

BUSINESS DAY WEEKENDER

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**20 EVENTS THAT
WILL MAKE YOUR
DETTY DECEMBER IN
LAGOS ABSOLUTELY
UNFORGETTABLE**

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your Dettv December
in Lagos absolutely
unforgettable



RESTAURANT

5 food spots Nigeriaans
can visit in the UK for
Christmas



SPORTS

Top 8 football stadiums
for best fan experience

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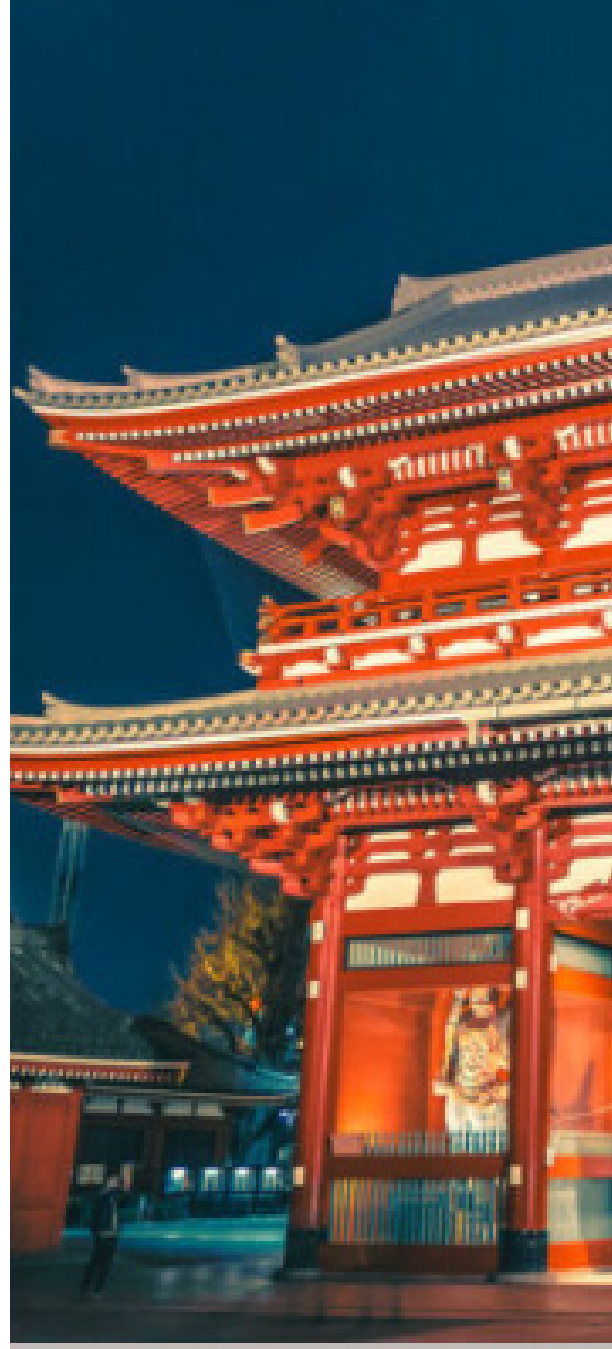
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A BIRTHDAY TRIBUTE TO A VISIONARY LEADER

Today, I celebrate a distinguished **statesman and transformational leader**

His Excellency, Chief Nyesom Ezenwo Wike, CON.

Your Excellency, your impact on our nation is undeniable. From your celebrated legacy as **"Mr Projects" in Rivers State to your remarkable achievements as FCT Minister**, you have consistently shown that leadership is action, courage, and results.

Under your watch, Abuja has become a vibrant construction hub, with projects advancing day and night – reflecting your unmatched passion for excellence. Your commitment to expanding development even into neglected areas proves your devotion to inclusive progress. You lead with clarity, discipline, and purpose, **inspiring others to rise to higher standards.**

As your mentee, I am proud to honour you today. May God grant you more strength, wisdom, and grace to continue shaping a greater Nigeria.

Happy Birthday, Your Excellency. Your legacy continues to shine.

John Utim CEO, Omega City and Properties Nig. Ltd.

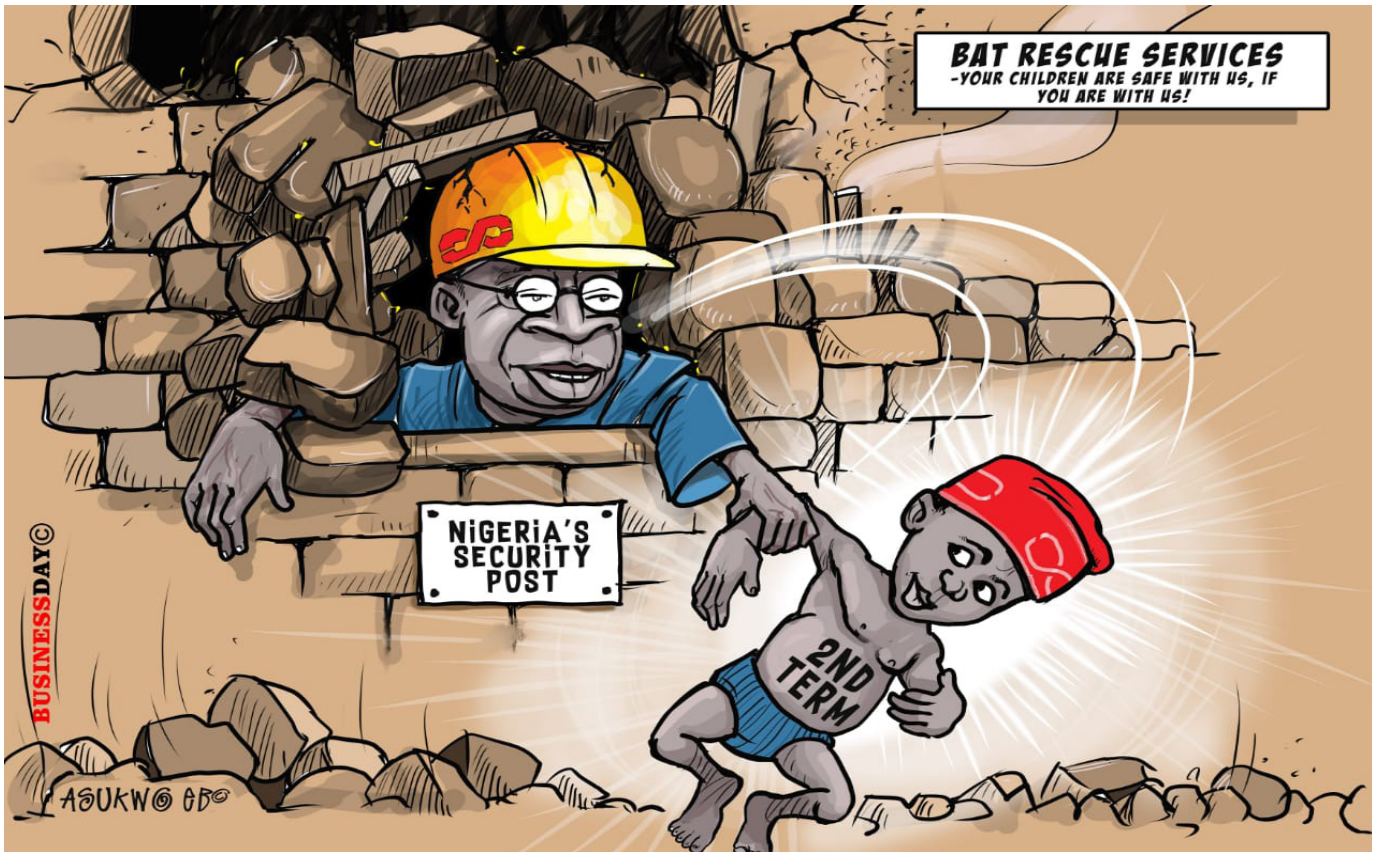
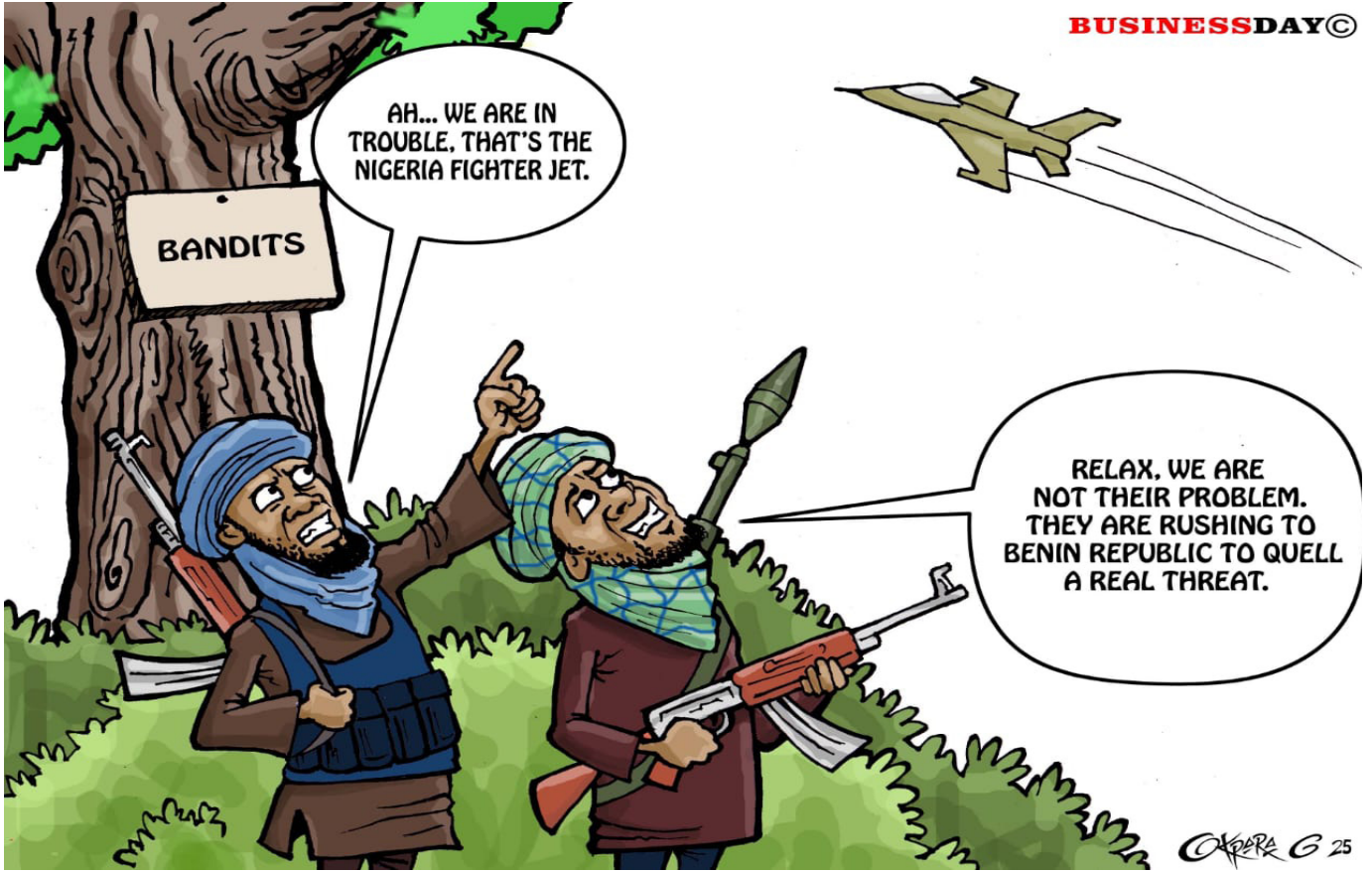
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20 EVENTS THAT WILL MAKE YOUR DETTY DECEMBER IN LAGOS ABSOLUTELY UNFORGETTABLE

ESTHER EMOEKPERE



If you are still on the fence about coming home for December, we need to have a serious conversation. Lagos does not play around during the final month of the year. The city becomes one big celebration where missing out actually hurts. Your cousins are already booking flights, your secondary school group chat is buzzing with plans, and someone in Lekki is testing sound systems for parties that are still weeks away.

