Health Workers across the country.

# EDO STATE GOVT GRADUATES 60 PERSONNEL, PLEDGES MORE TO BOOST SECURITY

*Elizabeth Kadir*



**PHOTO CAPTION**

*A cross section of the newly trained security personnel of the Edo State Security Corps*

As part of the Edo State Government's commitment to providing security of lives and property in the State, the Edo State Security Corps has concluded the training of 60 security personnel, who are to pilot the Security Administrative Departments at the Headquarters in Benin City.

The State Deputy Corps Commandant, CSP Richard Balogun (rtd.) while briefing the 60 security personnel, disclosed the Organisation's readiness to strengthen security in the State by recruiting and training more able men and women to help curb crimes and other social vices in order to foster peace, security, investments and economic growth.

CSP Balogun (rtd.) stated that the Governor Monday Okpebholo-led administration is committed to ensuring security for residents in the State, admonishing the recruits to collaborate with other security agencies in fighting crimes, while adding that effective crime fighting could be achieved through team work, tactics, intelligence and bravery.

The State Deputy Corps Commandant reminded the recruits on the code of conduct which included punctuality, selfless service, discipline, respect for constituted authorities and seniors, as well as the avoidance of gossips, absenteeism, amongst others.

## EDO STATE GOVT, FG DELIVER FRESH RELIEF TO GBELEBU, ...CONT'D

A resident in Gbelebu, Mr. Jos Degbelaemi described the interventions as reassuring and timely. He praised the Governor's sincerity and dedication to the people's welfare, pledging continued support from the Community for the current administration. Beneficiaries received the relief packages with joy, noting that the support would help restore hope, rebuild trust in Government, and aid the gradual recovery of their livelihoods.

The items distributed included 25kg bags of rice, 25kg bags of garri, salt, tomato paste, and other essential food supplies, aimed at alleviating the hardship faced by families still recovering from the crisis.

The Edo State Government also restated its commitment to enhancing security in the affected areas, saying plans are underway to strengthen collaboration with the Military and other security agencies to prevent future incidents and maintain lasting peace. The continued interventions underscore the State Government's focus on inclusive governance, peace-building, and long-term recovery of crisis-affected communities in the State.



# EDO GOVT INTENSIFIES EFFORTS TO REVIVE BENIN ENTERPRISE PARK WITH STRATEGIC VISIT TO LAGOS FREE ZONE

*Abdul-Kadir Abdullah*



## PHOTO CAPTION

*L-R: the Managing Director, Edo State Investment Promotion Office (ESIPO), Mr. Amen Odigie; The Special Adviser to Edo State Governor on Finance, Investment and Revenue Generation, Kizito Okpebholo; the Manager of Business Development at Lagos Free Zone, Richard Oghenovo and the Manager, Customer Service Tega Oscar -Ede, during a strategic visit recently to the Lagos Free Trade Zone as a blueprint to accelerate the revival of the Benin Enterprise Park in Edo State*

As part of ongoing efforts to reposition Edo State as a leading investment destination and enhance ease of doing business, a delegation from the Edo State Government has undertaken a strategic visit to the Lagos Free Zone as blueprints to accelerate the revival of the Benin Enterprise Park project in the State.

The delegation which included Kizito Okpebholo, Special Adviser to the Governor on Finance, Investment and Revenue Generation and Amen Odigie, Managing Director of the Edo State Investment Promotion Office (ESIPO), Ease of Doing Business Secretariat also visited Lekki Deep Sea Port recently.

At the Lagos Free Zone, they were received by Daniel Odibe, Deputy CEO of Lekki Port Free Trade Zone and Richard Oghenovo, Manager of Business Development who led them round the facilities.

The visit aligns with the Edo State Government's renewed commitment to the revival of the Benin Enterprise Park, a landmark project designed to transform Edo State into a regional trade and logistics hub. It is aimed to be a free trade zone and a hub for manufacturing and service sector companies.

According to Mr Kizito Okpebholo, "The revival of the Benin Enterprise Park is a key priority under the administration of Governor Monday Okpebholo, and this visit reinforces our commitment to delivering bankable, investor-ready infrastructure that will transform Edo's economic landscape."

