



KOGI STATE GOVERNMENT NIGERIA

We Welcome Mr President to the Confluence of Opportunities

The Chief Servant of Kogi State, His Excellency Alh Ahmed Usman Ododo and the entire people of Kogi State welcome His Excellency Sen. Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, President and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as he arrives in Kogi State on Monday, 27th January, 2025 to commission many life-touching projects of the Chief Servant of Kogi State.

Mr President sir, Kogi State is your home and we welcome you with open arms as you join in celebrating one year of impact of your son, His Excellency Alh Ahmed Usman Ododo as the Chief Servant of the Confluence State.

Ekabo sir.....Nyansse sir....Olale sir



Welcome



His Excellency
Alh. Ahmed Usman Ododo
The Chief Servant of Kogi State



HIS EXCELLENCY
BOLA AHMED TINUBU GCFR
PRESIDENT, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

ANNOUNCEMENT

Kingsley Femi Fanwo
Kogi State Commissioner for Information
and Communications

Kogi Strides

I am Serving
with
Integrity,
putting the
people
first
- GOV ODODO



KOGI STRIDES
is the official Magazine of Kogi State
Government, Published by the Ministry
of Information and Communications.



JANUARY | EDITION

GOODWILL MESSAGE

GIVEN BY THE HEAD OF CIVIL SERVICE OF KOGI STATE DR. ELIJAH A. EVINEMI TO HIS EXCELLENCY, GOVERNOR USMAN ODODO AND HIS DEPUTY, HIS EXCELLENCY COMRADE JOEL OYIBO ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR 1 (ONE) YEAR IN OFFICE.



PROTOCOLS.

Your Excellency Sir, Kogi New Agenda Government led by your humble self has toiled day and night to bring the state to her present glowing stage. Since your assumption in Office on January 27th, 2024, your Excellency has prioritized the affairs of Civil Servants.

We note with pride the Civil Service reforms embarked upon by your administration which repositioned the Civil Service for effective service delivery and brought on board policies that significantly improved the welfare of Kogi workers.

Chief among these welfare enhancing policies include:

- a. Prompt payment of salaries to Civil Servants and pensioners.
- b. Implementation of N72,500 (Seventy-Two Thousand Five Hundred Naira) only, as minimum wage to Kogi workers.
- c. Release of promotion letters of 2018 to 2022 to Staff.
- d. Implementation of the new Pension Harmonization and Health Insurance Scheme for Pensioners.
- e. Appointment of 12 (Twelve) new Permanent Secretaries to fill in the available vacancies.
- f. Provision of 37 (Thirty-Seven) Official vehicles for

judges

- g. The Installation of CCTV Cameras at the State Secretariat Complex premises to ensure security of the place.
- h. Completion of perimeter fencing at the State Secretariat Complex.
- i. Approval for Training of Permanent Secretaries and some Senior Staff.

We equally seize this opportunity to congratulate the Deputy Governor, His Excellency, Comrade Joel Oyibo, Cabinet Members and the entire Political Appointees who contributed to this success story.

Once again, to our workers friendly Governor, on behalf of Kogi Civil Servant, I say Congratulations!

Long live Your Excellency,

Long live Kogi State

Long live the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Signed:

**Elijah Adeiza Evinemi Ph.D., FCTI, FCA.
Head of Service,
Kogi State.**



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Editorial Note

Celebrating One Year of Transformative Leadership



Hon. Kingsley Fanwo
Commissioner for Information and Communications

As we commemorate the first anniversary of Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo's administration, it is important to reflect on the incredible journey and significant progress made under his visionary leadership. This past year has truly showcased the power of dedication, innovation, and an unwavering commitment to the advancement of Kogi State.

Governor Ododo's tenure has been marked by a series of transformative initiatives that have positively impacted every aspect of life in our state. From improving infrastructure to enhancing healthcare, advancing education, and fostering economic growth, the impact of his administration's policies has been profound and widespread.

One of the most remarkable achievements has been the comprehensive overhaul of our infrastructure. Previously impassable roads have been reconstructed, new structures have been erected, and urban renewal projects have revitalized our cities and towns. These developments have not only enhanced connectivity but have also stimulated economic activity, creating jobs and improving the quality of life for our residents.

In the healthcare sector, Governor Ododo's administration has made significant investments in upgrading medical facilities and expanding access to quality healthcare services. The establishment of new hospitals and the renovation of existing ones have ensured that more individuals can receive timely and adequate care. This commitment to health and well-being is a fundamental aspect of the administration's vision for a healthier and more prosperous Kogi State.

Education has also experienced a renaissance under Governor Ododo's leadership. The implementation of innovative teaching methods, along with the provision of modern learning facilities, has rejuvenated our educational system. Scholarships and grants have been made

accessible to deserving students, guaranteeing that financial constraints do not impede the pursuit of knowledge. The emphasis on education in our state is an investment in the future, providing our youth with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in an ever-evolving world.

Under Governor Ododo's leadership, economic growth has been a key focus. By fostering strategic partnerships and supporting local industries, Governor Ododo has cultivated a business-friendly environment that has led to the flourishing of small and medium-sized enterprises and an influx of foreign investments, ultimately bolstering our economy and creating opportunities for our citizens.

As we mark this significant milestone, it is crucial to recognize the collaborative efforts of the entire administration, civil servants, and the people of Kogi State. The progress we have achieved is a result of a shared vision and a united commitment to advancement.

Looking towards the future, Governor Ododo's administration remains dedicated to building upon the successes of the past year and driving continued positive change. With a focus on sustainability, inclusivity, and innovation, Kogi State is poised for unprecedented growth and development.

In conclusion, as we commemorate Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo's first year in office, let us celebrate our accomplishments, reflect on our journey, and embrace a future filled with hope and possibilities. Together, we will continue to build a prosperous, vibrant, and resilient Kogi State. Overall, Governor Ododo's first year in office has been a testament to his transformative leadership and unwavering dedication to the betterment of Kogi State. As we look ahead to the future, we are confident that under his guidance, our state will continue to thrive and prosper.

Hon Kingsley Fanwo

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I am Serving with
Integrity,
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- GOV ODODO

I am Serving with Integrity, Put the People First - GOV ODODO

Kogi Strides: Your Excellency, I extend a warm welcome to you. In the past, there was a governor in Nigeria, Dr. Muazu of Niger State, who referred to himself as the "chief servant." This title has not been adopted by any governor in recent years. I am curious to know the reasoning behind your decision to identify as a chief servant.

Gov. Ododo: Thank you for your question. It is a pertinent one that we must all consider, whether we embrace it or not. As public servants, we are entrusted with a mandate to serve our people. This title of "chief servant" carries with it a great responsibility. Today, I hold a mandate from the people of Kogi State to serve them during this critical time. They have not only chosen me to serve but have also entrusted me with the task of appointing individuals to assist in this service. Together, we are all dedicated to serving our community, as dictated by the mandates we have been given. I am honoured to have been chosen as their chief servant, and I am committed to fulfilling this role to the best of my abilities.

Kogi Strides: Today, I observed your interactions with the individuals, particularly the young children in the classroom. Your ability to connect with them and convey the message that you were once in their shoes was truly remarkable. It is evident that you have a deep understanding of your background and how it has shaped your leadership style. This leads me to ponder, how has your upbringing influenced your approach to leadership today?

Gov. Ododo: Thank you sincerely for your attention. It is said that a river that forgets its source will soon run dry. I have always carried with me a symbol of my roots, a reminder of where I come from and the

values instilled in me by my upbringing. My father is a dedicated farmer, and my mother is both a farmer and a successful businesswoman. I was born into a family of farmers and was raised by my wise grandmother, who lived over a century and imparted invaluable lessons to me.

My grandmother taught me the importance of respecting elders and valuing humanity. She showed me the significance of acknowledging those who came before me and the wisdom they possess. Growing up with 37 cousins, we learned to respect each other's space and honour our elders. This upbringing has shaped my leadership style, instilling in me a sense of respect, integrity, and humility.

I believe in being forthright and honest in all my dealings, as I was taught that wisdom is not something that can be bought but is found in the experiences of our elders. I am proud of my roots and strive to serve my community with their best interests at heart. I have been chosen by my people to represent them, and I am committed to serving them faithfully and continuously.

I am a product of my upbringing in the village, and I carry the values instilled in me by my family and community. I am dedicated to addressing the challenges faced by my people and working towards a better future for all. Thank you for entrusting me with this responsibility, and I will strive to serve you to the best of my abilities.

Kogi Strides: I vividly recall the day of your inauguration last year, on January 27th. I stood by the microphone as you delivered your speech, and upon its conclusion, I remarked, "He ascended the stage as a governor-elect, but descends as a Governor." As you descended the



steps, I asked you to reflect on the challenges that lay ahead as you assumed the mantle of leadership. What obstacles did you anticipate facing in your new role?

Gov. Ododo: Thank you very much for your attention. During my recent speech, you may recall that I encountered some challenges with missing pages and lines. I also humorously mentioned that the seat and cap I inherited from my predecessor were unexpectedly warm. As I ascended the podium as governor-elect and descended as a servant chosen to serve the people, I reflected on my journey. Having been trained within the system for eight years under my predecessor, I have gained valuable experience. I previously served as the Auditor General for local government, overseeing operations across 21 local government areas. Managing human resources can be a daunting task, but with the grace of God, the guidance of my predecessor, and the support of my team, we achieved success.

As I transitioned into my new role, I pondered how I would effectively lead and meet the needs of the people. This sense of responsibility and motivation drove me forward. During my speech, I surprised many by announcing some of my cabinet members. This decision was influenced by the transparency and collaboration I experienced with my predecessor. He shared his challenges and successes with us, allowing me to understand the complexities of governance. Throughout his eight-year tenure, I witnessed his dedication

and perseverance. This insight has prepared me for the task ahead, and I am committed to serving the people with integrity and diligence.

As I transitioned into my new role, I felt a sense of responsibility and motivation to effectively lead and meet the needs of the people. During my speech, I surprised many by announcing some of my cabinet members, a decision influenced by the transparency and collaboration I experienced with my predecessor. His dedication and perseverance over the past eight years have prepared me for the task ahead, and I am committed to serving the people with integrity and diligence.

Kogi Strides: My wife is a civil servant at the federal level, and I was surprised to hear that when the minimum wage was set at N70,000, many were pleased. However, it was even more surprising to learn that Kogi state intended to exceed this amount by offering N2,500 more. This unexpected development left us all waiting in anticipation. To our astonishment, Kogi began paying their employees before the federal government. How did you manage to achieve this feat?

Gov. Ododo: Thank you for your kind words. I am pleased to hear that your wife is a civil servant, as I too have experience in that field. I understand the challenges that civil servants face on a daily basis. Moving up the ranks in the civil service requires dedication and the grace of God. It is a highly competitive environment.

When the issue of minimum wage arose, it was always a priority for me. I made a commitment to prioritize the welfare of the people of Kogi State, as it is a state heavily reliant on the civil service. I took it upon myself to address this issue. When the President approved the minimum wage increase, I immediately convened a meeting with labour unions and political stakeholders to discuss how we could best serve the interests of our state.

Drawing on my experience as an accountant and former Auditor General for local government, I am confident in my ability to identify and address financial inefficiencies. Since taking office, I have worked diligently to eliminate wasteful spending and ensure that resources are allocated effectively.

One of the key factors that contributed to the state's financial stability was the reduction in the cost of governance. By

focusing on cutting expenses, we were able to make significant progress in improving the state's financial health. Additionally, during discussions with the revenue service, I emphasized the importance of professionalism and non-partisanship in tax and accounting matters. I empowered the team to operate autonomously and deliver results that would benefit the people of Kogi State.

Upon assuming office, I inherited a total and average derivation of 1.9 billion for Kogi State. Through strategic planning and effective management, we were able to increase revenue to three billion last month. This growth is a testament to the untapped potential of Kogi State.

In collaboration with labour unions, we successfully negotiated and implemented a fair minimum wage and consequential adjustments. This collaborative effort resulted in a win-win situation for all parties involved, demonstrating our commitment to serving the best interests of the people.

As we continue to work towards the betterment of Kogi State, I am grateful for the ongoing support and cooperation of all stakeholders. Together, we will strive to achieve even greater success in the future.

Kogi Strides: Based on your recent comments, it appears that there is no conflict between you and the labour union in terms of wrestling matches. Can you elaborate on the current relationship between the two parties?

Gov. Ododo: Based on your recent comments, you said it appears that there is no conflict between me and the labour union. Allow me to elaborate on our relationship. I will share a secret with you today: my deputy was once a union leader in the education sector, my Special Assistant on Labour Matters previously served as the Chairman of the NLC in the Kogi State Council, the Commissioner for Humanitarian Affairs has a background in labour activism, and the Senior Special Assistant on Labour Matters comes from the TUC. Drawing from my extensive experience within the system, I have observed instances where missteps were made by both parties. Many of these individuals now hold key positions within the government, having collaborated with me during my tenure as Auditor General for Local Government.

The current NLC chairman of Kogi State,

the president of the local government associations, and the Senior Special Assistant on Labour Matters, who previously served as the State Chairman of NULGE, are all familiar faces from our past collaborations. Recognizing our shared commitment to serving the people of Kogi State, we have come together to ensure that our relationship remains harmonious. We have all taken an oath to prioritize the interests of our constituents, whether they be civil servants, residents, or indigenous people of our beloved state. As the chief servant, I am dedicated to fulfilling my oath to serve our people, and it is clear that we all share common goals and objectives.

Despite any differences that may arise, we understand the importance of maintaining a positive and cooperative relationship. We have united as a cohesive family to propel Kogi State towards greatness. Our interactions have been marked by mutual respect and a shared dedication to the well-being of our people.

Kogi Strides: I will guide you through various sectoral areas. Simply mention the sector and provide details on your experience and accomplishments. Let's start with infrastructure.

Gov. Ododo: When discussing infrastructure, we must consider various aspects such as education, roads, health facilities, agriculture, and more. However, the foundation of all these is security. Without security, all other efforts are rendered useless. In terms of security, I am proud to say that we have made significant progress. I was involved in designing the security architecture of the state in the previous administration, and upon taking office, I continued to build upon that foundation. When faced with challenges such as the kidnapping of students, I remained resolute and determined to protect our state from criminals.

In the realm of healthcare, we understand the importance of a healthy population. We are currently working on upgrading over 150 primary healthcare centers to secondary level, ensuring that basic medical services are easily accessible to all residents. Our goal is to eliminate the need for individuals to travel to urban centers for routine medical care.

Education is the cornerstone of societal development, and we are committed to investing heavily in this area. Our efforts can be seen in institutions such as CUSTECH and Kogi State University Kabba, where we are



striving to provide quality education to our youth. By breaking barriers to education, we are providing our children with a pathway to a brighter future.

Let's discuss the importance of agriculture. Today, I am pleased to share that I am committed to serving my people honestly and transparently. I am open to feedback and constructive criticism, as I strive to always act in the best interest of the people of Kogi. This mandate to serve was not sought after, but rather a divine calling from the people of Kogi.

Before President Tinubu took office, our country had strayed from our roots in agriculture, which has always been a source of pride for us. However, under his leadership, there has been a renewed focus on returning to our agricultural heritage. Upon assuming office, I witnessed Kogi State ranking as the second most expensive state in terms of food items. President Tinubu's directive to prioritize agriculture has been a turning point for us.

I am committed to supporting this initiative and ensuring that the people of Kogi benefit from the opportunities that

agriculture presents. I urge my fellow citizens to embrace this call to return to our agricultural roots and work towards a more sustainable and prosperous future for our state. Together, we can revitalize our agricultural sector and secure a brighter tomorrow for all.

As a student of economics, I understand the fundamental principles of supply and demand. When supply exceeds demand, prices tend to decrease. It is with great pleasure that I can report a significant decrease in the prices of food items over the past two months. For example, the price of a bucket of tomatoes at Zango Market has dropped from one thousand naira to five hundred naira. This is a clear indication that the agricultural policies and programs implemented by the government are yielding positive results, particularly in Kogi State.

With over 9 billion invested in agriculture, we are currently focusing on dry season farming. This initiative aims to further boost agricultural productivity and ensure food security. I am personally overseeing this project as I have a deep-rooted passion for farming. It is crucial for us to continue investing in agriculture and

exploring innovative farming techniques to sustainably meet the growing demand for food.

In conclusion, I urge everyone to recognize the importance of agriculture and the significant impact it has on our economy. By working together and embracing new farming practices, we can ensure a prosperous future for our nation. Thank you.

Kogi Strides: I observed you pricing the tomatoes today, and it wasn't the pricing itself that caught my attention. Rather, it was the dynamic between you and those women that piqued my interest. This led me to contemplate the role of women and youth within your administration.

Gov. Ododo: It is important to acknowledge that my humble beginnings have shaped me into whom I am today. Coming from a background of poverty, I have always been connected to the struggles of the common man. As a farmer, I have sold tomatoes, pepper, and fried fish to support my family. Despite my current position, I remain grounded in my roots and grateful for the support of the people who have entrusted me with their votes.



I believe that public service is a collective effort, and I am merely a vessel for the will of the people. It is essential to me that I always remember where I come from and show appreciation for the opportunities that have been given to me. I understand the importance of maintaining a close relationship with the community, as they are the ones who have propelled me to where I am today.

Pricing tomatoes may seem like a simple task, but it brings me joy to connect with my past and remember the struggles my family faced. By making the process seamless and accessible to all, I hope to show my dedication to serving the people who have supported me.

I am grateful for the opportunity to interact with my community and show my appreciation for their continued support. I will always remain connected to my roots and strive to serve the people with humility and gratitude.

Kogi Strides: Since assuming your new role, what changes have you implemented?

Gov. Ododo: I will provide you with the key points of my leadership approach in Kogi State. Similar to Nigeria as a whole, Kogi State is home to at least 22 ethnic groups, each with its own language. Managing such a diverse society presents challenges. However, since assuming office, I have made it a priority to unite our people as one cohesive family.

From the beginning of my campaign, I recognized the importance of bringing our community together. I firmly believe that it was by the will of God, as expressed through the voices of our people, that I was chosen to lead. I have been guided by a strong sense of purpose to foster unity and collaboration among our citizens. Kogi State, known as the state, where two rivers meet, stands as a testament to the power of unity in the absence of conflict.

Through my efforts, I have successfully united our people under a common identity as proud citizens of Kogi State. Divisions have dissolved, and a sense of solidarity now prevails. We understand that our strength lies in our unity, and we are committed to working together for the betterment of our beloved state.

The reason I sought consultation for myself, if you are wondering, is because I believe in consulting widely, regardless of

political affiliation, ethnic background, or religious beliefs. I have engaged in consultations without limitations and continue to do so. As we approach our one-year anniversary in office, rather than celebrating, we will be convening a stakeholders meeting to address the issues facing our beloved state of Kogi. The abundance of mineral deposits in our state, bestowed upon us by God Almighty, must be utilized for our benefit, whether we agree with it or not. I extend this invitation to all, regardless of their origin, as we stand united as Kogites above all else - transcending politics, religion, and ethnicity. Since assuming office, my primary focus has been on uniting our people; bringing stakeholders, men, and women together as one cohesive family. This approach has proven successful and continues to yield positive results for us all.

Kogi Strides: I would like to discuss two projects with you: the second international market and developing the airport. Do you believe these projects are necessary?

Gov. Ododo: Thank you for your question regarding the necessity of an international market. It is long overdue, and I would like to express my appreciation to our esteemed leader and former Governor of our state, His Excellency, Alhaji Ibrahim Idris. Governor Idris's vision for an international market was commendable, but the current location poses significant risks to the safety of our citizens.

The recent tragic incident at the market highlights the urgent need for relocation. It is unacceptable that lives are being lost due to the market's proximity to a high-traffic area. The constant threat of accidents due to brake failures is a clear indication that action must be taken to protect our people.

We are not advocating for a second international market, but rather a relocation to a safer and more suitable location. The well-being and safety of our citizens must be our top priority. It is imperative that we address this issue promptly to prevent further loss of life.

I urge all stakeholders to support the relocation of the market to a more secure location. The safety and welfare of our people should always be our primary concern.

Furthermore, when considering this point, it is important to recognize that it

represents the historical face of the state capital, where Nigeria was founded. As such, it is crucial that we preserve its historical significance. Currently, on market days, vehicular movement is severely hindered throughout the day. Our goal is to establish an international market hub that will not only alleviate congestion in the current market area but also enhance the overall aesthetics of the town.

To achieve this vision, we are not simply handing over the project to private investors. Instead, we are actively involved in the development process, ensuring that the market remains accessible to our local population. By retaining a majority stake in the project (approximately 60 to 70 percent), we can ensure that the benefits are shared with our community.

By relocating the market from the main streets, we aim to restore Lokoja to its former glory as an ancient town with immense historical value. With its prime location, Lokoja has the potential to become a prominent tourist destination. For instance, the construction of a two-story building at Mount Patti could make it the tallest structure above sea level in Africa, showcasing the town's unique charm and allure.

In conclusion, we have a wealth of opportunities at our disposal. It is time to seize them and transform Lokoja into a thriving tourist destination. Let us work together to make this vision a reality.

When considering the importance of international airports, it is clear that proximity to Abuja is not enough to drive economic growth in our state. Kogi State boasts abundant mineral deposits that have yet to be fully utilized for the benefit of our people. We are eager to tap into this potential and attract investors to our region. Without a functioning airport, it is nearly impossible for investors to access Lokoja and navigate the surrounding areas. The historical significance of the first airflight in Nigeria, piloted by Lord Lugard in Zaragi, Kogi State, cannot be overlooked. It is essential that we preserve this piece of history and leverage it to attract investment and development.

During a recent visit to the site, surveyors from the Federal Ministry of Aviation were impressed by the condition of the airport and its potential for revitalization. With proper maintenance, this airport could once again serve as a hub for economic activity in the region.

By prioritizing maintenance and building upon the foundation laid by my predecessor, we are committed to implementing a 32-year development plan that will drive progress and prosperity in Kogi State. It is time to break the cycle of neglect and establish a culture of maintenance that will ensure long-term success for our state and our country.

The construction of an airport in our state is crucial for its economic, social, and political development. It will not only

solutions; I am deeply rooted in my village. The airport project is long overdue and necessary for utilizing our resources effectively for the benefit of the people of Kogi State. It is a vital component of our state's progress and prosperity.

Kogi Strides: When discussing the airport, you mentioned mineral resources. How far along are you with that, particularly when speaking to potential investors?

Gov. Ododo: Indeed, it is true. If you

betterment of our state.

Through my recent visit to Qatar, I realized that a crucial element was missing in our efforts - a comprehensive geological survey of our mineral resources. This information is essential not only for identifying occurrences, but also for estimating reserves. When an investor inquired about these reports, I was unable to provide them, prompting me to take immediate action.

I swiftly returned to Nigeria and engaged with the Director General of the Geological



provide air travel services but also contribute to the overall stability and growth of our dear state. The ongoing design process is a testament to the comprehensive nature of this project. In less than five months, when the designs are finalized, the impact will be undeniable. I do not rush into decisions or engage in unnecessary media controversies, as advised by Mr. President. My mandate is to serve the people diligently, and noise-making is not part of that mandate. The airport project is essential for creating job opportunities for our youth and women, addressing accommodation issues, and boosting our state's economic value. It will enable our state to make a significant contribution to the national GDP.

I am not someone who runs to Abuja for

observe me during any of my public appearances, you will notice that I have made it a priority to consistently address the issue of our mineral deposits. Currently, Kogi State boasts over 42 mineral deposits in significant quantities, yet they are not being utilized to benefit the state. This raises the question: what will happen if Nigeria reverts to regional government? Have we considered the implications for our state?

Upon reflection, I posed these questions to myself and my cabinet. Do we lack awareness of the mineral resources within our state? Or do we simply not understand the value of these natural gifts? Why have we not taken steps to unlock our potential? It is imperative that we confront these issues and harness the resources for the

Survey Agency to initiate work on compiling a detailed report of our mineral resources. While this endeavour is capital-intensive, the potential returns are significant. By focusing on five key minerals, we aim to unlock the vast potential of our land.

Rest assured; progress is underway. In the coming weeks, I will provide updates on our efforts to maximize the benefits of our solid mineral resources.

Kogi Strides: As I begin to wrap up the interview, I have three remaining questions that I have saved for last. I will present them one by one. The first question I have prepared is regarding the current state of affairs in which there seems to be a constant conflict between the previous

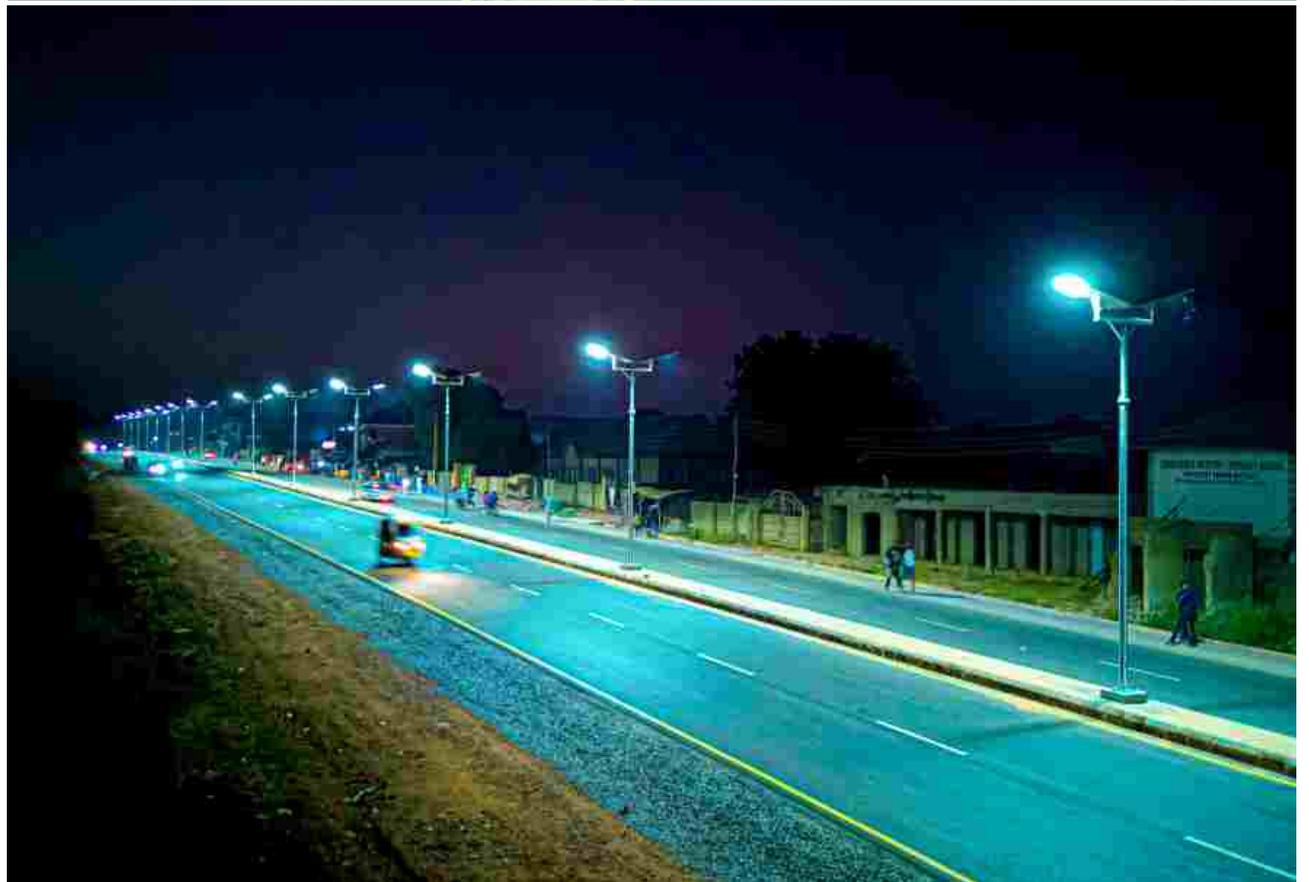
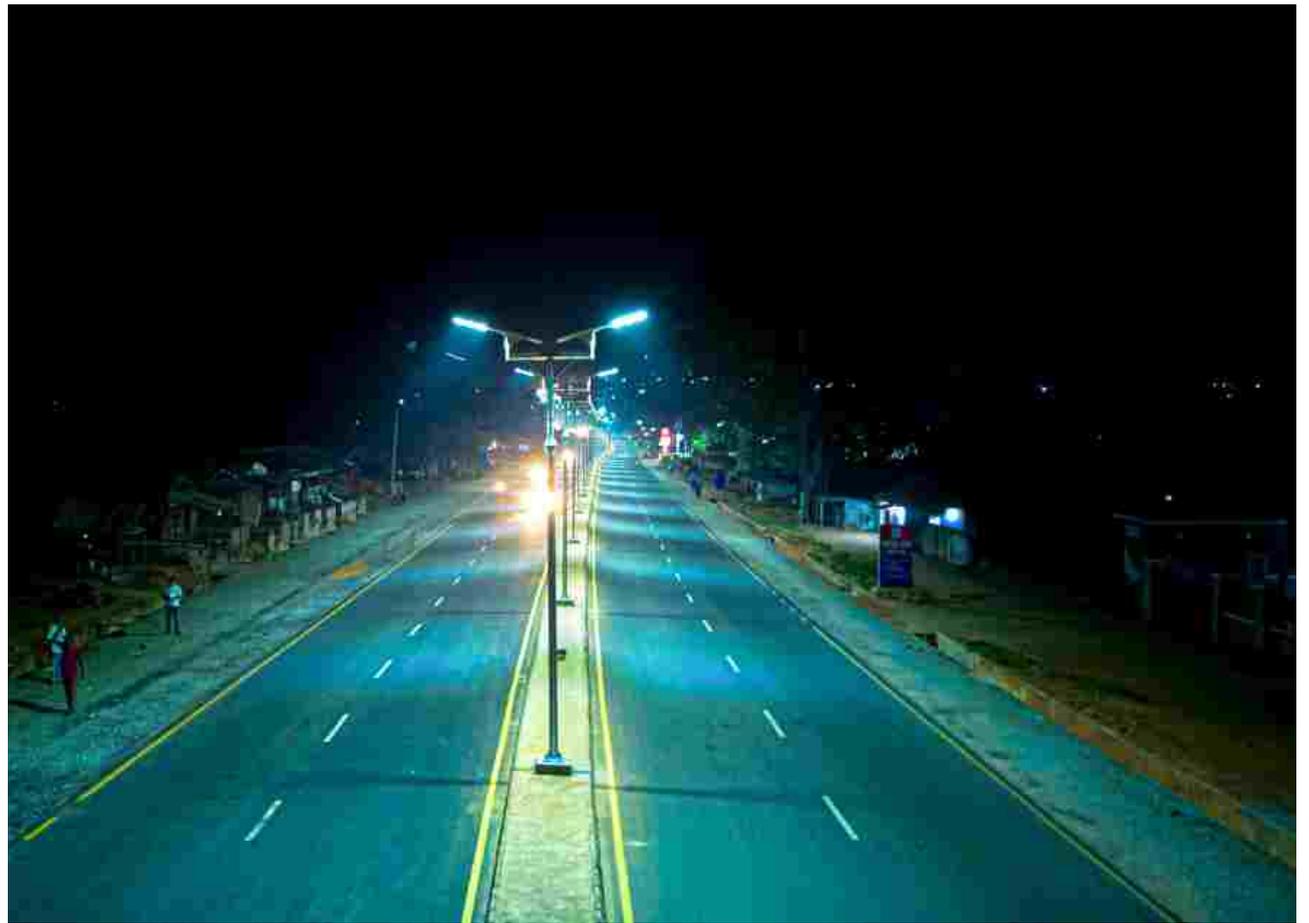
governor and the current one, resembling a never-ending battle. Despite this ongoing feud, why does the atmosphere here appear to be so harmonious? Can you elaborate on the relationship between you and your predecessor?

Gov. Ododo: My relationship with my predecessor, who is also my leader, can be likened to that of a father and son - it was truly excellent. Allow me to take you back to when I was appointed as the Auditor General for Local Government in Kogi State on March 1, 2016. Just a week after my appointment, the sitting governor, who was my predecessor at the time, granted me financial autonomy. Throughout the almost eight years that followed, he never once interfered with my work. I was able to carry out my duties as an auditor independently, thanks to his support.

This relationship has continued even after he handed over the reins to me. I have always believed in acknowledging and respecting my roots, as I was raised by a grandmother who lived to be over 110 years old. She instilled in me the importance of remembering where I come from, as forgetting one's origins can lead to a loss of direction. I am grateful for the opportunities that God, my predecessor, and the President have provided me.

It is worth noting that my predecessor's actions and achievements are often overlooked. He modelled his programs and policies after those of the President during his time as governor of Lagos State. Just as the President had done before him, my predecessor maintained a consistent team throughout his tenure, appointing individuals from within the system. This continuity of leadership has been carried on by Yahaya Bello, who has followed in their footsteps.

Thirdly, President believes in the development of the youth, as seen in the example of Sanwo-Olu. Consider his age, as well as the current PPA or PPS HMO. Reflect on Ambode's age as well. Yahaya Bello followed this path, leading us to where we are today. I would like to express my gratitude to President for his foresight in promoting youth inclusivity in government, a vision that Yahaya Bello has embraced. I also commend Yahaya Bello for his efforts. My goal is to build upon this foundation. Our relationship has been positive, and I will continue to show respect to all my predecessors and leaders who have contributed to the progress of our state. They have laid the groundwork, and



we are now moving towards strategic development. I will seek input from all stakeholders to ensure unity and progress for the benefit of our people. Thank you.

Kogi Strides: Let's address the second question now. During our time together today, I observed that you consistently bring up the name of the president in every location we visit. Even during this interview, you have referenced him nearly five times. Could you please elaborate on your relationship with the president?

Gov. Ododo: This question, even without being explicitly stated, is one that

resonates deeply with the people. Allow me to first explain why I will continue to hold President in high regard. I have had the privilege of engaging with him on a personal level. Through these interactions, I have witnessed his genuine commitment to giving back to the Country. It truly takes a special individual, driven by a sense of duty rather than personal gain, to prioritize the needs of the less fortunate. President's unwavering concern for the well-being of the populace is evident in his efforts to address the economic challenges that we currently face. While the crisis may not have originated during his tenure, he is tirelessly working to guide us towards a brighter future.

It is imperative that we rally behind President, offering our unwavering support and encouragement. I will continue to extol his virtues, express my gratitude, and acknowledge his contributions. I am acutely aware that without his guidance and support, I would not have achieved the level of success that I enjoy today. Our relationship can be likened to that of a father and son, with President assuming the role of a caring father figure. This dynamic has proven to be immensely rewarding, as evidenced by the positive developments in Kogi State. I firmly believe that, after divine intervention, President's leadership is the driving force behind our collective prosperity.

During my tenure as the Auditor General for local government, the highest FAAC allocation we ever received was 3.8 to 3.9 billion, while our wage bill alone amounted to almost 5 billion. There was a particular month where we only saw 1.9 billion, which posed significant challenges as we had to allocate funds for security, administrative expenses, running the local government, and various impactful projects. With a wage bill of about 5.2 billion at the time, the financial situation was dire. We had to resort to obtaining overdrafts from banks to pay salaries and keep the government functioning.

Fortunately, a change occurred when our current President assumed office. Since then, the local government has seen a significant increase in allocations, with the lowest being 5.6 billion and the most recent allocation reaching 9.7 billion. This positive change has been instrumental in alleviating the financial strain we previously faced. It is evident that the President's leadership has been crucial in navigating through this economic crisis.

I urge all Nigerians to join me in praising and supporting our President during this critical period. His leadership has been a beacon of hope, and it is essential that we rally behind him to steer us out of this inherited economic crisis. The relationship between the President and local government can be likened to that of a father and his last born, with a strong bond and mutual respect.

There are aspects of my work that I prefer to keep private, as I am deeply committed to serving my community and ensuring its prosperity. However, I must admit that the recent improvements in our financial situation have brought me great satisfaction. Let us continue to support our President and work together towards a brighter future for all Nigerians.

Kogi Strides: As I value confidentiality, I must address a circulating rumour

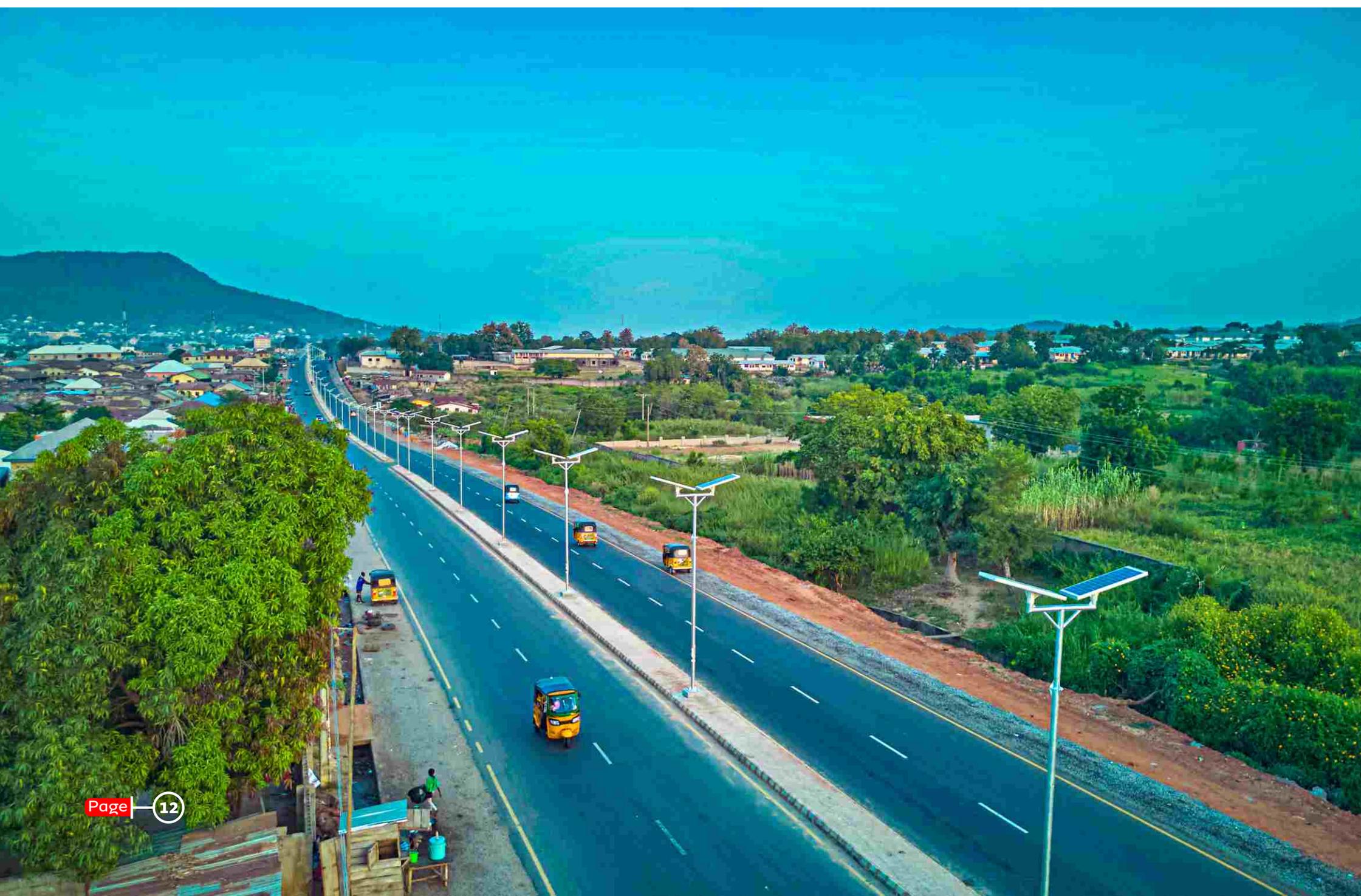
regarding your birth order. Rest assured; I will not disclose that you are the youngest sibling. It is important to acknowledge that there are individuals vying for your current position, despite your relatively short tenure of one year. However, you have a promising future ahead with three more years to prove yourself.