This year's lineup is honestly ridiculous in the best way possible. Beach raves, concert hall takeovers, free shows, premium experiences that'll hurt your January pocket—Lagos has really outdone itself. Here's everything you need to mark on your calendar.

Christmas Wonderland

Christmas Wonderland at Fantasy Land in Ikoyi runs from December 6 to January 11, making it one of the longest events this season. It is designed for families and includes activities like Santa's House, photo booths, a play zone with storytelling and face painting for kids, a games arena, a Christmas market with vendors selling gifts and crafts, and a food plaza. You can register as a guest or vendor if you are looking to sell.

Detty December Fest

Detty December Fest at Ilubirin Mixed Use Development in Ikoyi is a month-long celebration running from December 6 to December 31, 2025. Produced by Livespot360, the festival features music performances, art, food, fashion, and parties throughout the month. Past editions have brought in artists like Wande Coal, Young Jonn, Gunna, Busta Rhymes, and Juma Jux, so expect a diverse lineup

spanning local and international acts. The extended timeline means you can catch different events whenever your schedule allows.

Bella Shmurda Live at AfroVibes Fest

Bella Shmurda headlines the AfroVibes Fest X on Saturday, December 13, 2025, at the Livespot Entertainment in Oniru, Lagos. The show starts at 7 PM and is part of the Detty December celebrations. Expect high energy, special guests, and the street-pop sound that's built Bella Shmurda a solid following over the past few years. The venue promises premium vibes for what's shaping up to be a massive party.

Old-School Christmas Concert

The Old-School Christmas Concert happens on December 13 at Oriental Hotel in Victoria Island, with the red carpet starting at 4:30 PM and the

show at 6 PM. An orchestra will perform songs from Nigerian legends like Onyeka Onwenu, Victor Uwaifo, Oliver de Coque, Victor Olaiya, and Bobby Benson, along with classics from Boney M. The concert also features a stage performance by Oluchi Odii. The dress code is "Old Skool" and everyone gets a seat—no standing allowed.

Gen Z Fest

Gen Z Fest bills itself as Nigeria's biggest youth festival, bringing together music, fashion, tech, art, and the entire Gen Z culture. The festival happens twice—first on December 13 at Lion Wonder Arena in Alausa, Ikeja (mainland), starting at 6 PM and running until dawn. The second edition happens on December 28 on the island. It's designed for a younger demographic with performances and activities that reflect current trends.

Fola Live

Fola headlines the "What A Feeling" concert at Balmoral Convention Centre in Victoria Island on Monday, December 15, 2025, starting at 7 PM. The show is part of Island BlockParty and takes place at one of VI's more upscale venues, so expect a polished production.

Afrocan Festival

Afrocan Festival runs from December 15 to 21 at Freedom Park in Lagos Island under the theme "Chant Town". The week-long celebration focuses on African dance and youth culture, featuring exclusive Naija street dance classes, a dance concert with local and international artists, fashion showcases, music, film screenings, and an Owambe Party.

The Dapper Life Experience: Trench Symphony

Trench Symphony returns on December 16 at Balmoral Convention Centre in Victoria Island for an epic Fuji extravaganza. Fuji legends King Saheed Osupa and KS1 Malaika headline the night, blending street music (“trenches sound”) with a live orchestra performance. It’s a cultural experience that gives Fuji heritage a modern treatment. Tickets start from ₦25,000.

Iconiq Fest: Chike Live

Chike performs at Landmark Event Centre on Thursday, December 18, 2025, at 7 PM as part of Iconiq Fest. The “Detty Love” concert showcases the soulful R&B artist known for his emotive vocals and heartfelt lyrics. Landmark Event Centre is located at Plot 2 & 3, Water Corporation Drive, Victoria Island Annex. Given Chike’s style, this will be a different energy compared to the more upbeat Afrobeats shows happening around the same time.

Shakara Festival

Shakara Festival runs from December 18 to 21 at Nautica Resort in Lekki and bills itself as Africa’s premier music festival. The four-day event features over 50 artists across 15 genres, with different performers scheduled for each day. It’s designed as a celebration of African sounds with cultural experiences and community connection, all set against the Lagos skyline.

BNXN LIVE IN CONCERT: THE CAPTAIN EXPERIENCE

BNXN Live in Concert: The Captain Experience is scheduled for Friday, December 19, 2025, at Landmark Event Center, Lagos. The show starts at 7:00 PM and runs into the night. Part of the three-night Iconiq Fest, the event will feature BNXN’s signature smooth vocals and energetic performance, delivering a live experience that highlights music, creativity, and audience connection.

Iconiq: Plutomanian Fest

The Plutomanian Fest happens on Friday, December 20, 2025, at Landmark Event Centre starting at 7 PM. This is one of three nights under the larger Iconiq Fest 2025 umbrella and features artists from the Plutomania record label including Shallipopi, Zerry DL, and Famous Pluto. The event celebrates the Plutomanian sound—described as fearless, raw, and street-focused—with the Pluto Boys uniting for a charged experience of sound, light, and rhythm. Expect high energy and fast-tempo beats that hit hard.

Palmwine Fest

Palmwine Fest will take place at The Fidelity Ground, Abila Abiodun Oniru Road, Victoria Island, on Saturday, December 21, 2025, starting at 4 PM WAT. Hosted by Show Dem Camp, the event is part of the Detty December lineup and features a blend of live music, art, food, and palm wine. The festival continues to build on its reputation for highlighting alternative sounds while maintaining a relaxed community-led atmosphere.

Rhythm Unplugged with Rema

Rema will headline Rhythm Unplugged on Sunday, December 21, 2025, at the Eko Convention Centre, Victoria Island. With his

international profile and chart presence, the concert is expected to be one of the month’s major draws. The lineup also includes British rapper Central Cee alongside a slate of additional performers.

Victory Live: The Bonfire Experience

Victory’s annual “Bonfire Experience” returns on December 21, 2025, as part of Lagos’ Detty December calendar. The event is known for its high-energy, immersive atmosphere, giving fans the chance to experience Victory’s catalogue in full. It frequently includes surprise guest appearances from other popular artists, making it one of the more anticipated live shows of the season.

Afro Jazz Fest

Afro Jazz Fest returns to Amore Gardens on December 22, 2025, with a programme dedicated to jazz, Afro-fusion, and live instrumental performances. The event will take place at No. 1 Amore Street, off Freedom Way, Lekki Phase 1. This edition features artists such as Femi Leye, known for his Afro-soul guitar style, and EkundayoDBass, a bassist recognised for his live-band depth. The festival continues to serve attendees seeking an alternative to mainstream Afrobeats during the December season.

Flytime Fest 2025

Flytime Fest is the longest-running indoor festival in Nigeria and happens at Eko Convention Centre across four days. Each night has a different headliner: Flavour on December 22nd, Olamide on the 23rd, Asake on Christmas Eve, and Davido on Christmas Day. It’s one of the pricier events but also one of the most established, having run for years now.

Eko Fiesta

Eko Fiesta is a three-day trade fair and entertainment event scheduled from December 22 to 24, 2025, at Muri Okunola Park, Adeyemo Alakija Street, Victoria Island, Lagos. The event runs daily from 9 AM, and general entry is free, though registration is required. Combining commerce, culture, and entertainment, Eko Fiesta functions as a one-stop destination for shopping, networking, and live performances. It is slated to be the largest trade-fair and rave combination during this year’s Detty December.

Euphoria: Detty December Rave

Euphoria: Detty December Rave will take place on Thursday, December 25, 2025, at Athena Beach Lagos, located within Elegushi Royal Beach, Lekki. The event starts at 7:00 PM and runs into the early hours, offering a high-energy beach-side party experience as part of the Detty December festivities.

Detty Faaji

Detty Faaji is scheduled for Saturday, December 27, 2025, at the Muson Centre, 4aa Force Road, Onikan, Lagos Island. The event begins at 2:00 PM and is hosted by IJGB Socials. Billed as a full-blown “owambe paradise,” it features live Nigerian music, food, and cultural experiences. Segun Johnson will perform with a live band, and the official after-party will be hosted by Silk Lagos, making it one of the season’s most immersive post-Christmas events.

5 FOOD SPOTS NIGERIANS CAN VISIT IN THE UK FOR CHRISTMAS

ESTHER EMOEKPERE



During the Christmas season, many people travel to enjoy the holidays in new locations. If you will be in the UK, knowing which food spots are operating and offering festive menus can help you plan your meals and holiday gatherings.

These food spots provide a range of dining experiences suitable for families, friends, or solo travelers. Choosing the right spot ensures you can enjoy quality meals while making the most of the Christmas period in the UK.

Pavillon London

Pavillon London, located at the Four Seasons Hotel London at Park Lane, offers a Christmas menu available on both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. The restaurant serves modern French dishes prepared with seasonal British ingredients. Christmas diners can choose from options such as poached Scottish langoustine with sesame and shiso, beef Rossini with seared foie gras, and black truffle and spinach ravioli. For dessert, Pavillon is offering its *Bûche de Noël* from December 15 to December 26, 2025. The pastry team has created a version made with cocoa chocolate and sobacha praliné croustillant, drawing inspiration from the restaurant's interior design. It serves as the main festive dessert for guests visiting during the holiday period.





Dovetale

Dovetale, located in 1 Hotel Mayfair, London, offers a holiday dining experience for Christmas with a focus on seasonal, British produce. Led by two Michelin-starred chefs, the restaurant serves modern European dishes, including large-format sharing plates such as roasted chicken and salt-baked Cornish seabass, alongside desserts like the Knickerbocker Glory Trolley. For the festive season, Dovetale has opened a Winter Village on its terrace with four vendors. Visitors can enjoy sweet treats from Puffy, mulled wine and spiced cider from Maker's Mark, pints with photo prints from Guinness, and Bavarian-style bratwurst, pretzels, and drinks from Dovetale. The Winter Village combines seasonal flavors and interactive experiences, offering a casual, festive option alongside the restaurant's regular fine dining.

Yasmin Soho

Yasmin, a rooftop restaurant and bar overlooking Soho, offers a holiday programme for Christmas. The rooftop is decorated with candlelight and jewel-toned florals, creating a festive atmosphere for diners during the season. The Christmas menu includes dishes designed for sharing, such as Courgette & Feta Fritters, Vine Leaf-Wrapped Salmon, and Lamb Hünkar Beğendi, with desserts like Turkish Coffee Cheesecake and Pistachio Baklava. Seasonal drinks, including Devaux Champagne and Palmarae cocktails, complement the menu, making it a destination for festive meals in central London.





Gelupo

Gelupo, an artisan gelateria in Soho, London, has introduced a range of Christmas Specials inspired by the Italian Alps. The festive menu includes a sharing dark chocolate fondue with panettone pieces, mini gelato scoops, and slices of pear, alongside special-edition gelato flavors created for the holiday period. Founded in 2010 by Victor Hugo and chef Jacob Kenedy, Gelupo is known for authentic Italian gelato and sorbet made with fresh, seasonal ingredients. The gelateria, often cited as some of the finest outside the Alps, features a blue-and-white tiled interior and a menu that combines classic and unique flavors, making it a popular destination for holiday treats.