In his comment, the Managing Director of ESIPO, Mr Amen Odigie noted, "This engagement with the Lagos Free Zone stakeholders is strategic. It offers an opportunity to learn from the success of a major infrastructure project in Nigeria and to build relationships that will support the development of the Benin Enterprise Park in Edo State under a robust public-private partnership model".

The Edo State Government, through ESIPO and other relevant agencies, is currently making efforts towards working with technical consultants, federal regulatory authorities and potential investors to accelerate the revival of the Benin Enterprise Park project. Once operational, the project is expected to unlock new trade corridors, attract significant foreign direct investment and contribute to the long-term diversification and industrialization of the State's economy.

# EDO COMMITTED TO EXPANDING ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGICAL TOOLS ACROSS THE STATE – SEN. MONDAY OKPEBHOLO

*Efese Jim*



## PHOTO CAPTION

*The Functioning Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Science and technology, Engr. Jonathan Ukpebor delivering the opening address during the Edo Cyber security Summit 2025, held at the John Odigie Oyegun Staff Training Academy in Benin City.*

Edo state Government has reaffirmed its commitment to expanding access to technological tools, training and opportunities across the three senatorial districts in the State.

Giving this affirmation during the Edo Cyber security Summit 2025 at the John Odigie Oyegun Staff Training Academy in Benin City, Governor Monday Okpebholo who was represented by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Science and Technology, Engr. Jonathan Ukpebor explained that, through tech hubs coding clubs and Technological and digital education programs, the present administration aims to ensure that every young person, no matter the background has a fair chance to succeed in the digital space.

Speaking on "online security", the chief speaker, Prof. Kingsley Obahiangbon described the present era as one which relies basically on digital skills, breaking barriers of distance and inequality, adding that the power that digitalization brings, comes with disadvantages as well.

He Explained that children were being groomed in gaming chats, families had lost life savings to phishing scams, activists were being silenced by doxxing, and AI deepfakes had eroded trust in reality, adding that Online safety is not

just about passwords, but about preserving human dignity in the digital age.

"In today's digital age, online safety is crucial for protecting ourselves, our data, and our online presence". He noted.

Prof. Obahiangbon further defined online safety as practices, precautions and measures taken to protect oneself, personal data and online presence from potential risks, threats and harm, while using the internet and digital technologies.

High Point of the event was the award of grants worth twenty-five thousand dollars to beneficiaries for the pursuance of their cyber security careers.



## PHOTO CAPTION

*A Cross section of participants at the Edo Cyber security Summit 2025, held at the John Odigie Oyegun Staff Training Academy in Benin City.*

# EDO STATE GOVT REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

*By Wisdom Agbonta*



## PHOTO CAPTION

5th left: Coordinator of the Office of the First Lady, Edo State, Mrs Edesili Okpebbholo Anani  
4th Left: The Director General of Edo State Diaspora Agency, Dr. (Mrs) Loretta Oduware Ogboro-Okor  
3rd Left: Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, Mrs Joy Ihensekhien  
6th Right: Director General, Edo State Migration Agency, Hon. Lucky Agazuma, with other relevant stakeholders during the roadwalk in Benin City.

In commemoration of the year 2025 World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, the Edo State Government has organized a road walk around major streets in Benin City, to educate the public about the dangers associated with human trafficking and the importance of collective action in preventing human exploitations.

The event themed, "Human Trafficking is Organized Crime - End the Exploitation," brought together Edo State Government's officials and other relevant stakeholders. In her speech, the Coordinator, Office of the Edo State First Lady, Mrs. Edesili Anani stated that the administration of Governor Monday Okpebholo is committed to combating human trafficking in all its forms.

She assured that the administration is working tirelessly to provide employment opportunities for youths and create an enabling environment for everyone to thrive.

Mrs. Anani added that the State Government is resolute in its stance against human trafficking, and that anyone found guilty will face the full weight of the law.

The Commissioner of Women Affairs and Social Development, Chief Bisi Idaomi Esq., represented by the Permanent Secretary, Mrs. Joy Ihensekhien, expressed

concerns about the risks and negative outcomes associated with seeking opportunities abroad, particularly for young people who travel illegally.