During a recent encounter with an outsider, who happened to be a motorcycle rider, he made a bold prediction about your potential longevity in this role. While I advise against placing too much emphasis on his words, it is worth considering the expectations of the people of Kogi State over the next three years. What can they anticipate from your leadership? Let us focus on the present and work diligently towards achieving our goals, rather than dwelling on uncertain future predictions.

Gov. Ododo: Thank them very much for their continued support. I am truly grateful and will always appreciate it. I am committed to serving them with the utmost sincerity and with the fear of God almighty guiding me. It is their mandate that I carry, and I will ensure that it works in their best interests.

My vision and prayer for Kogi State is to create a thriving economy, foster social inclusivity, and maintain political stability that will benefit both present and future generations. I am dedicated to working towards this goal and making it a reality.







FELICITATION MESSAGE

FROM MEDICAL AND HEALTH WORKERS UNION OF NIGERIA, KOGI STATE COUNCIL

The Medical and Health Workers Union of Nigeria, MHWUN, Kogi State Council heartily rejoice with His Excellency, Comrade Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo as he marks one eventful year in office.

Your Excellency, it is not an over statement to say that the celebration is justifiable viewing from the quantum of development programmes achieved within the period under review.

Interestingly, the Medical and Health Workers Union has followed with keen interest, your track record of achievements and has come to a conclusion that you are really GOD SENT.

While appreciating you for the journey so far, we are also particularly grateful that you have not abandoned the workforce, especially the health workers.

A close look at your success stories indicates that you have done well in the health sector for scoring 'many goals' which has earned you the people's trust and confidence.

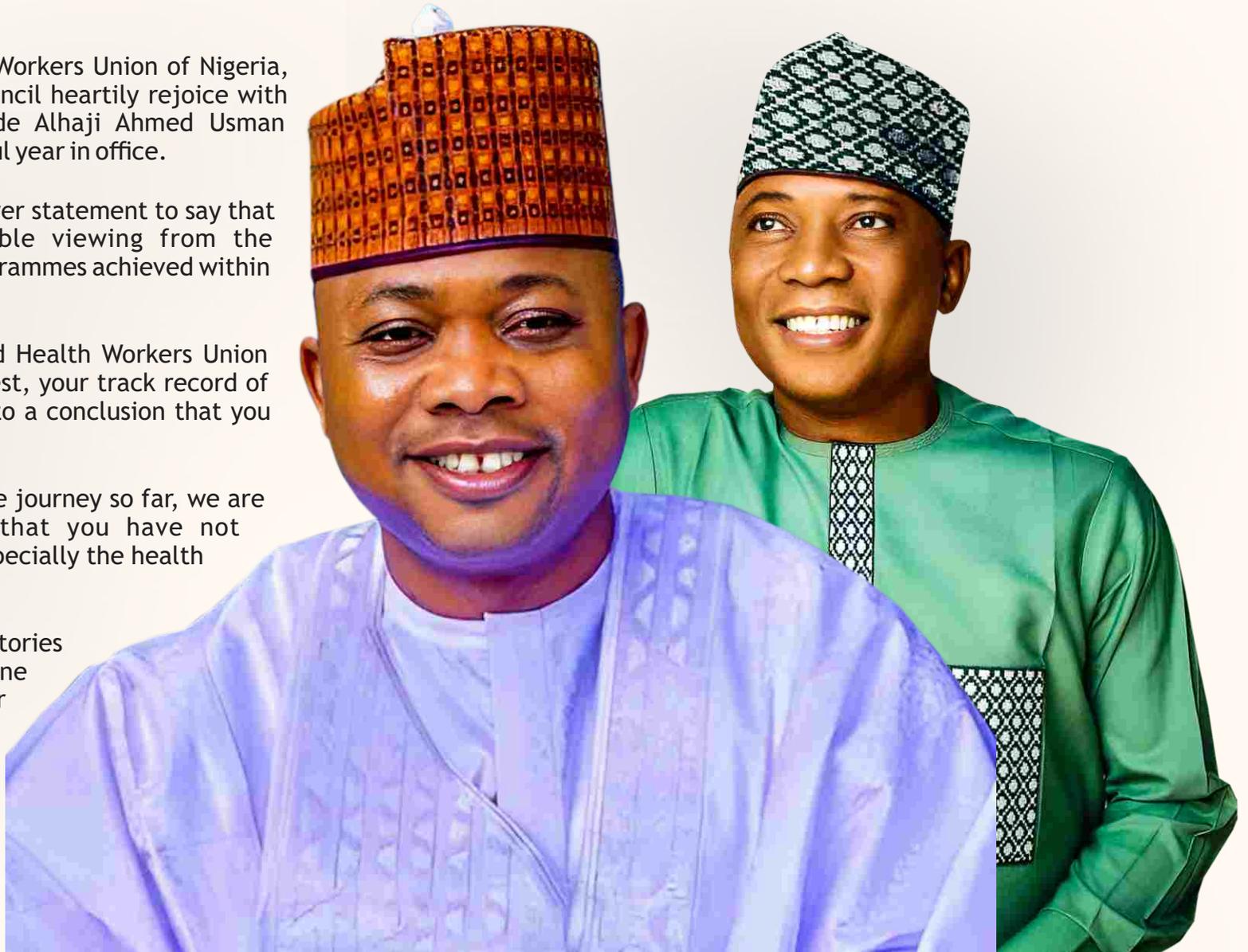
Indeed, the Council is bold to say that you have not disappointed the people, while remaining highly optimistic that you will take Kogi State to its desired destination of El dorado.

It is on record that the leadership of Nigeria Labour Congress, NLC in Nigeria had ranked Kogi State as number one for being the first to implement the new national minimum wage, a record that will remain indelible on the sands of time

The nailing of what was termed segmented or percentage salaries to local government workers and Primary School teachers, again, remain outstanding. The payment of one hundred percent hazard allowance to health workers and the smooth Health Insurance Scheme are all part of success stories, and soon, Primary Health Centres across the twenty one local government areas will receive attention as another mark of development in the health sector.

The Medical and Health Workers Union remains eternally grateful to God Almighty for making all these a possibility, and to the Governor for displaying such a rare political will and capacity in governance, praying that God will continue to lead him towards taking Kogi State to the promised land.

Congratulations once again, your Excellency, for being a worthy ambassador of the Labour movement.



Signed:
Comrade Gabriel Amari
Kogi State Chairman
Medical and Health Workers
Union of Nigeria



Signed:
Comrade Rose Momoh
State Secretary
Medical and Health Workers
Union of Nigeria

KOGROMA

COMMENCES ASPHALT OVERLAY OF TOWNSHIP ROADS



The Kogi State Road Maintenance Agency (KOGROMA) has commenced asphalt overlay in Egbe, Yagba West LG as part of the ongoing first phase of the approved road rehabilitation and reconstruction projects spanning 100 kilometers across eight Local Government Areas in the State.

The projects, a signature initiative of the Chief Servant of Kogi State, His Excellency Alh. Ahmed Usman Ododo is

aimed at gradually giving good roads to people at the grassroots to improve the standard of living in the rural areas.

These initiatives highlight Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo's dedication to transforming Kogi State and improving the lives of its citizens, building on the progress made by Former Governor Alhaji Yahaya Adoza Bello.

The Ododo Administration has decided to engage KOGROMA to evaluate the



capacity of the agency in delivering quality roads to the people of Kogi State. So far, the agency has delivered excellently across the project sites.

Aside the direct labor projects undertaken by the state-owned agency (KOGROMA), contractors are also simultaneously executing other road projects through the State Ministry of Works, thereby turning the state into a construction hub.

It is believed that most of the road projects will be ready for commissioning during the First Year Anniversary of the Ododo Administration.

The ongoing road projects across the state, underscore Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo's commitment to delivering quality road infrastructure, as his administration has embarked on various road projects to enhance infrastructure and foster economic growth throughout the State.

The administration of Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo has expressed commitment to enhancing rural roads quality to boost agriculture, which is one of the critical sectors the administration has been identified as an economic game changer.

In his reaction, the Executive Chairman of Yagba West Local Government Area, Hon. Tosin Olokun hailed the Governor for giving Egbe a "massive facelift".

Hon. Olokun said the massive support received by the Governor shows the confidence the people have in him, insisting that the Governor is already repaying the confidence of the people.

He said, "Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo has blazed the trail by embarking on projects with direct bearing on the rural people. Our people are very happy that the Governor has brought development to their doorsteps.

"You could see the joy across the Local Government Area. Our Governor is giving us joy", Olokun said.

The Local Government Chairman, who is also the ALGON Chairman in Kogi State also urged the people to cooperate with officials of the Kogi Road Maintenance Agency and (KOGROMA) ensure that the infrastructure is not destroyed by saboteurs.



**KOGI STATE
SCHOLARSHIP
BOARD**

BURSARY AWARDS:

**Governor Ododo Approves N316m
for 8,750 Kogi Students, Relieving
parents of Financial Burden.**

By Musa Solomon



Governor Ahmed Ododo of Kogi has approved the sum of N316 million for disbursement as Bursary for 8,750 undergraduate students of the state who have been successfully verified and cleared.

The State Commissioner for Education, Hon. Wemi Jones, made this known at a press conference on Friday in Lokoja.

The Commissioner said that out of over 40,000 undergraduate students that applied online for the 2024 Bursary Award, only 8,750 have completely uploaded the required documents and have been verified.

He explained further that the Bursary Allowance has been upgraded. Undergraduate Students are to receive N30,000.00 each while Students in Law Schools are to receive N300,000.00 each.

A total of 8,549 undergraduate students were cleared along with 201 Law School Students.

The commissioner assured that the

beneficiaries would start getting alert within the next two weeks.

He reaffirmed the commitment of the present Administration of Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo to education and to reduce the Out of School Children in the State.

The Commissioner also presented a complementary cheque of N5 million to Miss. Favour Oluwatimilehin Adebayo, a Kogi State indigene from Odoere in Yagba West Local Government Area of Kogi who is on a scholarship to study in Poland.

The commissioner said that the Governor has graciously approved the disbursement of N5 Million to the awardee for making the state proud by winning the European Union Erasmus+ scholarship to study in Poland.

The Commissioner while presenting the N5 million cheque to the father of the Awardee, Mr Moses Adebayo, on behalf of the Governor, said the N5 million is to complement the scholarship Award given to her by the European union.

In his address, Mr. Afolabi Joseph-Raji, the Executive Chairman, Kogi State Scholarship Board (KSSB), commended the Governor for his commitment to education development in the state through various Scholarship Awards.

Mr. Raji noted that Miss Favour had won a scholarship as an outstanding student while studying at the Nasarawa State University from 100 to 300 Level. The University through an exchange program with foreign universities has awarded her scholarship to study in Poland.

He said the presented fund would complement her tuition, accommodation and other areas of need.

He reiterated the State Government commitment through the Board to ensure that every Kogi student, attains academic success and become responsible.

In his response, the father of the awardee, Mr Moses Adebayo, expressed his gratitude to the Governor for the gesture towards his daughter, assuring that she would continue to make the state proud.

One Year: Celebrating an Outstanding Deputy Governor

In his capacity as the Deputy Governor of Kogi State, Comrade Joel Salifu has garnered widespread acclaim for his exceptional accomplishments, earning him the admiration of the state's populace. His remarkable leadership, humility, and unwavering dedication to the welfare of the people have been evident in his myriad achievements.

One of his most notable feats was his pivotal role as Chairman of the Committee on Flood, where he played a crucial role in effectively managing the 2024 floods in the state. Through his proactive approach and strong leadership skills, he ensured that the state was well-prepared to mitigate the impact of the flood, thereby minimizing its effects on the people and their properties.

Moreover, Comrade Salifu's diplomatic acumen was showcased when he successfully facilitated a peaceful resolution to the boundary dispute between Kogi and Enugu State at Ette in Olamaboro Local Government Area. This significant accomplishment underscores his ability to navigate complex issues and find mutually beneficial solutions. The resolution of this longstanding dispute has brought relief to the affected communities and has paved the way for enhanced cooperation and collaboration between the two states.

In addition to his achievements in flood management and conflict resolution, Comrade Salifu has admirably represented Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo in various capacities. His representation has been characterized by humility and an open-door policy, endearing him to the people. He has served as a commendable ambassador of the governor and the state, consistently embodying the values of the administration.

Comrade Salifu has demonstrated exceptional hospitality towards traditional rulers in the state, fostering a sense of unity and cooperation among them. His willingness to engage with monarchs, listen to their concerns, and diligently work towards addressing them has not only strengthened the bond between the government and traditional institutions but has also contributed to the promotion of peace and stability within the state.

Furthermore, Comrade Salifu's inclusive approach to governance, particularly in involving traditional rulers in decision-making processes, has been a defining characteristic of his administration. By actively seeking the counsel and input of traditional leaders on matters that impact their communities, he has garnered their respect and admiration while ensuring that government policies are tailored to address the specific needs and challenges of each locality.

In addition to his efforts with traditional rulers, Comrade Salifu has also shown a strong commitment to the welfare of the people through his interactions with Labor leaders. He has praised Governor Ododo as a forward-thinking leader and credited the harmonious relationship between labour unions and the government to the governor's exemplary leadership style.

Moreover, Comrade Salifu has been a dedicated representative of the governor at various significant events throughout the state. For example, he stood in for Governor Ododo at the inauguration of the Nyamkpo Community Electrification Project in Bassa local government Area, where he reiterated the administration's dedication to rapid infrastructural development and underscored the crucial role of electricity in driving economic growth and enhancing the overall quality of life.

In a display of compassion and dedication to the well-being of the people, Comrade Salifu played a crucial role in facilitating compensation for the victims of the GSM Village fire disaster in Lokoja. His efforts ensured that the victims received the necessary support and assistance to rebuild their lives and livelihoods. This gesture was widely praised by the community, who viewed it as a clear demonstration of the administration's commitment to their welfare.

The achievements of Deputy Governor Joel Salifu in Kogi State serve as a testament to his unwavering dedication, exceptional leadership skills, and strong commitment to the welfare of the people. His remarkable efforts in flood management, conflict resolution, representation,





Outstanding Deputy Governor

and engagement with traditional rulers have consistently reflected the values of the administration. It is evident that his legacy will be one of service, dedication, and a steadfast commitment to the greater good as he continues to serve the people of Kogi State.

Deputy Governor Joel Salifu's outstanding accomplishments are a shining example of his unwavering dedication, exceptional leadership skills, and relentless commitment to the welfare of the people of

Kogi State. His impressive track record in flood management, conflict resolution, representation, and fostering harmonious relationships with traditional rulers and labour leaders has been truly remarkable. These achievements are a direct result of the visionary leadership of Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo, who has played a pivotal role in driving progress in Kogi State. The governor's dedication to the welfare of the people, his diplomatic skills, and his ability to collaborate with traditional rulers in governing the state have been commendable.

Under the leadership of Governor Ododo, the state has continued to prosper. It is evident that his selection was a wise decision that will leave a lasting impact on the state.

In conclusion, Deputy Governor Salifu's legacy will be defined by his service, dedication, and commitment to his boss and the common good. His selfless actions have greatly impacted the lives of the people of Kogi State, and his contributions will be revered for generations to come.

Congratulations!

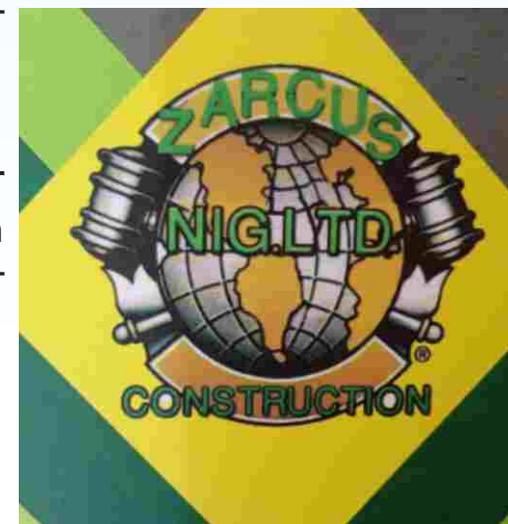
On behalf of the Staff and Management of Zarcus Construction Nig. Ltd, we extend our warmest congratulations to His Excellency, Alh. Ahmed Usman Ododo, on the occasion of his 1-year anniversary in office as the Governor of Kogi State.

We commend your tireless efforts and unwavering commitment to the development and progress of Kogi State. Your leadership has been a beacon of hope and transformation, and we are honored to be a part of this journey.

As a construction company, we are proud to have partnered with your administration to deliver quality projects that have positively impacted the lives of Kogites. We assure you of our continued partnership and determination to do quality jobs that meet the highest standards.

Once again, congratulations on this milestone achievement, Your Excellency. We look forward to many more years of collaboration and progress. Please accept our sincerest appreciation and best wishes.

Signed: Management



APPRAISING THE GAINS OF GOVERNOR ODODO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND POLICIES IN KOGI STATE

By Rotimi Odofin

Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo's economic development policies and programs in Kogi State have been yielding remarkable results. His administration has placed a strong emphasis on security, recognizing it as a critical factor in attracting investments and fostering economic growth. Under his leadership, Kogi State has experienced a significant reduction in crime rate, creating a safer environment for residents and businesses to flourish.

It is essential to acknowledge that Governor Ododo has implemented various economic development initiatives in his state that have produced substantial benefits. One of the key accomplishments of his economic development agenda is the generation of job opportunities for the youth in the state. Through initiatives such as the establishment of industrial parks and investments in the agricultural sector, Governor Ododo has successfully decreased unemployment rate and provide a source of income for many young individuals in the state. This has not only elevated the standard of living for the youth but has also contributed to the reduction of social issues associated

with high levels of unemployment.

Governor Ododo has also placed a strong focus on infrastructure development as a fundamental driver of economic growth in the state. By investing in roads, bridges, and other essential infrastructure projects, Governor Ododo has enhanced transportation networks and connectivity within the state. This has not only facilitated the movement of goods and services but has also attracted private investors to the state, resulting in increased economic activities and job opportunities. The enhancement of infrastructure has also improved the quality of life for residents of the state, making it more appealing to both investors and tourists.

Governor Ododo has made education and skills development a top priority in his economic development agenda, alongside job creation and infrastructure development. Through strategic investments in vocational training programs and educational institutions, Governor Ododo has equipped the youth with the necessary skills and knowledge to thrive in the global economy. This focus has not only enhanced the employability of the youth but has also attracted multinational corporations to establish operations in the state, fostering further economic growth and development.

Furthermore, Governor Ododo's economic development initiatives have had a significant impact on the agricultural sector. By facilitating access to credit facilities, promoting improved agricultural practices, and introducing technology, the Governor has successfully increased agricultural productivity and output in the state. This has not only bolstered food security but has also generated employment opportunities for numerous rural farmers, thereby reducing poverty levels in the state. The heightened agricultural productivity has also positioned the state as a key player in the agricultural sector at both national and international levels, contributing to overall economic prosperity.

Governor Ododo's comprehensive approach to economic development, encompassing education, skills development, and agricultural advancement, has yielded tangible results in terms of job creation, poverty reduction, and economic growth. His visionary leadership has not only transformed the





state's economy but has also empowered the youth to become entrepreneurs and job creators, paving the way for sustained prosperity and development.

Furthermore, Governor Ododo has implemented various strategies to attract foreign direct investment (FDI) to the state as part of his economic development agenda. By creating a conducive business environment, improving infrastructure, and providing incentives for investors, Governor Ododo has been able to attract FDI from multinational corporations across various sectors. This has not only brought in the much-needed capital investment but has also transferred technology, skills, and knowledge to the state, leading to further economic growth and development. The influx of FDI has also created job opportunities for the youth and improved the overall competitiveness of the state in the global economy.

In addition, Kogi State, under the leadership of Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo is the first state in the whole federation to implement the national minimum wage of N72,500 for the civil servants in the state.

Governor Ododo's administration has achieved significant milestones in the education sector by providing financial support to Senior Secondary School students in public schools across the state. Additionally, funds have been allocated for nationwide bursary Awards to Indigenous

students in higher institutions.

In conclusion, Governor Ododo's economic development strategies have played a pivotal role in positioning the state as a centre for economic progress and advancement. Through initiatives such as job creation, infrastructure enhancement, education and skills training, agricultural development, and attracting foreign direct investment (FDI), Governor Ododo has successfully fostered sustainable economic growth and improved the quality of life for the state's residents. The positive outcomes of Governor Ododo's economic initiatives are evident in the reduced unemployment rates, improved infrastructure, expanded educational opportunities, increased agricultural productivity, and the influx of FDI into the state.

Key Economic Development Initiatives:

- Infrastructure Development: Governor Ododo has prioritized the maintenance and enhancement of infrastructure, including roads, bridges, and buildings, to support economic growth and attract investments.

Agricultural Transformation Project: The administration has implemented programs to boost agricultural productivity, create employment opportunities for young people, and stimulate economic growth in rural areas.

- Investment Promotion: Governor Ododo

has introduced policies to incentivize investments, positioning Kogi State as an appealing destination for businesses and entrepreneurs.

- Human Capital Development: The government has strongly emphasised education and healthcare, recognizing the critical role of human capital in driving economic progress.

- Technology and Innovation: Governor Ododo has championed the growth of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector, fostering innovation and entrepreneurship in Kogi State.

Economic Gains:

- Improved security has increased investor confidence, attracting new businesses to the state.
- Agricultural projects have created employment opportunities and boosted economic activities in rural areas.
- Infrastructure development has enhanced connectivity and facilitated trade.
- Investment promotion policies have increased the state's revenue base.

Overall, Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo's economic development policies and programs have been instrumental in promoting economic growth and improving the standard of living in Kogi State.



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16/01/2025



His Excellency, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo

The Executive Governor of Kogi State.

Government House, Lokoja.

**Congratulations to
His Excellency, Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo,
on Your One-Year Anniversary in Office**

The Governing Council, Management, Senate, Staff and Students of Prince Abubakar Audu University, Anyigba, congratulate His Excellency Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo on the remarkable milestone of your first year in office as the Executive Governor of Kogi State.

Your Excellency, your prompt payment of salaries has significantly improved the welfare of civil servants, demonstrating your prioritisation of the people's needs. Your Excellency's leadership has also been marked by a commitment to detribalised governance, ensuring inclusivity for every citizen, regardless of ethnic or cultural background. This approach has fostered unity, strengthened bonds among communities, and positioned Kogi State as a beacon of equity and fairness.

Your commitment to advancing education has been evident in your unwavering support for tertiary institutions in the State, especially, Prince Abubakar Audu University, Anyigba. We deeply appreciate your invaluable support to our University, which has enhanced the academic environment and furthered the Institution's mission to provide quality education and foster innovation. These progressive steps set a standard for inclusiveness, equity, and sustainable development.

As you celebrate this milestone, we pray for wisdom, good health, and continued success in your administration. May your leadership bring greater peace, prosperity, and progress to Kogi State and her people.

Congratulations once again, Your Excellency!

Yours sincerely,

Professor Marietu Ohunene Tenuche, FNPSA, fspsp

Vice-Chancellor



Milestone Achievements

OF HIS EXCELLENCY ALHAJI AHMED USMAN ODODO

in Kogi State Local Government Service Commission

By Onakpa Habiba Ibrahim



The Kogi State Local Government Service Commission is a body saddled with the constitutional responsibility of bridging the gap between the government and its populace at the Grassroot.

Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo has made substantial contributions to the development of this important body as can be seen in the various developmental strides recorded in the commission within these past few months.

His efforts have been largely instrumental in improving local governance, fostering transparency, and boosting staff productivity.

Below is an outline of numerous achievements of Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo in the Kogi State Local Government Service Commission.

1. Human Resource Development and Capacity Building:

Training and Re-Training of Local Government Staff is an essential and integral aspect of the Ododo Led Administration.

His Excellency has placed significant emphasis on improving the skills and overall capacity of Local Government Staff. This he has made Possible through regular training programs, workshops, and seminars aimed at equipping employees with the knowledge and skills necessary to handle various administrative challenges and deliver improved Public Service.

These training initiatives cover areas such as financial management, record-keeping, and basic ICT skills, which empower employees to perform their duties more effectively.

2. Introduction of Transparent Recruitment and Promotion Processes:

In his commitment to transparency and meritocracy, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo implemented an open and competitive recruitment and promotion process within the Local Government Commission. His Excellency has ensured that individuals who have worked assiduously and contributed their quota to the service of the Local Government are given their promotion to the next and higher career ladder. This move aims to ensure that qualified and competent individuals are rewarded for their hardwork. As detribalized leader

His Excellency set clear guidelines and standards, curbing favoritism and nepotism in hiring and promotions thereby creating a more transparent environment ultimately improving the efficiency and credibility of the Local government Service Commission.

3. Promotion of Staff Welfare and Incentives:

Been a part of the Local Government himself, His Excellency, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo understands the assignment. Hence, he has prioritized the welfare of Local Government Staff, understanding that a motivated workforce is essential to achieving success.

He has built on various incentives to recognize the hard work and dedication of employees. These incentives include timely promotions, salary normalization and other benefits that reward employees for their loyalty and commitment to service.

The most recent is his Excellency's gracious approval and prompt implementation of a minimum wage of 72,500 Naira. This cuts across both State

and Local Government Staffer without exceptions.

Additionally, he has made provisions for timely pension payments, particularly for retired Local Government Workers, a significant achievement given the challenges often associated with pension disbursements.

Worthy of mention also is a Ten thousand Naira (N10,000.00) increment of the Pension of Retired Public Servants across the State As well as absolving them into the Kogi State Health Insurance Scheme, (KSHIA) so they can Continue enjoying top-notch health benefits even as retirees.

By ensuring timely and adequate compensation, Alhaji Ododo has cultivated a more motivated and engaged workforce.

4. Implementation of a Digital Record-Keeping System:

Another notable achievement of Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo's Administration is the establishment of a digital record-keeping system within the commission. Prior to his reforms, record management was largely manual, which was inefficient and prone to errors. To streamline administrative processes, Alhaji Ododo introduced an ICT-based record-keeping system that has improved data accuracy and retrieval.

The system has made it easier to track employee's records, process payments, and ensure proper documentation of Local Government activities. This digital transformation also aligns with modern governance practices and makes the commission more accessible and efficient.

5. Accountability and Financial Prudence:

Alhaji Ododo has been a strong advocate for accountability in the management of resources within the Local Government Commission. He has established financial

monitoring mechanisms to reduce the mismanagement of funds. His policies emphasizes financial prudence, thereby promoting the optimal use of available resources.

Under his watch, funds allocated to the commission are utilized judiciously, with projects completed on schedule and within budget. These achievement have not only contributed to infrastructure improvements but also built public trust in the commission's ability to deliver on its promises.

6. Improvement of Local Government Infrastructure:

Recognizing the need for better infrastructure in Local Government Offices across Kogi State, Alhaji Ododo championed projects aimed at rehabilitating and modernizing facilities. Office spaces have been renovated, work equipment are updated, and some essential facilities have been introduced to improve working conditions for staff.

By enhancing the infrastructure, His Excellency championed the construction of a gigantic office edifice which is 85% near completion. The sight of the top-of-the-art office complex has not only reassured the staff of His Excellency's commitment to their welfare, but has also contributed to higher staff morale and increased productivity.

7. Promotion of Local Economic Development Initiatives

His Excellency also saw the launch of initiatives aimed at fostering economic development at the grassroots level. He has worked to encourage Local Governments to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as a way of boosting local economies. Through community engagement, he has promoted various projects, such as vocational training programs and empowerment schemes, with the most recent being The GOVERNOR ODODO BUSINESS OUTREACH(GOBO).

GOBO is aimed at empowering small-scale entrepreneurs, fostering Community Development especially at the local level, poverty reduction and so many others.

These economic development initiatives have provided job opportunities and helped to reduce poverty within local communities, positioning the commission as a driver of socio-economic progress.

Additionally, is His Excellency's engagement of local leaders. He has created a channel through which grassroots concerns could be effectively addressed, thus ensuring that Local Government projects align with the needs and priorities of the communities.

He has focused on promoting a decentralized approach, allowing local governments more autonomy in decision-making while still ensuring accountability.

Indeed, the sweet scent of the beautiful rose flower destiny has planted, fills the air in the Confluence State.

From Darkness to Light: THE IMPACT OF GOVERNOR ODODO'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

By Buhari Femi Fatai

The Kogi State Government, under the leadership of His Excellency, Alhaji Usman Ododo, has consistently demonstrated its commitment to a progressive and improved Kogi State across all sectors and Senatorial Districts. In this regard, the government has initiated the installation of three 2.5 MVA, 33/0.415 KV transformers and an extension of the 33 KV overhead line from the Okene Transmission Substation to the Confluence University of Science and Technology (CUSTECH) in Osara, Kogi State. This project will enhance the electricity supply to the institution, creating a more conducive learning environment for students and benefiting the surrounding community. Once completed, it will also strengthen the security of the institution.

Additionally, the government has launched the 20 km Obajana-Uro-Aku Rural Road

Project in collaboration with the Rural Access and Agricultural Marketing Project (RAAMP). Upon completion, this road will improve transportation and serve as a catalyst for rural economic growth and food security within the state.

In his efforts to improve the welfare of civil servants, His Excellency Alhaji Usman Ododo has taken significant steps, including the recent extension of the 33KVA CBN feeder to various ministries. The installation of one 500 KVA, one 300 KVA, two 200 KVA, and two 10 KVA transformers (all rated 33/0.415 KV) in Lokoja, Kogi State, have made office environments more comfortable for civil servants and reduced the costs associated with conducting official business outside the office. These efforts are in addition to the prompt payment of salaries and the immediate implementation of the new

minimum wage, among other initiatives.

Furthermore, the installation of a hybrid 200 KVA, 33/0.415 KV transformer, along with a 15KVA inverter/solar system at Kogi State Radio Lokoja, have significantly improved information dissemination within the state and beyond. The radio station, recognized as the best in the state, can now operate uninterrupted for extended periods without transmission issues.

The extension of the 33KVA line, along with the installation and reticulation of a low-tension network that feeds the State House of Assembly complex and surrounding communities, have greatly enhanced the reliability of power supply for the State House of Assembly, mirroring the uninterrupted power enjoyed by other Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) in Lokoja.

Governor Ododo has prioritised the well-being of Civil Servants

- Kogi Head of Service

QUESTION: I would like to extend a warm welcome to you. As we approach the one-year mark of the current governor's administration, it is important to assess the state of the civil service within our state.

RESPONSE: Excellent question. As we approach the one-year mark of His Excellency Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo's administration as the chief servant of Kogi State, it is worth noting the positive relationship that has developed between the government and civil servants. Governor Ododo, a former civil servant himself, understands the needs of the civil service and has been proactive in meeting those needs. This has fostered a cordial and productive relationship between the government and civil servants.

QUESTION: I will like you to address the significant reforms that have taken place over the past year but let me focus on the most pressing issue. In the two days that I have been here, the civil servants I have interacted with seem elated, as if they are on the verge of dancing in the streets. This has led me to question what has transpired in the past year regarding the timely payment of salaries and benefits.

RESPONSE: Since the inauguration of the current Governor in January, there has been a significant improvement in the timely payment of salaries to civil servants in the State. Salaries are now being disbursed before the end of each month, which was not the case previously.

During the recent Sallah period, it is worth noting that salaries were paid on the 14th of the month, much to the surprise and delight of all civil servants in the state. A similar occurrence took place last December, further solidifying the Governor's commitment to ensuring that civil servants are paid promptly.

In a recent discussion with the Governor, he assured me that he would prioritize the payment of salaries before the FAAC Communication, as he understands that delays from FAAC could impact the timely disbursement of salaries. True to his word, he has consistently fulfilled this promise, much to the appreciation of all civil servants in the state.

QUESTION: Returning to the topic of reforms, over the past year, what were the key reforms that you implemented under the guidance and inspiration of the governor in the public service sector?

RESPONSE: Prior to the current administration, numerous reforms have been implemented in the state. The current Governor is building upon the foundation laid by the former governor, Alhaji Yahaya Bello. These reforms have provided the basis for the Governor's current initiatives. Notably, significant reforms have been made in the civil service sector. Over the past year, extensive training has been conducted for our civil servants. For example, in May of last year, approval was granted to train senior civil servants, with some being sent to Jos and others to Badagry. Additionally, approval has been given to train the recently appointed Permanent Secretaries, totalling 12 individuals appointed in September of last year. This training not only enhances the skills of our civil servants but also serves as a source of motivation for them to excel in their roles.

QUESTION: Is it accurate to say that all of the positive developments you are discussing are only occurring at the state level? It appears that these advancements are not filtering down to the local government level.

RESPONSE: Certainly, the issue has now reached the local government level. Previously, there were reports in the news that government employees were not receiving their salaries, even at the state level. However, the situation has since improved. Through my conversations with civil servants, I have gained insight into their experiences. It is now evident that all civil servants are receiving their salaries on time. Additionally, the recently approved minimum wage applies not only to state employees but also to those at the local government level. This means that when state civil servants receive their salaries, local government employees are also paid promptly.

QUESTION: For those interested in sports, I have been accompanying the Honourable Commissioner of Information, who is a football player. Imagine playing a full 90 minutes, scoring



the first goal, only to end up conceding 6 more goals afterwards. That initial goal you scored is what we call "initial gragra."

Now, let's shift our focus to the civil service in the state. Is the current situation just a temporary setback, akin to initial gragra in football, or is it a more permanent issue that we will have to contend with for the foreseeable future?

RESPONSE: The visible progress on the ground is a true reflection of the character of our esteemed Governor. He is a reliable and trustworthy leader who consistently follows through on his promises. This is why he is affectionately referred to as the "talk and do Governor." Every commitment he has made has been fulfilled, and he continues to exceed our expectations with new initiatives. Personally, I have full confidence in his ability to deliver on his promises. His dedication to public service and his positive impact on the state are evident in his actions. He is truly a Governor who prioritizes the well-being of civil servants and is making significant strides in improving our state.

QUESTION: As we conclude, where do you envision the service heading as he nears the end of his first term, perhaps within the next two to three years?

RESPONSE: Currently, approval has been granted for the digitization of the civil service and my collaboration with the office of the Head of Civil Service of the Federation. This collaboration is expected to provide us with the necessary support. Additionally, tentative approval has been given for the upgrade of the Staff Development Centre to a Public Service Institute, where our employees will receive training in a variety of fields. This project is already in progress, and we are confident that it will be completed by next year.

Congratulations!



Your Excellency, Alh Ahmed Usman Ododo On behalf of the Governing Council, Management, Senate, Staff, and Students of Confluence University of Science and Technology, Osara, I am honored to extend our warmest congratulations to Your Excellency on your one-year anniversary in office.

Your visionary leadership has been truly inspiring, and we acknowledge your unwavering commitment to the welfare of the people of Kogi State. Your prompt payment of salaries has brought significant relief to civil servants, demonstrating your dedication to their well-being.

We are particularly grateful for your administration's support for Confluence University of Science and Technology, Osara. The approval of funds for the development of critical infrastructure on our campus is a testament to your commitment to advancing education in Kogi State.

We also appreciate your commitment to creating an inclusive and prosperous state, where every citizen is valued.

As you celebrate this milestone, we pray for wisdom, good health, and continued success in your administration. May your leadership bring greater peace, prosperity, and progress to Kogi State and her people.

Congratulations once again, Your Excellency!

Signed:

Professor [Name]

Vice Chancellor, Confluence University of Science and Technology, Osara





KOGI STATE SET FOR MAJOR BOOST IN ELECTRICITY, INVESTMENT, AND FOOD SECURITY

By Abah Benjamin Eneojoh

The National Electricity Regulatory Commission has granted permission to Kogi State to manage electricity generation and distribution, paving the way for efficient power supply to boost businesses in the State.

The Commissioner for Rural and Energy Development, Engineer Abdulmutalib Muhammed, announced this in Lokoja on Wednesday 20-11-2024 while briefing Newsmen immediately after the State Executive Council meeting.

He revealed that the State Executive Council has directed that the State

Internally Displaced Camp should be electrified within one week.

The Commissioner for Information and Communication, Hon Kingsley Fanwo praised Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo for all round performance, emphasizing the need for an aggressive investment drive to improve the state's economy and create job opportunities for youth, stressing that the State Government remains committed to the security and wellbeing of its people.

Also speaking, the Commissioner for Agriculture and Food Security, Hon Timothy Ojomah, revealed that the state government has invested over

Nine Billion Naira in food security, resulting in Kogi State now having the lowest food inflation rate in the country. This achievement he said, is on the heels of Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo's wet season farming initiative, which invested over Seven Billion Naira in farm inputs and deployed over 100 tractors across 7,324 hectares of farmland.

The Press were also briefed that preparations are underway for the Kogi International Carnival, scheduled for December 1-7.

These developments demonstrate the state government's commitment to enhancing the lives of its citizens.



Congratulations

to the Pride of Kogi State



To His Excellency, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo, the Executive Governor of Kogi State, and His Excellency, Salifu Joel, the Deputy Governor:

We, the Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT), Kogi State Chapter, extend our heartfelt felicitations to you on your tireless efforts to improve staff welfare in Kogi State.

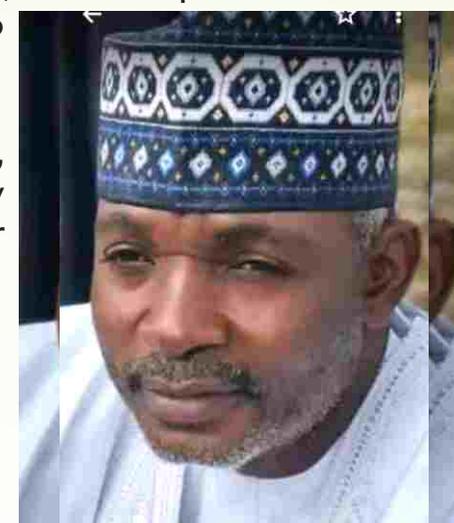
Your administration's commitment to prioritizing workers' welfare, particularly in the education sector, has not gone unnoticed. The payment of salaries and pensions, implementation of the minimum wage, and harmonization of pensions are testaments to your dedication to the well-being of civil servants.

We commend your administration's people-centered approach, which has fostered a harmonious relationship between labor unions and the government². Your leadership style, which emphasizes humility and open-door policy, has created a conducive environment for stakeholders to engage and work together towards the development of Kogi State.

As we celebrate your achievements, we pray that God continues to guide, protect, and direct you as you strive to make Kogi State a better place for all. May your vision for a prosperous Kogi State become a reality, and may your leadership inspire future generations.

Once again, congratulations, Your Excellencies!

Comrade Yakubu Dauda,
Kogi State NUT Chairman



WE WILL DISMANTLE BOTTLENECKS INHIBITING INVESTMENTS IN KOGI STATE - ODODO

The Kogi State Governor, Alh. Ahmed Usman Ododo has vowed to dismantle all bottlenecks inhibiting investments in the State, saying his administration is poised to make Kogi State the investment haven of Nigeria.