Floozie

Floozie Cookies, founded by pastry chef Kimberly Lin, is known for its handmade stuffed cookies. Originally a fully vegan bakery, it now offers both vegan and non-vegan options. For the Christmas season, the bakery has introduced limited-edition cookies and treats, including Marshmallow Avalanche, Caramelised White Chocolate, and Peanut &

Gochujang. Seasonal offerings also include Gingerbread soft serve, caramel apple matcha, and other take-home treats. Alongside these, the bakery continues its regular menu of favorites such as Cinnamon Crunch, Chocolate Chunk, Pecan Pie, PB&J, and Blackforest cookies, as well as in-store drinks like milkshakes, hot chocolate, and ice cream sundaes, making it a destination for festive desserts in London.

TOP 8 FOOTBALL STADIUMS FOR BEST FAN EXPERIENCE

ANTHONY NLEBEM

Support excites, unites, and brings people around the world together in a way few other things can. For true football enthusiasts, certain stadiums represent more than arenas; they are temples of history, culture, and unforgettable atmospheres. Below are some of the top stadiums every football fan should experience.

Santiago Bernabéu – Real Madrid (Spain)

A visit to the Santiago Bernabéu belongs on every football fan's bucket list. The New Bernabéu is a fully transformed, state-of-the-art stadium featuring a retractable roof and pitch, a 360-degree scoreboard, premium hospitality spaces, and a redesigned steel-louvred exterior that turns the arena into an architectural landmark. It has become a year-round entertainment complex beyond football. Madrid also offers unique football experiences across other clubs.



Wembley Stadium – England National Team (England)

Known as the "Home of Football," Wembley is synonymous with some of the game's most iconic moments. Reopened in 2007 on the site of the original ground, the stadium features the famous Wembley Arch and seats 90,000 for football, making it the largest stadium in the UK. It hosts England's home matches, the FA Cup Final, and major global events. Few venues carry the same prestige or sense of occasion.



Tottenham Hotspur Stadium – Tottenham (England)

Opened in 2019 at £1 billion, Tottenham Hotspur Stadium is one of the most technologically advanced stadiums in the world. Its multi-purpose design seamlessly accommodates Premier League football, NFL games, and concerts. The acoustics, steep stands, and modern amenities make it a fan favourite and a benchmark for future stadiums.



Maracana – Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)

The Maracana is a cathedral of world football. It has hosted two FIFA World Cup Finals (1950, 2014), Olympic events,

and countless historic Brazilian football moments. Once capable of holding nearly 79,000 spectators, most famously during the 1950 “Maracanazo”, it remains one of the sport’s most iconic venues. Today, it is home to Flamengo and Fluminense and attracts fans worldwide for tours and matches steeped in football heritage.



San Siro – AC Milan and Inter Milan (Italy)

Few stadiums match the atmosphere of Milan’s San Siro, shared by two of Europe’s most storied clubs: AC Milan and Inter Milan. With a capacity of over 75,000, the stadium hosts ferocious Derby della Madonnina clashes that define Italian football passion. Despite its ageing structure, San Siro remains one of the game’s most atmospheric and historically rich stadiums.



Allianz Arena – Bayern Munich (Germany)

Opened for the 2006 FIFA World Cup, the Allianz Arena is renowned for its illuminated, colour-changing façade and its unique architectural design. With a capacity of 75,000, it provides an intimate yet grand matchday experience. Home to Bayern Munich, the stadium embodies the club’s dominance in German and European football and is a must-visit for fans of modern stadium design.



Anfield – Liverpool (England)

Anfield is one of football’s most intimidating and soulful grounds. Home to Liverpool since 1892, its over 61,000-capacity stadium amplifies the club’s famous matchday traditions. The “This is Anfield” sign, The Kop, and the emotional rendition of “You’ll Never Walk Alone” contribute to one of the most powerful atmospheres in football.



Celtic Park – Celtic (Scotland)

With a capacity of over 60,000, Celtic Park, also known as Parkhead or Paradise, is Scotland’s largest football stadium. First opened in 1892, it is famed for its electric atmosphere, particularly on European nights. Celtic Park is a cauldron of noise, history, and passion, making it one of the most unique football experiences.



HOLIDAY EDITION: GTCO FESTIVAL TO CREATE VIBRANT MARKETPLACE FOR AFRICAN CULINARY BUSINESSES

ESTHER EMOEKPERE



The Holiday Edition will introduce several new features, including a dedicated children's play zone with holiday-themed games and curated entertainment.

A Street food Hub will spotlight Nigeria's growing urban fashion scene through designer pop-ups, live demonstrations and exclusive drops. Guests will also enjoy DJ raves headlined by two of Nigeria's top performers.

The organisers of the event highlighted the festival's continued

The Guaranty Trust Holding Company Plc (GTCO) has announced the maiden and special edition of its Food & Drink Festival themed 'Holiday Edition'.

This year's event is designed as a vibrant celebration of Africa's culinary heritage and a festive platform for families, entrepreneurs, and food lovers.

During a press briefing on Thursday, the company revealed that the festival which will hold on December 20 and 21 is scheduled to take place at the GTCentre, Plot 1, Water Corporation Drive, Oniru, Lagos.

The holiday timing is expected to be a major attraction, aligning with a season when families seek entertainment, diaspora visitors return home, and businesses experience heightened demand. The event is designed to create a vibrant marketplace for vendors to maximise festive sales while offering families memorable holiday experiences.

growth and impact.

They emphasised that the festival "has grown into a powerful platform for celebrating enterprise, creativity, and the richness of African cuisine".

They added that the 'Holiday Edition' is aimed at "creating joyful shared experiences for food and beverage SMEs".

"The GTCO Food & Drink Festival has grown into a powerful platform for celebrating enterprise, creativity, and the richness of African cuisine," they said.

"The Holiday Edition reflects our commitment to creating joyful shared experiences while supporting SMEs across the food and beverage value chain. We look forward to hosting families, businesses, and visitors from across the world at this special festive celebration."

TOP 10 PLACES TO VISIT IN Q1 2026

CHISOM MICHAEL

As global travel activity returns to steady patterns, early 2026 is shaping up to be a period for people seeking calm movement, cultural depth, and seasonal transitions.

From East Asia to Europe, Africa, and South America, the first quarter of the year offers cities where visitors can move at a steady pace before later-season demand rises.

According to Outlook Traveller, here are 10 destinations for travellers planning trips between January and March.

1. Tokyo, Japan

Early March in Tokyo marks the first signs of cherry blossoms. The period offers room for quiet handling strolls, local events, and city exploration before peak spring tourism sets in. Travellers can visit parks, neighbourhood shrines, and cultural festivals while the city remains in a slower rhythm.



2. Amsterdam, Netherlands

Amsterdam's canals and inner districts see lighter movement from January to March. Prices are lower, and early spring bulbs begin to appear. City gardens and areas leading towards the Keukenhof fields start to show colour by March. The months offer calm sightseeing for people who prefer a measured pace.



3. Vienna, Austria

Vienna's cafés, galleries, and historic spaces experience a winter calm in the first quarter of the year. The season supports visits to palaces, museums, and cultural events without peak pressure. The slower pace allows travellers to experience the city through its indoor and outdoor venues at convenience.



4. Prague, Czech Republic

Prague offers lower travel costs and stronger local presence between January and March. The city's lanes, castle viewpoints, and museums remain open for those who value atmosphere over busy season crowds. Visitors can explore historic quarters and riverfront paths while the city maintains a steady rhythm.



5. Seoul, South Korea

Late March brings cherry blossoms into Seoul's parks, walkways, and palace courtyards. The combination of urban landscapes and bloom-filled public areas creates strong visual scenes. Markets, historic districts, and waterfront spaces gain activity as the season progresses.



6. Marrakech, Morocco

Marrakech in January offers mild sunshine and consistent weather conditions for sightseeing. Gardens, souks, and historic places are easier to move through when crowds thin. The period supports guided tours, market visits, and open-air movement across the city's central districts.



7. Sydney, Australia

January in Sydney aligns with the height of the southern hemisphere summer. Beaches, waterfront venues, and outdoor events run at full scale. Travellers can join festivals, coastal walks, and city activities supported by long daylight hours.



8. Buenos Aires, Argentina

January is high season in Buenos Aires. The city holds festivals, open-air theatre, and neighbourhood events with strong participation. Tango venues, cultural centres, and public parks remain active throughout the month, creating steady opportunities for local immersion.



9. Cape Town, South Africa

Cape Town enters its summer period from January to March. Clear skies, warm seas, and vineyard visits shape travel demand. Table Mountain routes, coastal drives, and beach days reach optimum conditions. The season also supports exploration of markets, townships, and outdoor food spaces.



10. Kyoto, Japan

Kyoto offers a quieter cherry blossom window in late March. The city's temples, gardens, riverside paths, and traditional streets present spring scenes with fewer tourists than peak weeks. Travellers can walk through preserved districts and historic compounds at a gentle pace.



KARL BUSHBY APPROACHES THE END OF A 27-YEAR WALK AROUND THE WORLD

CHISOM MICHAEL



Karl Bushby is closing in on the final stretch of a journey that began before smartphones, streaming platforms or social media existed. The British walker, now 56, is less than a thousand miles from Hull, the same city he left in 1998 with a plan that many dismissed as unrealistic. His goal was to walk an unbroken line around the world without using any vehicle and without returning home until the mission was complete.

Nearly 27 years later, that line has carried him through 25 countries, across deserts, jungle corridors, international borders and frozen seas. The route has also taken him through long stretches of uncertainty as he faced political, financial and logistical setbacks that often seemed stronger than the physical challenge itself.

Bushby's return is expected in September 2026, marking the conclusion of one of the longest continuous walking projects in modern times. What began as a casual challenge among friends has become an odyssey shaped by persistence, isolation, human connection and a sense of duty to finish what he started.

Early life and the origins of the journey

Bushby grew up in Hull and later joined the British Army, serving with the Parachute Regiment. Military life exposed him to harsh terrain, risk and long periods of discomfort. It also shaped his sense of discipline, which became the backbone of his walking project.

The deaths of several fellow soldiers left a lasting influence and pushed him towards the belief that time should not be wasted. At 29, searching for a purpose larger than daily routine, he committed to a challenge that he believed could reshape the limits of what he thought possible.

He decided he would walk from the southern tip of South America all the way back to Hull, and do so without using motorised transport. That idea grew into what he later named the Goliath Expedition.

The Goliath Expedition: a route across 25 countries

Bushby set off in November 1998 from Punta Arenas, Chile, with about 500 dollars, paper maps and a plan that had no guarantee of success. The first months took him across Patagonia, the Andes and northwards through Central America. He slept in his tent or in shelters offered by strangers and sourced food as he moved.

By 2002, he had crossed Latin America and entered the United States, continuing north until he reached Alaska in 2005. One year later, he completed what is considered one of the most difficult crossings attempted on foot: the Bering Strait.

Together with adventurer Dimitri Kieffer, Bushby spent two weeks navigating unstable ice between Alaska and Siberia. The crossing took place over a frozen 241km route that broke apart under shifting ice sheets and strong winds. When the pair reached Russia, they were detained for entering at an unofficial point and later released after 57 days.

Russia soon became the greatest source of delays. Strict visa rules meant he could only stay for 90 days at a time. Progress slowed and, by 2012, he was denied another visa. In 2013, Russia imposed a five-year ban on him. Without the ability to continue on land, his global line was effectively cut.

In protest, Bushby walked more than 4,800km from Los Angeles to the Russian Embassy in Washington, D.C. That effort eventually resulted in the ban being lifted in 2014. He returned to Russia and continued through Mongolia, crossing the Gobi Desert with other walkers before the group later split, and he proceeded alone into China.

Financial interruptions and the pressure of time

Throughout the expedition, funding has been uncertain. There were periods when sponsorship disappeared, and Bushby had to pause the walk entirely. At one point, he



spent months in Mexico waiting for the resources needed to resume. The COVID-19 pandemic forced another long break, as borders shut and movement became restricted.

What he once believed would take 12 years has expanded into nearly three decades. Of the 27 years since he began, an estimated 13 were spent actively walking, and the rest were consumed by travel restrictions, bureaucracy and emergency detours outside the walking line.