She emphasized the importance of staying in the State and pursuing local opportunities, highlighting the potentials for personal growth, economic empowerment, and social development in the State.

Chief Idaomi stated that the Ministry aims to create a safe and supportive environment that promote the well-being of residents, particularly women and children who are often disproportionately affected by human trafficking.

The Director General of the Edo State Diaspora Agency, Dr. (Mrs.) Loretta Oduware Ogboro-Okor, appreciated the State Governor for championing a collaborative approach in tackling pressing issues, particularly human trafficking. She emphasized the importance for individuals to be cautious of false promises of opportunities abroad, saying the risks of exploitation that often accompany such ventures are of grave consequences.

# EDO STATE GOVT, FG DELIVER RELIEF TO RAINSTORM VICTIMS IN OWAN EAST LGA

*Edeniyere Abraham Osose*



## PHOTO CAPTION

*Left: Executive Secretary, EdoSEMA, Hon. Jerry Idahosa presenting relief materials to one of the beneficiaries of the disaster-affected communities at Otuor, Ake and Afuze communities in Owan East Local Government Area (LGA) of the State*

In a concerted effort to support disaster-affected communities, Edo State Government in collaboration with the Federal Government, has delivered food items to victims of a devastating rainstorm in Otuor, Ake and Afuze communities in Owan East Local Government Area (LGA) of the State.

The incident, which occurred in March, 2025, rendered hundreds of households homeless as violent winds tore through the communities, destroying residential buildings and displacing families. The intervention is part of a coordinated response led by the Edo State Emergency Management Agency (EdoSEMA) in collaboration with the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA).

Speaking during the official handover ceremony of the relief items at Afuze, the Headquarters of the LGA, the EdoSEMA's Executive Secretary, Hon. Jerry Idahosa, stated that the initiative aligns with the vision of the State Governor, Sen. Monday Okpebholo of prioritising the welfare of Edo people, and in line with President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda.

He disclosed that the items distributed included bags of rice, beans, maize, tomato paste, salt, and other essential food materials, aimed at cushioning the hardship brought about by the rainstorm.

Hon. Idahosa said that the distribution marked the first phase of the intervention with preparations underway for a second phase

to provide further support to the victims. He emphasised that the process was transparent, with the items officially handed over to the Council Chairman, Hon. Mallam Aruna Mohammed, in company of the designated recipients to ensure fairness and accountability.

Hon. Mohammed while receiving the items, lauded the initiative and pledged to ensure that the materials reached the intended beneficiaries. He appreciated the Edo State and the Federal governments for their interventions, assuring that no affected person would be left out.

One of the beneficiaries, Pastor Aikhamokhai Sheidu, expressed gratitude to God and to the authorities, describing the day as a turning point for many who had endured months of hardship. He commended the integrity of the distribution process, noting that the materials were not diverted, an action that brought renewed hope and joy to the affected communities.

Meanwhile, several victims have appealed for further assistance, particularly as they seek to offset debts incurred during the aftermath of the disaster. Many explained that they had been forced to borrow money to purchase roofing materials in order to rebuild their homes and restore some normalcy.

The intervention underscores the ongoing commitment of the Edo State and the Federal Governments to strengthen community resilience and safeguard the welfare of citizens affected by natural disasters.

# AKOKO-EDO COUNCIL CHAIRMAN REITERATES CULTURAL COHESION AT OKPE NEW YAM FESTIVAL

*By Okolo Jonathan Okhavhe*



## PHOTO CAPTION

*R-L: Rt. Hon Alabi Bliss Oshionogue in a hand shake with Oba John Afolabi, the Onose of Ekpedo during the 25th Annual Ekpedo Cultural Day Celebration held at Akoko-Edo Local Government Area.*

As part of his administration's resolve to promote cultural unity and socio-economic development, the Chairman, Akoko-Edo Local Government Area, Rt. Hon. Alabi Bliss Oshionogue has attended the 2025 Okpe New Yam Festival, which was organized by His Royal Highness, Oba Okhishimede Eshimokhai Idogu III, J.P OON, (Gbugbulu, Gbugbulu), the Olokpe of Okpe kingdom.