Addressing pressmen at the Kogi State Government Press Center shortly after the State Executive Council Meeting, the State Commissioner for Information and Communications, Hon. Kingsley Fanwo said the Governor is putting modalities in place to make Kogi State investment friendly.

"Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo has demonstrated a strong determination to make Kogi State the first choice of investors by removing the red tapes that have deprived the state of massive investments in the past. He made this known during the State Executive Council meeting and directed all the members of the State Executive Council meeting and those in attendance to ensure our administrative structures are not such that discourage investment", he said.

Fanwo also said the Governor expressed a strong commitment to the security of lives and property in the state, urging the citizens to cooperate with law enforcement agencies and Vigilante Groups to ensure security.

He said the administration has decided to take the route of giving a leading role to the communities in the security of their domains.

On the State Cultural Carnival, which is holding between December 1 to December 7, 2024, across the three



Senatorial Districts, the Information Commissioner said the Governor has expressed readiness to make the carnival a window to market the potentials of the State.

"With the carnival, Kogi State is looking at how to improve the global visibility of the state by marketing her potentials to the world. We are going to make it a big show to tell the world that Kogi is indeed, a tourist destination to reckon with. The Council commended the Committee steering the carnival for doing a great job", he said.

In the same vein, the State Commissioner for Agriculture and Food Security, Hon. Timothy Ojomah said the State Government has invested over 9 billion naira in agriculture to ensure Kogi takes the lead in food production. He said the Governor has matched his words with actions by investing heavily in the sector where the state has a comparative advantage.

In his remarks, the State Commissioner for Rural and Energy Development, Hon. Abdulmutalib Mohammed said electrification jobs are ongoing across the state to boost power distribution to stimulate economic growth.

CONGRATULATORY
Message
FROM

**Kogi STTEB
Cooperative Society to**



HIS EXCELLENCY,

ALHAJI ODODO AHMED USMAN

THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF KOGI STATE

On behalf of the management and entire co-operators of STTEB Cooperative Society, we join our voices in appreciating the people's Governor, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo for ensuring the realization of a NEW KOGI STATE.

No doubt, it is evident that your one year in office has been characterized by strategic policies and implementation aimed at bringing a new lease of life to the people.

Your economic reforms, civil service welfare packages and pensioners are all admirable despite some challenges.

The STTEB Cooperative Society is determined to add value to the lives of the people, be it members of the political class, civil servants, pensioners, etc.

We hereby reiterate our resolve to sustain partnership with the administration in order to boost the economic status of Kogi State through reliable savings and investments.

As one of the leading Cooperative societies in Kogi State, we rejoice with you, your Excellency, on this auspicious celebration of your one year in office.

It is our prayers that you will continue to soar higher with good health and courage to move Kogi State forward.

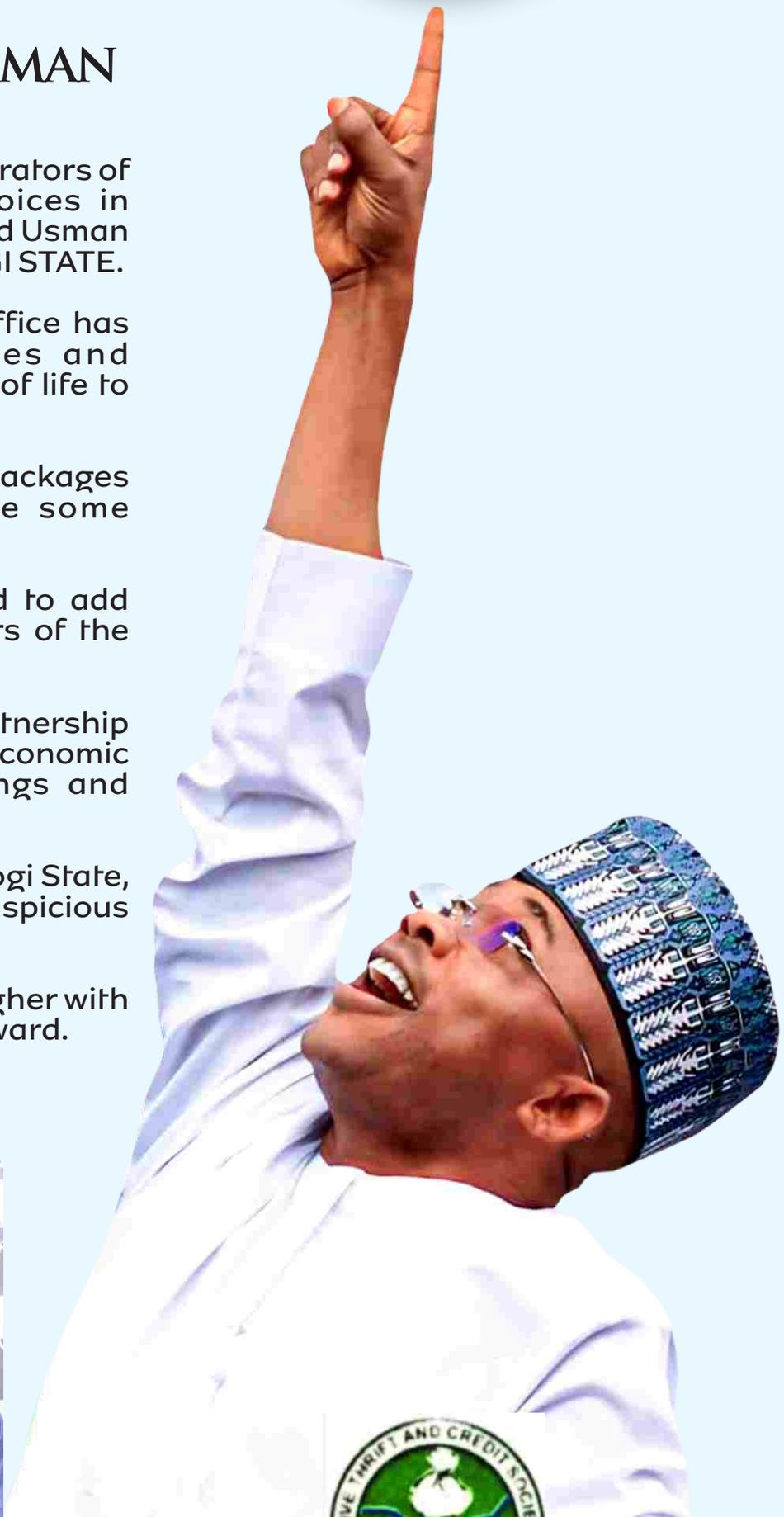
Bravo, the "God sent Governor".
Once again, we say Congratulations



Signed:
AUGUSTINE, EDIME OJUH
CNA, ccrfA, ccfl
President
(STTEB COOPERATIVE SOCIETY)



Signed:
SALISU MOHAMMED
Secretary
(STTEB COOPERATIVE SOCIETY)



CHIEF SERVANT COMMISSIONS Remodeled SGS Office Complex

By Abubakar Shuaibu. A

In line with Kogi State Development Plan 2024-2056 "Shared Hope And Prosperity" and the pledge by the Chief Servant of the State, Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo to "lift Kogi State to a higher level of performance and success", this promise was demonstrated at the commissioning of the office of the Secretary to the Government of Kogi State, Lokoja on Wednesday, November, 2024.

Hitherto, the office complex of the SGS became almost dilapidated and wore a saggy and shabby look with the white paint turned brown due to continuous batter by the harsh Lokoja weather.

In view of its strategic importance to State Government, on assumption of duty as the No- 1 Chief Servant of the State, the Governor sprang to action

and awarded the contract to Ridge Prime Limited for complete remodeling of the SGS office complex in April 2024.

No doubt, the remodelling was painstakingly conducted to taste, painted exterior white with interior off-white and fitted with new furniture.

Speaking at the commissioning ceremony, the Governor said civil servants deserve conducive working environment to maximize service delivery.

He said the remodeling is part of the plan to improve the standard of workplace environment in the state.

Governor Ododo said regular and timely payment of monthly salary is a pointer to Government's deep desire to

uplift the standards of the people.

The Governor praised the immediate former Governor, Alhaji Yahaya Bello for his vision and determination to place Kogi State on the path of development.

The Servant Leader also thanked the SGS for her hard work, patience and loyalty thus far in the service to the state.

Mrs. Folashade Arike Ayoade, Ph. D, Secretary to the Government of Kogi State (SGS) thanked the Governor for finding time to commission the renovated office complex.

The event was witnessed by the State Executive Council Members, top notch Political Office Holders, Civil Servants and the general public.



KOGI PENSIONERS LAUD GOVERNOR ODODO'S KIND-HEARTEDNESS.

By Igjiku Mary

The Nigeria Union of Pensioners, Kogi State Council has commended Governor Usman Ododo for implementing a New Harmonization for all categories of Pensioners in the state.

Speaking during a courtesy call on the Kogi State Head of Service, Peter Elijah Evinemi (FCA) in his office recently, the chairman of the union, Comrade Clement Ohida expressed gratitude to the Governor for the extension of his kindheartedness and

consideration towards the state retirees at this season.

The chairman noted that, such increase for Pensioners was last realized about 20 years ago adding that, since then no increase had been made at all.

Highlighting His Excellency's achievements, the Chairman applauded his prompt and regular payment of monthly pension, new pension harmonization as well as the implementation of Health Insurance Scheme for Pensioners in Kogi state.

Speaking further, Comrade Ohida

thanked the Head of Service for his unwavering supports and commitment to the welfare of Kogi Pensioners.

In his remark, the Head of Service, appreciated the leadership of the union for their calmness and perseverance, assuring them of His Excellency's determination to prioritize the welfare of the Pensioners.

Speaking further, he assured them of the State Governments plan to explore a long-term financial solution to address the backlog of gratuities comprehensively.



KOGI HOUSING COMMISSIONER ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS OVER HOUSING DEFICITS

By Blessing Ameloko-Odoh



To ensure affordable houses and mitigate housing deficits in Kogi State, the Commissioner for Housing and Urban Development Hon Abanika Taiye is organising a two-day symposium of stakeholders in the housing sector in the state.

Announcing this in Lokoja on Tuesday 19-11-2024, Hon Taiye Abanika said the symposium with the theme "Modern Housing and Urban Renewal in Kogi State" which will hold on the 27th and 28th of November 2024 is to galvanise ideas from stakeholders.

Abanika, noted that the Governor of the State, Alhaji Usman Ododo, has been working very hard towards providing houses for all in the state, particularly the less privileged, saying that this was part of his campaign promises to the citizens.

He noted that the ministry, though newly created, is already leveraging on the platform of the Federal Government under the Renewed Hope Agenda of President Ahmed Bola Tinubu's Administration to ensure decent and affordable houses for the people.

He said, "200 hectares of land have been provided for the Federal Ministry of

Housing and Urban Development and the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) to build over 1000 housing units in the state."

He further said that all the preliminary works towards providing houses for the workers are on and have been captured in the 2025 Draft Budget, which he said, will soon be presented to the House of Assembly for approval. "All these will help to bring down the cost of accommodation in the state", he added.

The stakeholder's meeting will come up with a blueprint that will help in policy formulation and fashioning the processes of ensuring affordable houses for the citizenry," Hon Abanika enthused.

He also revealed that as part of the activities, the stakeholders will also embark on a road-walk show to create awareness for urban renewal and regeneration.

Congratulation

His Excellency, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo Executive Governor, Kogi State Government House, Lokoja.

I am delighted to felicitate with Your Excellency on the occasion of your one-year anniversary in office. This milestone marks a significant achievement in your administration's journey towards transforming Kogi State.

As the Honorable Commissioner for Housing and Urban Development, I am proud to acknowledge the notable strides your administration has made in the housing and urban development sector. Our ministry is committed to building on these gains and ensuring that our policies and programs align with your vision for a more prosperous and developed Kogi State.

In the coming year, we pledge to intensify more efforts in delivering quality services to the people of Kogi State. We will maintain our focus on affordable housing, urban renewal, and infrastructure development, while exploring innovative solutions to address emerging challenges.

Please accept my warmest congratulations once again, Your Excellency. I promise more commitment and dedication to work to drive progress and development in Kogi State.

Congratulations once again!

Hon. Taiye Abanika

Honorable Commissioner for Housing and Urban Development





KOGI GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES BID OPENING FOR CONSTRUCTION OF LOKOJA INTERNATIONAL MARKET; APPOINTS TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

By Taiye Bayode

In line with boosting the commercial potential of the State & ensuring that she competes with the standard of first world countries, the State Government has officially launched the bid opening for the construction of Lokoja International Market in Kogi State.

The proposed international market is aimed to complement the current one, and in turn, transform the State into a major player in the exportation of goods & services to other countries.

The event which took place at the State Secretariat Conference Hall Lokoja, brought together different caliber of companies for the proposed bidding of the International market construction.

Giving the welcome address, the Hon. Commissioner for Commerce & Industry, Hon. Muhammed Muktar Shuaibu welcomed the guests & dignitaries seated at the high table.

While appreciating Almighty God for the grace to witness such an occasion, the Commissioner also commended H.E Kogi State Governor, Alh. Ahmed Usman Ododo for an enabling environment where local & foreign investments can thrive. He noted that the Chief Servant of Kogi State is always creating laudable projects and exploits, and this Multi-Billion Naira project is no different.

In his words "H.E Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo has been making giant strides since his assumption of office this year, 2024. It's important that we continue to celebrate

and recognize initiatives like this to keep Kogites informed.

I also want to appreciate all the companies present and charge the formed technical committee to be fair, and transparent in their selection of the bidders."

Earlier the Permanent Secretary of the ministry, Lamidi Salihu in his opening address, explained that the aim of the event is to get the best value for money in services rendered, so as to ensure that the quality meets the standard of H.E Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo, while also reiterating that the formed technical committee will be unbiased, fair & transparent in accordance with the "Kogi State Public Procurement Law".

He urged all bidders to put their best foot forward as only the most qualified would be selected.

The Appointed Technical Committee Members were:

- ☞ Perm Sec, Min. of Finance, Budget & Economic Planning, Mr Olajide Samuel - {Chairman}
- ☞ Representative of Chartered Institute of Purchasing & Supply, Prof. Omeiza Isah Usman - {Secretary}
- ☞ Monitoring, Evaluation & Certification, Bureau of Public Procurement - Mr. Olowonibi Segun - {Member}
- ☞ Director Commerce, Min. of Commerce & Industry, Mr Akowe Yakubu - {Member}
- ☞ Director Finance & Account, Min. of

Commerce & Industry, Mrs Bosede Micah - {Member}

- ☞ Quantity Surveyor, Bureau of Public Procurement, Momohjimoh Ibrahim - {Member}
- ☞ Acting Director, PRS, Min. of Commerce & Industry, Adejoh Ibrahim - {Member}
- ☞ Representative of Nigerian Institute of Quantity Surveyor, John Adejoh Agene - {Member}
- ☞ Representative of Nigerian Society of Engineers {Civil Engineer} W/ VP, Eng. Felix Ajayi - {Member}
- ☞ Representative of Ministry of Works, Electrical Engineer, Eng. Abbas Ibrahim - {Member}
- ☞ Representative of Min. of Housing & Urban Dev, Building Engineer, Builder Mrs. Salawu Rafiat - {Member}
- ☞ Quantity Surveyor, BPP - Ladan Lawal - {Member}
- ☞ Hon. Commissioner for Min. of Commerce & Industry, Alhaji Muhammed Muktar Shuaibu - {Observer}
- ☞ Permanent Secretary for Min. of Commerce & Industry, Lamidi Salihu - {Observer}
- ☞ Director General, Bureau of Public Procurement - {Observer}
- ☞ State Consultant, Eng. Kabiru Suleiman - {Observer}

The appointed members posed for pictures & left to another venue for their exercise & evaluation.

CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE



The Holy writ says; It's not of the him that wills, but of God that shows Mercy. Indeed, this past one year of Your Excellency in office as the Chief Servant of Kogi State, God has indeed been gracious and merciful to you. He has endowed you with Solomonic wisdom and clothed you the with the garment of honour.

It has been one year of steady progress; one year of promises kept and one year of delivery in all sectors. I am proud to be associated with your government. Little wilder, the wall of opposition in the state is crumbling and you have become the much sought after 'bride'. It's all about Allah's grace and benevolence.

Hearty congratulations, Your Excellency and more lofty heights!

Signed:

**HON. ARC.
IDRIS SALMAN FNIA**

Member, House of Representative Kabba-Bunu/Ijumu Federal Constituency





WAEC: KOGI TO SANCTION PERPETRATORS OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICES



Prin cip als, Teachers and Supervisors who aid and abet Examination Malpractices will henceforth be prosecuted in accordance with Kogi State Education Law and Other Matters Connected Therewith, 2020.

Kogi State Commissioner for Education, Hon. Wemi Jones made this known on Tuesday in Lokoja in a meeting with some principals and supervisors who were indicted by WAEC for Examination Malpractices for 2023/2024 Examinations.

The West African Examination Council has de-recognized 13 Schools and blacklisted 14 supervisors for various degrees of Examination Malpractices in the 2023/2024 Examinations in the State.

The Commissioner said Examination Malpractices is a criminal offence and will be treated in accordance with the Law.

He stated that a committee headed by the Permanent Secretary will be set up to investigate personalities that were indicted by WAEC and whoever is found wanting will be prosecuted in the Law Court.

The State, he said, has invested so much

in Education and will no longer tolerate the attitude of the "Bad Eggs" drawing back the gains already made in Education.

Also speaking, the Permanent Secretary Ministry of Education, Dr. Jibrin Seidu Alhaji, admonished the principals and the supervisors to desist from the act, saying that their actions are not just robbing the State but destroying the future of the students.

He asked them to have a sober reflection of their actions as posterity will judge everyone according to their deeds.

According to him, while some teachers are being called out for awards, it will be wrong for them to be called out for condemnations.

Dr. Jibrin who described teachers who engage in Examination Malpractices as "cheaters" said it is unfortunate that this is happening when Kogi State is investing so much in Education, saying that whoever is culpable will be severely sanctioned.



Hip! Hip!! Hip!!!

Harrray

HIS EXCELLENCY,

**ALH. AHMED
USMAN ODODO**

Executive Governor of Kogi State

On behalf of the Kogi State Health Insurance Agency, I am delighted to congratulate Your Excellency on your one-year anniversary in office. We acknowledge the tremendous attention your administration has given to healthcare in Kogi State, which has significantly improved the lives of our people.

Your commitment to providing quality and affordable healthcare services is evident in the various initiatives implemented by your administration. The upgrading of 70 Primary Health Centers to meet standard requirements is a notable achievement, and we appreciate the efforts made to enroll civil servants in the Health Insurance Scheme.

We are also grateful for the support given to the Kogi State Health Insurance Agency, which has enabled us to provide health insurance coverage to over 31,000 enrollees across the state. Our agency has accredited over 300 health facilities, providing access to quality healthcare services for our enrollees.

Please accept our heartfelt congratulations on this milestone achievement. We look forward to continuing our partnership with your administration to ensure that the people of Kogi State have access to high-quality and affordable healthcare services.

Congratulations once again!

Signed:
Dr. Aledare Adekunle
Executive Secretary,
Kogi State Health Insurance Agency



Women in Kogi State are thriving, thanks to Gov Ododo – SGS



Kogi Strides: My starting point would be the discrepancy between your previous claim of being an SSG and your current title as an SGS. According to the constitution, the role of the SGS - or any SSG for that matter - is crucial in governance, serving as the central hub for policy guidance and advice. How effective has this role been in practice?

RESPONSE: Thank you for providing me with this valuable opportunity. In my role as the Secretary to the State Government, I am responsible for overseeing policy formulation and ensuring their successful implementation, as you have rightly pointed out. Over the past year, I have had the privilege of working under the leadership of His Excellency Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo, who has granted me the autonomy to effectively carry out my

duties.

When I mention having "free hands," I am referring to the authority and support I have been given to roll out policies and ensure their proper execution through thorough monitoring and evaluation. Currently, we are in the midst of a retreat and ministerial briefing where we are assessing the implementation of the policies that were introduced in the previous year. Commissioners, heads of departments, and agency leaders are providing updates on their progress to ensure that the policies are being effectively implemented.

During these briefings, any challenges that have arisen are being addressed, and solutions are being sought to ensure the continued progress and development

of Kogi State. It is through this collaborative effort and dedication to excellence that we will continue to move forward and achieve our goals.

Kogi Strides: I will address policy formulation later, but first, let's discuss e-Governance. Let's examine the initiatives that the government is undertaking in this field.

RESPONSE: Currently, we have implemented the e-EXCO system within our organization. Upon the announcement of our state executive council meeting, there was a misconception that the meeting had been relocated to Aso Rock, the villa. However, I can confidently say that what we have in place is not only comparable to, but even superior to the facilities at the villa.

I invite you to visit our e-EXCO setup and witness its efficiency firsthand. Each commissioner is equipped with a modern laptop and Wi-Fi connection, allowing them to participate in the state executive council meeting from any location. This means that even if the chairman, who serves as the chief servant of the state and Governor, is traveling abroad, the meeting can still proceed seamlessly.

With our paperless approach, all aspects of the state executive council meeting, from attendance to memos, are managed digitally with just a click of a button. This ensures that no excuses, such as illness or unforeseen circumstances, can prevent a commissioner from participating in the meeting.

I encourage you to experience our innovative e-EXCO system for yourself and witness the efficiency and convenience it brings to our state executive council meetings.

Kogi Strides: Was a specialized program implemented for members of the state executive council to enhance their IT literacy skills and enable them to effectively navigate the digital landscape?

RESPONSE: Yes, we did. Before commencing our activities, each member underwent a one-hour training session. Both the cabinet members and I received training, and during our meeting, an



additional hour was allocated for the training of all participants. This practice has become routine for us.

Kogi Strides: I have noticed the presence of an NGO, which has prompted me to consider the current situation. In regards to the women of Kogi State, you serve as their representative and ambassador within the government. I am interested in learning about the progress and challenges faced by women in the past year under this administration.

RESPONSE: In the past year in Kogi State, there has been a significant increase in the representation of women in government positions. The term "Buga" may be used to describe this progress, as the governor has provided women with more opportunities and recognition. Currently, there are four women serving as commissioners, a notable increase from previous administrations. This demonstrates a positive shift towards gender equality and empowerment in our state.

I am proud to be a woman who has had the privilege of serving as the Secretary to the

State Government. It is encouraging to see more women taking on leadership roles in various departments and agencies, in addition to heading ministries. This progress has allowed us to surpass the 35% affirmation for women in government, showcasing the commitment to diversity and inclusivity in Kogi State.

Through the grace of God, I am grateful for the opportunities I have had as a woman in government. I believe that by continuing to support and empower women in leadership positions, we can create a more inclusive and progressive society for all.

Kogi Strides: This is directed towards those of you who hold top executive positions and are concerned with affirmative action. However, what is the overall status of women in the state?

RESPONSE: Women in Kogi State are thriving, thanks to the prioritization of their welfare by the governor. Whenever welfare packages are being distributed, the governor emphasizes giving women and children priority. This directive is

clear: women and children should always be the focus when rolling out welfare initiatives.

I am proud to lead an NGO called the Folashade Ayoade Initiative for Widows and Orphans. Our mission is to support widows and orphans in need. Whenever an opportunity arises, I personally ensure that widows and orphans receive the assistance they deserve. It is heartwarming to see widows coming to my office, seeking help and support. Their gratitude motivates me to continue my work.

I am not alone in my efforts. Other government officials, such as the Commissioner of Information and Communications, also prioritize empowering women in their communities. This commitment to supporting women is evident in Takete Ide where he comes from and beyond.

In Kogi State, women have a significant place and are valued members of our society. Together, we will continue to work towards a brighter future for all.

Kogi Strides: As a mother, you hold a

unique and important role in shaping the future of our youth. I am interested in hearing your perspective on the current state of young people in our community. Over the past year, what changes or challenges do you believe have impacted them the most? Your insights and experiences as a mother are invaluable in understanding and addressing the needs of our youth. Thank you for sharing your thoughts.

RESPONSE: The youth in Kogi State are thriving, and I feel rejuvenated despite approaching the age of sixty. Our state is dedicated to empowering our youth through various initiatives. We provide a regular monthly subvention to support different youth groups, including students, student unions, and national youth organizations like NYCN. Financial assistance is provided to help train the majority of our youth in various skills. Currently, 250 young individuals are undergoing training at the Nigerian Korean Institute.

In Kogi State, we prioritize teaching our youth how to be self-sufficient rather than simply providing handouts. The administration, led by His Excellency, the Governor, is predominantly composed of young individuals, with 90% of appointments going to youths based on merit rather than political connections. This approach to governance is a true form of empowerment, breaking away from the tradition of favouring the children of political elites.

My personal journey reflects the opportunities available in Kogi State. I come from humble beginnings, born to a pepper seller and a petty patent medicine seller in Ibadan. Despite facing challenges, including hawking pepper on the streets during my youth and undergraduate years, I have risen to serve as the Secretary to the Government of the State for the third consecutive term. This success story is not unique, as many individuals in our state have similar tales of perseverance and achievement.

Kogi Strides: I would like to transport you back to the classroom for a moment. Imagine yourself as a professor, equipped with pen and paper, ready to evaluate Alhaji Ododo's performance over the past year. What are your thoughts on this matter?

RESPONSE: My personal assessment is that we have achieved a 99.9% success rate in addressing the issues within the system. This assessment is based on my personal experience and involvement in the system. One of the key issues that remains unresolved is the matter of gratuity, which has been inherited from previous administrations such as those of Idris and Wada.

Currently, pensioners are receiving their pensions on time, with salaries being paid before the end of each month. In fact, December salaries were disbursed as early as December 14th. However, the issue of gratuity remains a challenge that we are actively working to resolve.

Since 2016, our state leader has implemented measures to gradually address the gratuity payments, releasing one hundred million Naira each month towards this cause. This problem was not created by the current administration, but they have made significant improvements over the past year.

With the continued efforts and improvements being made, we are confident that by the end of the current administration's term, the issue of gratuity will no longer be a concern. Our goal is to achieve a 100% success rate in addressing this issue by the end of the second term of this administration.

Kogi Strides: I appreciate your optimism in predicting an 8-year term, however, I must admit that I tend to be more cautious in my approach, hence the need for glasses. Therefore, I would suggest considering a more moderate time frame of three years. As we anticipate the conclusion of his first term, what do you envision for the future? How do you foresee progress and development across various sectors? I am eager to hear your insights on this matter.

RESPONSE: I must emphasize the success of the governor during his first term in office, particularly in the area of labour relations. Under his leadership, Kogi state became the first state to implement the minimum wage, setting a precedent that was recognized by the National Bureau of Statistics. The National Labour Congress even intended to present an award to the governor for this achievement, although he humbly declined, stating that his focus is on delivering results rather than collecting

accolades.

One key factor in the governor's success is his appointment of a knowledgeable advisor on labour matters, who has effectively navigated potential issues and ensured a harmonious relationship with labour unions. This proactive approach has garnered praise from both supporters and opposition members alike. In fact, an opposition candidate who previously ran against the governor acknowledged his accomplishments in various sectors, including health, education, infrastructure, and pension payments.

As we look ahead to the governor's second term, it is evident that his commitment to excellence and dedication to serving the people will continue to drive his success. The positive feedback from all sides of the political spectrum is a testament to his leadership and vision for the state. I have no doubt that the governor's second term will be marked by even greater achievements and continued progress for the people of Kogi state.

Kogi Strides: I would like you to incorporate the following information into your upcoming discussion. During a recent meeting, I brought up concerns regarding labour issues with the commissioner. Can you provide an update on the current status of labour relations with the government?

RESPONSE: Excellent! 100%! Allow me to share with you a wise decision made by Governor Ododo. He appointed the former chairman of the Nigeria Labor Congress in Kogi State, who had served 8 years and retired from civil service, as a special adviser on labour matters. This strategic move has proven to be highly effective, as Kogi State was the first to implement the minimum wage and promptly paid its workers, earning recognition from the National Bureau of Statistics. The National Labor Congress even intended to present an award to the governor for this achievement, but he humbly declined, stating that he prefers to be recognized for his accomplishments. However, the award was eventually brought to him in Lokoja. This decision to appoint someone with a deep understanding of labour issues has resulted in a harmonious relationship with labour unions, with no reported issues. In fact, they have expressed their appreciation by presenting him with awards.

CONGRATULATORY Message



As we commemorate a year of transformative leadership in Kogi State, Adbokem Technologies Ltd joins the chorus of well-wishers to celebrate your remarkable achievements, His Excellency, Alh. Ahmed Usman Ododo.

Your unwavering commitment to catapulting our great state to unprecedented heights has been truly remarkable. Under your visionary leadership, we have witnessed tangible progress in infrastructural development, and we are eager to augment your efforts.

As a stalwart partner, Adbokem Technologies Ltd pledges to provide cutting-edge solutions that exceed expectations. Your blueprint for Kogi State's transformation aligns seamlessly with our company's objectives, and we are resolute in our support for your initiatives.

We appreciate your unshakeable confidence in our company and eagerly anticipate continuing our synergy. Once again, congratulations on achieving this milestone. We wish you sustained success in piloting our great state.

Sincerely,



SIGNED: MANAGEMENT



GOV. ODODO REITERATES COMMITMENT TO SECURITY

SAYS SECURITY REMAINS THE PRIMARY GOAL OF HIS ADMINISTRATION



Gov. Ahmed Usman Ododo of Kogi State has reiterated his unalloyed commitment to security, saying his administration will continue to enforce a zero-tolerance to the insecurities of lives and properties in the state.

The Governor stated this in a chat with a Vigilante Group, Professional Hunters, Tuesday, in Lokoja, hailing the Vigilante Group for their "unbending, untiring and unwavering commitment to the security of Kogi State".

Governor Ododo thanked the Professional Hunters for putting their lives on the line to ensure the security of Kogi People, saying that the state is already reaping the huge investment in security.

He thanked the National Security Adviser, Mallam Nuhu Ribadu and all the heads of security agencies for their support since he assumed office, saying their unflinching support has helped in stabilizing the security of the State.

The Governor thanked President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR for spotting a security czar like Mallam Nuhu Ribadu, saying the President's talent spotting acumen has never been in doubt.

Earlier, the State Security Adviser, Commander Jerry Omodara (Rtd) commended the Governor for his avowed commitment to security, saying his efforts are already pushing criminals away from the state.

Omodara thanked the Vigilante Group for their heroics, assuring the people that the State Government will continue to adopt "community-led security approach".

Also speaking at the meeting, the leader of the Group, Prof. Abdullahi Yau said the Professional Hunters were encouraged by the commitment and support of the Governor of the State. He assured the

State that the Group will continue to cooperate and collaborate with other security agencies to stamp out criminality from Kogi State.

In his closing remarks, the State Commissioner of Police, Mr Bethrand Onuoha thanked the Professional Hunters for living up to expectations and for cooperating with the conventional security agencies to fight insecurity in the State.

The Professional Hunters numbering about 300 have been in the State for over two months to work with the security architecture on ground in the State. The meeting was attended by top government officials, and Local Government Chairmen



Kingsley Femi Fanwo

Hon.
Commissioner for Information and Communications



COMMISSIONER FOR CULTURE AND TOURISM

Congratulates

GOV. ODODO AS HE MARKS

One Year in Office

The Kogi State Commissioner for Culture and Tourism, Hon. Acharu Okpanachi has congratulated the Chief Servant of Kogi State His Excellency, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo, as he marks his one year anniversary in office.

The Hon. Commissioner warmly expresses her heartfelt congratulations to the Executive Governor for his distinguished leadership style, his commitment and dedication stressing that Kogi State has no doubt experienced exceptional growth and development.

I will like to appreciate his Excellency for the massive support the Ministry of Culture and Tourism has enjoyed from him since the inception of this administration. This has encouraged and enabled the Ministry to carry out many important programmes such as:

- * The unveiling of the maiden Kogi International Carnival Logo on the 27th August 2024.
- * The Organisation and actualization of the maiden Kogi International Carnival, one of its kind, held from December 1st to 7th, 2024.
- * The clearing and putting in good shape of the following tourist sites.
- * The European/African Cemetery by Kogi Travellers Park in Lokoja.
- * The European Cemetery opposite Zenith Bank in Lokoja.
- * The first prison yard and watchtower in the Northern Nigeria.
- * The tomb of the deposed Emir of Kano, Mallam Abdullahi Aliyu who died in 1926 at Kabawa in Lokoja.
- * The first safe in the Northern Nigeria.
- * The Lugard Rest House on Mount Patti.
- * The Cenotaph.

The site where the Royal Niger Company Flag was lowered for the last time on Nigeria soil and the British Union Jack hoisted on the 1st of January 1900.

Your Excellency, I want to assure you that the Ministry of Culture and Tourism is fully committed to supporting your administration. We are proud of your achievements and positive impact on our community.

Once more, congratulations, may God continue to bestow on you the wisdom to pilot the affairs of the citizens entrusted to your care.

Signed:
Hon Acharu Okpanachi
Commissioner for Culture and Tourism.



OKUN DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION AFFAIRS SUPPORT TO GOV. ODODO



Adegboyega Segun

A social cultural organization and the umbrella body of the Okun People of Kogi State, Okun Development Association, has expressed unalloyed support to the Governor of the State, Alh. Ahmed Usman Ododo.

The Association made this known when its leadership paid a working visit to the State Commissioner for Information and Communications, Hon. Kingsley Femi Fanwo.

During the meeting, Ambassador Rotimi, leader of the team, expressed their gratitude for the ongoing progress in Kogi State University, Kabba.

He thanked Governor Ododo for building on the strong foundation laid by former Governor Yahaya Bello, ensuring that Okunland has a university for accessible education for their children

"The Okun people are truly appreciative of the changes we are witnessing under this administration. Without partisan bias or political motives, the Okun Nation is pleased with the evidence of development around us, "The Kogi State University in Kabba stands as a shining example of a people-oriented administration, and we are grateful for the prompt intervention

concerning the new university in Okunland. Thank you for enhancing the legacy of former Governor Yahaya Bello.

Like Oliver Twist, we will continue to ask for more." Mr. Rotimi stated.

In response, Hon. Kingsley Fanwo urged the ODA to unite the Okun people for a cohesive Okun Nation, emphasizing that unity is essential for development. He encouraged the ODA to establish a platform for everyone to come together to foster growth in Okunland.

The Hon. Commissioner urged the ODA to fully support Governor Ododo, describing him as a humble leader committed to the transformative development of the state. He also encouraged the Okun people to explore agricultural ventures for sustainable livelihoods.

"I am very impressed that the ODA is beginning to recognize the importance of engaging with the current government, "The leader at the helm of affairs is a humble, humane, and considerate individual—a fair-minded leader committed to leaving a legacy of humanity and humility. We, as the Okun people, can rally behind him to support his administration." Hon. Fanwo remarked

He continued, "Governor Ododo has shown his commitment to Okunland. Take,

for instance, the university in Kabba—his promise to fund the project is being realized. Many improvements are evident, including developments on township roadways, healthcare facilities, and educational institutions. These efforts not only enhance the infrastructure but also promote economic growth and community well-being.

Hon. Fanwo proudly announced an upgrade of 72 Primary Health Care Centers across the state, enhancing their ability to provide secondary health services to the community. "I have reviewed the list, and I can confirm that Okun is benefiting considerably, with no less than 30% of the upgraded centers serving the region," Hon. Fanwo emphasized.

As we move forward, it is essential that we continue to work together to build upon these successes. The commitment from Governor Ododo and his administration exemplifies a dedication to serving the people of Okunland, fostering a brighter future for all residents.

"I call on everyone to stay engaged and support ongoing initiatives that contribute to the progress of our community. Together, we can achieve great things. Thank you for your continued support and dedication to the development of Okunland." Hon. Fanwo appreciated

THE GOVERNOR'S PERFORMANCE IS A CHALLENGE TO ALL COUNCIL CHAIRMEN - KOGI ALGON CHAIR



The Kogi State ALGON Chairman and the Executive Chairman of Yagba West Local Government Area, Hon. Tosin Olokun has said the sterling performances of Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo have put all Council Chairmen on their toes.

In this exclusive interview with the official website of the State Government, kogistate.gov.ng, Hon. Olokun said the Governor has reset the mentality of the people to development-focused governance. Here are excerpts from the interview.

KS: Can we get to meet you sir?

ALGON Chairman: I am Hon. Tosin Olokun, the Executive Chairman of Yagba West Local Government Area. I am also the ALGON Chairman in Kogi State.

KS: You were recently elected Chairman via an election. How will you rate the integrity of the election?

ALGON Chairman: The election was the most transparent in the history of Local Government elections in the State. We campaigned hard and we thank the people of Kogi State for believing in our party as they have always done.

KS: What are your plans for the people of Yagba West?

ALGON Chairman: My plans are all in my manifesto which I keep till date as my guiding pact with the good people of Yagba West. My team and I are determined to unite the people of the Local Government Area, ensure security of lives and property, promote small and medium scale enterprises, promote agriculture and food security, ensure good health, rebound our education and ensure we promote prosperity among our people. With the Governor we have in the state, we cannot fail.

KS: Now talking about the Governor, how will you rate his administration?

ALGON Chairman: Conducting the Local Government election alone has shown that our Governor believes in good governance and the rule of law. He gave the people the free hand to elect the people they want at the helm of affairs at the Local Government level. He has improved security in the state and has supported all of us in ensuring security in our respective Local Government Areas. He has also been doing great in infrastructure. In Egbe here in Yagba West Local Government Area, Township Roads are being reconstructed. The people are very happy. He is upgrading Primary Healthcare Centres across the State. We couldn't have come at a better time. But the blistering pace of the Governor is also a challenge. It means we must justify our mandate. Our people now know that governance can be impactful. We thank the Governor for being a worthy example to us all. We will not disappoint our people, and we will not disappoint him.

KS: There were security challenges in your Local Government Area at some point. How are you combating this?

ALGON Chairman: The Governor supported us to survive the onslaught. It was a big battle, but we have triumphed. The Governor was able to mobilize security logistics that helped us greatly. We thank him and we will keep our feet on the ground to ensure we keep criminals away from Yagba West permanently.

KS: As the ALGON Chairman in Kogi State, how prepared do you think your colleagues are to ensure grassroots development?

ALGON Chairman: This is the best crop of Chairmen our Local Government Areas have ever got. We are ready and we are already doing a lot at our respective Local Government Areas to improve livelihood. Like I said, the Governor is delivering at the

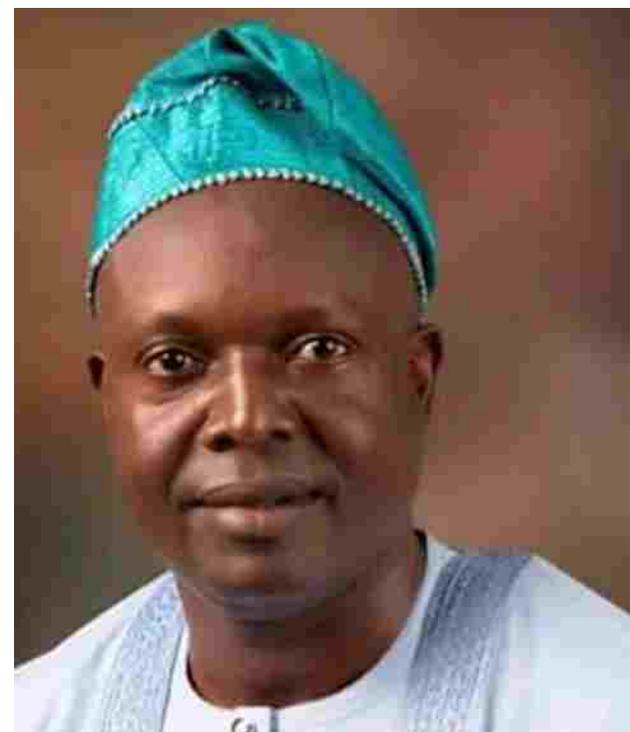
State level, we have no excuse not to replicate his good work. He is offering us a lot of support to shine, and we will seize the opportunities. All the Chairmen are ready to set positive records. We are good to go.