The Caspian Sea crossing and the return to Europe

By 2024, the remaining overland route required crossing through Iran or Russia, both of which were blocked due to geopolitical tensions. Returning home meant finding another solution.

Bushby chose to swim across the Caspian Sea from Kazakhstan to Azerbaijan. Despite limited swimming experience, he spent 31 days completing the 179-mile crossing, supported by safety boats where he slept during rest hours. He later said, "I'm definitely not a swimmer, nor do I like swimming," yet the crossing remained the only way to preserve the unbroken nature of his route.

After reaching Azerbaijan, he continued through the Caucasus, moving across Turkey and into Europe. Along the way he reported frequent support from locals, saying that many invited him into their homes. He described the hospitality in Turkey as consistent and supportive.

By late 2025, he had entered Hungary with roughly 932 miles left before reaching the Channel Tunnel and crossing back into the United Kingdom.

Human encounters and lessons learned

Although most of the journey has been carried out alone, Bushby often states that the walk has never been a solitary experience. Across 25 countries, strangers have offered shelter, meals, medical help and transport during non-walking detours between visa runs. He has spoken of an injury in Peru where he stitched his own wrist, and a stomach infection that forced him to rely on the care of a local doctor.

He frequently emphasises the human element of the expedition. In his words, "99.99 per cent of people I have met have been kind, generous and supportive."

This sense of connection has grown into a central theme of his updates. On social media, especially TikTok, followers request that he pass through their cities, write a book or record the details of his route. Many respond with admiration for what they call a once-in-a-generation effort.

Approaching home and what comes next

As he gets closer to Hull, Bushby speaks with a mix of relief and caution. For almost 30 years, he has woken each day with a single purpose: to move forward. That clarity will soon come to an end, and he has acknowledged that the transition may be difficult.

He hopes to turn his focus towards outreach work, science communication and public speaking. He plans to share the lessons he has learnt from long periods of isolation, cross-cultural encounters and a global route that forced him to understand borders, bureaucracy and human relations in unusual detail.

He also recognises that the United Kingdom he left in 1998 is not the one he will return to. "I left when Tony Blair was Prime Minister," he said. "Since then, we've had several more PMs. I might not recognise home when I get there."

A rare global circuit

If Bushby completes his walk as planned in 2026, he will be one of the first individuals to complete an unbroken, continuous line around the planet on foot. His route has crossed jungles, deserts, mountain ranges, frozen seas and political boundaries that shifted during the very decades he spent on the road.

For many around the world, his journey has become a long-running study of discipline, focus and endurance. For others, it is an example of how far determination can carry a person when the goal is clear and the rules are held firm.

Bushby's final steps into Hull will mark the close of a story that began as a casual challenge but grew into a global record. It will also mark the start of a new chapter for a man who has spent nearly half his life walking home.





**FROM HIDDEN GEMS TO GLOBAL
HOTSPOTS: WAKAWAKA DOCTOR
BRINGS PRACTICAL TRAVEL INSIGHTS
TO NEWS CENTRAL**

IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA



Renowned Travel and Migration Influencer WakaWaka Doctor, has debuted his long-anticipated travel television show, 'WakaWaka World', on News Central, ushering in a new era of lifestyle programming that blends exploration, culture, and storytelling for audiences across Africa and beyond.

The show, which airs every Saturday at 10AM WAT as part of News Central's Breakfast Xtra, is positioned to become a leading source of travel inspiration for viewers eager to discover both local and international destinations.

WakaWaka World is built around WakaWaka Doctor's passion for uncovering hidden gems, demystifying global travel, and empowering Africans with practical knowledge about tourism, migration, cultural experiences, and global mobility. Known widely across digital platforms for his engaging travel content and his ability to break down complex travel processes into clear, relatable insights, WakaWaka Doctor brings the same

credibility and charm to television.

His transition from digital influencer to TV show host marks a significant milestone in his career and reflects the growing demand for curated, trustworthy travel information tailored to African audiences.

The programme showcases an array of destinations—from vibrant African cities and serene local escapes to globally renowned international hotspots.

Each episode blends visual storytelling with WakaWaka Doctor's signature commentary, offering viewers not just beautiful scenery but meaningful context. Audiences can expect to learn about local cuisines, historical landmarks, cultural practices, lifestyle nuances, and travel tips that make each location unique.

Whether he is exploring a bustling market, experiencing a cultural festival, or highlighting simplified travel routes and opportunities, WakaWaka Doctor's goal is to make the world feel accessible to the everyday African viewer.

In promotional visuals ahead of the debut, WakaWaka Doctor appears enthusiastic and inviting, giving a confident thumbs-up as he encourages audiences to join him on his weekly adventures. It reflects the tone of the show—warm, engaging, and full of excitement. It also signals a new direction for News Central,

which continues to expand its portfolio of human-interest programmes that resonate with younger, dynamic audiences.

The broadcaster believes that WakaWaka World will not only entertain but also broaden viewers' horizons, inspiring them to consider travel as a tool for personal growth, education, and global connection.

News Central has made the show accessible across multiple platforms to ensure wide viewership. Audiences can watch on DStv Channel 422, GOtv Channel 23, StarTimes Channel 274, and YouTube via the official @NewsCentralAfrica channel, making the programme available to both traditional television viewers and digital audiences around the world.

By streaming online, the show also appeals to the African diaspora, many of whom follow WakaWaka Doctor's travel insights closely.

NIGERIA'S ELIZABETH JACK-RICH AMONG AFRICAN LEADERS DRIVING UAE–AFRICA DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

CHISOM MICHAEL



Elizabeth Jack-Rich, Nigerian business leader and chief executive officer of ELIN Group, was among a select group of Africa's top private-sector leaders invited to the African Business Leaders Delegation to the United Arab Emirates held from December 6–7, 2025.

The high-level mission brought together influential CEOs and philanthropists from across the continent to strengthen economic cooperation with the UAE

and accelerate development-focused partnerships in key sectors.

The delegation included prominent African business figures such as Aliko Dangote, Tony Elumelu, Abdul Samad Rabi, and Mo Ibrahim, alongside leading representatives from Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Egypt, Sudan, and Zimbabwe. Discussions focused on expanding UAE–Africa collaboration across energy, digital infrastructure, agriculture, green development, and philanthropy.

During the two-day engagement, the delegation held strategic meetings with UAE leadership, including an audience with His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE and Ruler of Abu Dhabi, and His Highness Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi.

In Dubai, the group participated in a policy roundtable and working lunch with His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, exploring new frameworks for UAE–Africa economic cooperation.

The visiting leaders also met with global philanthropist Bill Gates to discuss development financing and innovation opportunities, and later held closed-door sessions with senior diplomats at the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The delegation was convened by H.E. Badr Jafar, UAE Special Envoy for Business and Philanthropy, who hosted a private dinner with UAE philanthropists and African business leaders to chart actionable strategies for cross-regional development.

Reflecting on the mission, Jack-Rich described the experience as a defining moment for African private-sector leadership.

“It was a surreal and powerful honour to stand in a room shaped by Africa’s most formidable visionaries; Aliko Dangote, Tony Elumelu, Abdul Samad Rabiu, Mo

Ibrahim, and other brilliant leaders driving the continent’s rise. In dialogue with His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, we explored a bold new chapter of UAE–Africa partnership and shared prosperity,” she said.

She also expressed appreciation to Badr Jafar and UAE officials for convening the dialogue and reinforcing the UAE’s long-term commitment to Africa.

The visit comes as the UAE deepens its investment presence on the continent. Between 2019 and 2023, the UAE deployed more than \$110 billion in Africa, including over \$70 billion targeted at renewable energy and green infrastructure. The country recently launched a \$1 billion “AI for Development” initiative to support artificial intelligence projects in African agriculture, education, and infrastructure.

Jack-Rich’s participation follows her engagement at the Elevate Africa 2025 conference in Gaborone, Botswana, where she delivered a keynote address on “Sustainable Infrastructure for Economic Transformation.” She emphasised the importance of bold, future-ready infrastructure built to global standards.

“Africa is ready, and we must continue to build like it,” she said, reaffirming her advocacy for African-led development strengthened by strategic global partnerships.

PROSPERITY TORCH BUSINESS SUMMIT: ENTREPRENEURS URGED TO EMBRACE AI, INNOVATION, DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION



The Watchman Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement, Lagos Island District, recently hosted the 2025 edition of the Prosperity Torch Business Summit at its Church Auditorium in Jakande, Lekki.

This year’s summit, themed “You Are What You Know,” brought together a diverse audience of entrepreneurs, industry experts, students, petty traders, professionals, and young innovators for a day dedicated to enterprise development, capacity building, and spiritual enrichment.

The event delivered a well-rounded experience that combined panel discussions, keynote lectures, empowerment grants, mentorship opportunities, and prophetic sessions, creating a platform where participants could explore the intersection of business intelligence and purpose.

Business Insights Through Panels and Keynotes

The summit commenced with a panel discussion on “The Basics of Business Startups and Growth Strategies.”

Panelists included Helen Adinnu (Founder, El-Anuts Bakery), Anthony Anenechukwu (CEO, Parktel Int’l Limited), and Mr. Alex Ogbah (CEO, Necessities Edge Enterprises). They emphasized the importance of innovation, resilience, proper business structuring, and customer-centered service as foundations for long-term business growth. In the first keynote address, Sebastian Obeta, a Data Scientist and Analyst at the University of Cambridge, spoke on “Front Runner Strategy: Living with AI.”

He highlighted the growing influence of Artificial Intelligence on global markets and encouraged Nigerian entrepreneurs to embrace digital transformation to enhance productivity and remain globally competitive.

The second panel session explored the theme “Intrapreneurship: How to Add Value and Remain Relevant.”

Speakers Blessing Anenechukwu of Glowfield International Schools, Pastor Emeka Onuchukwu of Alkanes Oil and Gas Limited, and Kemi Ogbah, an ex-banker and entrepreneur, discussed workplace innovation, leadership, and continuous learning as pathways to organizational relevance.

A subsequent keynote by Michael Oyagha, legal practitioner and author titled “Taxation & Business Standardizations,” emphasized regulatory compliance, proper documentation, and financial discipline as essential elements of business sustainability.

The final keynote session was delivered by Nnamdi Felix Unachukwu, Executive Chairman and Founder of BMI Finishing School, on “Building from Scratch: Before and After a Collapse.”

He offered practical perspectives on business failures, reinvention, and the discipline required to rebuild stronger enterprises.

Empowerment Grants for Emerging Entrepreneurs

A major highlight of the summit was the Empowerment Grant Awards, where 10 outstanding SMEs were selected from a pool of applicants and awarded business seed funds ranging from ₦200,000 to ₦500,000. The initiative underscores the Church’s commitment to supporting small businesses and contributing to economic upliftment within the community.

A Blend of Inspiration, Networking, and Spiritual Support

Beyond its educational value, the summit featured refreshing networking opportunities, light entertainment including saxophone performances, and free access to experienced business mentors. The closing session was led by Mrs. Jewel Opara, a gospel minister and transformational leader, who encouraged participants to pursue wealth with integrity and the consciousness of eternal purpose.

A Continuing Legacy of Empowerment

The Prosperity Torch Business Summit reflects the broader vision of the Watchman Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement, a ministry dedicated to the holistic welfare of individuals. Over the years, the movement has supported several underprivileged students through international scholarships and other initiatives. The summit aligns with the mission of the General Overseer, Pastor Aloysius Chukwuemeka Ohanebo, to serve as “a channel of blessing to all seekers of God.”

Organizers affirmed that the summit is an annual event and remains open to collaboration and partnership with impact-driven organizations committed to economic empowerment and social transformation.