Speaking at the ceremony, Rt. Hon. Oshionogue disclosed that it was imperative for him to honour the invite as a demonstration of practical governance of Edo State Governor, Distinguished Sen. Monday Okpebholo as contained in his SHINE Agenda for the promotion of cultural heritage.

"The cultural heritage of a people can be an elixir for economic development if well harnessed. This is a critical component of the Governor's SHINE Agenda that is people centric". He stated.

In same vein, the Council Boss attended the 25th Annual Ekpedo Cultural Day Celebration, put together by the Community leaders, sons and daughters in the diaspora under the leadership of Oba John Afolabi Obabori, the Onose of Ekpedo. At the Ceremony, the Council Chairman informed the large audience about the State Governor's

passion in the promotion of cultural heritage. He disclosed that the Local Council under his watch is ready to partner with communities to foster peace, growth and prosperity.

Delivering his address, Dr. Fabunmi Francis Adesoji harped on love to promote the identity of ancestors and to chart a brighter future for generations to come. He explained that the anniversary was a cumulation of 25 years of tireless collective efforts, visionary leadership and community spirit. He appreciated the Oba, Chiefs, Elders and stakeholders for being unwavering custodians of peace and unity in the Community.

Present at the events were the Head of Local Government Administration, Dr. Igbinigie Osaheni, the Special Adviser to the Local Council on Political Matters, Hon. Stephen Ehihi, the Leader of Akoko-Edo Legislative Arm, Rt. Hon. Nicholas Akosile Imashimi, the Executive Chairman of the Edo State Board of Internal Revenue Service, Hon. Bankole Balogun, the Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Hon. Barr. Bisi Idaomi, Representative of People Living with Disabilities, Chief Ayo Olowojoba, some former members of the Edo State House of Assembly including Rt. Hon. Anselm Agbabi and Rt. Hon. Dele Oloruntoba Simeon, among others.

# EDO: SPECIAL SECURITY SQUAD LAUNCHES MANHUNT FOR CULT LEADERS, KIDNAPPING SYNDICATES

**...OVER 20 SUSPECTS ARRESTED IN FIRST MAJOR OPERATION IN BENIN**

The Special Security Squad, Operation Flush Out Kidnappers and Cultists, set up by Governor Monday Okpebholo to keep Edo State safe, has arrested over 20 persons in its first operation in Benin City, the State Capital.

Places raided include Isiohor, Iguosa, Oluku, Ibiwe/Lagos Street, and other notorious hideouts for criminals. Many suspects were arrested with drugs, dangerous weapons, and other incriminating materials.

Speaking after the operation, a member of Edo State Special Security Squad Against Cultism and Kidnapping, John Adewale Esekhaigbe, commended the move made by the governor of Edo State, Senator Monday Okpebholo for establishing the squad which he said will go a long way in reducing the criminal elements perpetuating evils in the State.

He noted that the squad will continue to clean up the State and make it safe for all.

According to him, "Thanks to the Governor of Edo State for his initiative in setting up the Squad, because he is a man committed to peace and against conflicts.

"Following the recent killing in Edo State, the Governor took it upon himself to announce to the State, nation and the World that the killing in Edo State must stop, thereby constituting the Special Squad.

"The Squad commenced operation on Tuesday and made several arrests and you can see for yourself as we combed the length and breath of the city of Benin to ensure it is safe for our people.

"We made several arrests. We found drugs, weapons and other implicating materials. This has come to stay and we will ensure that Edo State is safe for our people and investors who have come to invest in the State.

"The raid was not only about cultism as we are also looking for drug peddlers, kidnappers, as these crimes are inter-related. We are doing this to ensure that Benin City is safe for all of us. To achieve this, we have to clean the street of all social vices." He also noted that Governor Monday Okpebholo gave the marching order to ensure that armed robbery, kidnapping, cultism and other social vices that are bringing disrepute to the State become a thing of the past.

Another member of the Committee, Eribo Emwanta, said the raid and sealing up of a hotel at Isiohor is not witch hunting, but a move to keep the State and its citizens safe.