KS: What is your message to the people of Kogi State?

ALGON Chairman: They should have confidence in Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo. He is a God-fearing leader who will continue to prioritize the welfare of the people. On our part as Chairmen, we will continue to do our best to improve the living standards of the people. The people should also support the security efforts of the Government. Don't harbor criminals, always report criminals to the Government and security agencies. Violence should be completely eschewed. Now that the Government is closer to you with the election of Councillors, explore dialogue with the Government. We will always listen to you. We have a listening Governor, a humble achiever. Let us all support him and work with him.

KS: Thanks for your time, Hon. Olokun for your time.

ALGON Chairman: The pleasure is mine.



KOGI STATE INTENSIFIES EFFORTS TO COMBAT CHILD LABOUR AND TRAFFICKING



The Kogi State Government has vowed to take a firm stance against child labour and the trafficking of children within the state.

Halimat Alhassan, the Senior Special Assistant to Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo on Child Labour and Trafficking, made the announcement in a statement to the press on Wednesday in Lokoja.

Alhassan revealed that the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development is actively working to place children in orphanages into permanent, safe, and nurturing homes.

In her statement, she emphasized, "Since my appointment as the Senior Special Assistant to Governor Usman Ododo, the government has shown its unwavering commitment to addressing these grave issues. Protecting the welfare of our children is not just a priority but a solemn duty that the State Government holds in the highest regard."

She continued, "The Nigerian Constitution guarantees fundamental rights to life, education, health, and protection from abuse and exploitation for all citizens, including children. These rights are not just words on paper—they form the cornerstone of a just society. The law includes 273 sections covering vital issues such as healthcare services, the



prohibition of child marriage, and the state's responsibility to enforce these rights."

Alhassan also highlighted that, under the Child Rights Act, activities such as child marriage and betrothal of those under 18 are strictly prohibited, calling these measures crucial safeguards for the future of the nation's children.

"As a responsible government, we are dedicated to ensuring that every child in Kogi State is protected from all forms of harm and deprivation as mandated by law. Our mission is clear: to eradicate

child labour and trafficking not only in Kogi but across Nigeria," she stated.

She called on security agencies, the media, and other stakeholders to collaborate in the fight against child exploitation. "Together, we can end these heinous practices and secure a safer future for every Nigerian child, particularly those here in Kogi State," she urged.

Alhassan further stressed that any case of child abuse or rights violations would be managed with the utmost urgency and seriousness. "Our children deserve nothing less," she concluded.

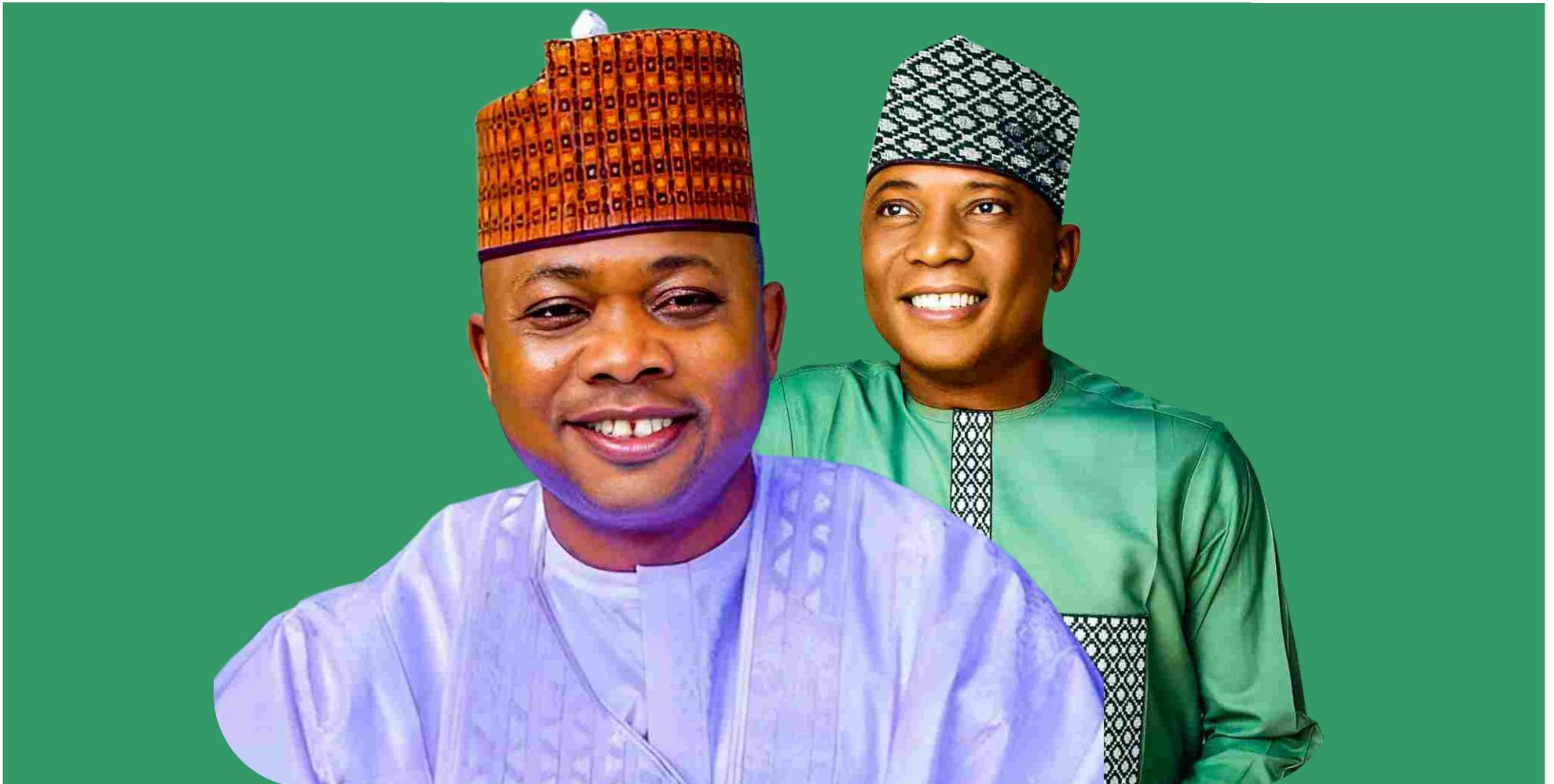


KOGI STATE

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT

CONGRATULATES GOV. ODODO AS HE MARKS ONE YEAR IN OFFICE



On behalf of the Staff and Management of Kogi State Ministry of Environment and Ecological Management, I extend our heartfelt congratulations to Your Excellency, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo, on the occasion of One-Year Anniversary as the Executive Governor of Kogi State.

This significant milestone provides us with an opportunity to reflect on the tremendous progress Kogi State has made under your robust leadership. Your exceptional dedication to public service and your clear vision for a sustainable and prosperous future for Kogi State has been evident in the policies and initiatives you have implemented in just one year.

Under your administration, we have witnessed significant strides in tackling deforestation, promoting sustainable agriculture, and improving waste management systems.

Your leadership has emphasized the

importance of creating a clean and healthy environment for all citizens of Kogi State, improving waste management systems and raising awareness about the importance of environmental conservation. These efforts have directly impacted the quality of life for many and fostered a greater sense of environmental responsibility among the people of Kogi State.

We are confident that your administration's continued drive towards greater ecological sustainability and economic prosperity will lead the state to an enviable destination. We also stand beside you in support of your initiatives on environmental sustainability and we strongly believe that with your leadership quality Kogi State will continue to witness all round development.

Once again, congratulations on your remarkable achievements during your first 365 days in office. We look forward to continue working towards building a greener, cleaner, and more prosperous Kogi State.



Hon. Engr. Joseph Oluwasegun
Commissioner for Environment and Ecological Management

I Am Pleasantly Pleased With Kogi's Current Affairs – Fanwo



Kogi Strides: I would like to revisit a point you made regarding the governance of the current governor, which you described as "governance redefined." Could you elaborate on the reasoning behind this characterization?

Fanwo: Governance revolves around the people, placing them at the core of decision-making processes. The primary goal of this government is to restore governance to its rightful place by empowering the people, amplifying their voices, and ensuring their active participation in shaping policies. This administration stands out for its commitment to prioritizing the needs and interests of the citizens, setting a new standard for inclusive and responsive governance.

Kogi Strides: As an information manager, how do you find the task of managing information related to your principal? Is it a seamless process or do you encounter challenges along the way? Share your insights on the intricacies of handling information in a professional setting.

Fanwo: The effectiveness of a leader often depends on their approach and style. Throughout my career, I have had the opportunity to work with a variety of principals, each with their own unique leadership qualities. One individual who stands out in my memory is His Excellency, Alhaji Yahya Bello, the former governor of the state. I liken his leadership style to that of a bulldozer - uncompromising, ruthless, and necessary for clearing the path ahead. Just as a bulldozer is essential for land preparation before planting, Governor Bello's approach was crucial in preparing the ground for progress in Kogi State. His unwavering determination and firm decision-making were instrumental in overcoming challenges and paving the way for future development. In contrast, the

current governor, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo, can be likened to a tractor - still effective in tilling the land, but with a more diplomatic and compromising approach.

As an information manager, I experienced firsthand the challenges of working with a bulldozer-like leader. The controversies and conflicts that arose required careful navigation and strategic communication. However, with the transition to a more peaceful and harmonious environment under Governor Ododo's leadership, my role has evolved to one of support and facilitation.

In conclusion, the success of communication strategies often hinges on the principal one is working with. Adapting to their style and approach is essential in effectively conveying messages and achieving desired outcomes.

Kogi Strides: Many individuals often find managing politicians to be a challenging task. Do you believe that managing the current government would also be a difficult endeavour?

Fanwo: The issue at hand can be attributed to a lack of trust in government communications. Over the years, the public has grown accustomed to viewing the government as a deceitful entity, using propaganda to manipulate the truth. This erosion of trust has created a deficit that is difficult to overcome.

When examining the current administration, it is evident that actions speak louder than words. For example, when addressing the payment of civil servants' salaries, the government took a proactive approach by assessing the situation at the local government level. This initiative aimed to ensure that local government councils could meet their obligations and pay employees in full.

Furthermore, during discussions surrounding the new minimum wage, the government remained silent. However, behind the scenes, a committee was already in place, working diligently to formulate a plan. Within a short period of time, the committee presented its findings, and the government swiftly enacted the new minimum wage into law. This decision, which exceeded the agreed-upon amount, was met with surprise and skepticism from many.

Despite the initial shock, the government's actions underscore its commitment to the welfare of its citizens. By prioritizing the needs of the people and taking decisive action, the government is working to rebuild trust and demonstrate its dedication to improving the lives of all citizens.

Kogi State is predominantly a civil service state, with numerous rural communities where the primary source of income is derived from civil servants. These communities lack industries and rely heavily on the salaries of teachers, local government staff, and state civil servants. This income is then used to support local businesses such as garri sellers, vulcanizers, motor mechanics, and okada riders. As a result, the economy of these areas is intricately linked to the salaries of civil servants.

Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo, known as the Chief Servant of the People of Kogi State, has successfully stimulated the economy in a way that has garnered widespread approval from the grassroots population. His ability to deliver on promises has instilled a sense of trust and belief in his leadership among the people of Kogi State. Governor Ododo's actions speak louder than his words, demonstrating a commitment to fulfilling his promises without the need for excessive rhetoric.

Thanks to Governor Ododo's proactive

I Am Pleasantly Pleased With Kogi's Current Affairs

approach to governance, the issue of distrust in the government is now a thing of the past in Kogi State. The people have witnessed firsthand a leader who not only talks the talk but also walks the walk, earning their respect and confidence in the process. Governor Ododo's actions have solidified his reputation as a leader who delivers results, making him a trusted figure in the eyes of the people of Kogi State.

Kogi Strides: I will discuss the policies and e-government initiatives that he has implemented, but first, let's address the issue of Radio Kogi. During my last visit, the radio station was not functioning properly. Can you provide an update on its current status and situation?

Fanwo: Thank you for your support. During your last visit, we encountered some challenges with our equipment, specifically related to power issues. The previous administration provided us with a top-of-the-line transmitter, but without a reliable power source and an STL (Studio Transmitter Link) for remote broadcasting, we were unable to fully utilize it.

Under the current administration, we have successfully addressed the power issue by implementing a hybrid power system at Radio Kogi and acquiring the necessary STL equipment. This has enabled us to broadcast 24 hours a day, allowing for programming to be anchored from anywhere, even as far as Lagos.

This achievement marks a significant milestone for Radio Kogi, as it is the first time in the station's history that we are able to provide round-the-clock broadcasting. We are proud of this accomplishment and grateful for the support that has made it possible.

Kogi Strides: Now, let's delve into your IT initiatives. One aspect that has always stood out about Kogi State, even during FGYB's tenure, is its reliance on IT and technology. I recall hearing you mention that state executive council meetings were conducted remotely even before our arrival. Could you please elaborate on this and provide us with more insight into your IT strategies and advancements?

Fanwo: Before the implementation of the e-EXCO, we did not have the privilege of utilizing such advanced technology. The current Exco Hall, which was established

after the governor took office, is a state-of-the-art facility comparable to the one found at the presidential villa in Abuja. Our Exco hall is unparalleled in the country, as it operates on a zero paper system. All meeting minutes and agendas are stored electronically, eliminating the need for physical documents.

Communication with the governor during meetings is seamless, thanks to a designated system that allows attendees to interact without interruption. Participants can request to speak through their system, and once granted permission by the governor, their microphone is activated. This innovative approach to governance has revolutionized the way we conduct meetings and collaborate with key stakeholders.

In addition to the e-EXCO hall, we have also implemented an e-governance platform that enables individuals to submit memos to the Governor, SGS, and Chief of Staff electronically. This eliminates the need for physical visits to their offices, streamlining the process and saving valuable time. Our goal is to promote efficiency and smart governance, ultimately leading to a more effective and productive government.

The advancements we have made in technology have significantly improved the operations of the state government, making Kogi a better place for all.

Kogi Strides: During our interview with the Housing and Urban Development Commissioner, a significant issue arose regarding the presence of 200 of the largest cement factories in the country located in Kogi State. How do you anticipate these factories will impact the state?

Fanwo: The ongoing conversation regarding the operations of Dangote Cement Company and Mangal Cement Company in Kogi State is one that will persist until justice is served. It is concerning that despite having two of the largest cement companies in Africa operating in the state, the local population still struggles with high prices for cement. This issue goes beyond the cost of the product; it also pertains to the impact these companies have on the community and the environment.

The lack of adequate support for the communities from which these companies

source their raw materials is evident in the poor conditions of local clinics and the overall degradation of the land. It is imperative that these giants in the cement industry prioritize corporate social responsibility and give back to the communities that support their operations. Kogi State plays a significant role in supplying resources such as coal to power the machinery used by these companies. Therefore, it is only fair that these companies reciprocate by investing in the well-being of the local population and environment. The sustainability of their operations hinges on their ability to address the social and environmental challenges faced by the communities in which they operate. It is essential that they fulfill their obligation to give back to Kogi State, as it is a non-negotiable aspect of their presence in the region.

Kogi Strides: In one of the write-ups you submitted, you described your Governor as transformative, which is a significant accolade. This term carries weight and implies substantial change and progress. However, some individuals may question the sincerity of this characterization, particularly those who are skeptical of political rhetoric. Therefore, I am interested in exploring the extent to which the current Governor has truly enacted transformative policies and initiatives.

Fanwo: Significant transformations have been taking place in various sectors within Kogi State. The civil service, in particular, plays a crucial role in the state's operations. With approximately 17 certified resources available, many of which remain untapped, there is great potential for growth and development. One notable example is the gold processing zone in Mopa, located in the Mopamuro Local Government Area, which serves as the primary processing hub for the entire north central region of Nigeria.

Currently, there is a sense of concern regarding the state of affairs. However, there has been a shift in mindset among civil servants, with a focus on empowering the youth through skill-building initiatives rather than handouts. The Korea Institute, for instance, is actively training hundreds of young individuals who will receive tools to support themselves and their families.

Furthermore, advancements in governance have been made through the implementation of e-governance and the Smarter School program. In the healthcare



sector, efforts are being made to upgrade 150 primary healthcare centers to provide secondary healthcare services to the population. This transformation means that individuals in remote areas, such as Ayatorokiri, will no longer need to travel to Kabba for basic medical procedures, as these services will be available locally.

These changes are not merely rhetoric; they are tangible improvements that are being witnessed firsthand. The focus is on real, sustainable progress that benefits the people of Kogi State.

There is a clear alignment between our words and their observations. The evidence speaks for itself, demonstrating the transformative impact of our actions. Take, for example, the significant focus on the construction and rehabilitation of rural roads in areas like Mopa, Egbe, and Dekina. These neglected roads are now receiving

the attention they deserve, a fact not lost on the local residents who are witnessing these improvements firsthand.

The enthusiasm and gratitude expressed by the people of Egbe, as they see their streets being paved with asphalt for the first time, is a testament to the tangible progress being made. It is not a matter of us trying to spin a narrative; rather, it is about the undeniable changes taking place under this administration. The voices of the community members are the ones speaking loudest, sharing their experiences and acknowledging the positive impact of our initiatives.

It is noteworthy to see teachers and labour organizations, who have historically been at odds with the government, now actively supporting and championing our cause. This shift in sentiment is a reflection of the transformative vision and policies that

have been implemented. The fact that these groups are not only endorsing but leading the campaign for our continued leadership in 2027 speaks volumes about the trust and confidence they have in our administration.

The unity and solidarity displayed by labour organizations and other stakeholders in Kogi State are a testament to the power of transformative ideas and effective governance. Despite past disagreements, we have managed to forge a new path forward, one that is built on collaboration and shared goals. The support and endorsement we have received are a clear indication that our efforts are making a meaningful difference in the lives of the people we serve.

Kogi Strides: I would like to discuss the topic of politics. During my travels to various states, I have noticed a lack of cohesion in some regions. However, I have observed a strong sense of unity in Kogi State. I am curious to understand how the government was able to achieve this sense of unity.

Fanwo: The relationship between one's style of governance and their personality is a crucial aspect to consider. The Chief Servant of Kogi State, His Excellency Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo, is known for his peaceful and humble nature, which is reflected in his approach to governance. His commitment to peace and inclusivity has been evident in his interactions with individuals from all political backgrounds.

From the onset of his leadership, Governor Ododo prioritized consultations with the people of Kogi State, regardless of their political affiliations. His willingness to engage with opposition leaders and his humility have disarmed many critics, fostering a spirit of unity and collaboration for the development and progress of the state.

Under Governor Ododo's administration, the traditional boundaries of political opposition have blurred, as individuals from various parties are working together for the betterment of Kogi State. This inclusive approach has led to a decline in opposition sentiment, as individuals recognize the benefits of cooperation over conflict.

Governor Ododo's efforts to bring together past leaders and key stakeholders in the state further demonstrate his commitment to unity and progress. The upcoming stakeholders meeting on January 27th serves as a testament to his dedication to

I Am Pleasantly Pleased With Kogi's Current Affairs

engaging with all Kogites for the betterment of the state.

Governor Ododo's leadership style, characterized by humility, inclusivity, and a commitment to dialogue, has laid the foundation for a more united and prosperous Kogi State. His ability to bridge political divides and foster collaboration among diverse groups is a testament to his vision for a brighter future for all Kogites.

And to all residents of Kogi State, regardless of your political beliefs or ideologies, we are all united by one common goal: the desire for the greatness of Kogi State. This is why esteemed individuals such as Senator Dino Melaye and Alhaji Muritala Yakubu Ajaka have been invited to join the conversation on the growth and development of our state. Their presence signifies a commitment to working together towards a brighter future for all Kogites.

Kogi Strides: During our last conversation, he expressed his desire for Kogi to be united as one. As you mentioned, the stakeholders conference was intended to bring everyone together. Looking ahead, considering his personality, what obstacles do you anticipate facing as an Information Manager?

Fanwo: The challenge ahead lies in effectively communicating the multitude of achievements that have been accomplished. The sheer volume of progress made within the key ministries and sectors of the economy in Kogi State is already overwhelming. It is evident that a mere documentary would not suffice to encapsulate all that has been achieved in just one year. Therefore, it is imperative that we strive to bring this remarkable progress to the attention of the global community on a weekly basis.

Navigating the realm of politics can be a complex and unpredictable endeavour, often driven by self-interest rather than genuine recognition of positive accomplishments. Despite potential obstacles, we are prepared to face any challenges that may arise. As the Information Manager of the Kogi State government, I am no longer alone in this role. The collective efforts of over 70,000 civil servants, who are actively involved in

broadcasting the government's initiatives, serve as a testament to the widespread support for our endeavours.

Local contractors have been instrumental in the ongoing efforts to improve infrastructure, such as roads and primary healthcare centers, across all 21 local government areas. Additionally, community and social development agencies, as well as educational institutions, have played a vital role in advancing our shared goals. It is clear that the narrative has shifted from managing negative news to effectively conveying the multitude of positive developments taking place.

In conclusion, the challenge now lies in ensuring that the people are informed of the numerous accomplishments that have been achieved. The collective efforts of all those involved in the progress of Ododo are a testament to the dedication and commitment to the betterment of Kogi State.

Kogi Strides: Please provide a brief summary of your governor's personality and significance to Kogi State in one or two sentences.

Fanwo: He has dedicated himself to serving the people of Kogi State, demonstrating his genuine commitment and determination. His focus is on providing humble, dedicated, and God-fearing service to the united people of Kogi State. Despite not being from Kogi East, he has shown his willingness to advocate for the region, exemplifying his belief in unity.

His actions speak louder than words, as he has actively worked towards uniting the people of Kogi State. The community has placed their trust in him, presenting a significant challenge that he is prepared to face head-on. When asked about the rising expectations, he remains resolute in his determination to achieve his goals.

His unwavering dedication and newfound qualities are becoming more apparent as he navigates through the challenges ahead. It is clear that he is a determined individual who will stop at nothing to fulfill his objectives.

Kogi Strides: As the expectations of the people continue to rise, it is clear that this

is a key takeaway. Looking ahead two or three years from now, when he will be gearing up to run for re-election, the question arises: Will those expectations have been met?

Fanwo: Very well, it has only been a year. In that short time, I have been keeping track of the progress made by the administration. When my staff presented me with the achievements, I couldn't help but wonder where all the resources came from. One thing that sets him apart is his exceptional resource management skills. He is not one to squander resources. As he approaches his one-year mark as commissioner, not a single vehicle has been purchased for any commissioner. He gathered us together and emphasized that the resources are meant to benefit the people, requiring sacrifices from all of us. He has not acquired any vehicles for himself either, demonstrating his commitment to serving the people.

This approach sets the tone for the future. In the next two to three years, his impact will be significant. As we prepare for his second term, the focus will be on the accomplishments in Dekina and Ankpa, with a promise to do even more. The campaign will highlight the tangible results achieved, not empty promises. The governor's dedication to serving the people, despite limited resources, positions us to compete with larger states with deeper pockets. Our strength lies in his unwavering commitment to making a difference in the lives of the people. This sets us apart and allows us to stand shoulder to shoulder with any state in Nigeria.

Kogi Strides: I think I have interacted with a very happy Information Manager indeed.

Fanwo: I am extremely pleased with the current state of affairs. It is truly gratifying when one's superior is performing exceptionally well, and the feedback received about them is overwhelmingly positive. This undoubtedly brings me great joy. My responsibilities extend beyond merely informing the residents of Kogi State about the accomplishments of our leader. I also engage with the people, seeking their opinions on his performance, and relay their sentiments back to him. It is truly heartening to hear the commendable remarks being made about his administration.

Thank you very much!

Congratulations!



To His Excellency,
Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo
Executive Governor of Kogi State.



On behalf of the Governing Council, Senate, Staff, and Students of Federal University Lokoja, I am delighted to congratulate Your Excellency on your one-year anniversary in office.

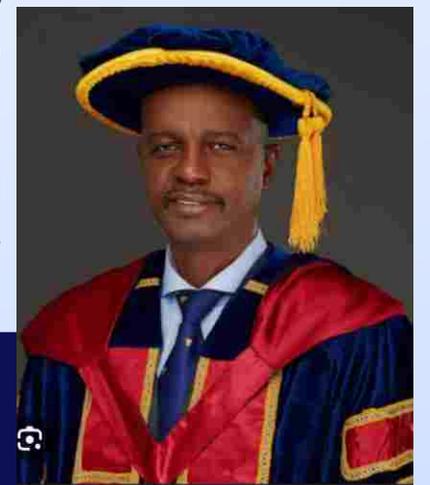
Your leadership has been characterized by vision, innovation, and a commitment to the welfare of the people of Kogi State. We appreciate your administration's efforts in creating a conducive environment for academic institutions like ours to thrive.

We are particularly grateful for the support and cooperation we have received from your administration, which has enabled us to fulfill our mandate of providing quality education and conducting cutting-edge research.

As we celebrate this milestone, we pledge to continue partnering with your administration to drive socio-economic development in Kogi State. We are committed to producing graduates who are equipped with the skills and knowledge required to drive innovation and entrepreneurship in the state.

Furthermore, we acknowledge your administration's efforts in ensuring the security of lives and properties in Kogi State. We appreciate the measures put in place to prevent and respond to security threats, including the establishment of a robust security architecture and the deployment of security personnel to strategic locations.

These efforts have contributed significantly to the relative peace and stability enjoyed in the state. Please accept our warmest congratulations once again, Your Excellency. We look forward to many more years of collaboration and partnership.



Yours sincerely,
Professor Olayemi Durotimi Akinwumi
Vice Chancellor, Federal University Lokoja

KOGI LAW STUDENTS PRAISE GOVERNOR ODODO FOR HISTORIC BURSARY AWARD

The National Association of Kogi State Law Students of Nigeria (NAKOLSON) has expressed deep appreciation to Governor Usman Ododo for approving a bursary allowance of 300,000 for Kogi State citizens currently studying at the Nigerian Law School. The association described this gesture as both unprecedented and historic.

In a statement signed by the President of NAKOLSON, Ismail Salifu, the association commended the Governor for his understanding of the financial challenges faced by law students, calling the bursary a much-needed relief for the beneficiaries. Salifu remarked: "We cannot fully express our gratitude for what the Governor has done. This is not just historic, but deeply meaningful and heartwarming for us. We never expected this approval, especially since such provisions were not made for

previous cohorts of law students."

He continued, "While we were aware that students from wealthier states typically receive bursaries ranging from 200,000 to 250,000, we set our expectations within those limits, if at all a bursary would be approved. However, Governor Ododo exceeded our expectations by approving 300,000—asum that is truly remarkable."

Salifu also highlighted the timely nature of the intervention, noting the financial hardship many students face in the light of the country's current economic challenges. "The news came at just the right time. Many of our peers were forced to borrow money from their families to fund their Law School admission. On campus, students are struggling to meet basic needs due to the economic strain. Governor Ododo's support is not only a

financial relief but a demonstration of his genuine concern for students' well-being."

He further acknowledged the role of Hon. Raji Afolabi, Chairman of the Kogi State Scholarship Board, for his meticulous efforts in ensuring that the bursary was disbursed to the eligible students.

In addition to the bursary, NAKOLSON praised Governor Ododo for his continued support to education in the state, particularly his commitment to paying examination fees for students. This includes the recent approval of 600 million to cover the WAEC fees for 18,734 students in public secondary schools across Kogi State. The association emphasized that these efforts have ensured that no student is left behind in accessing critical educational opportunities, reinforcing the governor's commitment to securing a brighter future for Kogi youth.

Governor Ododo is making Kogi Proud Already -Arc. Yomi Awoniyi



Usman Ododo. He is massively justifying our confidence in his capacity to deliver good governance to the people.

I have seen some of his projects and I am convinced that he will do even more in the coming years. He is a leader who is committed to development and the welfare of the people. He has shown that his years under the former Governor were not wasted.

Kogi West is witnessing road constructions, upgrade and remodelling of Primary Healthcare Centres as well as good projects at the Kogi State University, Kabba. We are also aware that work will soon start at the College of Education (Technical), Mopa", he said.

Awoniyi urged the people of Kogi State to continue to support the development initiatives of the Ododo Administration.

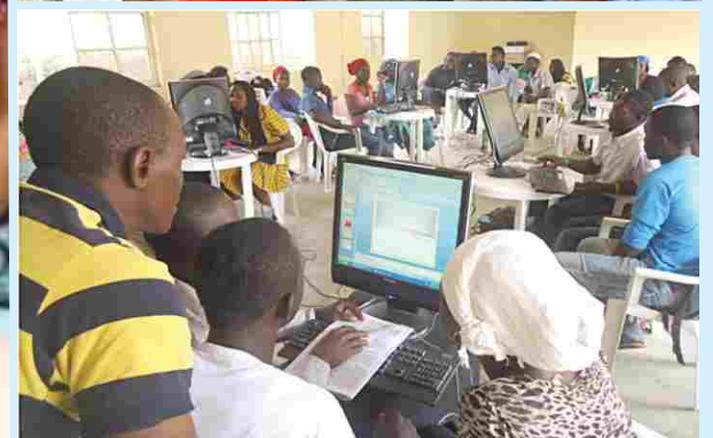


Achieftain of the All-Progressives Congress in Kogi State and former Deputy Governor of the State, Arc. Yomi Awoniyi has hailed Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo for his people-oriented projects, saying the people of the State are satisfied with the performance of the Governor.

The former Deputy Governor who spoke exclusively to Kogistate.gov.ng said the Governor has shown he was prepared for the task of development of the state going by the level of achievements within the first year of his administration.

I am proud of my decision to support and also mobilize support for Governor Ahmed

To Address Unemployment, Kogi State Launches Bold Youth Empowerment and Skill Acquisition Program



In a decisive effort to address unemployment and promote skill development, the Kogi State Government is set to roll out the Ododo Youth Empowerment and Skill Acquisition (OYESA) program. The initiative, which kicks off on Monday, November 18, 2024, at the Nigeria Korea Friendship Institute, aims to equip 250 young people from across the state with practical vocational skills.

The program was officially announced by Williams Charles Oluwatoyin, Rector of the Nigeria Korea Friendship Institute, during a tour of the facility with officials from the Ministry of Special Duties and Intergovernmental Affairs. The Institute will lead this ambitious project, offering training in a wide array of technical fields.

OYESA will provide intensive courses in automotive technology, welding, plumbing, electrical repairs and installations,

networking, computer hardware maintenance, solar power installation, and CNG gas conversion. The initiative's diverse curriculum is designed to build a skilled workforce capable of meeting the evolving demands of Kogi State's labor market.

The program will draw participants from all 21 Local Government Areas of Kogi State, who will undergo a comprehensive three-month training. Upon completion, graduates will not only receive certification but will also be supported with business registration assistance, starter packs to launch their ventures, and monthly stipends to facilitate their transition into the workforce.

In addition to the initial training, the Nigeria Korea Friendship Institute has pledged to provide ongoing mentorship to ensure the continued success of the

participants. This sustained support is expected to maximize the program's long-term impact and effectiveness.

Rector Dr. Oluwatoyin Charles Williams commended Governor Usman Ahmed Ododo for his innovative approach to tackling unemployment and crime in the state. He emphasized the program's potential to create a robust database of skilled professionals, which could lead to cost savings for the state through increased availability of local expertise.

The OYESA initiative marks a major investment in the youth of Kogi State, with the potential to drive both economic growth and social progress. As the program prepares to launch, there is high anticipation for its ability to transform the lives of its participants and contribute to the broader development of the state.

One of the beneficiaries, Anjorin Emmanuel hailed Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo for his youth empowerment initiative, saying the Governor is turning Kogi State to a state that is ready for the 21st century development.

A New Dawn for SEMA:

THE ACHIEVEMENT OF ALHAJI AHMED USMAN ODODO



took the bull by the horns to ensure the effective management for the annual disaster preparedness drill, he received a message through the agency from various community leaders from a vulnerable area on the outskirts of the city. The message indicated a potential flooding risk due to excessive rains earlier in the year, With the drill only a week away, Ododo gave a marching order to SEMA to take a necessary action.

His Excellency put up a very strong flood response team headed by the Deputy Governor, Comrade Joel Salifu to arrange an emergency meeting with local authorities and community leaders to assess the situation. They coordinated with meteorological experts to analyse weather patterns and updated local communities on the potential risks. Within days, early warning systems were put in place, and emergency response teams were deployed to high-risk areas. As a result, the community was adequately prepared when the rains intensified, and potential disaster was averted.

Ododo's initiative-taking approach gained attention, not only locally but nationally. His success prompted other states to adopt similar practices, leading to improved disaster readiness across the nation. In recognition of his efforts, Ododo was invited to speak at several international conferences, sharing his vision and advocating for community-based disaster management.

He equally established emergency response centres across the state. For his humanitarian kindness he released the sum of One Billion Naira for the purchase of relief materials for flood affected communities. Salau Ibrahim, PRO, SEMA.



As Executive Governor of Kogi State, HIS Excellency, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo gazed out of his office window, surveying the bustling city below. It had been a robust journey since he took office on January 27th, 2024, and Ododo's vision for SEMA has transformed it from a reactive agency into a proactive force for community resilience and disaster preparedness.

In the wake of increasing climate-related challenges and urbanization, Ododo initiated several key programs aimed at disaster risks reduction and community engagement. His motto: "Prevention is better than cure," resonated throughout

the agency and the communities they served.

One of Ododo's crowning achievements was the launch of the Community Resilience Initiative. This program brought together local leaders, NGOs, and citizens to identify vulnerabilities in their neighborhoods and develop tailored disaster response plans. Training workshops were implemented, focusing on first aid, emergency management, and sustainable agriculture, ensuring that communities were better equipped to handle emergencies.

During food disaster in the State Ododo

**Ministry of Youth
and Sports
Development
Kogi State**

Hurray



On behalf of the Management, Staff, teeming Kogi Youths and Sports Lovers, I, Hon. Aridajo Monday Anyebe, Commissioner for Youth and Sports Development, warmly rejoice and congratulate our sports and youth-friendly Governor, His Excellency, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo and his Deputy, His Excellency, Comrade Joel Oyibo Salifu, on the occasion of their one year in office.

In the last one year, we have witnessed reinvigorated commitment to youth and sports development under the watch of Your Excellency. We have seen youths been given the space to explore and realise their full potentials.

We recognise the special place that the administration has continued to accord youth and sports development. We appreciate the commitment of the Government and promise not to take this commitment for granted.

On behalf of the Ministry, I wish Your Excellency God's continued protection, wisdom, good health and greater vision for our dear state.

Your Excellency, hearty congratulations!



Signed:
**Aridajo
Monday Anyebe**
Hon. Commissioner

THE BEAUTY OF ODODO'S NON-KINETIC APPROACH TO KOGI SECURITY

By Kingsley Femi Fanwo



The last 10 months have been so reassuring to the good people of Kogi State that indeed, the new administration is committed to consolidating the achievements of the immediate past administration, ensuring continuity of the lofty projects and programs inherited as well as creating new channels of dynamic governance.

Kogi has always been in the news for issues that are security related. The immediate past administration created a security architecture that was effective in battling criminals and criminality. It employed a crack-down approach which was quite necessary at the time.

We needed a GYB when we got him. In farming, the role of bulldozer is quite different from that of the tractor. A bulldozer must be ruthless, decisive, uncompromising and hardworking. Without those features, the land won't be ready for cultivation. GYB was the bulldozer that got the land ready. GYB remains the father of a new Kogi State who set the template and a robust agenda for development. He radically changed the colour of leadership in the state and created a platform for the youths and women to excel.

The past 10 months under the leadership of Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo have witnessed intentionality in addressing the issue of insecurity with the non-kinetic approach.

AGRICULTURE

The massive investment in agriculture has made it possible for people to produce food

and earn incomes without being criminal. It has significantly created alternative sources of income to young people, thereby, diverting their attention from criminality.

The Farm Centres opened by the State Government and allocated to young people and women is poised to be the game changer, stretching a value chain of opportunities for the people.

Agriculture is creating prosperity at the grassroots now and the farmers have received tremendous support and empowerment to make Kogi the national focus on agriculture and food security.

This has no doubt reduced criminality in Kogi State.

WORKERS' WELFARE

The enhanced welfare of civil servants in Kogi State under the present administration has no doubt, stimulated the economy of the State as well as the standard of living of the people.

The promise of the Governor to take the welfare of the people forward from where he met it has impacted on the socio-economic development of the State.

There is a link between the poverty index and payment of salaries. As a result of financial engineering, reduced cost of governance and improved revenue, all the civil servants in the State now receive their full salaries before the 26th of every month.

The full salaries received by Local

Government Staff have also increased the amount of money circulating in rural areas. Local traders and service providers now benefit from the amount of money in circulation and many of them now have the resources to engage in weekend farming.

Civil servants can now pay their children's fees and provide accommodations for their children in higher institutions of learning, thereby reducing the vulnerability of getting them recruited into criminal gangs.

The industrial harmony between labour and the government has also engendered peace and security. So, much more than labour is now at the forefront of massive support to the Governor and his administration.

FREE EDUCATION POLICY

The Free Education Policy was introduced by the immediate past administration of Alh. Yahaya Bello. However, the Ododo Administration has expanded the scope.

Now, parents do not have to bother about school fees and even registration fees for ALL internal and external examinations. This policy has encouraged many people to enroll their children in schools.

The more people we can get off the darkness of ignorance into the light of education, the farther we move away from radical criminality. Education is a veritable tool against insecurity.

Aside making education free, the Ododo Administration is also investing heavily in expanding the capacities of our higher institutions of learning to take more students. Projects worth billions of Naira are ongoing in all higher institutions across the



state to give them the rooms to accommodate and secure more students.

INFRASTRUCTURE TRUMPS INSECURITY

Shettima and Zango were becoming very dangerous zones, and they are very close to the capital city of Lokoja.

What guns and ammunition wouldn't do easily, the beautiful road and streetlights are doing it already. A trip to Zango at night now is fun instead of the horror faced some months ago.

Criminals now know it is a no-go-area for them. This is one of the non-kinetic approaches to security in our dear Kogi State under the Ododo Administration.

The ongoing township roads across 8 Local Government Areas has also created jobs for artisans and food sellers, stimulating the rural economy. The fact that Kogi has become a construction site has also meant that more money has been injected into circulation and many jobs created.

THE HEALTHCARE REVOLUTION

Currently, the Ododo Administration is upgrading 74 Primary Healthcare Centres to a status whereby they will be able to render secondary healthcare services.

According to the State Commissioner for Health, Dr Adams Abdulazeez Omeiza, minor operations referred to General Hospitals will now be managed by Primary Healthcare Centres.

Insecurity will reduce when the standard of living of the people improves. This is the Kogi way.

YOUTH CAPACITY BUILDING

Over the months, thousands of Kogi youths and women have been exposed to training for the purpose of capacity building.

As at the time of filing this report, scores of

Kogi youth and women are in Jos where they are going through training in agricultural processing. This is a bold initiative to strengthen the agricultural value chain in the state.

Also, today, the State Government has commenced the training of hundreds of young people in collaboration with the KOICA here in Lokoja in different fields such as CNG Installation, Plumbing, Solar System Installation, Electrical Works, Welding, Photography and Graphics and Software Engineering. The idea is to train them and empower them with start-up kits.