MEET SAM ADEOYE, COMMUNICATIONS POLYMATH REWRITING EXECUTIVE VISIBILITY PLAYBOOK IN TODAY'S ATTENTION ECONOMY

CHISOM MICHAEL



In today's hyper-accelerated media ecosystem, where visibility functions like currency, and attention has become one of the world's most aggressively traded commodities, a new intellectual model for understanding newsworthiness is emerging from Nigeria.

And at the centre of this movement is Sam Adeoye, public relations leader and communications polymath, whose 20-year borderless career spans journalism, creative direction, advertising strategy, digital culture, and public relations leadership.

Adeoye is the creator of the E.P.I.C. Framework, synthesised from traditional news determinants and adapted to surface positive and ownable storytelling directions for top executives, founders, and public officials.

E.P.I.C., says Adeoye, represents Earliness, Proximity, Impact, and Change. What he proposes is simple but profound—newsworthiness in the context of executive PR is

not accidental; it is engineered. It can be studied, predicted, and intentionally designed. And for the corporate leaders, founders, and public figures who increasingly come to him for guidance, this framework is fast becoming the definitive compass for navigating visibility in a world that no longer rewards silence.

"With continued practice and several tests, we developed a formula to customise the system for each subject," he notes. "Each of the four elements is weighted accordingly to pinpoint exactly which of the pillars is strongest for each subject."

A framework born from the convergence of worlds

To understand why the EPIC system resonates, one must understand Adeoye's unique career path; few communications figures in Nigeria have occupied as many vantage points.

He began his career in 2005 at The Guardian, where he reported for Life magazine and The Guardian on Sunday. There, he wrote culturally resonant features, profiled emerging talent, covered entertainment and media, and authored the weekly marketing column, Marketing Edge. Twice, he was shortlisted as a finalist for Journalist of the Year at The Future Awards early recognition of his precision, narrative depth, and instinct for stories that capture the public mood.

From journalism, he was headhunted into advertising, rising rapidly through copywriting leadership roles across Nigeria's top agencies: Verdant Zeal, 141 Worldwide, DKK Nigeria, and STB-McCann. Along the way, he helped build campaigns for some of the world's most recognisable brands: Coca-Cola, Interswitch, MasterCard, Central Bank of Nigeria, Diageo, Facebook, MTN, Ecobank, PZ Cussons, Samsung, Unilever, Beko, Visafone, and others.

His work spanned everything from digital strategy to creative direction, experiential concepts, advertising campaigns, and new business initiatives for creative agencies. His rapid turnaround work at DKK Nigeria, helping grow the client roster from one to 12 in two years, and his cross-market portfolio at STB-McCann, are still cited by industry insiders.

In 2009, Adeoye was named Staff of the Year at Verdant Zeal and appointed founding COO of the communication group's new PR subsidiary, RedGecko Limited his first formal foray into public relations management, setting the stage for what was to come.

After more than a decade in advertising, Adeoye pivoted completely as Senior Partner at Boardroom Hypeman, where he pioneered a "Key Person Positioning" approach for CEOs and founders. He then joined Airtel Nigeria, one of Africa's most valuable telecom brands, as Head of Public Relations.

This panoramic cross-industry experience is what makes the E.P.I.C. approach to executive positioning quite compelling. Adeoye appears to understand the newsroom, the boardroom, the agency corridor, the social feed, and the CMO's table, all from the inside.

E.P.I.C.: Earliness, Proximity, Impact, Change

According to Adeoye, the reason so many talented people remain invisible is that they misunderstand the architecture of media relevance.

"Earliness is about timing, being ahead of the wave," he explains. "Proximity is your relevance to what the audience already cares about. Impact is the measurable or emotional consequence of your actions. And Change is your ability to shift something yourself, the industry paradigms, or the public conversation."

These four factors form the backbone of how journalists value stories, how audiences choose what to amplify, and how modern leaders build influence. Adeoye argues that anyone, either CEO, founder, executive, or policymaker, can become visible strategically, not randomly, when these factors are intentionally activated.

As he puts it, "The goal is not publicity. It is visibility intelligence. It is not about chasing the news cycle; it is about shaping the conditions that make the subject relevant to the news cycle."

Visibility as infrastructure

Adeoye's subjects typically arrive at inflection points: ascending to new roles, positioning for boards, seeking investor recognition, preparing for regulatory or political transitions, or building a public narrative that matches the scale of their ambition.

In a world where corporate success depends not just on competence but on perception, Adeoye argues that visibility is now infrastructure, much like capital, technology, or distribution. "Some executives think visibility is vanity," he says. "But it is leverage. You don't win appointments, influence policy, attract partnerships, or grow a company's reputation in silence."

Through EPIC, he provides a repeatable way to evaluate personal newsworthiness, create visibility roadmaps, and design stories that resonate across media, audiences, and gatekeepers.

The Nigerian thought leader crafting a new visibility playbook

With over 15 years in PR and marketing communications, more than 20 years across media industries, and influence that stretches beyond borders, Adeoye represents a new breed of African communications leader: editorially trained, creatively sophisticated, PR-seasoned, digitally fluent, and culturally attuned.

As business, politics, culture, and technology collide in Africa's age of accelerated ambition, voices like his are beginning to shape how stories are told and how influence itself is constructed.

And if E.P.I.C. becomes the default process for understanding modern visibility, its origin will be traced back to one man.

START FROM SCRATCH: BUILDING COMMUNITY AND CONFIDENCE IN AFRICA'S ASPIRING DJ TALENT

...as AlphaTheta, HOMECOMING bet big on Africa's DJ talent pipeline after Lagos milestone



organisations, anchored by the newly opened HOMECOMING™ space and supported by AlphaTheta's world leading DJ technology. The Lagos debut launched with a fully booked first class in September and continued with additional sessions through the end of the year, each one oversubscribed and energised by a new wave of aspiring DJs across the city.

The programme introduces complete beginners to the theory, tools and creative thinking behind DJing. Participants explored everything from beatmatching and blends to storytelling, identity and building a personal sound. The Lagos editions featured a powerful lineup of mentors who reflect the innovation and diversity of contemporary African music, including Dope Caesar, Weareallchemicals, Honeeay and the collectives Dencity, Floss and Femme Africa. Their guidance created an environment defined by openness, confidence and community, giving new DJs the space to learn directly from artists who are shaping the future of the sound.

Across Europe and Africa, HOMECOMING™ has collaborated with mentors such as Major League DJz, DJ Spinall, Gina Jeanz, Donnie Sunshine, Dare Balogun and Kitty Amor. The success of the Lagos programme strengthens this global network while deepening HOMECOMING's commitment to talent development on the continent.

What has emerged in Lagos is more than a series of workshops. It is the beginning of a long term investment in DJ culture, infrastructure and creative ecosystems in Africa. With AlphaTheta's support, Start From Scratch is becoming a platform that opens doors, builds skills and creates pathways for new voices.

Following the impact of the 2025 editions, HOMECOMING™ and AlphaTheta are now developing an expanded programme for 2026. More cities, more sessions and a deeper educational offering will build on the momentum created in Lagos, ensuring that access and opportunity continue to grow for the next generation of DJs.

HOMECOMING™ is celebrating a standout year for Start From Scratch in Lagos, marking the first time the global DJ education programme has been delivered on the continent in partnership with AlphaTheta. The 2025 Lagos workshops were met with unprecedented demand, establishing a new blueprint for accessible music education in Africa and setting the stage for an expanded and more ambitious programme in 2026.

Start From Scratch has travelled through major cultural capitals including London, Berlin, Paris and Amsterdam. Its arrival in Lagos marked a significant moment for both

PREMIUM VIBES, ZERO STRESS: WHY THE 'Q5 PARTY' IS THE NEW SECRET TO BEATING CORPORATE BURNOUT



In a year when many Nigerian companies have battled tight budgets, long work hours and pressure to hit targets, a new kind of celebration is giving workers a chance to breathe, relax and feel valued.

It is called the Q5 Party, a shared corporate year-end event that lets teams unwind without the stress or cost of planning their own party.

Organised by Events Architects Ltd, the Q5 Party gathered firms from different industries for a single, premium night out, instead of the traditional, often stiff in-house office party.

This year's edition which had over 350 CEOs, executives, founders and their teams in attendance was a mix of music, fine dining, laughter and cross-industry networking in a setting designed to lift spirits and remind workers that their effort matters.

Funmi Victor-Okigbo, Chief Visionary Officer of Events Architects, said the idea came from a simple thought. "After Q4 comes Q5," she said with a smile. "It is the start of the holiday mood. A time to relax, have fun and drop the stress. We help companies do that without spending too much or worrying about logistics."

A Shared Stage for Different Industries

The event offered a fully curated evening, multi-course dinner, drinks, top-tier entertainment, interactive activities and a lively afterparty.

Companies could book tables and even customise their space to make it feel personal and special for their staff.

Victor-Okigbo said the goal is to give teams a memory that carries them into the new year with renewed energy.



“These organisations work so hard. They close deals, chase numbers and try to end strong. We want to remove the pressure and help them enjoy the celebration they deserve.”

Events Architects has hosted similar events since 2013 but rebranded it this year as Q5. She expects a bigger edition in 2026.

“It will be annual. And we have many more exciting projects coming.”



Beyond the Spreadsheet

Guests described the night as a refreshing pause, a moment to connect, breathe and meet new people outside work walls.

Idia Aisien, Actress and entrepreneur, stated the event is more than a party. “This is balance,” she said. “Without balance, people cannot be productive. I’ve barely been here and I’m already having fun. I’m seeing people I know and meeting new professionals. It’s a beautiful mix.”

She encouraged companies not to let tough economic times stop them from appreciating staff. “If you are Nigerian, you are already resilient. We’ve faced worse and survived. I believe 2026 will be even better.”

The HR Relief

For Human Resources managers, Q5 is a strategic “cheat code.” Olaronke Blaize, HR Manager at Events Architects, said year-end planning often overwhelms HR teams. “We saw the need,” she said. “Many HR teams struggle with planning events. Q5 lets them de-stress. They can enjoy the night and still bond with their teams.”

She added that events like this improve morale. “A team that unwinds works better. People have worked all year. Targets

matter, but the people meeting those targets matter more.” Blaize believes celebrations like Q5 should be compulsory in modern workplaces. “Employee engagement drives employee experience. Nights like this help people relax, connect and feel appreciated.”

The Emotional ROI

For corporate professionals like Samson Nwakanma, an IT healthcare project manager, the value of Q5 is emotional. “After a year of hard work, it feels good to sit with your team, laugh, talk about the wins and even the failures,” he said.

“This event captures that feeling perfectly.” Nwakanma said shared events also boost productivity. “A happy team is an efficient team. People work better when they feel valued.”

As companies plan for 2026, he believes they must stay open to change. “Trends are evolving. You can’t do the same thing and expect a different result. You must reinvent, network and try new strategies.”

Events Architects says it hopes to expand Q5 beyond Lagos and bring the relaxing, shared celebration model to more organisations across Nigeria.

BEFORE VOWS: THE MARRIAGE SCHOOL REVEALS SECRET BLUEPRINTS FOR LASTING MARRIAGES

IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA



Marriage is a journey of deep companionship, mutual support, and shared growth, offering a secure, loving space to build a life, face challenges as a team, and create lasting memories. It provides emotional security, fosters personal development, and offers a chance to experience true partnership in raising a family and pursuing shared dreams.

This was one of the focal points at The Marriage School (TMS)'s Singles with Purpose Conference (SWPC) on Saturday. The 2025 edition, which also marked the maiden graduation of the first Singles with Purpose Programme (SWPP) cohort, aimed to equip singles with the skills, values, and mindset required for intentional, faith-driven marriages.

Under the theme "Before the Vows: Equipping Singles for Love, Life and Legacy," the conference offered workshops, interactive sessions, and talks by experienced couples to help participants prepare not just for a wedding, but for the lifelong vocation of marriage. Organisers stressed that strong marriages are foundational to building stronger societies.