"The hotel that was sealed at Isiohor was not to witch hunt anybody but a move to invite the owner to explain his own part as the hotel appears to be a place for hideout for suspected drugs peddlers, cultists, and other criminals."

Amielemen Idemudia Noah, also said the exercise witnessed has shown that the Governor is ready to keep the State clean, as he is pained over the killings which are denting the image of the State.

"We thank the Governor for giving us the opportunity to work with him to clean the State of all forms of criminality, and ensure a peaceful, united State where all will live and do business without fear."

The Edo State Special Security Squad Against Cultism and Kidnapping, is made up of the Military, Police, Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corp (NSCDC), and other sister security agencies.

Hunters, vigilante groups, and repentant cultists, among other critical stakeholders in Edo State, are also members of the Squad.

Signed:

Fred Itua,

The Chief Press Secretary to Governor Monday Okpebholo of Edo State.

# EDURESCUE TAKES CHILDREN OFF STREETS, KITS THEM FOR SCHOOL

By Etinosa Odigie



## PHOTO CAPTION

*The Commissioner for Education, Dr. Paddy Iyamu with pupils of Ologbosere Primary School at Upper Sakponba, Benin City*

In a heartwarming move that highlights Governor Okpebholo's dedication to child education, the Commissioner for Education, Dr. Paddy Iyamu, led a team from the Ministry and Project EduRescue to Ologbosere Primary School in Upper Sakponba, where they provided support to dozens of children who had been found wandering the streets during school hours.

This initiative is part of the pilot phase of the Ministry's flagship EduRescue Project, aimed at identifying, rehabilitating and reintegrating out-of-school children back into classrooms, ensuring that every child in Edo State has the opportunity to learn.

At the event, the children received school bags, exercise books and pairs of socks, all generously provided by Dr. Iyamu as a personal gesture of encouragement.

During the outreach, Dr. Iyamu reaffirmed the Government's strong commitment to addressing the issues of street hawking and truancy among school-age children.

"Our vision is simple yet profound. Every Edo child must be in school, equipped and empowered to learn. Today is just one step of many and we will not rest until every child is rescued from the streets and given the dignity of education". He said.

Dr. Iyamu also praised the EduRescue team for their hard work during the pilot phase and encouraged parents, guardians and community members to keep working with the Government to identify and support vulnerable children.

Teachers and parents expressed their gratitude to Dr. Iyamu for his proactive leadership and for personally providing the learning kits that brought joy to the children.

Residents of Upper Sakponba praised the Ministry's intervention, calling it timely and impactful.

As the pilot phase moves forward, the Ministry of Education is once again urging parents, guardians and community leaders to make child education a top priority. They're also asking everyone to report any cases of children who are out of school, so the EduRescue team can reach them quickly.

The EduRescue project stands as a shining light of hope, working to connect policy with the real lives it aims to change, one child at a time.

# EDO CYBERSECURITY SUMMIT 2025: EDO STATE GOVERNMENT COMMITTED TO A DIGITALLY SECURE AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

*Wisdom Agbonta*



## PHOTO CAPTION

*Middle: The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, Mrs. Joy Ihensekhien, with panelists and other dignitaries during the Edo Cybersecurity Summit 2025, at the John Odigie Oyegun Public Service Academy in Benin City.*

The Edo State Government under the leadership of Senator Monday Okpebholo is committed to building a digitally secure and inclusive society where technology uplifts and not endangers.

The Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Chief Bisi Idaomi Esq. made this assertion during the Edo Cybersecurity Summit 2025, with the theme "Online safety: Our collective responsibility", held at the John Odigie Oyegun Public Service Academy in Benin City.

The Commissioner who was represented by the Permanent Secretary, Mrs. Joy Ihensekhien, emphasized the need to work together in building a digital environment where safety, opportunity, and innovation can thrive for all, especially the most vulnerable.

Chief Idaomi stated that Digital transformation brings opportunities, but also threats like cyberbullying, financial scams, online harassment and data exploitation. She went further to state that young women and girls are particularly vulnerable to gender-specific online risks.

"I am proud to contribute to a conversation that seeks to address these gaps and chart actionable pathways for inclusive digital protection, the promotion of gender-sensitive online safety policies, and the empowerment of women in technology and cybersecurity". She said.