Everyday, the Ododo Administration is intentionally depopulating the idle ring from which criminality emanates.

The State Government has also leveraged the opportunities provided through its partnerships to empower the youths and women across the state.

BURSARY AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Just last week, the State Government announced bursaries and scholarships for

her students in higher institutions of learning, with students in Law School getting as high as N300,000.00.

The Ododo Administration is gradually creating a population that is fiercely patriotic towards the development of the State. Insecurity will be suffocated when the people are determined to move their state forward.

DIALOGUE, PEACE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Chief Servant of Kogi State, His Excellency Alh Ahmed Usman Ododo is always prepared to talk to the people. He believes in bringing all Kogites together to be part of the development plans for the State. This approach is already shining positive impacts on the security of the State.

Also, the Governor is championing community -led security approach that will make each community the major player in the security of her people.

You can't secure a people that are not part of the security plans. This approach has led to the foiling of many life-threatening attacks without shooting a single bullet.

With the way Kogi State is moving under the leadership of Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo, she will soon become the epicenter of security in Nigeria.

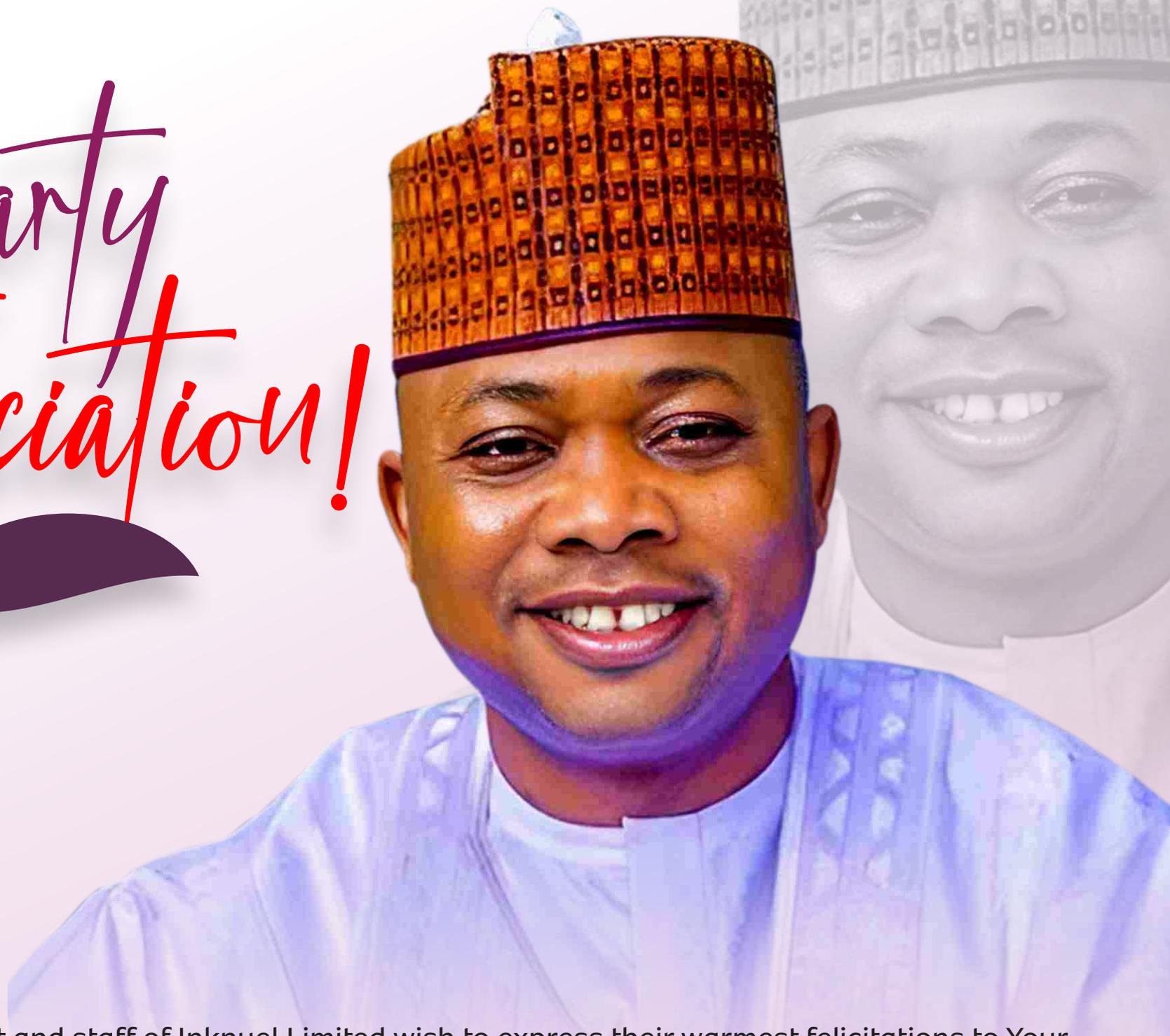
The Governor has been very smart enough to build on the legacies of his predecessor and fine-tune it where and when necessary.

Kogi is setting the pace in non-kinetic security approach.

Kingsley Femi Fanwo is the Kogi State Commissioner for Information and Communications and writes in from Lokoja.



Hearty Felicitation!



The Management and staff of Inknuel Limited wish to express their warmest felicitations to Your Excellency on the occasion of your one-year anniversary in office.

Your administration's infrastructural drive has been truly impressive, and we commend your commitment to delivering exceptional quality projects that have transformed the landscape of Kogi State.

As a key player in the state's infrastructure development, we are proud to be partnering with your administration to bring about meaningful change in the lives of the people. We reaffirm our dedication to upholding the highest standards of excellence in our projects, and we look forward to continuing our fruitful collaboration with your administration.

Please accept our sincerest congratulations on this milestone achievement. We pray that your leadership continues to be guided by wisdom and vision, as you steer Kogi State towards greater heights.

Congratulations once more!

Signed:Management



KOGI STATE'S GREEN ENERGY REVOLUTION: LEADING THE CHARGE TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



energy landscape.

The advantages of renewable energy extend far beyond environmental benefits. By fostering green energy solutions, Kogi is creating new job opportunities, stimulating local economic growth, and enhancing the overall quality of life for its residents. The installation of renewable energy-powered streetlights, for example, not only improves security but also attracts investment and fosters business development in the region.

This forward-thinking approach to energy resilience and sustainability is setting Kogi State on a path toward a brighter, more environmentally conscious future. With His Excellency Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo at the helm, the state is positioning itself to become a beacon of renewable energy innovation in Nigeria and across Africa.

As the world continues to transit to renewable energy and embrace sustainable practices, Kogi State is poised to lead the charge in fostering a greener, more prosperous future for its people and the nation.

By Mariam Adams

Under the leadership of His Excellency Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo, the Kogi State Government has made remarkable strides in promoting renewable energy and tackling climate change. This progressive vision reflects the state's commitment to creating a cleaner, safer, and more sustainable future for its citizens.

Renewable energy is increasingly recognized as a cornerstone for global environmental stewardship. Derived from abundant, naturally replenishing resources like sunlight, wind, and water, renewable energy sources play a critical role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating the impacts of climate change. By embracing these technologies, Kogi State is making significant contributions toward a healthier planet while securing a reliable energy future for its people.

One of the most notable achievements in

this regard is the recent installation of solar-powered streetlights along Army Barracks and Zango roads. This initiative, alongside the ongoing implementation of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) solutions, demonstrate the State government's unwavering commitment to sustainability. These projects not only reduce energy consumption and lower carbon emissions but also offer practical benefits, such as enhanced public safety and reduced energy costs for the state.

Kogi State is uniquely positioned to capitalize on the global energy transformation. Nestled at the confluence of the Niger and Benue Rivers, the state is endowed with significant potential for hydroelectric power generation. With the right investments in hydroelectric infrastructure, Kogi can reduce its reliance on fossil fuels and provide a stable, affordable, and sustainable energy supply for its residents. This would also contribute to national energy security and position Kogi as a leader in Nigeria's renewable



To His Excellency, GOVERNOR AHMED USMAN ODODO

On behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, I extend our warmest congratulations to you on your one-year anniversary in office. Your tireless efforts to transform Kogi State's Agricultural sector have been truly remarkable.

Your creation of the Livestock Ministry is a testament to your commitment to diversifying and strengthening our state's agricultural economy. This bold initiative has opened up new opportunities for farmers, herders, and rural communities, contributing significantly to food security and economic growth.

Under your leadership, we've witnessed significant strides in agricultural development, including:

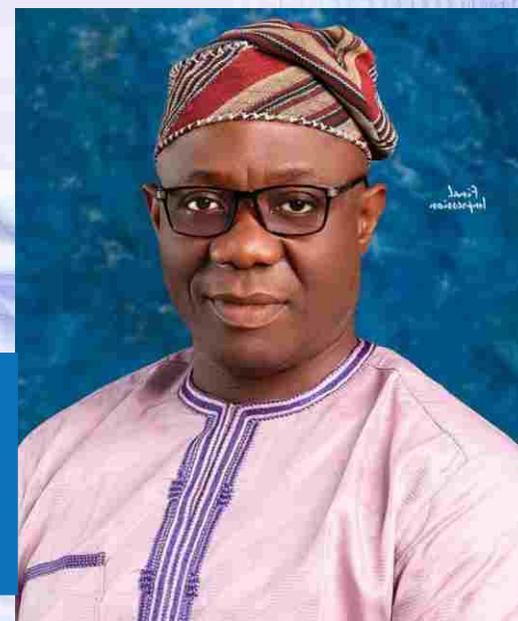
- **Increased Food Production:** Your administration's support for farmers has led to increased food production, reducing reliance on external sources and enhancing food security.
- **Improved Livestock Management:** The Livestock Ministry has introduced innovative practices, improving the health, productivity, and market competitiveness of our livestock.
- **Empowerment of Rural Communities:** Your initiatives have provided training, resources, and infrastructure to rural communities, empowering them to take charge of their agricultural development.

As we celebrate this milestone, we acknowledge your unwavering dedication to the welfare of Kogi State's citizens. Your vision for a prosperous, food-secure state is inspiring, and we're honored to be part of your team.

Please accept our heartfelt congratulations, Your Excellency. We look forward to continued collaboration and success in the years ahead.

Signed:

TIMOTHY OJOMAH
Honorable Commissioner for
Agriculture and Food Security.



Ododo Steps Up Massive Infrastructure Work at KSU Kabba



In his bid to make the Kogi State University, Kabba one of the best in the country, the Kogi State Governor, Alh. Ahmed Usman Ododo is overseeing an audacious infrastructural development in the institution.

The infrastructure which include Theater Halls, Lecture Halls, Hostels and some administrative buildings are fast shaping the school as a first-class citadel for learning and excellence.

Also, the Governor's massive investment in the road network within the university is fast unfolding into an engineering beauty to behold.

Reporters of the Kogi State.gov.ng, while on a tour to the institution, interacted with some management staff of the institution, many of whom expressed delight in the massive infrastructural projects going on in the University.

The Public Relations Officer of the institution, Hon. Tade Oshaloto told

kogistate.gov.ng that the Governor has "left no one in doubt as to his readiness to make the institution one of the best in the country".

His words: "It is not a surprise that we are already oversubscribed by prospective students for the next session. It is a good problem for us as it also shows that students are beginning to admire the beauty that Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo is creating at the Kogi State University, Kabba. He has shown and demonstrated commitment, and I must say we are lucky to have such a Governor who is keeping the flag flying",

The Kogi State University, Kabba was founded by the former Governor of the State, Alh. Yahaya Bello in his gracious response to the agitation of the people of Okunland to have a full-fledged university in the area.

The establishment of the University endeared the administration to the people of Okunland and Kogi West in general.

KOGI GOVERNOR APPROVES N8 BILLION FOR INFRASTRUCTURAL PROJECTS AT NEW KOGI UNIVERSITY, KABBA



Governor Ahmed Ododo of Kogi State has authorized the allocation of N8 Billion for various infrastructural projects at the newly established Kogi State University Kabba (KOSUK).

The State's Commissioner for Education, Hon. Wemi Jones, FCIB, made this announcement during a press conference in Lokoja.

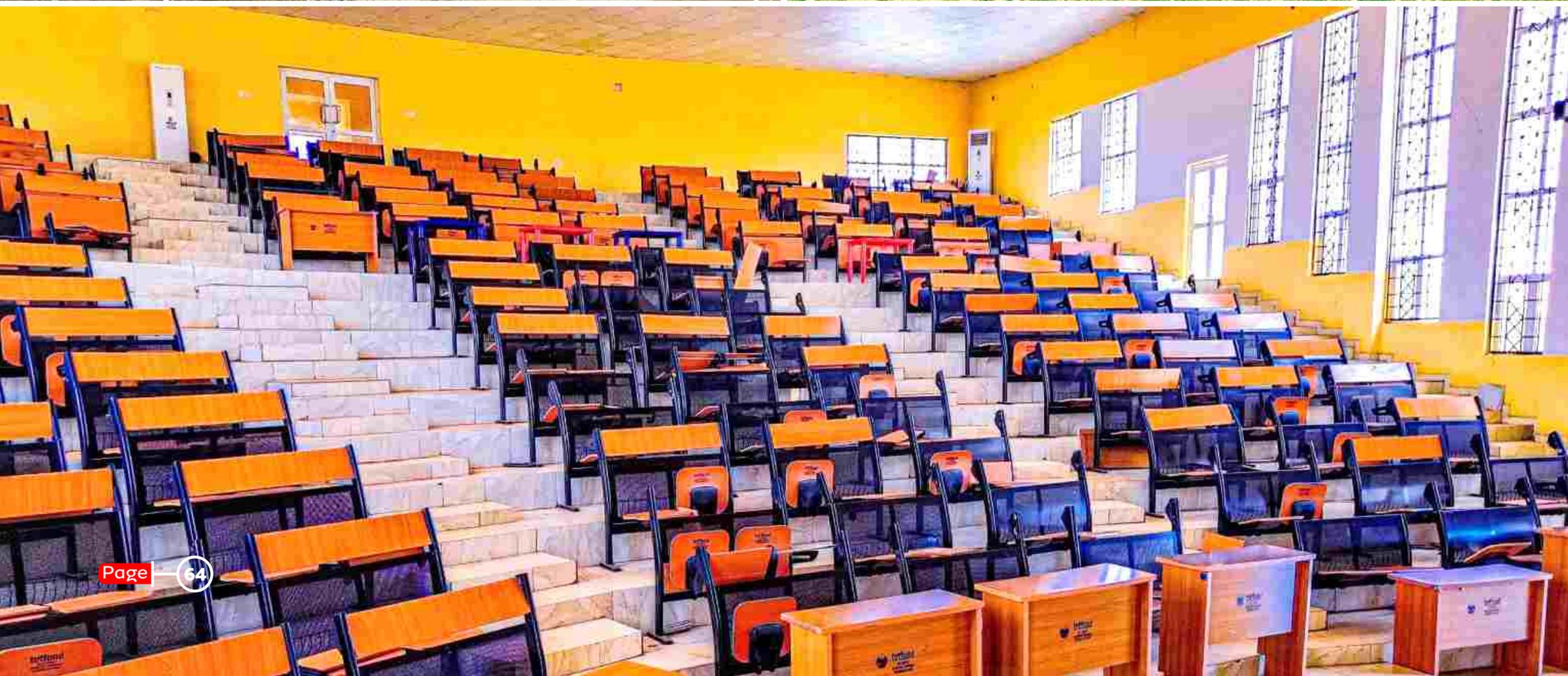
Jones revealed that the approved funds will be used for the construction of the Senate Building, Faculty of Science, as well as Male and Female Hostels at the university.

He assured that the contractors have been mobilized to begin work at the university within the next two weeks.

The State Government, under the leadership of Governor Ododo, is dedicated to building upon the solid educational foundation laid by the previous Governor, Alh. Yahaya Bello.

The Kogi Government has made significant investments in education, and Governor Ododo is committed to maintaining and exceeding the 30% budgetary allocation to the education sector.

Governor Ododo, who was part of former Governor Yahaya Bello's administration, prioritizes the education sector in the state.



Hearty
Congratulations
to the

Executive Governor of
Kogi State,
His Excellency,
**Alh Ahmed Usman
Ododo**



1ne
YEAR IN OFFICE

On behalf of the management and Staff of ECL Construction Ltd, we extend our warmest congratulations to you on your first anniversary in office. This milestone marks a significant achievement in your administration's efforts to transform Kogi State.

As a construction company partnering with Kogi RAAMP, we have had the privilege of contributing to the state's infrastructure development. We commend your leadership and vision, which have created an enabling environment for businesses like ours to thrive.

We promise to continue delivering quality jobs and collaborating with your administration to drive growth and development in Kogi State. Our commitment to excellence aligns with your government's goals, and we look forward to many more years of successful partnership.

Once again, congratulations on this milestone, and we wish you continued success in your endeavors to move Kogi State forward.

Management:

KOGI STATE AUDITOR GENERAL FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT URGES LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHAIRMEN TO EMULATE GOVERNOR ODODO'S TRANSPARENCY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

By Abah Benjamin Eneojoh

from the administration of former Governor Yahaya Adoza Bello.

He stressed the need for financial responsibility and transparency, highlighting the significance of adhering to established financial guidelines. He encouraged the Local Government Officials to prioritize accountability and ensure that funds are utilized efficiently.

According to the Director for Audit Services, the meeting was to ensure that Local Governments manage their finances prudently and in accordance with established regulations. He further noted that compliance with financial guidelines and procedures to maintain transparency and accountability is key to good governance.

He urged participants to maximize the benefits of Local Government autonomy to drive development and growth in the state adding that a harmonious relationship should be created between the Chairmen and the Civil Servants.

The chairman of Yagba East LGA who doubles as the ALGON chairman of the State Hon Olokun Tosin appreciated the Auditor General for Local Government for the robust engagement and promised to keep all the instructions given to them, stressing that the only way he could reciprocate the good work Gov Ahmed Usman Ododo is doing in his Local Government was to deliver good governance to his people.

The DLG Lokoja and the chairman of the Association of DLG and Treasurers of Kogi State, Mr Aliyu Musa also commended Hon Adabenege for his proactiveness noting that the State was not disappointed in their votes for Governor Ododo.

By conducting this meeting, Hon. Adabenege has demonstrated his commitment to promoting good governance and financial stewardship in the state.



Kogi State Auditor General for Local Government, Hon. Yakubu Adabenege Siyaka has charged the newly elected Local Government Chairmen, Directors of Local Government (DLGs) and their treasurers to emulate Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo's transparency, accountability and good governance.

Hon. Adabenege made this statement today 12-11-2024 in Lokoja while addressing the newly elected Local Government Chairmen, DLGs, and their

treasurers in a maiden meeting to emphasize the importance of financial discipline and adherence to financial instructions.

Adabenege in his congratulatory message to the newly elected chairmen praised Gov Ahmed Usman Ododo for allowing the will of the people to prevail maintaining that the meeting comes on the heels of the Local Government autonomy granted by the Federal Government, which Kogi State has already domesticated right

GOVERNOR ODODO REMAINS RESOLUTE TO INFRASTRUCTURAL, HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT IN KOGI - HON FANWO

Adegboyega Segun,

The Kogi State Commissioner for Information and Communications, Hon Kingsley Fanwo, has reiterated Governor Ododo's unwavering commitment towards infrastructural and human capital development in the state.

Hon Fanwo made this known as he received representatives of Governor Ododo Business Outreach (GOBO) in his office in Lokoja.

The commissioner expressed his satisfaction and absolute support for GOBO initiative as it is a programme that aligns with Governor Ododo's agenda to alleviate people from abject poverty in the state.

Speaking further, Hon Fanwo emphasized that His Excellency has been performing tremendously well, ranging from the welfare of the civil servants to infrastructural developments, adequate security of lives and properties, among others, stressing the joy of commuters over Zone 8 Roundabout to GYB Junction Road,

highlighting that the road now wears a new look as it has been dualised and street lights fixed for easy and safe movements.

"I'm satisfied and fully in support of GOBO initiative. I hereby accept the request to be the Patron of the forum. It is crystal clear that the forum's aims and objectives are in line with Governor Ododo's consolidation and continuity agenda. His Excellency is resolute for infrastructural and human capital developments. His signature projects are visible for all to see. Currently, more than 10 Local Government Areas have their township roads under construction. The Zone 8 - GYB Junction has been the latest talk in town as it has a new edifice. The construction is completed, and streetlights have been installed for the safety of the commuters. Just to mention, but a few.

With this great initiative, I hereby grant 30 minutes to air GOBO programmer on weekly bases on Kogi Radio in English, Okun, Ebir, and Igala languages. I also grant the Chairman of Kogi State Senior

Special Assistants Forum, Hon Shehu Yahaya, two pages about GOBO on The Graphic Newspaper," Hon Fanwo promised.

He urged the forum to remain united, committed, and co-operative as appointees to make His Excellency's work easier.

The chairman of the forum, Hon Yahaya Shehu Ahmed, briefed the Hon Commissioner on the mission of GOBO initiative and the programs that have been organized in empowering small-scale entrepreneurs and vulnerable people. He added that GOBO initiative was launched on October 31st, 2024, with the aim of uplifting marginalised groups and providing economic opportunities at the community level, emphasizing that the initiative had already shown positive impact.

Hon Yahaya commended Hon Fanwo for being a pragmatic, committed, and competent leader and for relentlessly projecting the image of the state at all levels as the Chief for Information of the State.

GOV. ODODO HOST; WORLD BANK, NPC OFFICIALS IN KOGI, WOOS INVESTORS WITH CONDUCTIVE ENVIRONMENT.

By Abah Benjamin Eneojoh

Kogi State Governor, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo, is rolling out the welcome mat for national and international investors, touting the state's conducive environment and rich mineral resources.

Kogi State Governor, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo has called on National and International investors to bring their investments to the state to tap the numerous mineral resources deposited in Kogi State. He made the call on Monday 04-11-2024 when the Task Team of World Bank and National Project Coordination of ACresal project paid him a courtesy visit in Lokoja.

With over 52 mineral deposits, Governor Ododo believes Kogi State is poised for economic growth and development.

During a courtesy visit from the World Bank and National Project Coordination of ACresal project, Governor Ododo



highlighted his administration's investments in security and infrastructure development. He emphasized the importance of unity among the people of the State, promising to stamp out crime and insecurity.

The World Bank's Task Team Lead, Dr. Joy Iganya Agene, praised Governor Ododo's commitment to the ACresal projects, citing Kogi State's three active sites as an indication of his support.

The National Project Coordinator, Abdulhammed Umar, thanked the Governor for his contributions and urged him to prioritize access to project sites and worker security.

By creating an enabling environment and leveraging its natural resources, Kogi State is positioning itself for sustainable development and economic prosperity.

FELICITATION!



His Excellency,

**Alhaji Ododo
Ahmed Usman**

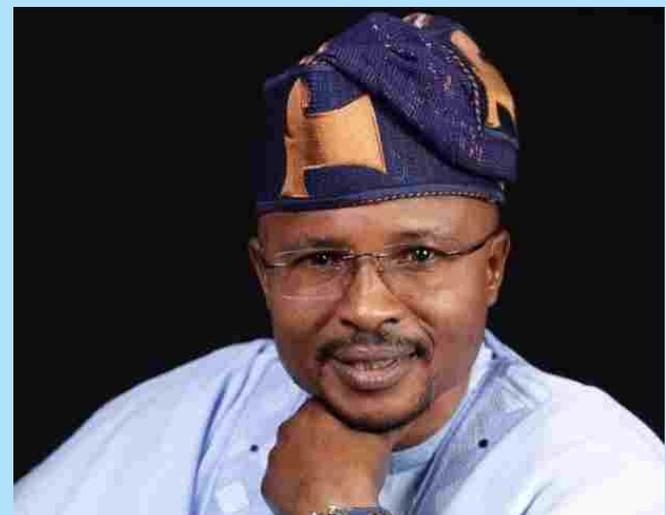
THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF KOGI STATE

This past one year, you have matched your words with actions and by so doing, rekindled the hope of our people in the better days that lie ahead.

As a critical stakeholder, I congratulate Your Excellency on the remarkable steps you have so far taken to restore the hope of our people. In you, I see a state where tribe, tongue or religion will not be a barrier for advancement. You have demonstrated in very clear terms that you are a detribalized leader with the entire Kogi State as your constituency.

As you mark your one year in office, I pray that God bestows on you more grace and the good health to take our dear State to its next level of development/progress.

Hearty Congratulations!



REP. LEKE ABEJIDE, MHR

Yagba Federal Constituency,
Chairman, House Committee on
Customs & Excise

KOGI'S INFRASTRUCTURE RENAISSANCE: A JOURNEY OF GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

By Princess Funsho Sumanu



Kogi State's transformative journey is gaining momentum and it's no surprise!

Spearheaded by a commitment to modernizing infrastructure. As the sun sets over the city of Lokoja, the once dimly lit streets are now aglow with a network of new streetlights, illuminating not just the roads but also the prospects for economic growth and investment. This newfound brightness is symbolic of the State Government's initiative to prioritize critical infrastructural development.

The administration of Alh. Ahmed Usman Ododo's recent investments in road networks and public utilities signal a new era. It recognized that to create a favorable and friendly investment environment, it must first create the necessary physical foundations for businesses to thrive. At the forefront of this revitalization is the expansion and upgrade of the road systems across Kogi.

The government's focus on improving road links between the Lokoja metropolis and rural areas is central to ensuring the smooth movement of goods and services. These roads are not merely extensions, they represent pathways to economic opportunities for local farmers and small business owners. Farmers can now transport their produce to markets with

greater ease and speed, while manufacturers can distribute their goods faster, reducing costs and increasing competitiveness.

The government's investments also extend to the construction of new roundabouts and the reconstruction of existing ones, addressing critical bottlenecks that previously hampered trade and mobility.

With improved infrastructure, Kogi State is not just building roads; it is building connections and fostering relationships—between businesses, communities, and markets.

As visitors and residents navigate the streets of Lokoja, the ambiance of the capital reflects this commitment to progress. The new streetlights not only enhance safety but also create a welcoming environment.

Prominent areas such as the popular Zone 8 Roundabout and Army Barracks - Zango Districts are experiencing a renaissance as businesses continue to cater to the needs of a growing and engaged citizens.

Moreover, the government's efforts are being recognized beyond Kogi's borders. Business owners and investors are taking notice of the state's serious approach to

infrastructure development.

The glowing streets of Lokoja have become a metaphor for a brighter economic horizon, signaling that Kogi is open for business.

In addition to the infrastructural upgrades, the government has prioritized community engagement to ensure that the needs and concerns of residents are effectively addressed. The recent Citizens Engagement in the 2025 Budget Formulation demonstrates the government's commitment to transparency and stakeholder's involvement.

By fostering open communication channels and involving community members in the decision-making processes, the government aims to build trust and create solutions that resonate with the citizens.

This collaborative approach not only empowers residents but also encourages a sense of ownership over the projects, leading to more sustainable outcomes. As these initiatives unfold, the focus on both infrastructure and community involvement is expected to enhance the overall quality of life, promote social cohesion, and drive long-term development in the area. Ultimately, the government's commitment to integrating community feedback into its plans reflects a holistic vision for progress that benefits everyone.

Empowering Communities:

Kogi's Innovative Approach to Energy Access



In a groundbreaking effort to revitalize its rural communities, the Kogi State Government has launched an ambitious initiative to provide electricity to underserved areas.

Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo, who made this announcement, emphasized his administration's commitment to bridging the energy gap and enhancing living standards.

The initiative, aimed at boosting the rural economy and improving social well-being, gained momentum during a high-level roundtable event held at Rockview Hotel, Abuja.

This event, organized by the Kogi State Government in collaboration with the Rural Electrification Agency (REA) and other key stakeholders, marked a significant step towards addressing the energy access gap

in the state.

Governor Ododo highlighted the energy shortfall faced by Kogi State, which hampers growth and development. With only 50 MW from the national grid serving approximately 5 million residents, the need for transformative action is evident.

He emphasized the wide-ranging benefits of rural electrification, from supporting local industries to enhancing education, healthcare, and clean water systems. "Electricity is the cornerstone of innovation and economic growth," he declared.

Governor Ododo also reassured stakeholders of the state's commitment to protecting energy infrastructure, unveiling plans for a new security framework to safeguard investments.

Additionally, he announced several

strategic initiatives, including the enactment of the Kogi State Electricity Act, the establishment of a State Electricity Regulatory Commission, and the creation of a comprehensive rural electrification investment brochure to attract investors.

During his welcome address, Engr. Abdulmutalib Mohammed, the Kogi State Commissioner for Rural and Energy Development, unveiled the state's energy vision.

He expressed appreciation to the Rural Electrification Agency (REA) and other stakeholders for their unwavering commitment to electrifying rural areas and harnessing the economic potential of Kogi State, often referred to as the "Confluence of Opportunities."

"The significance of electricity in rural communities cannot be overstated," the commissioner emphasized. "By improving energy access, we have the ability to uplift livelihoods, spur local industries, and promote sustainable growth."

Mr. Abba Aliyu, the Managing Director/CEO of the REA, praised Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo for prioritizing energy development and reiterated the agency's dedication to providing renewable energy solutions. He disclosed that Kogi State is well-positioned to benefit from ongoing interventions aimed at electrifying rural areas.

Engr. Doris Uboh, the Executive Director of the Rural Electrification Fund, also commended the collaboration. She revealed that the fund has attracted over 5 billion in private investments, leading to the creation of over 26,000 jobs nationwide.

Highlighting the state's renewable energy potential, Mr. Aliyu Salami, Kogi State's Chief Economic Adviser, pointed out the abundance of resources such as solar, hydropower, biomass, and wind.

"With consistent sunlight and the convergence of Rivers Niger and Benue, Kogi is uniquely positioned for various renewable energy projects," he stated.

Mr. Salami emphasized the importance of energizing agricultural hubs, noting that in 2024 alone, the state exported cashew worth over \$50 million.

"Investing in energy infrastructure will unlock untapped economic opportunities," he urged.

Dr. Folashade Arike Ayoade, the Secretary to the Government of Kogi State, concluded the event by expressing gratitude to stakeholders for their dedication to achieving reliable, clean energy in Kogi State.

KOGI GOVERNMENT TRAINS ADMINISTRATIVE/EXECUTIVE OFFICERS FOR QUALITY SERVICES

Igiku Mary



As part of the drive to promote quality service amongst the officers in the Administrative and Executive cadre, the Kogi State Office of the Head of Civil Service has organized a special training program for its officers.

A 4-day in-house training which was facilitated by fifteen (15) skilled resource persons was designed to share their wealth of experience and knowledge with the officers, to enhance their skills and expertise.

The training section covers various topics like, Work Ethics and Values in the Public Service, the Roles of Financial Regulators in Public Service, Misconduct/Serious Misconduct, Speech/Report Writing, Office Management in Civil Service Contexts, to mention but a few.

The Head of Service, Mr Elijah Evinemi FCA, while declaring the training section open noted that, the program demonstrates the State Government's commitment to capacity building and excellence in public service, which marks a significant milestone its effort to enhance the capability of its civil servants for effective and efficient service delivery.

Mr Evinemi expressed gratitude to Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo FCA, for approving and funding the training, emphasizing its significance in reforming the Civil Service sector. " Our mandate is clear, reform the Civil Service through optimal performance." The head of service said.

Speaking further, he disclosed that, the State Government had earlier sponsored some officers on Administrative, Executive as well as Data Processing cadre to renowned institutions like, the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON) National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru (NIPSS) and Center for Management Development (CMD) for capacity building.

He urged the participants to pay rapt attention to the lectures being delivered, to enable them to translate the knowledge acquired to improve their performances.

Earlier, Hajiya Mariam Muhammed, Deputy Director Training, Office of the Head of Civil Service, explained that the content of the training manual is tailored towards the required and needed knowledge to enhance productivity skills and competencies, as well as empowering

them to becoming efficient and incorruptible.

She thanked the Head of Service for his initiative-takingness and determination in ensuring the success of this initiative.

Mr Sunday Odeh, Permanent Secretary, Local Government Service Commission, one of the facilitators, stressed the importance of financial regulations and how it affects public service, noting that, "understanding these regulations enables Civil servants to manage resources efficiently".

Mrs Ann Onoja, Director Establishment, Office of the Head of Civil Service, with the topic, "Leadership and Emotional Intelligence" emphasize the need for leaders to utilize emotional intelligence in accessing team member's well-being to improve direction for optimal performance. "A good leader shows gentleness, kindness and empathy, understanding follower's challenges."

It is worth noting that, this training program marks a significant step towards transforming Kogi State Civil Service sector."

GOV ODODO: A TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADER COMMITTED TO EDUCATION; INVESTS 600 MILLION NAIRA IN WAEC FEES FOR OVER 18,734 STUDENTS IN KOGI STATE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

By Aishat Ohene Yusuf



In a groundbreaking step towards improving educational access and fostering a brighter future for Kogi State, His Excellency, Alh. Ahmed Usman Ododo has taken a pivotal initiative by investing a remarkable sum of 600 million naira to cover the 2024/2025 West African Examination Certificate (WAEC) registration fees of over 18,734 students in public secondary schools.

This forward-thinking gesture not only underscores his commitment to quality education but also highlights his broader vision to combat societal challenges through the empowerment of the youths.

Recognizing education as the bedrock of development and a powerful tool for societal transformation, Gov. Ododo has consistently prioritized policies that address fundamental human needs in Kogi State. His focus on education as a tool for combating societal menace is evident in this significant investment.

By ensuring that thousands of students can sit for their WAEC examinations without financial hindrances, he is helping them take a crucial step toward their future careers and opportunities in higher education.

In recent years, many families have found it difficult to afford the cost of registering for

WAEC, a mandatory examination for Secondary School Students aiming to pursue higher education or professional careers. Through this financial support, His Excellency has alleviated this burden, allowing parents and guardians to focus more on other needs of their children, while students can pursue their academic goals with a renewed sense of purpose and optimism.

This initiative is expected to yield far-reaching benefits. Education is widely regarded as a key driver in curbing social vices such as crimes of different degrees, unemployment, and poverty.

A society equipped with educated young minds is a society free of crimes because there is nothing more dangerous than an uneducated one.

The administration of His Excellency is working to build a more resilient society in Kogi State where better educational access provides these students avenues to make more informed choices, contribute positively to the economy, and foster a culture of responsibility and progress.

His Excellency's support for the youths and education in Kogi State goes beyond

financial assistance as this is a build-up on previous administration that has implemented several initiatives aimed at improving the infrastructure and quality of teaching in public schools, providing both students and teachers with better facilities and tools. From classroom renovations to teacher training programs, Gov. Ododo's commitment reflects his belief in a well-rounded approach to education.

As a visionary leader, Gov. Ododo envisions a society where every child, regardless of their background, has access to quality education. His administration understands that when young people are given the right tools, they can achieve their potentials, overcome challenges, and contribute to the prosperity of their communities.

This 600-Million-Naira investment in WAEC fees for over 18,734 students is a testament to Gov. Ododo's unwavering commitment to social and educational reform. It is a bold move that resonates with his pledge to uplift Kogi State's youth and address societal menaces through education. As the students prepare for their examinations, they do so with the assurance that their government stands firmly behind them, fostering a generation of educated and empowered young individuals poised to make a lasting impact in Kogi State and beyond.

Congratulation

On behalf of the Management, Staff, and students of Kogi State College of Nursing and Midwifery, Obangede, we extend our warmest congratulations to His Excellency, Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo, on his remarkable one-year anniversary in office.

We are deeply grateful for the tremendous impact of your administration on our institution. Your government's support has enabled us to provide top-notch education and training for nursing and midwifery professionals, shaping the future of healthcare in Kogi State.

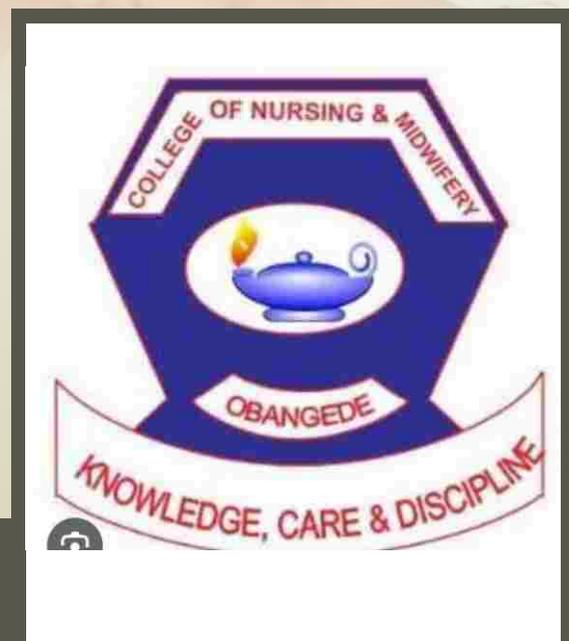
Your leadership has been a beacon of hope for our students, staff, and the entire community. We appreciate your commitment to education, healthcare, and the overall development of Kogi State.

As we celebrate this milestone, we reaffirm our dedication to excellence in nursing and midwifery education. We are proud to be part of your vision for a healthier, more prosperous Kogi State.

Please accept our heartfelt appreciation and best wishes for many more years of transformative leadership. May your administration continue to flourish, and may Kogi State reap the rewards of your tireless efforts.

Congratulations once again, Your Excellency!

**Signed:
Management**



Kogi State Government's **Vision** for **Economic Growth** Receives Major Boost with International Airport Approval

Princess Funsho sumanu



The Commissioner for Finance, Budget, and Economic Planning, Hon. Asiwaju Idris, has hailed the Federal Government's approval for the construction of an international airport in Kogi State as a significant milestone in the state's journey towards economic growth.

Hon. Idris emphasized that this development exemplifies Governor Alh. Usman Ododo's strategic vision for fostering economic growth and development in the state.

"The approval of the international airport will provide more opportunities for economic expansion and job creation, enhancing connectivity both within and beyond our borders," stated the Commissioner. "This project aligns

seamlessly with our state development plan, which is designed to drive socio-economic growth through strategic planning, efficient budgeting, and effective coordination. It embodies the government's commitment to National Development." He added.

The construction of the airport is projected to generate thousands of direct and indirect job opportunities attracting both local and international investors to Kogi State and bolstering the State's economy. Additionally, it will enhance connectivity, facilitating trade, commerce, and tourism between Kogi State and global destinations.

Hon. Idris remarked that this achievement is a testament to the Governor's

dedication to transforming the state's economy and improving the lives of its citizens.

Reiterating the commitment of the State Government to ensure the project is executed efficiently and uphold the highest standards, the Commissioner assured that the Ministry of Finance will work closely with relevant stakeholders to monitor and oversee the progress of this landmark initiative, ensuring transparency and accountability throughout the process.

In conclusion, Hon. Idris affirmed that the airport project is a crucial step towards realizing the state's economic objectives, positioning Kogi State as a key hub for economic growth and development in Nigeria.



Congratulations to a Visionary Leader,



contributing to this transformation through our ongoing project, the Odenyi-Oguma-Sheriya road and bridge, which will benefit approximately 40 communities upon completion.

Under your visionary leadership, we've witnessed tangible progress in infrastructural development. As a key player in this sector, we're eager to augment your efforts and continue delivering high-quality projects that enhance the lives of Kogi State residents.

We appreciate your unshakeable confidence in our company and eagerly anticipate continuing our synergy. Once again, congratulations on achieving this milestone. We wish you sustained success in piloting our great state.