Kelvin Enumah, director of The Marriage School, said the program addresses a gap in Nigeria where many young professionals enter marriage without preparation. "Our research, with 340 respondents, showed that money is not the top concern for most people entering marriage. Physical attraction ranks ninth. What matters most are clarity, purpose, and shared values," Enumah said.

He added that the program also encourages participants to discover whether marriage is the right path for them.

The 10-month SWPP program combines virtual sessions twice a month with physical meetups, covering mentorship, relationship skills, and community-building. Monica Enumah, co-organizer, emphasised the importance of service and humility.

"Happiness comes from investing in others. When you think of your partner, family, and community, it creates a foundation for a joyful, lasting relationship," she said.

Ike Nnaedozie, the keynote speaker and entrepreneur, married for 33 years, stressed sacrificial love and preparation. "Marriage is about giving yourself for the other, understanding that life has ups and downs, and building a home that serves society. Too often, people focus on the wedding day rather than the work marriage requires," he said.

He encouraged young participants to embrace compromise, empathy, and intentional effort.

To guide participants, Nnaedozie outlined four essential principles. First, understand what it means to love. "Love is not merely a feeling but a deliberate decision to will the good of another," he said.

Second, be intentional. "Don't rush into marriage," the keynote speaker added. "Thoughtful dating, courtship, and self-reflection are crucial to discovering true compatibility."

Third, nurture your spiritual life. "A strong inner foundation equips couples to sustain a healthy and enduring relationship," he said.

Finally, respect the permanence of the vow. "Marriage is a lifelong commitment, not a temporary experiment, and requires consistent dedication from both partners," he stated.

Participants shared their experiences of growth through the program. David Okafor, class governor of the inaugural SWPP cohort, described it as transformative.

"I learned about mistakes I was unknowingly making and how to grow into a better partner. The sessions emphasised collaboration, intentionality, and building lasting connections," he said.

The conference also covered practical issues such as financial unity, communication, courtship, compatibility, and spiritual grounding. Organizers highlighted that successful relationships require ongoing effort, conscious decision-making, and preparation before the vows.

A total of 57 graduates completed the first cohort, leaving the program equipped to pursue intentional and fulfilling marriages.

The Marriage School aims to cultivate homes that are virtuous, loving, and resilient, fostering a generation of families that contribute to society's stability and well-being.



FROM ONLINE FAMILY TO REAL-LIFE TRIBE: 'PARTY WITH OLORI-EBI' 2025 RAISES THE BAR FOR INFLUENCER-LED EVENTS



Some events trend for a day, others leave a lasting impression and signal the birth of something new, something different, something capable of becoming culture.

Party with Olori-Ebi has become a cultural moment, the kind that lingers on timelines, in group chats, and most importantly, in people's memories.

The 2025 edition, held on November 27 in Lagos, went beyond meeting expectations; it raised the bar on what an influencer-led community gathering can be.

What began two years ago as a warm tradition between Tomike Adeoye and her loyal online Family has evolved into a full-scale celebration that now draws fans, creators, celebrities, and industry heavyweights, all bonded by one thing: the unmistakable joy that follows Tomike everywhere she shows up.

A Community Event That Has Become a Lagos Social Calendar Staple

The heart of this party has always been the Family — Tomike's community of followers who connect with her beyond the screen. They arrived early, dressed like they were stepping into a wedding, a film set, and a music video all at once.

The aso-ebi brief became an open challenge to outdo the last edition, and the guests rose to it. Feeds overflowed with stunning interpretations of the denim asoebi in bold detail-rich outfits that could rival any red carpet.

But here's the thing: the real magic wasn't in the clothes. It was in the way strangers greeted each other like old friends, how people formed circles to dance together, and how joy moved across the room like it had rehearsed.

Talk about Celebrity Pull Up!

If anyone ever doubted the pull of the Olori-Ebi effect, the guest list ended that conversation. The room was star-studded, with familiar faces showing up out of genuine love for Tomike and the community she has built. Toke Makinwa, Veekee James Enioluwa, Toyin Abraham, Broda Shaggi.



Hilda Bassey. And many more, not as celebrity guests but as people who came to dance, laugh, and soak in the atmosphere.

Music That Carried the Night

The lineup was a highlight on its own. From The Loud Choir who set the tone with harmonies that pulled people off their seats, to Nasboi and Segun Johnson who turned the gathering into a carnival. Then a surprise act, Spyro with his hit songs, carrying the audience along with rhythm. What a night! Every performance felt intentional, as though curated not just to entertain, but to make people feel part of something.

The Giveaways That Shocked the Room

One thing about Tomike's events: people never go home empty-handed. It's a Yoruba party standard and Olori-ebi will not be the one to abandon a good tradition. Guests won iPhones, cash prizes and home appliances in pure disbelief as they walked away with what they hadn't expected when they dressed up for the party.

The energy in those moments summed up the entire night; unpredictable, heartfelt, and overflowing with gratitude.

A Party That Proved What Community Can Build

By the midpoint of the night, it was clear the event had outgrown the tag of "influencer party." The production, the turnout, the balance of fans and celebrities, the scale of engagement online, all pointed to something meaningful. Shout out to the planner - LH Events, a great event does not plan itself.



Party with Olori-Ebi has become a case study in how digital communities can transcend screens and become real-life tribes. Tomike's warmth set the tone, but the people mirrored it right back. They showed up for her, for one another, and for the joy that this gathering now symbolizes.

FROM PRIVATE CONCIERGE TO PHYSICAL STORE: BOLA COKER UNVEILS QBEESCLOSET LAGOS DESTINATION

CHINONYE ISIDIENU



Qbeescloset, the renowned luxury fashion concierge founded by Bola Coker, has officially opened its first physical luxury store in Lagos, marking a milestone after over 20 years of curating rare and authentic high-end pieces for women across the world.

The grand launch event was hosted by celebrated actress, media personality, and style icon Idia Aisien, a longtime client of the brand.

“This is more than a store to me, it’s the continuation of a journey that began over two decades ago,” says Bola Coker. “Lagos has always been home to my most loyal and discerning clients. Bringing Qbeescloset here is both a homecoming and a promise to continue delivering luxury without compromise.”

For over two decades, Coker has built a trusted reputation as a luxury curator for Nigeria’s most influential women, from business leaders and executives to celebrities and global tastemakers. Long before the rise of luxury reselling and personal shopping, she was sourcing, authenticating, and delivering some of the world’s most coveted pieces through her private concierge service.

With the opening of its Lagos location, Qbeescloset transitions from solely operating as an exclusive private-shopping experience to a sophisticated in-store destination, offering a carefully curated selection of brand-new and pre-loved luxury items.

True to its ethos, every piece is intentionally handpicked, authenticated, and selected for women who value rarity, craftsmanship, and timeless elegance.

As part of the launch celebration, clients who spend \$1,000 or more between the 15th and 30th of December will be entered into a raffle for a chance to win a coveted brand new Birkin 35”, offering a unique opportunity to experience luxury at its finest.

Hosting this landmark event is Idia Aisien, one of Nigeria’s leading fashion figures. A celebrated model, television presenter, actress, and philanthropist, Idia has worked with top luxury brands and remains a symbol of modern African elegance.

As a longtime customer and close friend of Qbeescloset, she represents the woman for whom the brand was built: confident, discerning, and globally attuned.

Qbeescloset is built on her natural gift for spotting the most coveted luxury pieces, a passion she has honed for over 25 years.

What began as a love for beautiful things evolved into a full-time calling. Now back in Lagos, she is building a curated destination for true luxury lovers, offering both brand-new gems and pre-loved treasures. Every piece is handpicked, inspected, and guaranteed authentic.



HOUSE BOURGEOISIE: THE PAN-AFRICAN NICHE FRAGRANCE HOUSE REDEFINING SENSORY LUXURY IN AFRICA

CHINONYE ISIDIENU



House Bourgeoisie, Africa's pioneering Pan-African niche home-fragrance and olfactive-art brand, is elevating the continent's luxury landscape with its commitment to chemical-free formulations, sustainable sourcing, and refined scents crafted from Africa's own aromatic identity.

Founded in 2023 by Teniola Josette, a Nigerian with a French background, certified artisan perfumer, and seasoned digital marketing strategist, House Bourgeoisie blends cultural depth, modern sophistication, and artistic innovation into a new era of sensory luxury.

A Founder with strategic finesse & creative precision

With over 12 years of professional experience, Teniola has built a multidimensional career across FMCG, international organisations, oil & gas, and the automobile sector.

Her expertise spans digital marketing strategy, high-level operational coordination, visual storytelling, and business development.

Her unique blend of corporate depth and creative artistry — strengthened by years spent working across West Africa, including the Republic of Benin — informs the refined direction of House Bourgeoisie today.

Reclaiming Africa's olfactive identity

House Bourgeoisie was created with a bold mission: to break the continent's dependence on imported luxury fragrances and lead the movement for authentic, sustainable African olfactive artistry.

The brand sources inspiration and aromatic materials from across the continent, celebrating Africa's diverse scent heritage through:

Niche home diffusers, luxury candles, room sprays, scented jewelry infused with natural African oud and botanical notes. Every product is chemical-free, gentle, sustainably crafted, and rooted in a vision of refined African luxury.

HBV Legacy — The Signature of House of Bourgeoisie

At the center of the brand's olfactive universe is HBV Legacy, a soft-launched bestseller known for its bold woody-leathery profile, dry elegance, and emotive depth. HBV Legacy communicates strength, intimacy, and quiet confidence — embodying the spirit of House Bourgeoisie.

The brand also continues its journey with The Bourgeois Atlas, a fragrance concept inspired by cities and cultural energies across Africa and beyond — transforming scent into memory, geography, and emotion.

Trusted by luxury hospitality & real-estate spaces

House Bourgeoisie continues to expand its presence within the luxury ecosystem, partnering with distinguished hospitality brands such as The Wheatbaker Hotel — one of Lagos' most refined boutique hotels known for its world-class ambience and clientele.

The brand also scents and collaborates with The White Orchid Hotel, an elegant property owned by EbonyLife Group, further establishing House Bourgeoisie's presence in premium hospitality experiences.

Beyond hotels, the brand works with premium real-estate developers and curated private spaces seeking bespoke scent identities that elevate ambience and reflect sophisticated taste.

Through its website and community channels, House Bourgeoisie's products are actively enjoyed by customers across Lagos and abroad.



A brand already in motion

While this marks House Bourgeoisie's first formal media announcement, the brand is far from new. Its fragrances are already in homes, hotels, and private collections.

Its soft launch of HBV Legacy has exceeded expectations, and its presence continues to grow organically through word-of-mouth, niche communities, and sensory-driven storytelling.

Looking Ahead - Q1 2026

As House Bourgeoisie advances into 2026, the brand is preparing to expand its creative universe with:
A new wave of refined home fragrances,

enhanced Pan-African ingredient sourcing initiatives, immersive scent-experience events for collectors and connoisseurs, and a deeper focus on sustainable luxury and African olfactive mastery.

The future of House Bourgeoisie is intentional, experiential, and deeply rooted in African excellence — a brand built not just to scent spaces, but to shape culture.

WHY PUBLIC-PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS' FUTURE DEPENDS ON ETHICS, GOOD GOVERNANCE

—SULAIMON

...Delivers UNILAG's 451 and fifth inaugural lecture in 2025/2026

CHARLES OGWO



As Nigeria faces growing social and economic pressures in public and private institutions, Abdul-Hameed Sulaimon, dean of faculty of management sciences at the University of Lagos, explored why ethical conduct and sound governance must drive institutional progress.

Sulaimon who delivered the 451 inaugural lecture of the university titled, "Good Ethical Conduct, Corporate Social

Responsibility and Corporate Governance Compliance: Whose Interest?" explored the interconnectedness of ethics, corporate social responsibility, and corporate governance as the bedrock of sustainable development in both private and public institutions.