Chief Idaomi further emphasized the mandate of the Ministry and the proactive stance it has taken in addressing the complexities of the digital the age.

"The Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development plays a pivotal role in advancing the safety, empowerment and well-being of women, children and families in Edo State. Our work goes beyond physical spaces. It now extends to the digital world, where we must ensure that safety, dignity and opportunity are not compromised". She continued.

Highlight of the event was the engaging panel session on digital literacy and youth cyber education, which brought together exceptional experts who shared their expertise and experiences, providing participants with valuable insights and practical knowledge on navigating the online world safely and effectively.

During his remark, the Managing Director of Edo Broadcasting Service (EBS), Mr. Sulaiman Aledoh noted that by embracing the digital space and acknowledging the knowledge and expertise of younger users, we can better educate ourselves and them about online safety.

Mr. Aledoh further stated that, Governments and organizations must prioritize cyber security, leveraging the insights of all generations to protect against evolving threats.

The Chief innovation Officer of Genius Hub, Mrs. Isimeme Whyte stated the need for every individual to strive to be digitally literate, equipped with the knowledge and skills to navigate the online world with confidence and precision.

Also present at the event were the Teen Management Coach, Mr. Tejiri Chunu and the Executive Director at African Center For Enterprise and Capacity Development, Mr. Osayi Tres Omokaro amongst other dignitaries.

# EDO GOVT EMPOWERS OVER 200 FINANCIAL OFFICERS WITH SPECIALIZED TRAINING

*By Osamwonyi Osagiede*

Edo State Government has reiterated its commitment to promoting homegrown initiatives and supporting grassroots economic empowerment through strategic partnerships.

This renewed stance was made known by the Edo State Head of Service (HOS), Dr. Anthony Okungbowa Esq. during a meeting with a delegation from the Lift Above Poverty Organization (LAPO) Microfinance Bank at his office in Government House, Benin City.

Dr. Okungbowa Esq. emphasized that Governor Monday Okpebholo remains deeply committed to grassroots-focused and locally-rooted solutions, revealing that the proposed partnership with LAPO would mark a bold step towards enhancing the State's Public Sector space and broadening the financial inclusion of Civil and Public Servants.

"Our Governor is very unique. He believes in homegrown systems, in the way he runs government, in the way he empowers people and in how he has structured the Civil and Public Service. That principle has always guided him, and this is why initiatives like LAPO which started here in Edo, deserve priority, visibility and prominence". He said.

Reaffirming the Governor's support, the HOS assured the delegation that the State would back LAPO's efforts to provide financial services to Civil and Public Servants. He also advised the LAPO team to ensure that their products and rates remain competitive.

"We will support this venture to ensure its success. Yes, there are many financial institutions, but LAPO stands out. It has a good story and I believe it will deliver in a unique way.

"This is a highly competitive space. What you put on the table, the offerings, will determine how our officers engage with you. It's not just about business, impact matters too". Dr. Okungbowa added.



## PHOTO CAPTION

*L-R (Front Row): Deputy Accountant General and Representative of the Accountant General of Edo State, Mr. Eddy Idehen; the Director General, John Odigie Oyegun Public Service Academy, Mrs. Gina Otamere; Director of Communications, JOOPSA, Hon. Osamwonyi Osagiede.*

*Back Row: Participants at the three day training on Appropriation and Final Accounts Preparation.*

The Head of Service further noted that LAPO's roots in Edo State are not only a point of pride but also a reason to trust the organization's capacity to deliver sustainable and impactful services to Civil and Public Servants, while commending the Founder's values and legacy.

"When LAPO comes on stream to offer services, we know the quality that went into building it and how well LAPO has proven itself over time.

"Undisputedly, LAPO has been a leader in microfinance industry in Nigeria. I know the Founder personally. His work ethics and integrity are the very things every worker should emulate. I have a lot of respect for him". He said.

On his part, the Head of Communication, Lift Above Poverty Organization, Mr. Oluremi Akande expressed appreciation for the warm reception and reiterated the institution's commitment to empowering Edo State employees and grassroots communities, while explaining that LAPO's renewed engagement with the State was

aimed at providing affordable financial services that would help Civil Servants meet their obligations without financial strain.