Sincerely,

Signed:
Management



His Excellency
**Alhaji Ahmed
Usman Ododo**
The Executive Governor,
Kogi State

As the people of Kogi State celebrate a year of purposeful leadership under your administration, we at Vanguard Construction Ltd are delighted to add our voice to the chorus of praise for your outstanding achievements, His Excellency, Alh. Ahmed Usman Ododo.

Your unwavering commitment to catapulting our great state to unprecedented heights has been truly remarkable. We are proud to be

KOGI STATE 2024 LOCAL GOVERNMENT Elections: *A triumph of* DEMOCRACY AND PEACE

By Modupe Adegboro

Kogi
Strides
Magazine

The Kogi State Local Government Elections, held on 19th October 2024, marked a significant milestone in the State's democratic journey. Organised by the Kogi State Independent Electoral Commission (KOSIEC), the election reflected the Commission's dedication to a free, fair, and transparent process.

Under the able leadership of Hon. Mamman Nda Eri, who had previously overseen the successful December 2020 Local Government Elections, KOSIEC approached the 2024 polls with firm focus on transparency, inclusivity, and efficiency. The chairmanship and councillorship elections, conducted simultaneously in the 21 Local Government Areas of the state have been described as the most peaceful in the state's electoral history.

From issuing the notice of polls to election day, KOSIEC was fully engaged in operationalising. Elections were held to fill the 21 chairmanship and 239 councillorship positions across the state on 19th October, with observers praising the peaceful and successful conduct.

Building a Strong Foundation: Pre-Election Preparations

The success of the 2024 elections was built on thorough planning well ahead of the election day. Voter's Education was prioritised, with KOSIEC collaborating with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), community leaders, traditional rulers, security agencies, and the public to raise awareness.

KOSIEC's sensitisation campaign started with a visit to the palace of the Attah of Igala Kingdom, HRM Matthew Alaji Opaluwa Oguche Akpa II, followed by sensitisation tours to the Ohinoyi of Ebiraland, HRM Alhaji Mohammed Tijani Anaje, and the Obaro of Kabba, HRM Oba Solomon Owoniyi, where royal blessings were sought for the task ahead. Town hall meetings were also held in the state's three Senatorial Districts to educate voters.

Furthermore, extensive engagements were held with political parties, Election Officers, security agencies and other relevant stakeholders to ensure an open and fair process. KOSIEC's collaboration with Equity Promotions Limited (a Human Resource Development Consultancy) led to training workshops for the ad-hoc staff, ensuring the integrity of the voting

process.

KOSIEC's representatives monitored peaceful primary elections across the 21 Local Government Councils. Honourable Commissioners representing the various Federal Constituencies of the state monitored the conduct of party primaries across the state.

The distribution of sensitive and non-sensitive election materials to Local Government Areas before election day was successfully achieved in collaboration with security agencies. The media, IPAC, Electoral Officers, CSOs and others were present as the materials were moved out of the Commission's office in Lokoja.

A Peaceful Election Day

Election day proceeded in an organised, calm atmosphere. Polling units opened promptly at 8:00 am, and voters cast their ballots smoothly following accreditation. The Nigeria Police Force and other security agencies deployed across the state had very little to do as there was orderliness at polling units.

Despite isolated reports of voter's apathy and delays in material deployment, the election continued without significant disruptions as these setbacks were

promptly addressed.

Throughout the entire process, the Chairman of the Commission, Hon. Mamman Eri continually addressed the media, assuring stakeholders and electorate of KOSIEC's readiness for the elections. The Commission adhered strictly to its timetable, ensuring there were no delays at any stage.

Post-Election Processes

After the polls closed at 3:00 pm on election day, results were collated at the ward level before being transferred to Local Government Headquarters where the Local Government figures were collated. By 10:00 pm, KOSIEC's Chairman Hon. Mamman Nda Eri officially announced the results as received from Electoral Officers, with the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) winning all chairmanship and councillorship seats.

Meanwhile, stakeholders across the state and beyond have hailed the peaceful conduct of the elections. Mr. Joseph Aremu, Secretary, Forum of State Independent Electoral Commissions (FOSIECOM), praised the KOSIEC team for conducting hitch-free elections. He specifically noted the absence of vote-buying and inducement, concluding that the electioneering process was smooth.

Similarly, the State Chairman of the Inter Party Advisory Council, Ilyas Badanga, in a Press Conference, commended the conduct of the elections, while also describing the process as free, fair, and credible. Mr. Ilyas was of the view that KOSIEC performed creditably beyond all reasonable doubt. He therefore called on all registered political parties to accept the results of the elections as announced by the Commission.

The IPAC Chairman further lauded Governor Usman Ahmed Ododo for creating an enabling environment for all political parties and security agencies to achieve violence free and substantially acceptable Local Government Elections in the state.

KONGONET, the umbrella network for Kogi NGOs and an accredited overseeing observer of Civil Society Organisations, also commended KOSIEC for efficient organisation, particularly in its training of ad-hoc staff and engagement with stakeholders.

Part of KONGONET's report reads: "The

development of a comprehensive training manual for Electoral Officers was a significant improvement. Our team was able to witness the training sessions for Local Government Election Officers, which were thorough and informative. The engagement with accredited observers by KOSIEC on 17th October 2024 was constructive, and the timely disbursement of observation kits further facilitated our monitoring efforts."

Moving Forward: Areas of Improvement

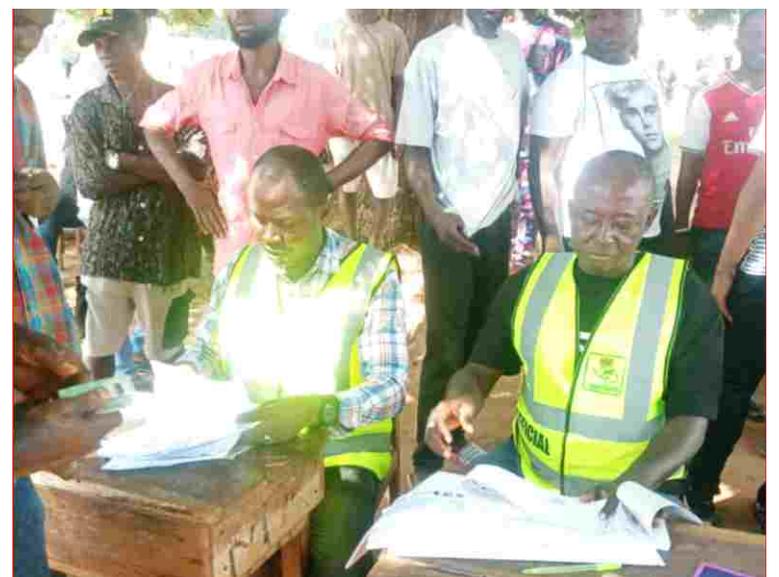
While the overall 2024 electioneering process in Kogi State displayed notable improvements compared to previous elections, there are critical areas that require attention, including the following:

1. Pasting of Voters Registers: There were reports of insufficient or invisible voters' registers at polling units, an issue that should be addressed in future elections.
2. Timeliness of Material Delivery: Ensuring early arrival of election materials at all polling units is essential for a seamless voting experience.
3. Movement Restrictions: Strict enforcement of movement restrictions should be upheld to encourage voters' turnout during the election process.
4. Publicity and Sensitisation: Improved sensitisation efforts are necessary to boost voters' turnout in future elections.

2024 Local Government Elections: A Democratic Achievement for Kogi State

The 2024 Kogi State Local Government Elections were more than a political exercise; They were celebration of democracy. KOSIEC's commitment to transparency, inclusiveness, and credibility were evident throughout the process.

As Kogi State looks forward to future elections, KOSIEC aims to build on the success of 2024, striving for a more efficient and credible process that encourages greater voters participation and ensures that the people's will is accurately reflected in the results. The future of Kogi State's democracy is promising, and KOSIEC is proud to lead its advancement.



Hearty Congratulations

to our
**Extraordinary &
Transformative
Leaders!**



To His Excellency, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo, the Executive Governor of Kogi State, and His Excellency, Salifu Joel, the Deputy Governor:

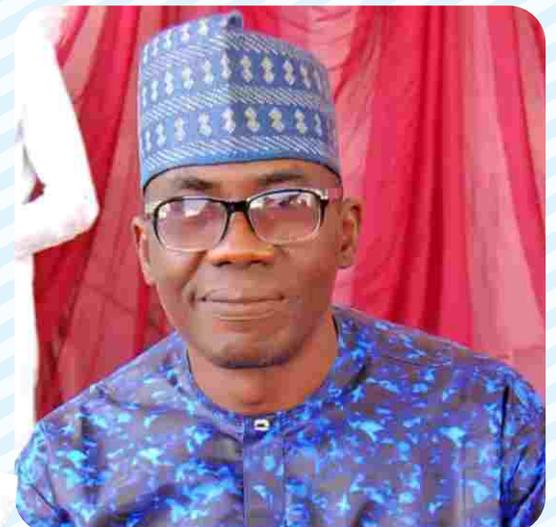
As you mark a significant milestone in your administration, I join the entire Management and Staff of the Office of the Deputy Governor in congratulating and celebrating your outstanding achievements. Your tireless efforts to transform Kogi State have not gone unnoticed.

Some of your notable achievements include:

- **Empowerment of Youths:** Empowering youths across the 21 local government areas through skill acquisition programs.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Completing critical infrastructure projects like the Zango-Daji road and Zone 8 roundabout.
- **Education:** Paying WAEC fees for all public secondary school students.
- **Agriculture and Food Security:** Distributing grains and farm inputs to local governments.
- **Civil Servants' Welfare:** Rehabilitating the Deputy Governor's office and attending to civil servants' welfare.
- **Flood Control and Relief:** Implementing flood control measures through SEMA and providing palliatives to flood-affected people.
- **Support for Fire Victims:** Providing compensation payments to the fire victims at the GSM Village in Lokoja.
- **Boundary Settlement:** The amicable boundary settlement between Kogi and Enugu State at the Ette in Olamaboro Local Government Area, Kogi State is another Landmark achievement of this administration.

Your commitment to the welfare and development of Kogi State is truly inspiring. As you continue to discharge your duties, we pray that Almighty God guides, protects, and directs you. May your vision for a prosperous Kogi State become a reality, and may your leadership inspire future generations.

Once again, congratulations, Your Excellencies!



Signed:
Ochu Omeiza Philip
Permanent Secretary

Kogi State Governor Commends KGCSDA and NG-CARES for Grassroots Development Initiatives

KOGI TO SET UP EDUCATION TASK FORCE TO INSPECT, SUPERVISE AND EVALUATE SCHOOLS

By Musa Solomon

In its effort to restore the glory of Primary and Secondary Education in the State, Kogi State Government has planned to set up Education Monitoring Team in all the 21 Local Government Areas of the State.

The Eleven Man Team which members would be drawn from NUT, ASUSS, ES, AEE's, NAPPS, AMIS, Religious and Traditional Institutions, PTA, Youth Organizations amongst others would be at the Local Government Levels and the three Senatorial Districts.

The State Commissioner for Education Hon. Wemi Jones made this known at the stakeholders meeting for the reformation of Education Task Force in the State held on Tuesday 24th of September 2024 in Lokoja.

The task force he said would be empowered to monitor, inspect and evaluate Primary and Secondary Schools in the State to ensure full implementation of Government policies and Programs in Education.

The Commissioner who appealed to the stakeholders to work with the Ministry to restore the glory of education said Government alone cannot address the challenges in Education, emphasizing that only teamwork can produce greater results.

Education, he noted is not all about spending money, but proper planning and execution of Government policies and programs, saying that the State Government has made huge investment in Education and would not allow it to go to waste.

Successive Governments, in Kogi State since 2016, the Commissioner stated have been able to plan well for the overall development of education in the State.

The Government of Alhaji. Usman Ahmed Ododo, he said, would continue to build on the solid foundation already put in place by his predecessor, Alhaji. Yahaya Bello in Education and would make sure that at any risk the investment made in Education would not be ruined.

"Government he said would like to know if teachers are teaching according to the curriculum and to get feedback on the school's challenges," he added

Speaking, the special Adviser to the Governor on Education, Hon. Abdullahi Abdulmalik said the Education Monitoring Team would be saddled with the responsibilities of inspecting and monitoring of schools and sensitize students against indulging in social vices.

In his remarks, the Chairman Forum of Education Secretaries, Kogi Local Government Education Secretary, Mr. Salihu Adamu Usman commended the Government for prioritizing Education, promising that the Forum of Education Secretaries would continue to do their best in the implementation of Government policies and programs in Education.

The Meeting has in attendance the Education Secretaries from the 21 Local Government Areas of the State and the Zonal Directors of Education, STETSCOM.

Princess Funsho Sumanu



Kogi State Governor Alhaji Usman Ahmed Ododo has commended the Kogi State Community and Social Development Agency (KGCSDA) and NG-CARES for facilitating the delivery of his administration's development initiatives directly to the people.

The Governor, represented by the Kogi State Commissioner for Finance, Budget, and Economic Planning, Hon. Asiwaju Idris, who also doubles as the Chairman of the State CARES Steering Committee (SCSC), gave the commendation at the opening ceremony of the second batch of training for Community and Group Project Management Committees in Okene, as well as the flag-off ceremony of various projects.

The Governor, in his speech, assured the people that all the micro-projects to be implemented across the state would have a direct positive impact on the lives of the residents while reiterating his administration's commitment to grassroots development.

Governor Ododo explained that the execution of 170 micro-projects under the Nigeria Action for Resilience and Economic Recovery (NG CARES) will benefit approximately 200,000 individuals throughout the state.

The Governor restated his commitment to funding the program and assured rural residents of the extensive community projects aimed at reducing poverty, alleviating hunger, and promoting self-reliance.

He also promised the people that his developmental agenda would remain a top priority for his administration.

In his remarks, the General Manager of the Kogi Community and Social Development Agency (KGCSDA), Chief Mallam Dauda highlighted that Governor Ododo's Administration is dedicated to bringing development to the people's doorsteps.

He disclosed that the ongoing projects are being managed through a Community/Group Development Plan, which has been earmarked for support, with an estimated 200,000 beneficiaries expected.

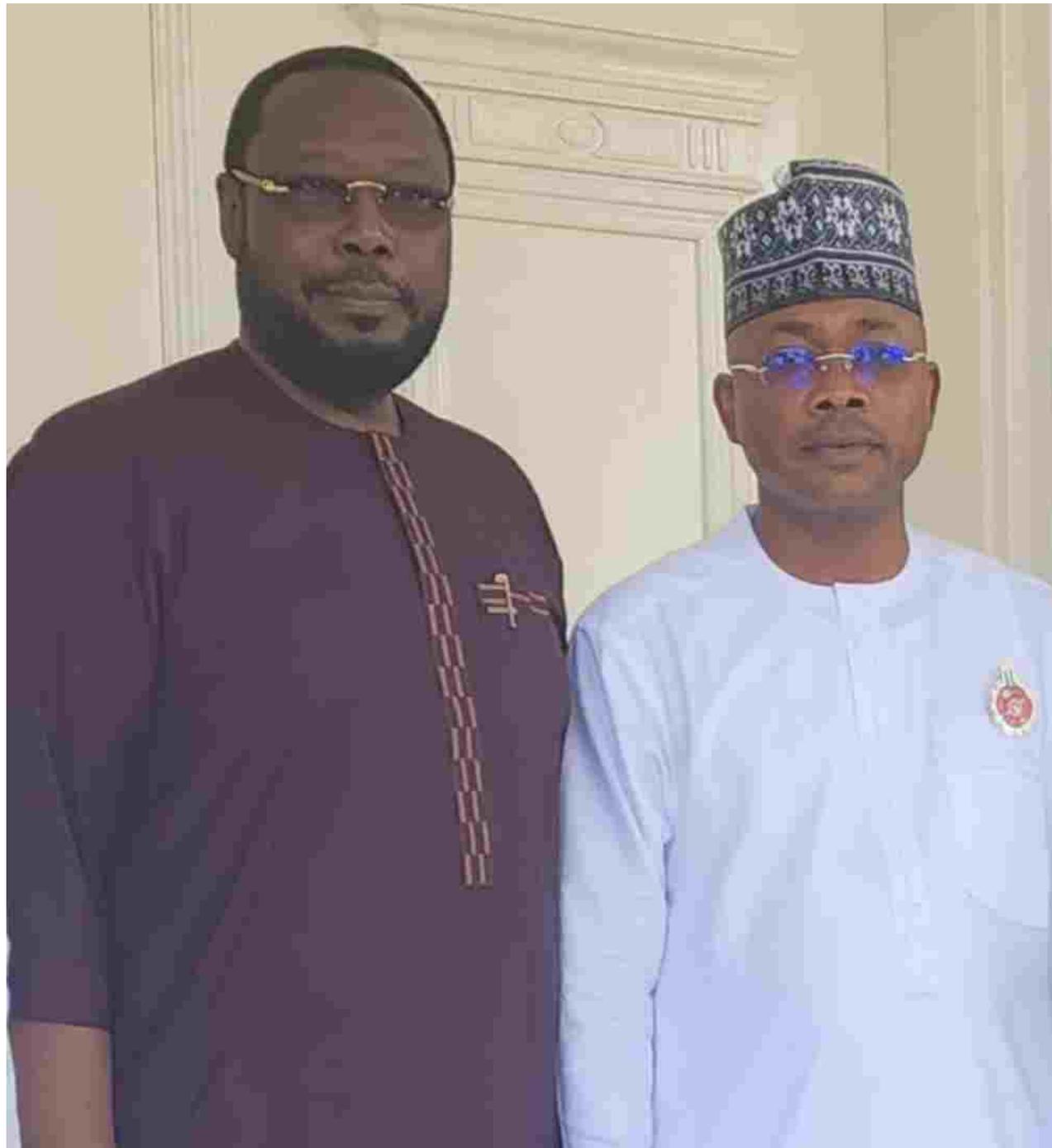
According to the agency's work plan, the projects scheduled under the Community Development Plan are set to be fully implemented and operational by September 2024.

He urged the Community Implementation Committees involved in the projects to adhere to the established specifications, noting that non-compliance would lead to sanctions and the potential blacklisting of defaulters.

The General Manager, while attributing the smooth implementation of projects to the timely release of funds by the State Government, commended the current administration for providing all the necessary support to NG-CARES. He assured that projects across the state would be completed on time and ready for commissioning.

GOVERNOR AHMED USMAN ODODO: ONE YEAR IN OFFICE: WHAT MANNER OF LEADERSHIP IN KOGI STATE?

- BY H.E YOMI AWONIYI, A FMR DEP. GOV KOGI



As Governor Ododo marks the first anniversary of his assumption of office, it is a fitting moment to reflect on his journey so far. This milestone serves as an opportunity to evaluate the progress made under his leadership, the challenges overcome, and the groundwork laid for a brighter future. It also affords me the opportunity to address the questions about the Governor's stewardship which I frequently encounter from friends and associates, who have followed my political journey over the past eighteen months.

A year ago, Governor Ododo pledged to deliver governance that is "transparent, inclusive, and committed to the well-

being of all citizens." Today, his administration stands as a testament to that promise, marked by significant strides in infrastructural development, economic revitalization, and the restoration of public confidence in government. His leadership exemplifies a dedication to serving the people and addressing the critical needs of Kogi State.

A Leader Dedicated to His People

Governor Ododo's governance is deeply rooted in a desire to bring relief and progress to the people of Kogi State. This commitment is evident in the deliberate measures he has taken to address the immediate needs of citizens, particularly civil servants, while laying a foundation

for sustainable development. His actions reflect a profound understanding of the socio-economic challenges facing the state and the need for pragmatic, people-centered leadership.

From the onset of his administration, Governor Ododo prioritized policies that directly impact the lives of ordinary citizens. His efforts to fulfill campaign promises, such as improving workers' welfare and investing in critical infrastructure, demonstrate a leadership style that places people at the center of governance. This approach has not only improved living conditions but has also inspired hope and optimism across the state.

Restoring Trust Through Workers' Welfare

One of the most significant achievements of Governor Ododo's administration has been the prioritization of workers' welfare. In a state where salary issues had historically caused frustration and discontent, his commitment to prompt payment of wages has brought stability and dignity to thousands of households. The implementation of the national minimum wage and the proactive efforts to address pension and gratuity arrears have further underscored his dedication to improving the lives of civil servants and retirees.

These initiatives have not only alleviated financial hardships but have also elevated trust in governance. By addressing these fundamental issues, Governor Ododo has demonstrated that campaign promises are not mere rhetoric but commitments to be honored. This renewed trust has created a ripple effect, fostering a sense of hope and confidence among the broader populace.

Inclusive Leadership: Bridging Divides and Fostering Unity

A hallmark of Governor Ododo's leadership is his inclusive approach, which emphasizes collaboration, mutual respect, and unity across all segments of Kogi State. In a political climate often

ONE YEAR IN OFFICE: WHAT MANNER OF LEADERSHIP IN KOGI STATE?

characterized by division and partisanship, he has distinguished himself by reaching out to elder statesmen, traditional rulers, and stakeholders from diverse political affiliations.

This inclusive approach reflects not only humility but also the recognition that governance is most effective when it incorporates diverse perspectives and expertise. By fostering mutual respect and shared responsibility, Governor Ododo has created an environment where leaders from all walks of life are encouraged to contribute to the state's development. This strategy has bolstered the credibility of his administration and strengthened the social and political fabric of Kogi State.

One notable example of this inclusivity is the active engagement of youth and women in decision-making processes. Recognizing the importance of these demographics, Governor Ododo has ensured that their voices are heard, and their contributions valued. This has empowered a new generation of leaders and fostered a sense of belonging among historically underrepresented groups.

Infrastructure as a Catalyst for Development

Under Governor Ododo's leadership, infrastructure development has been a cornerstone of progress. Across Kogi State, roads are being constructed, schools are being renovated, and healthcare facilities are being upgraded. These projects are not mere political gestures, but strategic investments designed to stimulate economic growth, improve access to essential services, and elevate the overall quality of life.

In my hometown of Mopa, for example, the reconstruction of key roads and the rehabilitation of community infrastructure stand as tangible evidence of the Governor's inclusive governance. These efforts demonstrate a commitment to ensuring that no community, regardless of size or location, is excluded from the state's

developmental agenda. Similar projects across various towns and communities have improved connectivity, bolstered local economies, and empowered businesses and residents alike.

Governor Ododo's administration has also prioritized the improvement of healthcare facilities, recognizing that a healthy population is essential for sustainable development. New health centers have been built, existing facilities have been upgraded, and essential medical supplies are provided. These initiatives have improved healthcare access and outcomes for countless families, particularly in rural areas.

Building a Positive Image for Kogi State

Governor Ododo's leadership has extended beyond the borders of Kogi State, reshaping its image as a hub of progress and opportunity. Through his unwavering commitment to good governance, he has repositioned Kogi as an attractive destination for investment, innovation, and sustainable development.

The administration's focus on youth empowerment, job creation, and agricultural development has further solidified this positive trajectory. Initiatives such as vocational training programs, support for small businesses, and investments in modern farming techniques have created opportunities for economic growth and self-reliance. These efforts are positioning Kogi State as a beacon of hope within Nigeria and beyond. For skeptics, I encourage them to witness these achievements firsthand.

Renewed Hope Amid Challenges

While significant progress has been made, challenges such as healthcare access, education reform, and rural development persist. However, the accomplishments of the past year offer a compelling reason for optimism. As the adage goes, "The morning shows the day." Governor Ododo's first year has set a clear tone of action, integrity, and

commitment, demonstrating that focused leadership can overcome even the most daunting challenges.

For example, education reform remains a priority. Governor Ododo's administration has embarked on initiatives to improve the quality of education, including teacher training programs, curriculum updates, and infrastructure improvements in schools. These efforts aim to equip the next generation with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in an increasingly competitive world.

Charting the Path Forward

As Kogi State looks to the future, Governor Ododo's administration must continue to prioritize the needs of its citizens while striving for excellence in governance. The foundation has been laid, but the journey is far from over. Inspired by the renewed hope brought about by his leadership, the people of Kogi State eagerly anticipate further progress and development.

Moving forward, it will be essential to sustain the momentum of the past year. This includes expanding infrastructure projects, deepening reforms in critical sectors, and ensuring that the benefits of development reach every corner of the state. By maintaining a focus on transparency, inclusivity, and accountability, Governor Ododo's administration can continue to build on its successes and chart a path toward lasting prosperity.

A Message of Appreciation and Encouragement

On this significant milestone, it is only fitting to commend Governor Ahmed Ododo for his leadership, unwavering commitment to the welfare of his people, and efforts to build a brighter, more prosperous Kogi State. His first year in office has proven the power of purposeful governance, and all signs point to even greater achievements ahead.

Congratulations to Governor Ododo on this remarkable milestone. May his tenure continue to bring hope, progress, and pride to the great people of Kogi State.

Congratulations TO A TRANSFORMATIVE LEADER!



His Excellency, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo
The Executive Governor of Kogi State
Government House, Lokoja

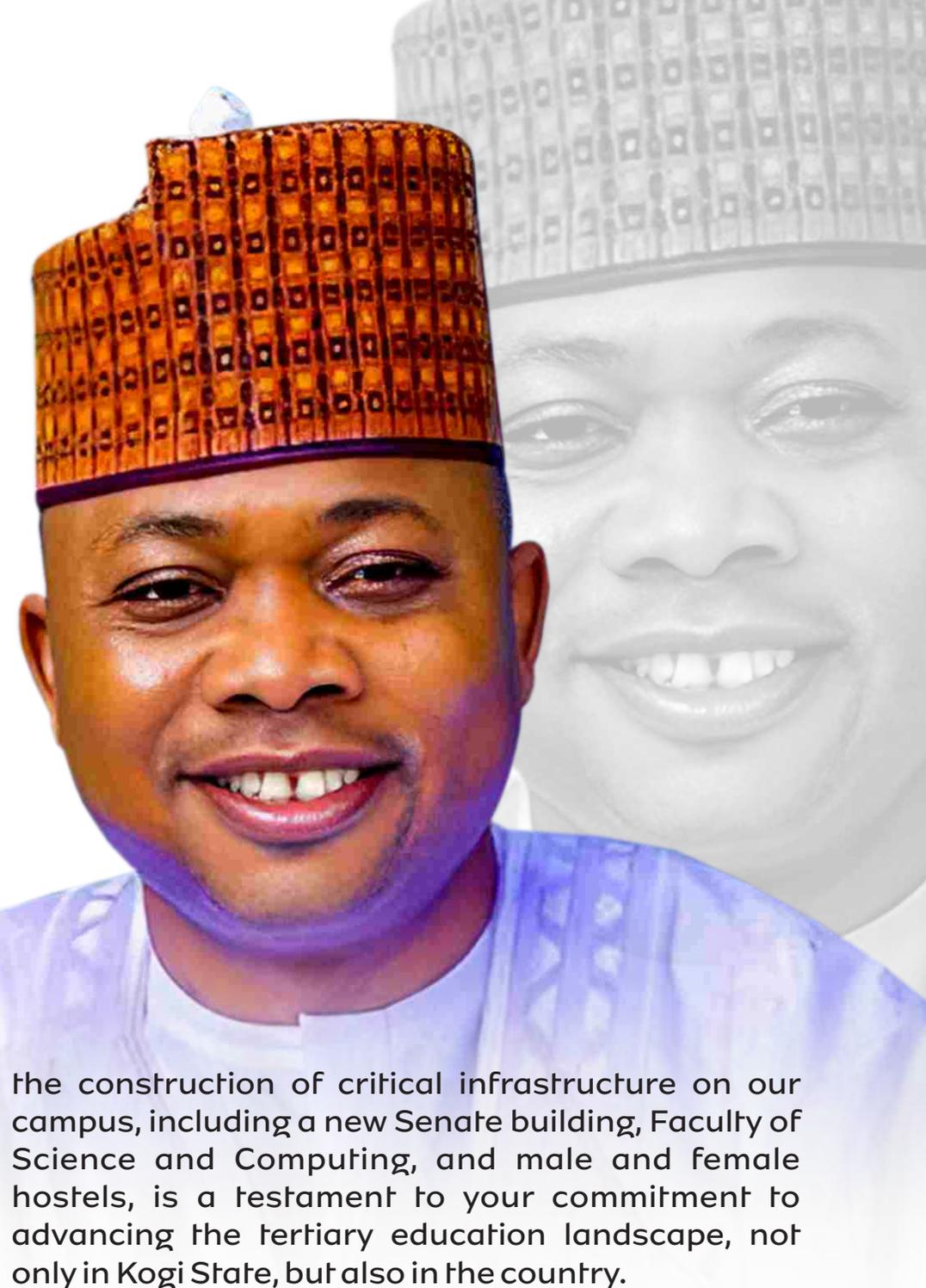
On behalf of the Governing Council, Management, Senate, Staff, and Students of Kogi State University Kabba, I am delighted to congratulate His Excellency on your one-year anniversary in office.

His Excellency's leadership has been remarkable, and we appreciate your commitment to the welfare of the people of Kogi State. Your prompt attention to the welfare of workers, specifically my colleagues here at Kogi State University, Kabba has notably held up the ante of diligence and commitment to duty, demonstrating your humane and worker friendly leadership.

His Excellency, your visit to our campus, during which you inspected ongoing projects and expressed satisfaction with the progress made, was a morale booster for our community. We also appreciate your commitment to creating an inclusive and prosperous state, where every citizen is valued.

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We are particularly grateful for your administration's support for infrastructural development of KOSU. Specifically, the approval for



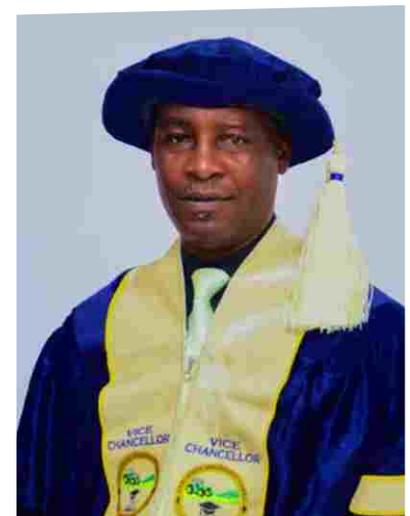
the construction of critical infrastructure on our campus, including a new Senate building, Faculty of Science and Computing, and male and female hostels, is a testament to your commitment to advancing the tertiary education landscape, not only in Kogi State, but also in the country.

As you celebrate this milestone, we pray for wisdom, good health, and continued success in your administration. May your leadership bring greater peace, prosperity, and progress to Kogi State and her people.

Congratulations once again, His Excellency!

Yours sincerely,

**Professor K.I.T Eniola fNSM
Vice Chancellor
Kogi State University Kabba**



HON FANWO REITERATES GOVERNOR ODODO'S COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE, FAIRNESS TO THE CITIZENRY

Adegboyega Segun



The Kogi State Commissioner for Information and Communications, Hon. Kingsley Fanwo has reiterated Governor Ododo's unwavering commitment to justice and fairness to the citizens of the state, describing him as a man of peace who believes in the harmony of the people of the state.

The Hon Commissioner made this known while receiving the Directorate of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) of the State Ministry of Justice in his office in Lokoja, on Tuesday 19th November 2024.

Hon Fanwo stated that people had started embracing alternative ways of resolving issues amicably without going to court, noting that it's easier, costs less, and keeps the community united.

Speaking further, he added that ADR. Is one of the non -kinetic methods that has been established to ensure security in the society without arms and ammunition.

He emphasized that the Ministry has the core mandate to inform the citizens about the activities, programs, policies, projects of the Government, assuring the directorate of adequate sensitization on ADR to the nooks and crannies of the state.

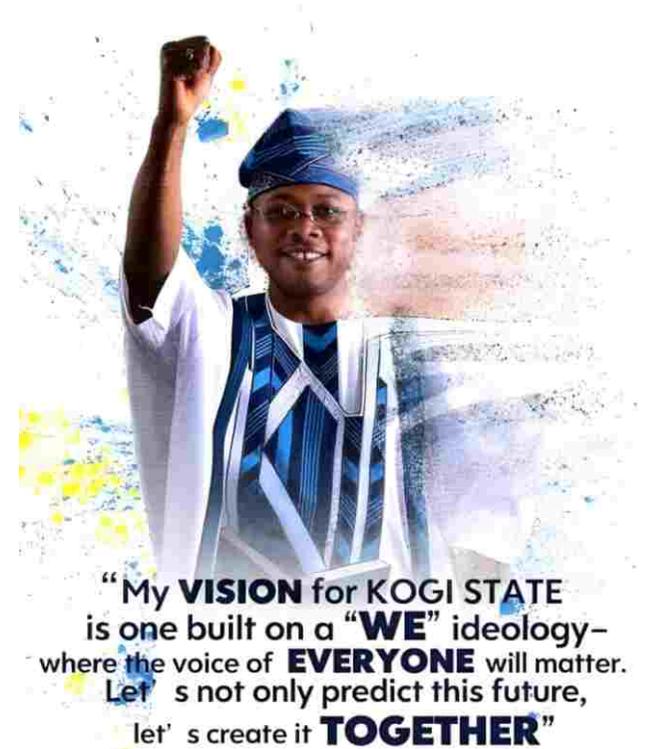
"The Kogi Sate Government has been magnanimous with the Information Ministry by improving our Information and Communications infrastructure in the state. Currently, our transmitters are the most modern in Nigeria. We would yield our platforms to you for adequate publicity of ADR. The administration of Alhaji Usman

Ododo seeks to maintain peace, security and stability in the state. I'm very sure you would study his body language. He is a man of peace, a man who believes in the harmony of the people. He is a man who is committed to justice and fairness. This is going to be one of the avenues through which we can assist the people to access justice," Hon. Fanwo emphasized.

Hon Fanwo charged the directorate to remain resolute, committed, and resolute, expressing his confidence that the directorate would be of great help to the good people of Kogi State.

The team leader of the Directorate of ADR, Barr. Onuche Oyibo described the Ministry of Information and Communications as a strategic Ministry to sensitize the people and enhance the awareness of the new department called ADR, adding that ADR is an alternative means of resolving disputes as opposed to the traditional routine of going to court to settle disputes.

Barr Onuche highlighted that ADR is for the benefit of the people as it helps to settle disputes amicably on time and without charging legal fees. He therefore appealed to the Hon Commissioner to use the platforms as well as Radio Kogi and the Graphic Newspaper to reach out to the citizenry.



"My VISION for KOGI STATE is one built on a "WE" ideology— where the voice of EVERYONE will matter. Let' s not only predict this future, let' s create it TOGETHER"

LAUNCH OF CONVERSION INCENTIVE PROGRAM AND HANDING OVER OF CNG BUSES: A STERLING ACHIEVEMENT IN THE TRANSPORTATION SECTOR OF KOGI STATE

By: Sa'adatu Mohammed

The Executive Governor of Kogi State, Alh Ahmed Usman Ododo has stated that the launch of conversion incentive program and handing over of Compressed Natural Gas Buses by Federal Government through the Presidential Compressed Natural Gas Initiative (P-CNG) is a laudable achievement in the history of Kogi State Transportation Sector.

Gov Ododo, who was ably represented by his Deputy, Elder Joel Salifu Oyibo made this known on Wednesday 02/10/2024 at the launching ceremony of conversion incentive program and handing over of CNG buses to transporters in Kogi State at Lokoja Mega Terminal.

The Deputy Governor, affirmed that the Presidential Compressed Natural Gas Initiative (P-CNG) is part of quest to accomplish the Renewed Hope Agenda of the current administration and also cushion the impact of fuel subsidy removal, adding that, the donation of CNG Buses to transporters in Kogi State is to significantly reduce transportation cost by 40% for the populace by powering the mass transit and industries with cleaner, cheaper reliable and safer Domestically Produced Natural Gas.

Speaking further, he disclosed that the

State Government in partnership with Nigeria-Korea Friendship Institute of Professional and Advanced Technology is willing and ready to train two hundred and fifty youths in CNG conversion, thereby providing them with technical skills to enable them key into the current global technologies.

Receiving the vehicles at the Kogi State Mega Terminal, Felele, Lokoja, Governor, Ahmed Usman Ododo in a message to the occasion, said the CNG initiative is a significant milestone in the "Renewed Hope Agenda" of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu.

In his address, Hon. Commissioner for Transportation, Hon Atuluku Victor Levi lauded the initiative as a commendable progress, appreciating the people of the state for embracing the Renewed Hope Agenda of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu.

Speaking Further, he said he is confident that the conversion incentive program will significantly alleviate the challenges faced by the populace and urged the populace to passionately key into the initiative, adding that it will alleviate their cost of living.

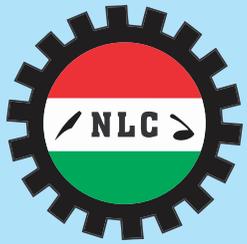
In his goodwill message, the Minister of Steel Development, Prince Shuaibu

Abubakar Audu, stated that the "Renewed Hope Agenda" of President Tinubu has been brought to their doorstep, noting that plans are underway to make Ajaokuta one of the CNG hubs of Nigeria, noting that the Ministry is working assiduously to present a proposal to the Federal Government for possible consideration to establish an Industrial Park within Ajaokuta environ, which will also host a CNG park, a Free Trade Zone and enhance the standard of living of the environment

The Program Director/Chief Executive of the P-CNGI, Engr. Michael Oluwagbemi, said that the P-CNGI chose Kogi for its inaugural launch because the state beyond being a Confluence State of water bodies is also significant in the transportation system as a link between the north and other parts of the country, and also hosts an important gas hub.

He said that the event was not designed just to reduce transportation fares for commercial drivers or fulfil Mr. President's promise to ensure that transporters get their vehicles and tricycles converted for free, but also a golden opportunity for Nigerians to benefit from the abundant resources of the country, urging everyone to key into the transformative initiative of Federal Government.





FELICITATION! MESSAGE FROM

KOGI STATE COUNCIL OF NIGERIA LABOUR CONGRESS, NLC



On behalf of the organized Labour in Kogi State, I heartily felicitate with the Labour friendly Governor, the people's Governor, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo on his one eventful year in office.

This message is no doubt, borne out of our sincere appreciation of the concern to the workforce, the pensioners and the electorate at large.

So far, you have not disappointed us and we remain optimistic that you will take Kogi State to the anticipated enviable position among the comity of states in Nigeria.

For the records, it is note worthy that you have earned the respect of the Nigeria Labour Congress, NLC at the national level having being the first to implement the new minimum wage, and meeting all the indices as a state.

The laying to rest of segmented or percentage salaries to local government workers and Primary School teachers, again, remain outstanding while the one hundred percent payment of hazard allowance to health workers and the Health Insurance Scheme are all part of success stories.

As you mark this one year in office, the NLC in Kogi State is proud to identify with the administration, hence you have been tagged "God sent".

It is our prayers that God Almighty will continue to guide and protect you with the needed courage to move on with the people at heart.

Congratulations once again, your Excellency



Comrade Gabriel Amari
NLC Chairman, Kogi State



By Blessing Ameloko-Odoh

The Executive Governor of Kogi State, His Excellency Alh Ahmed Usman Ododo, has unveiled an ambitious plan to revolutionize the state's urban and housing landscape. The Governor announced this development during a 2-day symposium themed "Modern Housing & Urban Development" held at the Glass House, Government House in Lokoja.

Representing the Governor, Hon. Joseph Oluwasegun, Commissioner for Environment and Ecological management, reiterated the commitment of Governor Ododo's administration to transforming the lives of Kogi State residents through

GOVERNOR ODODO UNVEILS BLUEPRINT FOR KOGI STATE'S URBAN REVITALIZATION

modern housing and development initiatives.