He argued that genuine economic, social and institutional progress depends on ethical compliance that transcends mere legal obedience, aligning morality, transparency and accountability with organisational purpose.

"Ethics, corporate social responsibility and governance are not isolated ideals, but a strategic trinity that determines long-term sustainability.

"Ethical conduct is crucial to institutional success and sustainability," he asserted.

Sulaimon used practical illustrations such as the contrasting post-election conduct of Presidents Goodluck Jonathan, and Donald Trump to bring ethical decision-making to life within political, business and societal contexts.

"When faced with a situation of choosing between what is legally right and morally correct, the common good of all should take preference over personal gain, Jonathan, the former President of Nigeria who lost election as incumbent.

Being ethical will always serve the common good of the larger society as against being compliant which requires people to behave ethically to avoid sanctions," he said.

Contrasting this with the Trump during his first term as president of the United States of America who lost election as incumbent.

"For me, being ethically compliant suggests the need to have an appropriate blend of ethics and compliance, morality and legality, persuasion and sanction, and applying a contingency management approach rather than a one fit all approach.



“My advocacy for ethical compliance is for businesses to behave like responsible citizens, carrying out their operations in a sustainable manner and within the confines of the law,” he stated.

Importance of a strong ethical compass in navigating complex situations: Multiple stakeholder dilemma

Sulaimon reiterated that if a company wants stakeholders to feel and act positively towards it, the company must first make meaningful contributions to their lives.

He emphasised that the goal of maximising profit for shareholders and ensuring fair wages for employees can constitute an area of conflict.

“In reality, ethical conduct is simple to understand but difficult to practice in all aspects of an organisation when it does not consider the stakeholder approach, hence, a business must be ethically aware of the watchful, educated and sometimes, emotionally charged stakeholders when carrying out their long term goals,” he asserted.

The Oyo State-born professor urges business owners to go beyond mere following the regulation to being ethical in their actions.

Ethical consideration, he said remains a viable means of evaluating and discrediting actions that are inimical to human existence/general good even when such actions have coverage in the legal framework. “Therefore, simply following regulations may not be enough for business conducts both in the private and public sectors.

“People are getting more understanding of how much a company depends on them to remain competitive. The assumption that a business may not need to worry about anything else once it is complying with basic legal obligations may be more harmful to a company in today’s world as people with multiple identities are requesting

that a company consider the implications of their business activities or avoid irresponsible business,” he noted.

Leadership and ethical culture

The dean of management sciences emphasized that leadership is essential in determining the ethical culture of an organisation.

“By making ethical decisions, holding others accountable and modelling integrity, effective leaders set the tendency for ethical behaviour and through which organisations can cultivate a culture of respect, trust and responsibility among employees thereby resulting in improved ethical outcomes,” he said.

Whose interest matters?

Sulaimon emphasised that the real question, “Whose interest?” must always be answered through the lens of collective well-being.

Ethical conduct, corporate governance, and CSR ultimately serve humanity’s shared interest. “Ethics gives a human face to business actions; without it, progress becomes prosperity without peace. Effective corporate governance, corporate social responsibility, and ethical practices are not invariably the optimal selections.

“These strategic imperatives are advantageous for sustained development and progress as they address a varied array of stakeholders. Comprehending who benefits from these actions relies on the interconnection of stakeholder interests,” he said.

He advocates strengthening of Nigeria’s laws and regulations as well as the collaborative effort of all and sundry to move with the trend of the times in ensuring that good ethical conducts, CSR or corporate governance is achieved.



HOW INSECURITY DRIVES NIGERIA INTO NEW POVERTY SPIRAL

CHARLES OGWO



On countless farmlands now overrun by bandits, crops rot unharvested while families once self-reliant scramble for survival.

From the North to the Middle Belt, insecurity is ripping through the economic fabric of communities, driving Nigeria into a dangerous new poverty spiral.

Nigerians are worried that insecurity is fueling a new poverty crisis in the country by disrupting livelihoods, displacing populations, destroying infrastructure, and creating a cyclical relationship where poverty and insecurity feed each other.

This happens as conflicts and crime prevent farming and business, forcing people to flee and become impoverished, while the resulting economic hardship, displaced populations, and social unrest in turn increase vulnerability to crime and conflict.

Friday Erhabor, director of media and strategies at Marklenez Limited, said because the country is largely an agrarian economy and the insecurity especially in the northern part has made it difficult for farmers to cultivate their land.

“For the farmers, they have been denied access to their means of livelihood. That erodes their income.

“On the other hand, because farmers are not given an enabling environment to farm properly, there is food inflation which also erodes the purchasing power of Nigerians and consequently increases their poverty,” he said.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), “Cost of food in Nigeria increased 13.12 percent in October of 2025 over the same month in the previous year.

“Food Inflation in Nigeria averaged 14.14 percent from 1996 until 2025, reaching an all-time high of 40.87 percent in June of 2024.”

Erhabor called on the government to overhaul Nigeria’s security architecture.

“States should be empowered to have state police or state security outfits to localise the fight against insecurity,” he noted.

Ibukun Bankole, a media expert, and the CEO of JEN, an initiative group empowering youth, said the reality is that insecurity in Nigeria has gone beyond a security challenge and it is now a major driver of poverty.

“When businesses shut down because of fear of attacks, jobs are lost and families are thrown into hardship. In many cases, breadwinners are killed, kidnapped, or displaced, leaving dependents without support.



“This cycle keeps pushing more households below the poverty line.

We see it clearly in the economy because land that should normally appreciate in value is now depreciating in conflict-prone areas because people are abandoning their farms and properties,” she said.

Besides, Bankole emphasised that because of the insecurity, schools are closing down in unsafe regions, denying children access to education, while health facilities are either destroyed or inaccessible.

“These are critical indices showing how insecurity is eroding both livelihoods and social infrastructure and ultimately keeping many Nigerians poor,” she noted.

To break this cycle, she said that Nigeria must strengthen its security architecture with community-based policing and intelligence-driven operations, which she believe already exists.

This, she said, is because Nigerians have witnessed alleged allegations by military officers on the frontline claiming that they are being told to stand down instead of fighting and killing these terrorists.

The security crisis in Nigeria is having its toll on the economy, which has led to a surge in the cost of living and has brought untold hard times to the education sector as well.

According to the NBS 2022 “Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)” survey, 63 percent of Nigerians, about 133 million people, are multidimensionally poor.

Of that number, 86 million live in the north, while about 47 million live in the south, highlighting how poverty is

concentrated in Nigeria’s historically most insecure or conflict-prone regions.

Poverty is higher in rural areas, with about 72 percent of rural Nigerians living in poverty, compared to about 42 percent in urban areas; rural areas are more exposed to insecurity, disruption of agriculture, and displacement.

The survey shows wide variation by state: for instance, poverty incidence ranges from as low as 27 percent in some states to as high as 91 percent in others, such as Sokoto State, many of the worst-off states are those most affected by banditry, insurgency or communal conflict.

According to a World Bank report in 2024, about 129 million Nigerians live below the national poverty line, a sharp increase compared to prior years.

Insecurity is a key driver of poverty increase in Nigeria by disrupting livelihoods, agricultural production, and economic activity—especially in the north and conflict-affected regions.

Poverty rates have worsened sharply in recent years, coinciding with heightened insecurity coupled with inflation and economic shocks.

Available records show that Nigeria’s extreme poverty rate increased from about 40 percent in 2019 to over 60 percent by 2025, according to World Bank and NBS-based projections.

A recent Benue State report shows a one percent increase in insecurity corresponding with decreases in crop and livestock output of about 0.2 percent to 0.3 percent undermining income and food security.



THE COMMON PROBLEMS WITH P2P: INSIDE BREET'S NEW REPORT ON NIGERIA'S CRYPTO CASHOUT REALITY

DANIEL ADELEKE



For years, P2P trading has been the backbone of crypto liquidity in Nigeria and millions rely on it every day. But what is P2P really like for the average Nigerian user? To answer that question, Breet carried out a detailed investigation across multiple platforms.

Fresh accounts were created, trades were made with real money, vendor behaviour was monitored, payout times were recorded, and every conversation, delay, or dispute was documented and over 20,000 P2P related was reviewed. And the findings were clear — P2P works, but it comes with problems that appear over and over again, no matter the platform.

Over 60 percent of the traders didn't get the full amount they were supposed to from the buyers.

Over 45 percent of them were sent a fake screenshot.

Customer support on most P2P market places took longer, and most times, was unresponsive.

The Common Problems With Crypto P2P
Across the research, the same patterns kept showing up, even when the traders, platforms, and amounts were different. One of the most common issues was what many users call "kobo chopping."

Traders quietly knock off small amounts from payouts, rounding down to the nearest hundred, removing the kobo entirely, or asking for ₦500 to ₦1,000 as a "profit." Over several trades, users lost anywhere from ₦12 to as high as ₦900 on

a typical \$50 cashout. Because platforms do not automatically detect these small discrepancies, the burden falls on users to argue or simply accept the loss.

Another recurring problem was fake alerts and forged proofs. Some traders mark a transaction as “paid,” upload a screenshot of a transfer that never happened, and pressure the user to release the crypto. This problem appeared in nine percent of the tested transactions, confirming what many Nigerian users already suspect from experience: fraud attempts are common across all major P2P platforms.

Ghosting also emerged as a major source of anxiety. After a user locks in the crypto, some traders go silent for five to 20 minutes, sometimes even longer. With money stuck in escrow, users are left waiting, refreshing their screens, and hoping the trader returns.

The research also showed a surprising number of traders pushing conversations off-platform. Requests like “add me on WhatsApp” appeared frequently.

This opens the door to several risks, from social engineering to phone number harvesting and leaves users with fewer protections if something goes wrong.

And even when users try to seek help, platform support is often slow or unavailable. Some tickets take days to resolve. Some chats provide only generic responses like “please wait 24–48 hours,” even when money is on the line. Many users are effectively left alone during disputes.

At the core of all these issues is the biggest truth from the research: the platform does not determine your experience, the trader does.

A 100 percent rated trader delivers a smooth experience. A lower-rated trader introduces stress, delays, and uncertainty. Human behaviour decides everything.

What Could Be Better

Despite the problems, P2P is not disappearing anytime soon. It plays a huge role in Nigeria’s crypto economy. But the research highlights six practical fixes that could make the entire experience safer, easier, and far less stressful.

One recommendation from the report is for platforms to force exact payouts. If the money received doesn’t match the agreed amount, the system should automatically flag the transaction and prevent the user from releasing their crypto.

Another improvement would be bank verification, where the platform can confirm that a transfer truly happened before a trader is allowed to mark a transaction as paid. This single change would eliminate most fake alert situations.

The report also suggests a zero-tolerance policy for fake proofs, with permanent bans for traders who attempt them. Stronger consequences would discourage risky behaviour.

Customer support is another area that needs major improvement. During an active trade, users should be able to reach a human agent in under five minutes, not wait hours or days while their funds hang in limbo.

The research also recommends extending the rate lock window. At the moment, some platforms lock rates for only 30 seconds. A five-minute lock would give users more time to check trader ratings and avoid rushing into problems.

Even with these improvements, there will always be some level of risk, because P2P depends on people, and people are unpredictable. But with better rules and stronger systems, the experience can be far more reliable.

After documenting the good, the stressful, and the unpredictable sides of P2P, the research turns to the natural next question:

What else can users rely on?

This is where automated OTC solutions like Breet come in. Unlike P2P, there are no traders, no chats, no negotiations, and no risk of fake alerts. The system is fully automated once the crypto lands, the payout is processed instantly and exactly as displayed.