"LAPO is a household name in Edo State. We are proud of our roots here and the transformative leadership of the State Government. We recognize the Government's efforts to improve Civil and Public Servants' welfare, and we believe public-private partnerships such as this is crucial to sustaining that progress.

"This visit is to reintroduce our business through your office and make Civil and Public Servants aware of loan products that are accessible, fairly priced and tailored to improve their well-being. A happy Civil Servant means better productivity and sustainable service to the State.

"We are passionate about economic empowerment and social intervention. LAPO has awarded scholarships to over 3,000 people and provided skills training to over 1,500 beneficiaries, many of which are from Edo State". Mr. Akande noted.



## 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.

#Anewedoisrising  
#stopdiphtheria  
#Denguefever

**PICTURES FROM THE GOVERNOR'S DESK**



### PRACTICAL GOVERNANCE IN VISUALS



Edo State  
Government



**SEN. MONDAY  
OKPEBHOLO**  
The Executive Governor of Edo State.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY to A Quitesential Leader

I join numerous well-wishers in celebrating a visionary leader and dedicated public servant, Engr. David Umahi, as he marks his birthday. His commitment to advancing critical infrastructure projects across our nation is truly commendable and inspiring. I wish you a joyous celebration and continued strength in your service to the country.



" 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-



"This victory is a clarion call on everybody to rally behind our Governor and work collaboratively to drive progress



" The approval of 1 billion naria annual bursary for Edo students in tertiary institutions aligns with my administration's broader vision to enhance access to quality education, encourage academic excellence, and support the aspirations of Edo youths to contribute meaningfully to the development of the State and the nation"

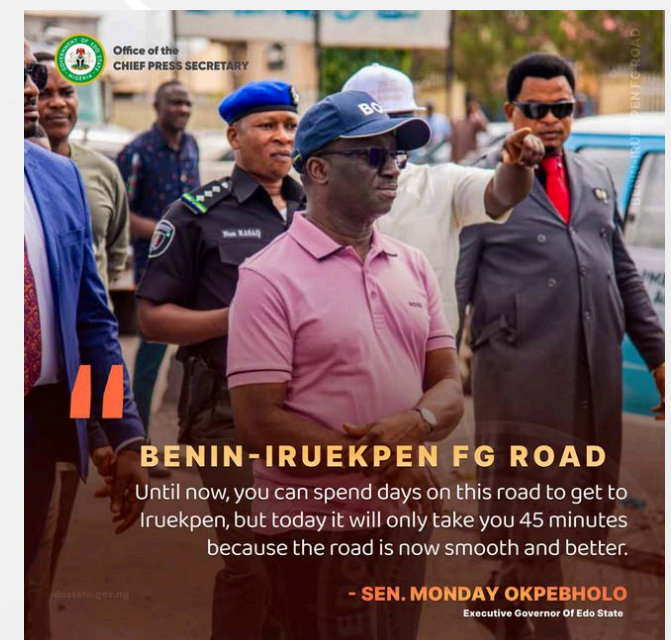


" I argue all Edo residents to join me in embracing Neuro diversity and promote a society that values diversity and



#### GOVERNOR OKPEBHOLO COMMISSIONS KEY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS IN SOKOTO STATE

On Wednesday, 2nd July, 2025, Senator Monday Okpebholo, the Executive Governor of Edo State, commissioned key infrastructure projects in Sokoto State, Seat of the Caliphate. Some of the projects commissioned by Governor Okpebholo were Tamaje Water Scheme and the Mabera Township Roads. The projects' commissioning were part of activities marking the second year anniversary of the administration of His Excellency, Governor Ahmed Aliyu of Sokoto State.



#### BENIN-IRUEKPEN FG ROAD

Until now, you can spend days on this road to get to Iruekpen, but today it will only take you 45 minutes because the road is now smooth and better.

- SEN. MONDAY OKPEBHOLO  
Executive Governor Of Edo State



# WE WISH TO HEAR FROM YOU

Via Our  
Contacts  
Below