The symposium aims to tackle pressing housing challenges confronting the people of Kogi State. The Commissioner for Housing and Urban Development, Hon Abanika Taiye, represented by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry Dr Zainab Obadaki emphasized that the program will provide affordable housing for the people of Kogi State, prioritizing sustainability and social inclusion.

The Governor has made significant strides in addressing land disputes and environmental degradation in Kogi State.

Hon. Aliu Salami, Economic Adviser to the

Governor, emphasized the significance of the symposium, noting that the blueprint presented will unlock numerous benefits, ultimately driving rapid development in the state.

Dr. Zainab Obadaki, (ESV) Permanent Secretary of the Kogi State Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, stressed the significance of the program in achieving modern housing schemes for the people of Kogi State.

The Governor's commitment to transforming the housing and urban development sector is expected to enhance rapid development and economic growth in Kogi State.

TOWARDS EFFECTIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION IN KOGI STATE

By Atuluku Samuel

The Local Governments are known to be the third tier of government and constitutionally placed in line with the federal system of government as practiced in Nigeria.

For quite a long period of time, the local government system of government has often generated some feelings among stakeholders and the people generally due to a number of factors.

Apparently, a lot of arguments have ensued as to the functionality or otherwise of the governance at the grassroots level.

Several reasons had been advanced for

what may be ascribed as the abysmal performance of the local government chairmen or leadership as may be called.

For this reason therefore, many had called for the scrapping of the local government system, but the present administration in the Country under President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, in its wisdom, considered it expedient to strengthen the third tier of government which was primarily meant to complement the efforts of the federal and state governments by bringing governance to the door step of the ordinary people, or those at the grassroots.

In this wise, the President instituted a case at the Supreme Court seeking for outright

autonomy for local governments in the Country.

Consequently, the Supreme Court, in its verdict or ruling, directed immediate implementation of the local government autonomy.

Following this development, most Nigerians saw the Supreme Court verdict as a welcome development which will promote governance and checkmate the growing scenario of rural urban migration and insecurity among others.

A matter of concern therefore, was the election of Chairmen and Councilors which many states were yet to fulfill as a matter of fact. This led to a period of grace being given

to states that were concerned, including Kogi State.

In response to this challenge and a display of responsiveness in governance, Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo directed its Electoral organ, Kogi State Independent Electoral Commission, KOSIEC, to immediately put machinery in motion towards conducting local government elections in the state, a process that has since been executed with the swearing in of the Council Chairmen by the State Chief Executive in October.

In his charge to the Chairmen at their inauguration, Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo urged them to live above board by being exemplary in their respective local governments.

According to the Governor, his administration which is government of consolidation and continuity would not condone acts of retrogression, but will remain committed to providing the gains of democracy to the electorate.

Going by the words of the Governor vis-a-vis his actions so far, it is evident that the administration is people centered, with special focus on workers welfare, socio economic prosperity and massive infrastructural development with unity of purpose.

At this juncture, it is important to emphasize the role of the local government chairmen with a view to attaining the best in line with the vision of the chief servant of Kogi State, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo and the President.

The Council Chairmen are expected to see themselves as servant leaders in their respective areas, provide relief to the rural dwellers, and provide governance that will address some missing gaps due to lack of autonomy in the past.

The coming of the autonomy no doubt, should be seen as an opportunity for them to set some records straight through purposeful leadership devoid of segregation, political divide as well as other non productive considerations.

Obviously, the dream of any leader is to leave some legacies that will stand the test of time, irrespective of any circumstances- This is what actually determines true leadership.

Suffice to state here that in the past, Council Chairmen made Lokoja the state capital their permanent base, thereby giving less attention to the people by making themselves non accessible and

consequently negating the essence of their existence.

Going by the body language of the Governor, the Chairmen should now do all within their reach to complement the efforts of the present administration whose desire is to witness a more progressive and greater Kogi State.

Indeed, the level of rural urban migration is expected to be on the decline when Council Chairmen live above board through the provision of basic social amenities.

One thing that may be paramount is the need to embrace inclusive governance since elections have come and gone, the time to face genuine governance devoid of any consideration is now according to the people's Governor.

Efforts should equally be intensified to ensure value for money being spent as a mark of prudence and having zero tolerance for corruption which has been identified as one of the bane of under development.

"Understanding the ethos of true governance is key in order to provide the much anticipated gains of democracy to the people; sincere leadership is responsibility requiring selflessness, commitment, courage and generosity, which paved way for the success of past leaders who wrote their names in gold".

The development blue print of the Governor should not be weakened, but strengthened, supported in all ramifications and there should be no excuse for failure by the Council Chairmen who have been given a conducive environment for optimum performance.

"Furthermore, it is sacrosanct to emphasize that the justification for the long awaited local government autonomy can only be visible when there is improved livelihood on the part of the rural dwellers who indeed, constitute significant percentage of the population".

What then will be the reason to remain stagnant when there is liberation or freedom ? What will be the excuse when Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo is doing well for the state ? What will be the excuse when Chairmen now has resources at their disposal with the provision of enabling environment by the chief servant of the state ? It is time to wake up, initiative ideas through improved revenue among other strategies.

The people at the grassroots are eagerly waiting to witnessing unprecedented growth and development under this present administration in Kogi State, which is why efforts must be intensified by the Chairmen to meet the yearning and aspirations of the masses and avoid the get rich quick syndrome.

The legislative arms of the local governments also have enormous roles to play at advancing governance at that level, even as local government workers are not left out in the responsibility of adding value to the operational system as engine of government.

On the whole, the Chairmen are to be reminded that their effectiveness will always be acknowledged by the electorate who are in the best position to judge any administration, either good, bad or ugly and this must be ringing in their minds to properly reposition them for optimum performance, and as well ignore the principle of what may be described as "winner takes all"



Congratulations!



On behalf of the Management and Staff of Swaleys Nig. Ltd, we would like to extend our warmest congratulations to His Excellency Alh. Ahmed Usman Ododo, the Executive Governor of Kogi State, on his one-year anniversary in office.

We appreciate the trust and confidence reposed in us as a partner in the development of Kogi State's infrastructure. We are committed to delivering quality projects that meet the highest standards, and we look forward to continuing our collaboration with your administration.

Please accept our heartfelt congratulations on this significant milestone. We wish you continued success and wisdom as you steer the affairs of Kogi State.

Congratulations once again!

Signed;

**Engr (Chief) Wale Olaleye, FNSE
MD / CEO**



THE IMPERATIVES OF TRAINING INFORMATION OFFICERS **FOR BETTER** REPORTAGE: Gov. Ododo's Precept

By Adeniyi Sunday

A training workshop is an interactive educational event designed to teach participants new skills, knowledge or attitude in a specific area.

The Executive Governor of Kogi State His Excellency Alhaji Usman Ahmed Ododo saw the need to improve the performance of Information Officers in Kogi State Ministry of Information and Communications. This Workshop was designed to equip the Information officers on reportage in the new age of Information and Communications Technology through a project called 2024 Training Workshop and Capacity Building for Information officers on the 4th and 5th of November, 2024. Powered by Lizy Water Nigeria Limited.

The project was held at the prestigious and one of the best conference halls, the Riverton Hotel. The Hon. Commissioner for Information and Communications Hon/Chief Kingsley Fanwo, the General Manager, the Graphic Mr. Yusuf Itopa, the Director-general Kogi State Broadcasting Corporation Hajia Nana Yusuf, the Permanent Secretary Mr. Ebenezer Adurodija. The Director Information Services Mr. Sunday Adeniyi, the Director News and publicity who doubles as the Chairman NUJ Alhaji Ademu Seidu, Director Budget and Planning Mrs Fatima Sanni, The Director Foods and Nutrition Mrs Agnes Igunu, The Director Graphic Arts Alhaji Abubakar Umar, The Director Digital and Printing Services Mrs Pauline Okotie, The Director Graphic Arts Mrs Ocheja Scholastica and the entire Information Officers of Kogi State Ministry of

Information and Communications.

All the training materials including a bag of high quality, writing materials and a very conducive learning environment were provided by the consultant as well as the attractive interior of Riverton Hotel.

The Director of Training of Lizy Water Consultancy in his opening speech congratulated the Information Officers for having Evangelist Kingsley Fanwo as the Commissioner and appreciated the Commissioner for the good work he is doing, especially in equipping the Information Officers for better performance through the workshop and appealed to the information officers to concentrate on the workshop as there are varieties of beneficial lectures to be delivered to them.

While declaring the workshop open, Hon. Chief Kingsley Fanwo described the consultant as one of the best media practitioners who has created a very big name for himself in the Journalism industry. He appreciated the Permanent Secretary, Manager Radio Kogi, the GM The Graphic Newspaper, all Directors and the information Officers.

Hon. Fanwo disclosed that the workshop was organized to improve Information Officers on how to report Kogi State's laudable activities.

He appreciated the Governor, Alhaji Usman Ododo for paying a lot of attention to the Information Ministry especially the

information Officers. He commended him for mobilizing resources to ensure professionalism, accurate timing and the best diction of the information officers. He commended the Information Officers for their dedication and commitment and for coming with him on a successful journey, promising to take adequate care of their welfare.

Hon. Fanwo stated that the Governor has determined to carry every Kogian along adding that the Governor was positively committed to ensuring the progress of Kogi State. and is opening up areas that had been abandoned commending him for being a caring, transparent and listening leader. He emphasized that the good people are overjoyous as the Governor had approved N72,500 minimum wage for Civil Servants commending the Governor for not suppressing voice adding that the media is the barometer needed to measure the performance of the Government. All resource persons at the workshop are intellectuals that have contributed in no small measure first to their fields of professionalism Dr Austin Maho. Maho is a University lecturer that has carried a niche for himself in the academic and journalism fields. The topic of his lecture " Making the Media work for you" emphasized that the media has the power to influence the public's perception of a person or institution. Quoting Malcolm X, he said " the media e.g print and electronic are the most powerful entity that have the fundamental objective enshrined in the charter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the government to the people,".



THE IMPERATIVE OF TRAINING OF INFORMATION OFFICERS FOR BETTER REPORTAGE: GOVERNOR ODODO'S PRECEPT

Under the subtopic Media powers, he stated the media differentiate the authoritarian regime from a democratic regime. He maintained that the media is the watchdog of the society, watching over the powerful few in the society on behalf of many to guard against tyranny. He added that the media watch the government and make sure that they conscientise the government to do the right thing in the interest of the governed. He stated that the media have the power to shape opinions, views and perspectives adding that opinion leaders can limit the power of the media in agenda setting, Dr. Austin Maho explained that the media is imbued with the unique ability to arrange our world and create our reality through mental pictures. He emphasised the media capacity, through Newswriters, to focus public attention on some events and issues and away from others. He added that the media can change perception attitude, knowledge, behavior, emotions and political views.

Dr. Maho however noted that the media is limited by ownership structure, commercialization of news, communications disruption through the new media revolution which became positive in 2004-2005. According to Dr Maho Google which went public in 2004 now has 4 billion people search on it . Facebook has 3 billion viewers while 2-3 billion people visit the YouTube everyday .Twitter that emerged in 2006 has half a billion tweets sent every day. The apple introduced the I phone in 2007. Today 6.4 billion people use smart phones worldwide. Dr. Maho ventified the challenges of the new media to the following of amusement entertainment content against the hardcore news. New media users such as Davido 21.5m, Yemi Alade 15m, Funke 14.2 M Akindele, Tiwa Savage instagram 13.5 m followers whereas the newspaper altogether do not have up to 20 million followers. He stressed that the media should use their enormous power responsibly in the pursuit of national interest for development.

On the sub-topic "Public Relations and Journalism", Dr. Maho defined Public relations as the management of information and communications to maintain positive image, build relationship and promote understanding and between an organization and its stakeholders while journalism is the gathering and dissemination of credible news to the public. During his lecture, he emphasized the 99Versus1% especially during the promotion of the activities of our institutions where as the journalist disseminates news He finally concluded that the media are powerful tools that can be strategically deployed toward public relation objectives. There were questions



THE IMPERATIVE OF TRAINING OF INFORMATION OFFICERS FOR BETTER REPORTAGE: GOVERNOR ODODO'S PRECEPT

from the Information Officers to Mr. Maho which he answered brilliantly and explicitly. He gave an assignment to the Information Officers to write a public relations plan for their MDAs. This assignment was written and submitted by the Information Officers. The lecture lasted for more than three hours.

The lecture was followed by a lunch break and all attendees of the workshop were directed to the cafeteria where they were treated to a sumptuous lunch.

Immediately after the lunch, a renowned lecturer from Federal University Lokoja, Dr Agbana Funmilayo continued the workshop with a lecture on "Effective Government Communication and Ethical Reportage" she stated that the objectives of the lecture were to equip reporters with the skills to ethically communicate government policies. She pointed out that the goal of the lecture was how to balance government representation with journalistic integrity and identify the key focus, to be transparency, accountable and objective in government communications. She defined government communications and ethical thinking as strategies used by the government to inform and engage the public. She continued that press releases, Public Service Announcement, websites and social media handles are reliable strategies of effective government communications. According to Dr. Agbana public engagement includes consultation surveys and outreach programmes. Public Service Announcements include crisis communication which are through alerts and updates during emergencies. It can also be done through educational campaigns through raising awareness on issues. Like health safety and civic topics. She lectured that the website should always be up to date as it must contain all information about the organization and should the top-notch social media handles. Through these methods, she said the public can be persuaded to learn and unlearn so many things. To this end, Dr Mrs. Agbana recommended a research unit in the Ministry of Information and Communications. She stressed that through effective government communications, the government must be able to combat crises in the minds of the people concerned, through beautiful networking and good human relations through reliable contacts.

While lecturing on "the role of communications in shaping public opinion", she said that effective government communications build trust, influence public perception on issues and encourage civic engagement pointing out that crises management aim maintain public confidence through knowledge and

diplomacy.

Dr. Agbana stressed the principle of ethical journalism to include truth and accuracy, impartiality, editorial independence and accountability. She maintained that ethical reporting must balance government's perspective with public interest.

She stated that the techniques for effective government communications are through framing policies, positively messaging consistency during crises, adding that timeliness in updates prevent malfunctioning, advocating real time updates, interactive engagement visuals and healthy engagement campaigns.

While lecturing on the topic "balancing Government favour and journalist integrity", Dr Agbana identified fair reportage, neutrality and transparency to avoid bias in reportage stressing that effective Government Communications and ethical reporting helps to build public trust and acceptability of the issues discussed.

Through the interactive session involving questions and answer, she advised Information Officers to be hardworking and relevant so that they can be involved in policy formulation and strategy.

The second day of the workshop the 5th day of November, 2024 started with a light breakfast of tea and snacks immediately after the registration for attendance. After the light breakfast the workshop continued with a lecture by one of the learned resource persons of Lizy Water Consultancy Nigeria Limited Mr. Shina Omotomiwa.

The topic of his lecture "leveraging Artificial Intelligence and modern ICT tools to enhance reporting data processing and communications work flow within state ministries was apt and timely as its emphasis was mainly on the use Information Technology. During the lecture, Mr. Omotomiwa emphasised that the lecture will assist Information Officers on the practical application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools in automating, processes and improving communications efficiency. He maintained that information officers are crucial between the government and the public through preparing, managing and disseminating official reports and ensuring that accurate information is relayed to the right audience.

He however identified challenges of Information Officers to include loading of card, data, speed and accuracy and

diverse communication channels. While lecturing, Mr. Otmowima defined AI as a machine that can mimic natural intelligence to perform tasks such as solve problems, effective reporting etc.". The first AI tool he taught was the "speech to text tools" e.g. other AI chat; a microsoft to transcribe interviews, meetings and speeches into texts., deep I Write or google to communicate with diverse groups, chatgots.com which are used to handle public inquiries, respond to frequently asked questions and to help citizens navigate through forms, policies and reports without human intervention, AI enhanced e-mail tools to improve the management of language tools e.g Deep L write or google can be used to communicate with diverse audience. He lectured that AI enhanced Email tools are used to improve the management of official communications through e-mails.

He continued that Collaboration and Communications tools e.g. microsoft Teams and Slack that allow Information Officers to share documents, hold meetings and engage in real-time discussions.

Mr Omoniwa while lecturing on Documents Management Tools stated that SharePoint and Guitle Drive allow collaboration when dealing with documents adding that they have version control to track changes in report overtime.

He continued that Video Conferencing Tools such as Zoom and Googlemeet are very useful in reporting minutes and webinars. According to Mr. Omowiwa, a First Class Masters Degree holder from an American University, modern ICT tools include Grammarly to improve writings and designs, the Google lens to analysis documents, the canva and canva for magic designs and advertisement, and the Hot Suits to manage social media accounts and to schedule posts.

The used the laptop through the film projector to construct charts and to write on how Governor Ododo was combatting flood in Kogi State. The AI machine was able to incredibly respond with a credible report within minutes, which he tagged AI assisted writing. He also assisted the Information Officers to access some applications on their phones in order to access the AI applications.

. He concluded that AI and ICT tools enhance efficiency and accuracy in reportage, ensure data security and maintain public trust and automise decision making processes.

All Information Officers were visible delighted and elated by the marathon workshop. I could hear some of them discussing that the workshop reminded them of lectures in the university and other higher institutions.

THE IMPERATIVE OF TRAINING OF INFORMATION OFFICERS FOR BETTER REPORTAGE: GOVERNOR ODODO'S PRECEPT

Immediately after the sumptuous lunch, another lecturer Mr. Otori Abdulfatai, a learned and practicing public speaker and master of ceremonies lectured the Information officers on 'Improving Public Speaking Skills.'

He started by pointing out that many people are jittery, flustered, nervous or uncomfortable when they pick a microphone to speak in public. This feeling, he identify to be "stage fright or performance anxiety". However, he assured the Information Officers that speaking in public is not very difficult. He identified causes of stage fright as lack of adequate preparation, lack of familiarity with the audience, and the setting, fear of rejection and unrealistic expectations.

According to the erudite scholar, there are some researches that need to be done before attempting to speak in public. At the workshop, he lectured that proper researches provide the speaker with the official background of his audience adding that for correct pronunciation of English words, the speaker should endeavour to check the phonetic transcription in the dictionary.

The second process is the fact that the speaker must know his audience adding that speakers are more comfortable with the audience they know. The speaker must assess the audience's level of exposure, education, experience, and the diction of the topic to be discussed. The public speaker must be conscious of the group's reaction as the speech progresses.

He added that a public speaker should endeavor to practice and practice. He stated that practice leads to effectiveness in public speaking. He suggested a mock presentation of the speech in advance of the program with an imaginary audience or a co-worker, a friend or a family member as an audience.

Mr. Abdulfatai continued that the feedback or comments should be integrated into future presentations. He noted that the public speaker should appreciate the audience or the mock audience for the invaluable feedback and add his/her own flair. He cautioned that when using PowerPoint presentation, the speaker is not expected to repeat the content word for word but should use video presentations.

He advised the public speaker to use a particular story or an anecdote to connect with the audience, make eye contact, use appropriate body language, stand with an excellent posture and be calm and composed.

The lecturer also taught that the speaker needs to record himself while speaking and listen to his speech to know where he commits errors so as to improve.

He said it is important to develop one's public speaking skills as it is very helpful for growth in career and strengthen team building. He taught some pronunciation drills on how to phonetically pronounce some words such as privacy, data etc.

He recommended books such as "The Art of Public speaking by Dale Carregie", "Talk

like Ted", by Carmine Gallo, online courser etc.

The lecturer concluded that flaws become minimal after patience, practice and persistence. He finally called on all Information Officers to "KISS", an acronym for "keep it short and simple".

We must appreciate the Governor Alhaji Usman Ahmed Ododo for initiating and funding the workshop and Hon. Kingsley Fanwo for implementing it.

Throughout the duration of the workshop, the Hon. Commissioner was in attendance and on several occasion, contributed meaningful to the lectures in the workshop. There were fruitful interactive sessions between the lecturers and the Information officers.

At the end of the workshop, Information Officers were motivated and updated for their task of accurate reportage of government activities. Their knowledge in reporting have been sharpened, improved and honed for better performance in their Ministries, Departments and Agencies.

The success of the workshop conforms with the submission of Herbert Hoover who says that "words without actions are the assassins of idealism". The Governor of Kogi State His Excellency Alhaji Usman Ahmed Ododo had matched his words with actions, thereby actualizing his idealism on the imperative of training of Information Officers as a catalyst to efficient and effective reportage of government activities, programmes and policies.





Congratulations
Mr Governor
ON YOUR FIRST
ANNIVERSARY

I join the good people of Kogi State at home and the Diaspora and the West Senatorial District in particular in congratulating your Excellency on your administration's first anniversary in office.

May God Almighty continue to abide with you as you shoulder on in the arduous task of piloting the affairs of our great state.

Accept my heartfelt Congratulations your Excellency.

His Excellency
ALHAJI AHMED
USMAN ODODO
Executive Governor of Kogi State

Senator Steve Sunday Karimi

Kogi Strides: What accomplishments have you achieved in the urban and housing sector over the past year?

COMMISSIONER: Over the past year, significant progress has been made in housing and urban development in Kogi State. Under the leadership of His Excellency Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo, the administration has prioritized the completion of existing housing projects and the initiation of new ones throughout the state.

Several housing projects are currently in advanced stages of completion, including those at the Confluence University of Science and Technology Osara. These projects encompass the construction of various buildings such as the Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of

Gov. Ododo is ensuring ADEQUATE HOUSING for Kogi citizenry Housing Commissioner

Informatics and Computing, Library, Senate building, Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences, and male and female hostels. The ongoing construction, which began in March 2024, is now at 98% completion. Additionally, perimeter fencing and a security tower are being constructed to

ensure the safety of students and staff at the University.

At Kogi State University Kabba, numerous housing projects are also underway. These include the construction of the administrative block, Library, lecture rooms, and the recent allocation of sites to four contractors for the construction of the Faculty of Science, Senate building, and two hostels. The total cost of these projects amounts to 9 billion naira, demonstrating the state's commitment to providing quality facilities for students and the community.

Furthermore, renovations have been carried out at the audit house and various road construction projects have been completed within Lokoja metropolis and the three senatorial districts of the state. These efforts aim to create a conducive and safe environment for residents and enhance the overall infrastructure of the state.

For the past one year, we have witnessed a tremendous development in various housing and Urban Development in Kogi State. His Excellency Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo, in this administration of consolidation and continuity has taken the Bull by the horn at the beginning making sure that all ongoing housing projects in the state are completed as well as initiating new ones in the state. Parts of these housing projects ongoing have reached advance stage of completion, this includes those going on at the Confluence University of Science and Technology Osara, there we have Faculty of Engineering building, Faculty of Informatics and Computing building, the



Library building, the Senate building, the Faculty of Basic Medical building, the male and female hostels with the capacity of 250 rooms, which we started in March 2024 is now at 98% completion. We also have the construction of perimeter fencing at the University and security tower is also ongoing for the security of students and staff of the University.

Also at Kogi State University Kabba, we also have a lot of ongoing projects of housing there, we have the Administrative block, the Library, the lecture rooms, and of recent, we handed over sites to four contractors for the building of Faculty of science, Senate building, two hostels, that's the male and female hostels. This building construction ongoing there, worth out 9 billion naira the state expended for the benefits of our students and the community. Also we have audit house as some renovations work have been done in existing building, all these are to provide serene and good environment for people to live, also part of organization of the state, we have achieved a lot of road construction within Lokoja metropolis and within the 3 senatorial districts of the state.

Kogi Strides: Upon arriving in town, I heard rumours circulating regarding the Housing and Urban Development Sector. It is being said that the Governor is allocating 100 hectares of land to the Federal Housing Authority for the construction of 1,000 housing units. Can you confirm if this information is accurate?

COMMISSIONER: Indeed, it is imperative for the government of Kogi State to ensure adequate housing for its citizens. As part of this commitment, we have actively pursued the attraction of Federal projects to our state. Thanks to the renewed focus on housing projects by His Excellency, the President of Nigeria, GCFR, Kogi State has successfully engaged with Federal entities such as the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and the Federal Housing Authority.

In line with this collaboration, the state has allocated 100 hectares of land to the Federal Ministry of Housing and Urban Development for the construction of

1,000 houses. Additionally, another 1,000 hectares of land have been designated for the Federal Housing Authority to build an additional 1,000 housing units in the state. Furthermore, we have seized the opportunity to partner with Family Home Funds to develop more housing estates for our citizens.

These Federal projects underscore the commitment of His Excellency to bring tangible development to Kogi State. Through strategic partnerships and proactive initiatives, we are working tirelessly to address the housing needs of our people and create a more sustainable and prosperous future for all.

Kogi Strides: Earlier, during our conversation, you mentioned that some projects at the University began in March 2024. Now, take a moment to envision the future of the Housing Sector two years from now. What implications do you foresee?

COMMISSIONER: In two years, Kogi State will experience a significant increase in housing projects. Sufficient housing will be provided for all citizens, putting an end to the persistent rumours of a housing deficit in the state.

Kogi Strides: What is the collaboration between Kogi State and private sector real estate professionals? How are they working together to drive economic growth and development in the region? Let's explore the partnership between Kogi State and the private sector real estate industry, and the impact it is having on the local economy.

COMMISSIONER: We have had numerous developers express interest in partnering with the Kogi State Government to provide housing solutions. One notable example is TAF Global Africa, which has successfully developed housing estates in Port Harcourt. We have engaged in several meetings with this developer, who has shown a keen interest in expanding their operations to our state. We are currently in discussions with TAF Global Africa to bring their expertise and experience to Kogi State, replicating the success they have achieved in other states.

Kogi Strides: Imagine this scenario: You are faced with a group of Nigerian citizens who are eager to hear about the accomplishments of your Governor in your sector. You have less than two minutes to convey the impact and achievements of your Governor. What would you say?

COMMISSIONER: The Governor of Kogi State has demonstrated exceptional leadership by prioritizing the housing sector and focusing on the well-being of the citizens. He is known as the Chief Servant of the state, with a reputation for being people-friendly and attentive to the needs of the community. His commitment to action is evident in the ongoing housing projects and urbanization efforts taking place throughout the state.

Recently, the Governor initiated the construction of an Ultra-modern market in Lokoja, further enhancing the urban landscape. His dedication to improving the economy and quality of life for all residents is commendable, as he works tirelessly to ensure progress and development in every sector. The Governor's track record as an achiever speaks volumes, as he continues to strive for excellence and positive change in Kogi State.

Kogi Strides: Do you exclusively operate in Lokoja, or do you have a presence across the entire state?

COMMISSIONER: We are expanding our presence across the three senatorial districts of the state. Lokoja, the state capital, is experiencing significant development, as are the other two senatorial districts. In this year's budget, we have allocated funds to develop housing estates in all three senatorial districts, including the capital city.

CONSULTANT: Are estates only available to civil servants, or do individuals in the private sector also have the opportunity to access them?

COMMISSIONER: Is for all, both Civil Servants and all citizens of the state residents in the state.

Kogi Strides: Thank you very much.

CONGRATULATIONS To His Excellency,

Alh. Ahmed Usman Ododo
The Executive Governor of Kogi State

On behalf of the Kogi State Ministry of Works, I extend our warmest congratulations to you on your 1-year anniversary in office. Your tireless efforts to develop our great state have not gone unnoticed.

Under your leadership, we have witnessed significant strides in infrastructure development, and we are committed to continuing this momentum. As the Commissioner for Works, I pledge to work closely with your administration to deliver quality projects that meet the highest standards.

Your vision for Kogi State's growth and development aligns with the ministry's goals, and we are dedicated to supporting your efforts. We appreciate your unwavering support for our ministry and look forward to continuing our partnership.

Once again, congratulations on this milestone achievement. We wish you continued success in leading our great state.



Signed:

Hon. Engr. Mohammed Ahovi Yusuf
Commissioner, Kogi State Ministry of Works



Rural Development:
 We are focusing
 on improving
infrastructure
 and access to
essential services
Engr Abdulmutalib

K o g i Strides: As I examined the operations of your ministry focused on rural development and energy, I noticed several challenges that may be hindering its effectiveness. I am curious to know, over the past year, what obstacles have you encountered and how have you navigated through them?

Engr Abdulmutalib: Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I must say, it has been quite challenging, but thanks to the leadership of His Excellency Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo, we have been able to overcome many obstacles. His Excellency is always open to new ideas and actively engages in brainstorming sessions to find solutions that benefit our ministry.

Our efforts in the rural areas have been focused on improving infrastructure and access to essential services. Through the Rural Access Agricultural Marketing Project (RAAMP), we have successfully implemented initiatives such as sinking boreholes and constructing roads to connect agricultural farms. The impact of these projects has been so significant that the World Bank has extended the project by another 18 months, recognizing the positive changes it has brought to the community.

By creating a conducive environment in rural areas, we are not only reducing migration to urban centers but also fostering economic growth and development. This will lead to the construction of schools, markets, and other essential facilities, ultimately improving the quality of life for residents and creating new opportunities for economic prosperity in the state.

Kogi Strides: During our conversation, I



found myself pondering a question: How does one identify the most suitable project for a specific rural area? What steps are involved in this decision-making process?

Engr Abdulmutalib: Thank you for your question. In addition to gathering information directly from individuals, what I mean by sourcing information from the people themselves is engaging with community members who have specific needs and aspirations. This can be done through written correspondence, such as letters expressing their desires. Additionally, there is a directorate dedicated to rural social development that interacts with the community to understand their needs.

Many of the appointed officials, including myself, come from rural backgrounds and have a vested interest in improving the lives of our communities. By collaborating and pooling our resources, we can work towards addressing these needs. While we acknowledge that resources may be limited, we can still compile a list of projects and present them to the governor, providing a rationale for why these initiatives are necessary.

During the governor's campaign, a secretariat was established to document

the promises made to the people, with the Commissioner for Information overseeing this effort. This information serves as a reference point for us to remind the governor of the commitments made and the progress that has been achieved or is still pending. This allows us to effectively communicate the projects that require attention and support from the governor.

Kogi Strides: The transmission of electricity or energy is no longer solely under the federal government's jurisdiction. Over the past year, what progress has Kogi State made in this area?

Engr Abdulmutalib: Thank you. As you may be aware, the Governor himself hails from the energy sector, having previously worked with NEPA, PHCN, and AEDC before departing around 2015. I, too, have a background in this sector, having been involved until 2022 before being called to my current position.

With the recent signing of the Electricity Bill 2023 by the President, the Governor has seized the opportunity to ensure our state is among the first to benefit. Currently, Enugu, Ekiti, Ondo, and soon Kogi State have completed the necessary steps to transition to the new system. Our state has passed the electricity law, received assent, and

We are focusing on improving infrastructure and access to essential services

appointed commissioners and a chairman to oversee the process.

I had the privilege of meeting with the appointed officials as you arrived, and they are in the process of assembling a team to work alongside them.

Rest assured, with the collective experience of the Governor, myself, and other industry professionals serving as commissioners, we are committed to delivering the best possible service to the people of our state. Drawing from lessons learned at the federal level, we aim to improve upon past practices and ensure a successful transition to the new system.

Kogi Strides: When you generate your own energy, are you contributing to the national grid? Can you explain how this process works?

Engr Abdulmutalib: Currently, the responsibility for electricity generation, transmission, and distribution remains with the federal NEC. States are only allowed to create their own electricity markets through the State Electricity Market (SEM). However, states with the capacity to build power stations are encouraged to do so. In our case, we have investors, such as Quanti Energy, who have obtained a license from the Ministry of Power to develop the Omi Dam and generate 20 megawatts of electricity. We have also shown them other potential sites, like Osara Dam and Ekuku Dam, which have sparked their interest.

These investors are demonstrating a keen interest in generating electricity in our state. We are not solely focused on electricity, but also on energy as a whole. We are leveraging President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's DASS initiative, which aims to expand access to electricity distribution. His Excellency has invited the managing director of REA to the state to collaborate with stakeholders on implementing solar energy solutions in underserved areas without access to the grid.

Under this World Bank project, a regulation will be established for residents to gradually pay for the energy services provided by investors. Once the memorandum of understanding is signed between the investor, the state, and the REA, construction will commence to meet the standards set by the REA.

We oversee the investment process, and then you compensate them with 70% of their initial investment. Over time, they will recover the remaining 30% through the

tariff system. This approach not only empowers communities but also generates employment opportunities. The community members will manage the investments and form a cooperative that will act as a service provider. Once the investors have recouped their initial investment, the equipment and installations will remain in place to benefit the community. This model not only creates employment opportunities but also establishes a cooperative that we will oversee to ensure the success of the portfolio.

Kogi Strides: I will return to RAAMP. However, before doing so, I have not yet observed any mention of solar energy in this context.

Engr Abdulmutalib: In the state, we have implemented a strategic solution to address the issue of unreliable power supply from the AEDC. Due to our background and understanding of the limitations of the current power supply, we have identified key areas that require uninterrupted electricity, such as our radio station, Radio Kogi. To ensure continuous power supply, we have introduced a hybrid system at Radio Kogi, Mount Patti, and the federal medical store. These locations house critical equipment, including vaccines, that cannot afford any downtime. Considering the high cost of diesel, we proposed the use of solar power to His Excellency, who approved the initiative.

Over the past six months, this investment has proven successful. The Commissioner for Information can attest to the fact that Radio Kogi now operates 24 hours a day. This strategic decision has not only improved the reliability of power supply in these sensitive areas but has also demonstrated our commitment to innovation and efficiency.

Kogi Strides: I would like to revisit the topic of RAAMP, specifically its role in agricultural marketing products. I am curious about how this initiative impacts the lives of rural dwellers and the underlying concept behind it. Could you please provide more insight into this matter?

Engr Abdulmutalib: It is widely believed that the current situation in our rural areas presents a significant challenge for farmers. The lack of proper infrastructure, such as roads, makes it difficult for vehicles to access farms and transport products to market. This often results in perishable goods spoiling before they can be sold.

The Rural Access and Agricultural Marketing Project (RAAMP) aims to address this issue by improving road conditions and establishing markets in the heart of rural communities. By making roads more accessible and building markets closer to farms, farmers and off-takers will have an easier time conducting business.

Ultimately, the goal of RAAMP is to ensure that rural farmers can efficiently transport their products to market, leading to increased profits and a more sustainable agricultural industry. By implementing these changes, we hope to see a positive impact on the livelihoods of rural communities and a boost in agricultural productivity.

Significant progress has been made in our infrastructure development efforts. Approximately three months ago, His Excellency inaugurated the Obajana-Aku road, spanning approximately 19 kilometers. Additionally, a road in the southeast measuring around 30 kilometers and another in the Isanlu area covering 24 kilometers are currently under construction. Visual evidence, including photos and videos, will be provided to showcase the advancements made at these work sites.

Approval has been granted for another project, with award letters expected to be issued tomorrow. This new project, spanning approximately 80 kilometers, aims to further enhance our transportation network. In response to the positive impact of these initiatives, plans are underway to extend the project to cover an additional 120 kilometers across the three senatorial districts, focusing on improving rural road infrastructure.

Furthermore, the World Bank has expressed interest in the long-term sustainability of these projects. As a result, the Rural Access and Agricultural Marketing Project (RAAMP) will establish a sector reform initiative, including the creation of the Rural Road Maintenance Agency (RARA) and the State Rural Fund. These agencies will collaborate with stakeholders such as road transporters, NGOs, the NLC, and the Nigerian Society of Engineers to ensure ongoing maintenance and funding for rural roads.

By implementing these measures, we aim to not only improve our current infrastructure but also ensure its long-term viability. The establishment of these agencies underscores our commitment to sustainable development and the continued prosperity of our communities.

Kogi Strides: Your ministry focuses on rural development, yet the majority of your

We are focusing on improving infrastructure and access to essential services

discussions have centered around roads. Does your mandate not extend beyond just roads? What other initiatives and resources are being provided to rural areas to promote their overall development and well-being?

Engr Abdulmutalib: We have made significant strides in the field of electricity infrastructure development. Our efforts have extended across all three senatorial districts, with a total investment exceeding 12 billion. This investment was presented to the federal NEC, following the established guidelines that allocate a certain percentage of the electricity industry to the Federal government and the state respectively.

Our focus has been on enhancing the state's equity in the electricity sector through strategic investments. We have installed over 85 transformers of varying capacities in different locations, including the Koton Muritala Mohammed Bridge to serve Koton Karifi. This bridge features an armored cable spanning approximately 7,000 meters to ensure reliable power supply.

The decision to use a 185 mm cable on the Muritala Muhammed Bridge was made in November 2020, replacing the previous 90 mm cable. The upgrade was necessary due to the increased demand for electricity in the Koto area, surpassing the capacity of the existing infrastructure. This initiative was undertaken by the government to address the limitations faced by AEDC in meeting the growing energy needs of the region.

Furthermore, on the eastern side, the Itobe Bridge spans 3 kilometers, highlighting our commitment to expanding and modernizing the electricity network to meet the evolving demands of the community.

As previously mentioned, each cable consists of a red face, a blue face, and a yellow face, meaning that three cables are required for any installation. This equates to a total of nine thousand meters of cable, with the previous 95 mm cable being upgraded to 300 mm to accommodate the increased demand from local government entities previously serviced by Jos disco, now connected to the Abuja disco axis within our coverage area.

Our investment in a dedicated transmission line from the Okene station to supply CUSTECH underscores our commitment to providing reliable power to this science university, which is essential for its research and construction activities.

The 48-kilometer 3kv line from Okene to CUSTECH, along with the necessary reticulation within the university premises, represents a significant financial investment, with each span of the line costing over 7 million.

Considering that each kilometer consists of 20 spans, the total cost of the project can be calculated by multiplying the cost of one span by 20 and then by 48 for the total length. This does not even account for the additional 7.5 MVA investment in CUSTECH. The meticulous planning and execution of this project demonstrate our dedication to providing reliable power supply to critical institutions like CUSTECH.

We understand that the power supply requirement at CUSTECH is approximately 5 MVA. In the field of electricity, it is common practice not to load equipment to its maximum capacity. The industry standard is to load equipment to about 75% of its capacity in order to protect the lifespan of the equipment and reduce the chances of faults occurring.

Given the 5 MVA requirement at CUSTECH, we made the decision to install 7.5 MVA of capacity. However, instead of just installing one 7.5 MVA transformer, we opted for three 2.5 MVA transformers. This decision was made in order to optimize load management and ensure a consistent and high-quality power supply.

By strategically placing a transformer at the load center and radiating lines from that point, we can minimize voltage drop along the lines and improve overall efficiency. By dividing CUSTECH into three regions and using 2.5 MVA transformers in each region, we have created a system where any transformer issues can be isolated and resolved without affecting the entire campus.

The project at CUSTECH is currently 95% complete, and we are confident that we will be able to commission the new power supply system by January 27th. Our goal is to provide a reliable and efficient power supply that meets the needs of the university community.

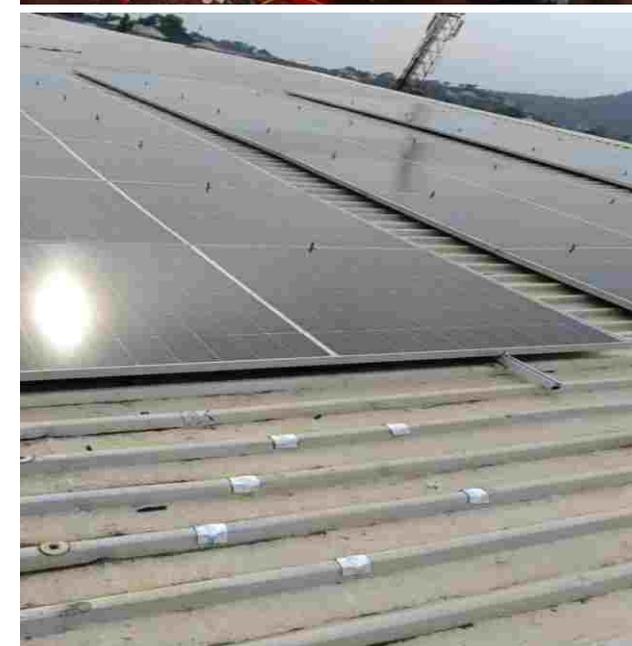
Kogi Strides: To conclude, I would like to address the point you made about the word "span." Considering the duration of the Governor's term, how do you envision the development of energy consumption in the rural areas of Kogi over the next three years?

Engr Abdulmutalib: Thank you. Currently, I would like to discuss the availability of

power in Kogi. Understanding the availability of power is crucial as it allows us to determine what is necessary for the State. The current daily allocation from AEDC to Kogi stands at 80 megawatts. However, this amount falls short of the actual demand, which exceeds 200 megawatts.

In order to meet the energy needs of Kogi, we must work towards acquiring an additional 120 megawatts before the end of His Excellency Ahmed Odo's third year in office. This is a challenging task, but I am confident in our ability to achieve it. By implementing smart strategies, such as the DAS system, we can improve access to electricity, create employment opportunities, and enhance the quality of life in rural communities.

With the dedication and commitment shown by His Excellency towards improving electricity access in rural areas, I am confident that we can surpass the 200 megawatt mark by the end of his administration. I am optimistic that we have a 90% chance of success in achieving this goal. Thank you for your attention and support.





On behalf of the Management and Staff of CCECC Nigeria Limited, we would like to extend our warmest congratulations to His Excellency, Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo, on his 1-year anniversary in office.

We appreciate the governor's vision for Kogi State and his efforts to create an enabling environment for businesses to thrive. Our company is committed to supporting the state's development goals, particularly in the areas of infrastructure development and economic growth.

We pray for Governor Ododo's successful tenure and look forward to continuing our partnership with Kogi State.

May our collaboration bring about prosperity and development to the people of Kogi State.

Once again, congratulations to the people's Governor.

Signed:
Management



Ododo is prioritizing Education

Wemi Jones



Kogi Strides: Upon entering your office, I was not surprised to see the quote from Nelson Mandela stating that "education is the most powerful weapon with which you can change the world." Throughout the brief history of Kogi State, education has been a cornerstone. As we reflect on the past year of the government's tenure, I am curious to know if there have been any notable advancements in the education sector.

Hon Wemi Jones: Thank you. It is important to recognize the interconnectedness of the current administration with its

predecessors. In particular, the foundation laid by the immediate past governor, His Excellency Alhaji Yahaya Bello, has been instrumental in shaping our approach to education. By building upon this existing structure, we have been able to continue the trajectory of quality education service delivery.

Rather than reinventing the wheel, we have focused on maintaining and improving upon the solid foundation that was established. This approach has allowed us to achieve significant progress in a relatively short period of time. In just

one year under the leadership of His Excellency Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo, we have made notable strides in advancing our education system.

By recognizing and building upon the work of our predecessors, we are able to create a more seamless transition and ensure continued success in our educational initiatives. Thank you for your support as we strive to provide the best possible education for our students.

Kogi Strides: I noted your recent comments regarding the importance of quality education and service delivery. Let's delve deeper into this topic, particularly focusing on your responsibilities in the fields of education, science, and technology. Private education will serve as our example for discussion. Can you provide an overview of the accomplishments made by this administration in the past year in this area?

Hon Wemi Jones: Thank you. I previously oversaw the education, science, and technology sectors, but currently, my focus is solely on education. Science and technology have been transferred to a new Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation. It is important to note that the current government's approach to education is a comprehensive one, building upon the foundations laid by the previous administration.

We have established two key principles to guide our education initiatives: proper planning and adaptation. The Kogi State Education Sector Plan 2021-2030 serves as our roadmap for delivering quality, affordable, and accessible education to the citizens of Kogi State. Additionally, we have enacted the Kogi State Education Law in 2020, making Kogi State one of the few states in northern Nigeria with a comprehensive education law.

O dodo is prioritizing education

Our education reform efforts in Kogi State have been tailored to meet the diverse needs of our population, incorporating both high-tech and low-tech solutions. We are committed to modernizing our education system to ensure that all students have access to quality education. We have a variety of high-tech, low-tech, and cutting-edge systems in place, and we are making significant progress in each of them. These systems are detailed in the appendix for reference.

Prior to implementing these systems, we carefully crafted an education sector plan and consolidated the education laws to provide us with a comprehensive roadmap for the development of all levels of education - primary, secondary, and tertiary.

After conducting a thorough review of our funding strategy, it became evident that we are fully aligned with the plan we have meticulously crafted. This indicates that we are well-prepared to advance our initiatives with confidence. Our initial assessment revealed a shortfall in education funding within our plan. Consequently, the previous administration took the proactive step of allocating 30% of the state's annual budget towards education starting in 2021. This strategic decision has facilitated the smooth implementation of key initiatives outlined in our plan.

Under the current administration, there is a steadfast commitment to building upon the foundation laid by our predecessors. The governor has expressed a strong desire to not only maintain but also enhance the 30% allocation towards education. This unwavering dedication is evident in the ongoing efforts across all sectors of our state.

As we look ahead to the 2025 budget, it is clear that we are on track to surpass the 30% allocation target. The diligent work being carried out across our state is laying the groundwork for a brighter future for all residents.

It is imperative that we prioritize education, particularly at the tertiary institution level, where significant construction projects are currently underway, notably at Kogi State University Kabba. To address your question directly, all levels of education are

interconnected and interdependent. Let us begin with tertiary education. We are implementing state-of-the-art Perimeter Fencing at the institution to ensure the safety of our faculty and students. This is where the government must demonstrate its commitment. How can we best safeguard our university campuses? Kogi State University Kabba is one of three state-owned universities established by the late Governor Abubakar Audu.

However, from 2000 to 2024, two new state universities were established: one in Osara, known as Confluence University of Science and Technology, which began in 2020, and Kogi State University, which commenced in 2023. The first matriculation ceremony took place in January 2024. Why did we establish these universities? Kogi State is classified as an educationally advantaged state. Consequently, a student from Kogi State who scores 50 percent on university entrance exams may be deemed inadequate for admission, while a student from an educationally disadvantaged state with a 30 percent score may secure a spot in the same program. Recognizing this disparity, we took it upon ourselves to address the issue by establishing universities in Osara and Kogi State. Additionally, due to the abundant natural resources in our state, particularly mineral deposits, we saw an opportunity to create a specialized university that would capitalize on these assets.

The inception of Confluence University of Science and Technology in 2020 was driven by two primary reasons. However, as time passed, it became evident that the issue of our children facing challenges in gaining admission persisted. To address this concern, we established Kogi State University in Kabba, aiming to maintain a balance in the political landscape of our state.

With Prince Abubakar Audu University situated in Kogi East, CAUSTEC Osara in Kogi Central, and the university in Kabba in Kogi West, each central district now boasts a state-owned university. This strategic placement ensures equitable access to higher education across the state.

Recognizing the potential risk of our universities being populated by students from neighbouring states due to lack of preparedness among our own, we took

proactive measures. By investing in our secondary school system through the establishment of GYB Science Academy Schools, we aimed to enhance infrastructure and teaching quality.

The GYB Model School Adankolo, a flagship mega-school, exemplifies our commitment to providing students with a comprehensive education that prepares them for admission not only in local universities but also on a global scale. These mega-schools, one per federal constituency, are designed to equip students with the skills and knowledge necessary for success in higher education. As we continue to expand and develop these mega-schools, our ultimate goal is to ensure that every student in Kogi State has the opportunity to excel academically and pursue their aspirations, both within our borders and beyond.

The primary goal is to ensure that students in schools across different federal constituencies are able to compete on a level playing field. To achieve this, a mass recruitment drive for qualified teachers has been initiated to oversee academic competitions in secondary schools. In Kogi State, examination fraud is strictly prohibited and considered a criminal offense. The incidence of exam fraud has significantly decreased as we strive to empower students to independently excel in their exams.

In order to be eligible to teach in Kogi State, teachers must be registered with the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria. A Computer-Based Test (CBT) was conducted to assess the competency of potential teachers, ensuring a fair and unbiased selection process. The entire application and shortlisting process was conducted online, with computer algorithms determining the candidates who met the criteria for further evaluation.

Oral interviews were conducted for nearly 4,000 teachers, with successful candidates being deployed to various schools. The focus is not only on establishing mega schools but also on revitalizing and upgrading primary schools. Teachers are being trained and equipped to provide quality education to students, preparing them for higher education. Our aim is to produce students who are truly qualified to excel in universities, ensuring that investments in education yield tangible results.

O d o d o i s p r i o r i t i z i n g e d u c a t i o n

There is an acronym known as DOTS, developed by the Federal Ministry of Education. Upon reviewing our education sector plan, it became evident that despite its development in 2020, it closely aligns with the DOTS philosophy of the federal Ministry of Education, encompassing approximately 80% of its principles. This indicates a thorough and meticulous approach in our planning.

In the DOTS philosophy, the letter "D" stands for data repository and automation, which are currently being implemented in ECOBIS. I currently have access to a comprehensive record of every student in secondary school ECOBIS on my phone, awaiting its official launch for wider accessibility.

The letter "O" in DOTS represents the reduction of out-of-school children, a challenge that ECOBIS State is actively addressing. By making education free from primary school to SS3, the state aims to ensure that all children, regardless of financial constraints, have access to education. The education law mandates that no child of school-going age should be out-of-school during official school hours, underscoring the government's commitment to tackling this issue.

Furthermore, to support students in completing their education, the government covers the costs of various examinations, including WAEC, JAMB, NECO, NAPTEC, Common Entrance, First School Leaving certificates, and Junior WAEC. This comprehensive support system aims to ensure that every child not only enrolls in school but also successfully completes their education.

It is evident that the primary and secondary education systems are intricately connected, with each component playing a crucial role in the overall success of our education sector.

It is important to recognize the interconnectedness of all aspects of

education. As I sit at my desk, my ultimate goal is to guide students towards achieving the title of a true graduate. This journey begins from the moment they set foot in primary school. So everything is connected, you know, because as I sit on my desk, the end result is for me to produce a graduate that can be truly called a graduate. So, and it starts from the day they step their feet into the primary school.

Kogi Strides: I would like to revisit and further investigate the 30% mentioned. The UNESCO contribution stands at 26%, while you have consistently maintained a 30% rate over the past three years. Does this figure also encompass the bursaries provided to Kogi students studying outside the state?

Hon Wemi Jones: Bursary is a recent addition to our education sector, having been implemented within the last year. Despite its newness, Bursary is an integral part of our education plan, making it challenging to separate from our overall goals. As we continue to work on this project, I am confident that we will exceed our initial expectations.

I have already secured 316 million naira to be distributed as the first tranche of Bursary payments to students in tertiary institutions. Those attending the Nigerian Law School will receive 300,000 naira each, while students pursuing regular courses or facing specific challenges will receive 30,000 naira per student. These funds are safely held in the ministry's account through the scholarship board.

Our aim is to coincide the disbursement of these funds with the one-year anniversary celebration of the government. Once all the necessary arrangements are in place, it is clear that our investments in education will surpass the 30% mark.

Kogi Strides: I would like to examine the infrastructure of the three schools located in different political zones of the state that you mentioned. Can you provide more details on the specific initiatives and projects being implemented to improve infrastructure at these universities?

Hon Wemi Jones: Prince Abubakar Audu University at Anyingba has a rich history, dating back over 20 years. This esteemed

institution has truly flourished in all aspects. TEDFUND has played a crucial role in supporting the university's growth, particularly in infrastructure development.

On the other hand, Confluence University of Science and Technology is a relatively new establishment, only four years old. Despite its youth, the progress made at CUSTEC is nothing short of remarkable. The ongoing construction projects and the imminent graduation of the first batch of students this year are testaments to the university's rapid advancement.

Kabba University is the newest addition to our educational landscape. Recent approvals for the construction of key facilities, such as the Senate building, Faculty of Science, and hostels, underscore the commitment to its development. The significant investment of over a billion naira in these projects highlights the government's dedication to providing top-notch education facilities.

As we speak, the contractors for the four projects have all mobilized to their respective sites and are diligently working. Despite the holiday season, they are committed to meeting the nine-month deadline for project completion. In light of the security challenges faced in Kogi State, all tertiary institutions have been enclosed with robust fencing to ensure the safety of students and staff.

The unfortunate incident of student kidnapping served as a wake-up call for us to enhance security measures. The vast lands surrounding the institutions are being utilized to support future development while also being utilized for agricultural purposes. We are taking proactive steps to install CCTV cameras and modern security equipment to further fortify the safety of our institutions. This infrastructure upgrade is crucial in safeguarding our educational institutions and ensuring a conducive environment for learning and growth.

Kogi Strides: During our discussion, you mentioned the process of nurturing students from primary to secondary school in order to increase their chances of gaining admission to our institutions. I am curious to know the current percentage of students from Kogi State who are enrolled in our universities.



Hon Wemi Jones: I have not taken a recent statistic, as the numbers are constantly changing. Initially, when Kabba was established, approximately 70% of the student body consisted of individuals from Kogi State. However, as of the year 2023, when we welcomed around 1,040 students, we saw representation from all six geopolitical zones of Nigeria. By the time of our matriculation in 2024, Kogi State still held the majority with 70% of the student population. This diversity showcases the widespread appeal and reach of Kabba as an educational institution..

Kogi Strides: In conclusion, I would like to ask: When you began addressing questions, you mentioned that the advancements in the education sector are a direct result of the leadership of Governor Yahaya Bello and Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo. I am curious to know, looking ahead to the next two or three years, what are your projections for the future of education in Kogi State?

Hon Wemi Jones: We firmly believe that infrastructure alone does not create a successful educational system. There is a common saying that when you build a house, your untrained children will destroy it. We are aligned with the initiatives of the Federal Ministry of Education, particularly the emphasis on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and entrepreneurship for our students. The goal is to equip students with practical skills so that they can support themselves upon graduation.

Recently, we had the opportunity to send 25 out of 250 young people from all 21 local government areas of Kogi State to the Nigeria-Korea Friendship Institute. This institute, a vocational training facility, is a

collaboration between the government of South Korea and Kogi State. The state government sponsored the training, providing accommodation, stipends, and a starter pack in the chosen vocation upon successful completion.

The training programs offered at the institute cover a wide range of technical skills such as automobile mechatronics, videography and cinematography, CNG conversion, welding and fabrication. We are committed to expanding these types of training opportunities as we believe they are essential for preparing our youth for the workforce.

We are currently in the process of aggressively and significantly revamping the four technical colleges within our state. Two of these colleges have already undergone this transformation, with the remaining two scheduled for completion this year by the grace of God. Our ultimate goal is to restore the quality of education to the standards we once experienced.

For those of us who are 50 years and older, we can recall a time when school inspections were a regular occurrence. In an effort to uphold these standards, we are establishing an inspectorate division that will oversee all 21 local government areas in Kogi State. This initiative is aimed at ensuring that the teachers we employ are present and actively engaged in their roles, teaching in alignment with the curriculum and utilizing effective pedagogical methods.

While the concept of inspections is not new, our approach will be modernized through the use of automation. This technology will allow us to monitor and assess educational practices remotely, providing real-time insights into the

teaching methods being employed across various local government areas. This automated system will enable me to oversee educational activities from my desk, ensuring accountability and consistency in education delivery.

We are committed to implementing this new system of inspection and feedback across all 21 local governments, with plans to launch during the first quarter of this year. Through these efforts, we aim to enhance the quality of education and ensure that our children receive the best possible learning experience.

We have meticulously planned this initiative, as outlined in our sector plan. We have a clear strategy in place for its execution, and we are fortunate to have the governor's full support. He is eager for us to proceed expeditiously. While the physical infrastructure may not be immediately apparent, our focus is now shifting towards enhancing the content and quality of education for our children.

We are also privileged to have the backing of Agile Supporting Education, a World Bank project dedicated to improving education. Leveraging this partnership, we aim to extend our reach to underserved communities within our state.

It is crucial to consider the challenges faced by teachers, such as the desire to relocate to urban centers like Lokoja, rather than remain in more remote areas like Bunu. This disparity highlights the importance of ensuring equitable access to quality education across all regions of Kogi State.

We are committed to implementing measures that guarantee our children receive an education that aligns with the government's significant investment in the sector.

Kogi Strides: Upon entering your office, I observed and took note of the information displayed, using it as a foundation for my inquiries. How have these principles converged to support your efforts in serving the state and government in the healthcare sector over the past year?

Dr Adams: The facelift you are witnessing is a result of the generosity of the government and people of Kogi State, for which we are truly grateful. We prioritize creating a welcoming and collaborative work environment, as we believe it is essential for our success.

Upon assuming office, we made it a priority to demonstrate our effectiveness by fostering unity among all team members, from top to bottom. Our goal is to work together seamlessly towards a common objective. This approach has been instrumental in our achievements thus far. As a doctor, honesty and integrity are the cornerstones of my practice. These values, along with many others, have been instrumental in driving our efforts to fulfill our ultimate goal as the State Minister of Health - providing innovative and high-quality healthcare services to the people of Kogi State.

Furthermore, we have initiated a state-wide, sector-wide approach to healthcare that encourages collaboration and open dialogue among all stakeholders. This inclusive approach has been key to our success and will continue to guide our efforts moving forward.

Kogi Strides: I have researched various health programs focusing on malaria, tuberculosis, and measles. However, I would like you to address these programs in addition to your response. Prior to assuming your current administrative role within the past year, what were the primary health challenges faced by the state, and how has the government's leadership addressed these challenges?

Dr Adams: I will also address a question or raise a point before discussing the major challenges facing the state. One of the most significant challenges in both the state and the country as a whole is the shortage of human resources for health. This issue must be addressed before tackling other health challenges or disease burdens.

The healthcare workforce is a critical focus at both the federal and state levels. Currently, there is a shortage of doctors being produced within the state. No institutions in Kogi State are currently training doctors, which is a major concern that we are actively working to resolve.

Previously, there was a partial accreditation at the Kogi State University

We are taking a holistic approach to addressing all HEALTH CHALLENGES

DR ADAMS



Teaching Hospital, which was then known as Prince Abubakar Audu University Teaching Hospital. Unfortunately, this accreditation was lost. However, we are diligently working towards regaining accreditation in order to train medical doctors and other healthcare workers.

The Federal University in Lokoja has recently initiated an MBBS program, with the first set of students currently at the 300 level. This demonstrates the urgent need for more doctors to be produced within the state. I would like to express my gratitude to the government of Kogi State, under the leadership of Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo, for their commitment to building on the state's legacy in healthcare. Additionally, I appreciate the support of former governor Alhaji Yahaya Bello in establishing a reference hospital, now known as Confluence University of Science and Technology Teaching Hospital.

By the end of this year, the university will be launching the MBBS program, and preparations are underway for the teaching hospital to begin producing doctors. This initiative is a crucial step towards addressing the shortage of healthcare professionals in the state.

The issue of healthcare workforce for doctors is being gradually addressed. In addition to training doctors, we also have other institutions such as the School of Nursing and the College of Health Technology or Health Sciences that are producing nurses and technicians. This is crucial for ensuring an adequate human resource for health.

Kogi Strides: What are the main challenges when it comes to identifying a particular disease that affects the body?

Dr Adams: We are taking a holistic approach

We are taking a holistic approach to addressing all health challenges

to addressing all health challenges, particularly in times of emergencies or outbreaks. One of the key components in effectively managing such situations is the establishment of a strong disease outbreak response team. With the support of the federal government and various development partners, Kogi State has made significant strides in this area.

From the annual occurrence of Lassa fever during the dry season to sporadic outbreaks of cholera, Kogi State has put in place a well-coordinated response team that covers the entire state. In addition to addressing these specific challenges, efforts have been made to improve the overall healthcare system, including initiatives to combat malaria.

The State Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the federal government and other development partners, has implemented various programs to manage malaria cases. This includes training healthcare workers, distributing medications, and providing free treatment at public health facilities. The support of organizations such as the Islamic Development Bank has been instrumental in these efforts.

Over the next two years, the state government is set to invest over \$50 million in combating malaria and other diseases. This significant investment underscores the commitment of Kogi State to improving the health and well-being of its residents. If you would like further information on our efforts to address other diseases, please do not hesitate to ask.

Kogi Strides: As medical professionals, the equipment and infrastructure you work with are crucial to the success of your work. I appreciate your insights on training and interventions for various diseases. In the past year, what has been the state of equipment in hospitals in Kogi State?

Dr Adams: Equipment is a crucial component that sustains the healthcare infrastructure and motivates healthcare workers to deliver exceptional care. In our state, we have implemented various state-of-the-art equipment initiatives that were established by the previous administration. Currently, we are dedicated to maintaining and utilizing this equipment effectively.

Previously, our state lacked essential equipment such as an MRI scanning machine. However, we now have one that is fully operational and well-maintained. Additionally, we have a city scan machine and a hyperbaric oxygen treatment chamber, which is the first of its kind in the

country. These facilities are now available for use and are being properly maintained to ensure optimal functionality.

Furthermore, significant improvements have been made in the equipment at the specialist hospital in Lokoja. The psychiatry unit is now operational with an in-house psychiatrist, and renal dialysis services are being provided at the state specialist hospital and secondary facilities. Over the past year, numerous cottage hospitals have been established across all local governments, and facility assessments have been conducted in one secondary facility in each local government, totaling 21 assessments.

By investing in state-of-the-art equipment and ensuring its proper maintenance, we are committed to providing high-quality healthcare services to our community. Our ongoing efforts to enhance our healthcare facilities demonstrate our dedication to improving the overall health and well-being of our residents.

The secondary healthcare facilities have undergone assessments to determine their current level and identify areas for improvement. The goal is to ensure that these facilities can provide the necessary quality of care in the future. With the support of development partners and the

healthcare system and improve access to quality services.

While discussing tertiary healthcare facilities, I transitioned into the topic of secondary care and then primary care. This interconnected system will facilitate referrals from primary care facilities to the designated secondary healthcare facility in each local government area. This coordinated effort aims to enhance patient outcomes and optimize healthcare delivery. In Kogi State, we are committed to establishing a seamless continuum of care from primary to secondary to tertiary levels. This collaborative approach extends beyond clinical settings to include administrators and policymakers. Through a sector-wide approach in health, all stakeholders come together to develop a unified plan, budget, and strategy for healthcare delivery.

Our efforts in Kogi State mirror those at the federal level, where a similar approach has been successfully implemented. By aligning our priorities and resources, we can achieve a more efficient and effective healthcare system that meets the needs of our communities.

Kogi Strides: There are plans to establish one primary health care center per ward, as originally intended to be one primary health care center per political zone. However, the



federal government, as well as state oversight, we are working towards establishing a comprehensive emergency obstetric and newborn care system.

Our objective is to have at least one fully functional secondary healthcare facility in every local government area. These facilities will serve as hubs for a referral system, connecting primary care centers to ensure proper patient care. This integrated approach will streamline the

current situation in Kogi is unclear. How many primary health care centers are currently operational in the state? And how evenly distributed are they across the area?

Dr, Adams: The primary care facility that was mentioned is known as functional primary healthcare. It is essential for a facility to not only exist but also to operate effectively. In Kogi State, there are 854 primary healthcare facilities spread throughout the entire state. With the assistance of the federal government through the Basic Healthcare

We are taking a holistic approach to addressing all health challenges

Provision Fund, each political ward now has at least one functional primary healthcare facility. There are a total of 239 political wards in Kogi State that have been receiving support from the federal government to ensure that each ward has a functional primary healthcare facility.

However, out of the 239 primary healthcare facilities in Kogi State, not all of them meet the required criteria for functionality. The national standard for primary healthcare facilities includes providing 24-hour service, having a perimeter fence for security, a clinic building, residential facilities, renewable energy sources, and access to clean water. Unfortunately, most of the primary healthcare facilities in Kogi State do not meet all of these criteria.

Currently, there is an ongoing effort to upgrade 239 out of the 854 primary healthcare centers in Kogi State. The goal is to elevate these centers to Level 2 PHCs, particularly focusing on those without proper fencing. The state government has already initiated the revitalization of 88 out of the 239 identified centers. Prior to this intervention, 70 centers had already been revitalized to Level 2.

The remaining 70 centers are now in the process of revitalization, with plans for federal government intervention and support from the World Bank. Additionally, 21 out of the 239 centers are being revitalized by the federal government

through the National Primary Development Agency.

In total, over 180 PHCs are currently undergoing renovation to reach Level 2 status, which includes facility upgrades. Collaboration with local governments is also underway to strengthen the workforce at these PHCs, as the workers fall under the jurisdiction of the local government.

The aim of these efforts is to achieve universal healthcare coverage in Kogi State by ensuring that all PHCs are equipped to provide quality care. Through strategic partnerships and resource mobilization, we are working towards this common goal.

Kogi Strides: I believe that when commissioners are appointed, they have a one-on-one meeting with the governor. During your interaction with the governor, what specific directives did he provide you with?

Dr. Adams: In simple terms, he said, doctor, get the PHCs working and don't fail me in the health sector.

Kogi Strides: One year after, how will you rate yourself?

Dr Adams: I will refrain from rating myself but rather focus on evaluating the entire personnel within the health sector. It is not just me alone in this endeavour. I am

merely overseeing the operations. I must acknowledge the heads of agencies, departments, programs, permanent secretary, civil servants, political office holders, special advisers, and senior special assistants who are all integral to the functioning of the health sector.

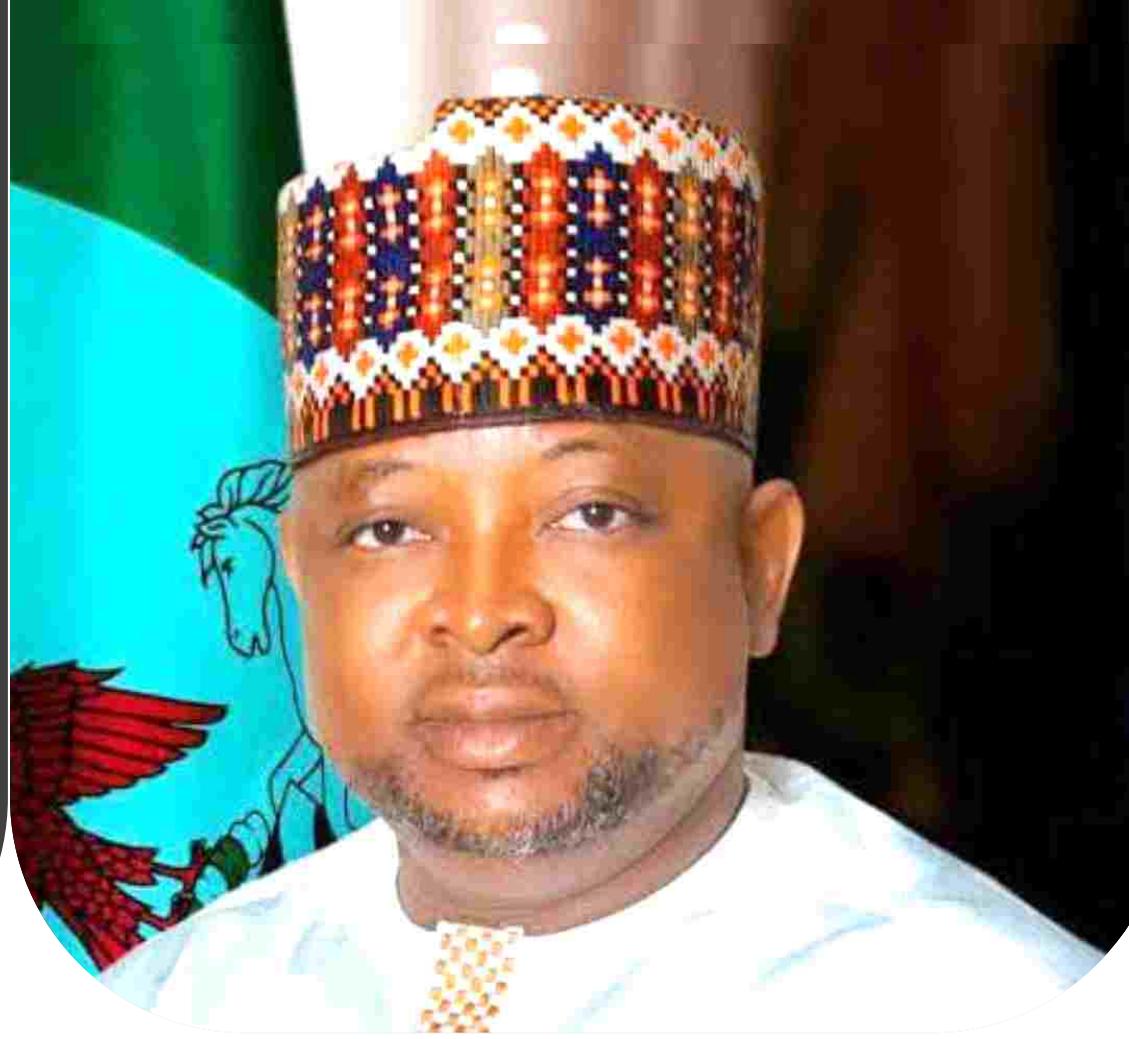
I believe it is important to assess our performance collectively. While I am hesitant to provide specific figures without proper data and surveys, I can confidently state that we have made significant progress. However, we have not yet reached our desired goals. We are committed to doing more to meet the expectations of His Excellency, the government of Kogi state, and the people of Kogi state.

It is worth noting that we are building upon the achievements of the previous administration, which has facilitated our work. This foundation has made it easier for us to make strides in our efforts. While we have made commendable progress in the past year, there is still room for improvement.

Moving forward, I anticipate a thorough evaluation of our accomplishments by the state minister of health or the health sector in Kogi state. It is essential to reflect on the gains made over the past year and strive for continuous improvement. I am confident that the upcoming year will build upon the progress of the previous year, leading to further advancements in our health sector. Thank you.



In Three Months, **Ododo** has impacted over **80 Comm- unities** - Momoh



Kogi Strides: It is impressive to see that your government goes beyond just focusing on the capital city and actively engages with communities. I would like to inquire about the number of communities that have been reached since the beginning of His Excellency Alhaji Usman Ododo's tenure.

Momoh: Under the leadership of His Excellency Alhaji Usman Ododo, the Chief Servant of the State, we have successfully engaged with 80 communities. Our recent project kick-off last week marks the beginning of our ongoing efforts to improve the lives of our citizens. We are excited to continue our work with another project tomorrow, followed by additional initiatives next month.

Kogi Strides: Can you please provide more information about your interventions? What is the underlying concept and how do you engage with communities?

Momoh: Our organization's primary focus is on improving education, healthcare, and access to clean water. In the education sector, we construct classrooms, provide textbooks, and refurbish schools. Within the healthcare field, we establish new clinics, upgrade existing facilities, and distribute essential medications and supplies.

Kogi Strides: In many states across the federation, primary health centers are established to provide essential healthcare services to the community. I am curious to know if there is any overlap

or conflict between the services you provide in the community and those offered by the primary health centers.

Momoh: We collaborate closely with primary health centers, often incorporating our facilities into their projects. We supply them with essential equipment and offer ongoing support to ensure their success.

Kogi Strides: Could you please clarify which specific facilities you are referring to?

Momoh: We equip them with the necessary tools and resources to efficiently run their clinics.

Kogi Strides: How do you plan to target the appropriate areas? Please provide me with a detailed description. What sacrifices are necessary and what is required of you to achieve success in this endeavour?

Momoh: Reaching remote communities poses a significant challenge due to their isolated locations. In some cases, we must traverse through neighboring states to reach them. For instance, accessing certain areas of Ibaji necessitates passing through another state.

Kogi Strides: It is difficult to reach out to them, but I think it's the best any government can do. Because without us reaching out to these people, they won't have any community presence. And what are they asking for?

Momoh: They primarily request access to water, basic healthcare facilities, and food.

Kogi Strides: Have you implemented these initiatives in 80 communities? Did you engage with the government prior to initiating your work?

Momoh: Yes, we have successfully completed projects in 80 communities as part of our initiative. This aligns with the government's focus on rural development, recognizing the importance of addressing the needs of rural areas where the majority of votes originate.

Having extensive experience within the system, I understand the intricacies of operations. Therefore, it was not difficult for him to acknowledge our work and entrust us with the task of centering projects in rural communities. This strategic decision has been instrumental in our progress.

With the necessary funding secured, we have been able to carry out all the projects effectively and efficiently.

Kogi Strides: Are you saying that within the span of less than a year, you have made an impact on 80 communities spanning various government areas?

Momoh: We strive to provide equal support to all local governments, however, some may require more interventions based on their specific needs and the volume of requests received. It is imperative to address these needs during the dry season when these communities encounter unique challenges. Currently, we are conducting assessments

to identify the most effective interventions for each community.

For instance, in Ibaji, we have been actively engaged in various projects since November of last year. These projects include school renovations, cleaning initiatives, and more. Our goal is to complete these projects within a three-month timeframe, ideally finishing before February to ensure timely completion.

Each community has its own unique set of needs and priorities, and we tailor our interventions accordingly. By collaborating closely with each community, we can effectively address their specific challenges and work towards sustainable solutions.

Kogi Strides: You have successfully developed 80 communities. Moving forward, what is your target for community growth over the next three years? What's your target?

Momoh: Our current focus is on expanding our reach to individuals worldwide through community engagement. In the past year, we have successfully completed a total of eight projects, each benefiting a specific community. While we typically limit our projects to one per community, there are instances where multiple projects are implemented, providing additional support to those in need.

One such example is a project in my village, where the community has greatly benefited from initiatives such as cleaning efforts and access to clean water. These projects have had a significant impact on the local residents, improving their quality

of life.

Moving forward, we aim to continue our work in various communities, with a goal of completing a total of 170 micro projects across different sectors such as healthcare, water, and education. By focusing on the needs of each community and implementing tailored solutions, we strive to make a positive impact on a larger scale.

Kogi Strides: Where do you see yourself heading in the next two to three years, and how many additional projects do you anticipate taking on during that time frame?

Momoh: With the support of His Excellency, we are aiming to exceed 150 Community Development Projects (CDPs) this year. Our goal is to distribute a minimum of 300 micro-products to communities in need. Fortunately, we have a highly skilled and dedicated team of staff members who are prepared to tackle these projects. I am particularly interested in expanding our clinics and exploring new opportunities in that area.

In a short amount of time, we have already made an impact in 80 communities. Moving forward, we are focused on significantly increasing our reach in the years to come. Our plan is to implement over 300 micro-projects this year, furthering our mission to support and uplift communities in need.

Kogi Strides: When constructing a clinic, it is essential to consider not only the physical infrastructure but also the staffing requirements. Have you made provisions for the necessary personnel to

ensure the smooth operation of the clinic?

Momoh: Staffing is a crucial responsibility of the local government. We are committed to providing the necessary physical structure, equipment, and supplies to support our operations. However, we recognize the importance of addressing delays in staffing and are actively exploring alternative options, such as temporarily employing ad hoc staff.

Kogi Strides: As I start my journey home, I am curious to learn more about the impact of our efforts over the past four months. We have successfully reached 80 communities and distributed over 170 micro-projects. I am interested in understanding the reactions of the people at the grassroots level. How are they responding to these initiatives?

Momoh: The response from grassroots communities has been overwhelmingly positive. Many communities, particularly those in remote areas, have expressed gratitude for our interventions. They have witnessed a significant improvement in their access to basic services.

Kogi Strides: You know, I was going there. How do you determine which community to go to and what project to sign there?

Momoh: Communities are invited to submit expressions of interest for our projects. In addition, we utilize various communication channels, including radio, to disseminate information about our available programs. The community plays a vital role in determining the priority projects through a democratic process, which often includes voting.



CONGRATULATIONS TO HIS EXCELLENCY, GOVERNOR AHMED USMAN ODODO!



The Kogi State IFAD Team congratulates you on your 1-year anniversary in office. We appreciate your administration's commitment to agricultural development, poverty reduction, and rural transformation in Kogi State.

As an implementing partner of the Value Chain Development Programme (VCDP), we have witnessed significant strides in enhancing agricultural productivity, improving market access, and empowering smallholder farmers in the state.

We commend your leadership and vision for a prosperous Kogi State. We look forward to continued collaboration and partnership to drive sustainable agricultural growth, improve nutrition, and enhance the resilience of rural communities.

Please accept our best wishes for your continued success and leadership.



Signed:
Dr Stella Adejoh
Kogi State IFAD Coordinator



Solar Powered Borehole
Asco Camp Cluster, Ajaokuta LGA

KOGI STATE HEALTH INSURANCE AGENCY

Providing Equitable Access And Financial Risk Protection For Kogi Residents



About six years ago, the former Executive Governor of Kogi State, His Excellency, Alhaji Yahaya Adoza Bello took the bold and decisive step to establish Kogi State Health Insurance Agency after the failure of past administration to bring the Agency on board.

The Agency on its establishment has the mandate to address the health needs of the residents of Kogi State residents from the financial risk of huge medical bills and improve the health of the people and also accelerate the attainment of Universal Health Coverage.

The strong political will and financial commitment of the state government has engendered improved organizational capacity, expand population coverage and stimulated digital transformation of our health insurance processes.

The foundation laid by the former governor, our leader, His Excellency, Alhaji Yahaya Adoza Bello CON, has provided the impetus and renewed zeal for the Advanced New Direction team led by the Executive Governor of Kogi State, His Excellency, Alhaji Ahmed

Usman Ododo to consolidate on the gains in the health sector particularly in the mileage in the coverage of the population being covered by the Agency

Exactly a month after His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Kogi State, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo assumed office, he flagged off the formal sector Health Insurance plan for the state civil servants and their dependants which has positioned Kogi State amongst the comity of states that are providing health insurance to their employees.

The significant milestone of the establishment of Kogi State Health Insurance Agency has been sustained with the counterpart employer contribution of 5% basic salary of each employee paid by the state government.

The continuation of the Bello-Care programme of the Agency by the Advanced New Direction team of His Excellency Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo has succeeded in the continued

provision of succour to ten thousand vulnerable persons in the state.

The state government ably led by His Excellency, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo have also trained one hundred and eighty health workers from our accredited health facilities on digital encounters, claims and service utilization data submission.

The State government commitment to the journey to the Universal Health Coverage has culminated in about 68% increment in persons enrolled in the scheme in the last one year which has add up to a total number of one hundred and eighty thousand seven seven and ninety one enrollees (180,791) accessing care under the scheme.

On behalf of the Board, management and staff of the Agency, We wish to congratulate your Excellency and the good people of Kogi State on the one year anniversary in office of His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Kogi State, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo.



Congratulation
TO A
VISIONARY
LEADER!



On behalf of the management and staff of Dangote Cement, the giant of Africa and the most trusted cement company, we extend our warmest felicitations to Your Excellency on your one-year anniversary in office.

We commend your outstanding achievements within this short period, which have significantly impacted the lives of the people of Kogi State. Your visionary leadership and commitment to the welfare of the people are truly inspiring.

As a proud partner in the development of Kogi State, we appreciate the conducive business environment your administration has created, enabling us to continue our operations smoothly. We look forward to continued partnership and collaboration in the years to come.

Please accept our heartfelt congratulations once again, and we wish you continued success in your endeavors to take Kogi State to greater heights.

Signed:
Management Dangote Cement Company