The study offers one of the clearest pictures yet of what millions of Nigerians experience every day. And by documenting the issues honestly and showing what better alternatives look like it opens the door for a future where crypto cashouts are not only fast, but also safe, simple, and stress-free.

GIRLS ARE BORN WITH AGENCY: HOW WE RAISE GIRLS DETERMINES THE WOMEN THEY BECOME

EKEMINI AKPAKPAN

Recently, I found myself typing a disturbing question into a search bar: “Do girls have agency?” The answer came back quickly and simply: “Yes. Girls are born with agency...” Agency, by the way, is the ability (of a person) to make choices, act on those choices, believe your decisions matter, and influence the world around you. I stay committed to demystifying concepts like this because so many of the conversations we have about women and girls depend on definitions people often aren’t fully familiar with.

For example, inalienable human rights is another phrase I constantly find myself explaining, even to well-intentioned people who simply do not know. Inalienable human rights are the basic rights and freedoms every human being is born with and cannot lose. No government, no institution, and no individual can take them away, transfer them, or demand that you surrender them. These rights exist inherently simply because you are human. Here’s the connection I want to establish: If every human being is born with inalienable rights, then agency is the means through which they exercise those rights.

Recently, I launched an empowerment campaign for vulnerable girls called Letters to My Younger Self. A crucial part of this sustainability roadmap for helping girls graduate out of poverty is developing their agency. That is why I surrounded them with women leaders who were once girls themselves and whose stories mirror the realities these girls now face. Through those stories, the girls could see the undeniable thread of agency: how empowered decisions can shape your life forever, no matter your starting point.

As these leaders read letters to their younger selves, they channelled something deeply powerful—a sense of identity, worth, and possibility. Because at its core, agency begins with knowing who you are and believing you matter. Across every story, a familiar pattern emerged: each woman first discovered her inherent value, and that discovery unlocked the potential and courage to make empowered decisions.

From Adenike Oyetunde-Lawal, who lives life wholly and accomplished, determined after losing a limb to cancer; to Dr. Tàlé Alimi, who showed how an

empowered self-image shapes self-perception and ultimately life outcomes; to Rhoda Robinson, navigating life with little restraint as a last child; and Ibukun Owolabi, whose boundless childhood as an only girl taught her that “impossible” was nothing. Each story mattered and made perfect sense in hindsight. Together, they revealed a shared truth: every story matters, and when a girl knows her worth, her agency wakes up. And when she exercises that agency, her life expands.

What does it look like to not have Agency?

In 2022, I created this ‘art for SDG 5’ as part of my assignment for the UPG Sustainability Leadership Fellowship.

When girls are socialized from their earliest years to view life through a narrow, gendered script, they are being conditioned—slowly but powerfully—to surrender their agency. By simply aligning with a deeply entrenched construct of “how girls should behave,” they absorb a worldview that becomes deeply consequential over time.

Instead of being encouraged to explore their interests, talents, or natural curiosity, girls are subtly guided toward what is considered “appropriate for girls.” I grew up with someone whose gifts were rooted in sports, dance, and physical expression. She enjoyed being active. But her interests were dismissed, and she was warned about “growing muscles.” Worse, she was shamed for it. That is what the erosion of agency looks like—choosing against oneself just to fit a narrative.

This conditioning continues as they grow older. Girls internalize the idea of marriage in a way that distorts their identity. Long-term decisions—what to study, where to work, what dreams to pursue—are filtered through what is “acceptable” for a future husband. Her agency slowly becomes diminished for an imagined partner. Then, the “biological clock” becomes a psychological prison that dictates the rhythm of her choices rather than her calling.

Layered on top of this is the early assignment of gender roles. Girls become the default caregivers and emotional managers of the household. They carry the domestic and emotional load in a way that unhealthily leads to self-sacrifice and eventually self-neglect.

And each time a girl's sense of self or identity is dismissed, her voice is dismissed. Confidence doesn't disappear overnight; it erodes quietly. She begins to think: "What I think is less important," or "My desires are secondary." A girl who never gets to practice making real choices grows into a young woman who doubts her own judgment.

This is how self-doubt takes root. Overdependence on approval. Fear of risks. Avoiding leadership because she has internalized, directly or indirectly, that leading and decision-making is not for girls. A girl who has never been trusted with decisions becomes a woman who doesn't trust herself.

And so, their life outcomes become shaped by limitations, not potential. Not because they lacked talent or desire, but because they were never given the space to build the building blocks of agency: confidence, self-trust, autonomy, and the belief that their choices matter. They grow into women navigating a world with muted versions of themselves, not because they chose to be small, but because they were never allowed to be anything else.

How the Erosion of Agency Shrinks Women's Opportunities in Life

And if you know me, or if you read my work often, then you already understand where my deepest concern lies: in how these subtle (and sometimes not-so-subtle) constraints placed on girls slowly shape their life outcomes and quietly shrink their potential. These limitations don't simply affect personality; they shape possibility. They distort destinies that might have unfolded differently, and beautifully, if only girls had been allowed to honor who they are.

A lack of agency closes doors long before a girl ever walks toward them. It narrows her imagination before she even discovers what she is capable of. Here's what that erosion of agency looks like in real life:

1. Gender Segregation Becomes "Normal"

Girls who are raised to see the world through a gendered script often enter adulthood believing certain career and business paths are simply

"not for them." Not because they lack the talent or interest, but because exploration was never encouraged. Their dreams become pre-edited; their potential becomes prematurely negotiated.

2. Financial Dependence

Early conditioning around "what girls should do" often evolves into financial vulnerability later in life. This shows up as reliance on partners for stability, hesitation around money management or investing, and difficulty leaving unhealthy relationships due to financial dependence. When girls are not taught to trust their own agency, they grow into women who outsource their economic power.

3. Shrinking Leadership Potential

Leadership requires voice, initiative, and the courage to decide; all traits weakened when girls are raised only to obey rather than question. As adults, many women shy away from promotions, avoid visible roles, or convince themselves they are "not ready" for leadership. Without early practice in making choices, decision-making becomes intimidating instead of empowering.

4. A Diminished Ability to Champion Change

A girl who is taught to stay small rarely becomes a woman who fights big battles. When curiosity is punished, and questioning is labeled "disrespect," girls internalize the belief that challenging norms isn't their place. The result? The world loses pioneers, disruptors, and innovators, not because they lacked brilliance, but because the courage to imagine change was never nurtured.

Final Thoughts

At the heart of all these lost opportunities is one powerful truth: When girls are denied the practice of agency, they grow into women unprepared to own their lives.

And the cost is enormous, not only for them individually, but for all of us. Society loses out on the brilliance, talent, leadership, and power they were born with. Every time a girl's agency is stifled, the world becomes smaller than it could have been.

SOFT POWER AND CURATION: HOW EXHIBITIONS INFLUENCE GLOBAL THOUGHT

Every exhibition begins with a room and a story. And every visitor walks in with their own beliefs, fears, and hopes. But something happens when the lights dim and the first artwork greets the eye.

Minds soften. Walls fall. A quiet conversation begins. Picture a group of strangers standing before a simple portrait in a small gallery. They do not share a language. They do not share a history. Yet they lean in at the same moment. They feel the same shift. The painting carries a truth that reaches them without effort. Moments like this reveal the quiet force of soft power. It moves people deeply. It opens doors that were once shut. It creates new understanding without force.

In this digest, we will discuss how exhibitions use subtle storytelling to influence global thought and create emotional bridges between cultures.

1. Curators Shape Stories That Travel

Behind every exhibition is a curator shaping the story. They choose works that speak beyond borders. They build a path for visitors to follow. Their choices guide how people learn about cultures they never knew. A well-curated show becomes a shared experience. It moves ideas from one heart to another. This is soft power at work. It is persuasion through emotion, not pressure.



Keturah Ovio, Curator of small & Iconic Miniature Art Exhibition, Engaging with the Audience at V in Focus Art Exhibition



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An art lover engaging with an art piece at small & Iconic's "Artssembly" Art Exhibition

2. Exhibitions Shift Perception With Emotion

People rarely change their minds through argument. They change through feeling. Exhibitions tap into that truth. They let visitors see humanity in others. A single artwork can undo years of bias. A sculpture can make a distant culture feel close. A photograph can rewrite a belief. This emotional shift shapes how people talk, vote, and think.

3. Art as a Bridge Between Worlds

Exhibitions create safe spaces for cultural meetings. They help people understand before judging. They allow stories to unfold slowly and honestly. Curators become bridge-builders. They connect audiences to voices that were once ignored. They help visitors listen with care. These small acts build trust between nations.

The world feels louder every day. Nations push for influence through force or speed. But exhibitions offer another way. They invite people into quiet rooms filled with meaning. They let stories speak for themselves. They build respect through shared humanity. That slow influence changes how the world thinks.

Exhibitions influence global thought through simple but powerful stories. They open minds with emotion. They connect cultures with truth. They allow nations to speak through art instead of conflict. And at the heart of it all stands the curator. Their voice shapes how we understand each other. Their work guides the global conversation toward empathy.



Keturah Ovio

Keturah Ovio is an Executive at Patrons Modern & Contemporary African Art. She is also an engineer and Founder of Dukka, a Fintech startup providing bookkeeping and payments solutions for small businesses. Keturah is passionate about African Art and has been collecting art since her early 20s. Now, she advises, curates, and manages collections for individuals and corporate organisations looking to start or diversify their wealth management through art collecting. She strongly believes that a fine marriage exists between Art and Technology

FROM SMALL WORLD TO GLOBAL IMPACT: IWOC'S NEW BOOK ARCHIVES 30 YEARS OF LIFE-CHANGING WORK



The book, 'Threads of Heritage,' documents IWOC's journey, weaving together stories of cultural identity, charitable collaboration, and the women who have worked tirelessly behind the scenes to uplift communities across Nigeria. It showcases partner charities, key beneficiaries, and the global volunteers who continue to support IWOC's work.

Speaking during the launch, Titiloye Ashamu, Chairlady of IWOC, said the IWOC Coffee Table Book is a project that beautifully captures IWOC's journey of partnership, culture, generosity, and service.

"For three decades, IWOC has stood as a bridge: connecting countries, cultures, and hearts. Our members represent many nations, but our purpose is one: to give hope, dignity, and opportunity to the lives we touch," Ashamu said.

According to her, the coffee table book is more than pages and photographs, it is a celebration of the countless women who serve quietly.

"It is a tribute to those who give selflessly. And it is a reminder that when women work together, communities rise," the IWOC Chairlady added.

The International Women's Organisation for Charity (IWOC), organisers and producers of the renowned Small World event, has launched its landmark Coffee Table Book titled 'Threads of Heritage'.

The launch event which took place on Thursday, 11th December 2025, at Black Diamond Hotel, Lagos, was attended by diplomats, CEOs, development partners, and friends of IWOC.

The publication commemorates three decades of IWOC's charitable impact across Nigeria. It also highlights the rich cultural diversity of its international membership, the global partnerships that fuel its mission, and the transformative work done through the Small World initiative and other IWOC-supported projects.

She said this year, the theme 'Threads of Heritage' "reflects exactly who we are: A tapestry of global sisterhood, woven together by compassion and driven by impact. In these pages, you will find stories that inspire, culture that unites, and testimonies of how your support is changing lives across Nigeria. As we celebrate IWOC at 30, we also look forward."

According to Ashamu, the need around them is real as families, children, and communities continue to depend on what IWOC does.

She invited sponsors, partners, and ambassadors to join in actualising the vision of IWOC so the organisation can give more, reach further, and transform even more lives.



be a permanent sponsor of the organisation,” he added.

Laila Peysson and Paula Campbell, Charity Coordinators, said their job is very humbling and sometimes heartbreaking but very rewarding.

According to them, they have seen the many ways Small World funds have improved lives in Nigeria by enabling hospitals to purchase life-changing equipment, supporting Down syndrome, improving the lives of street children through charity, building skills, and empowering people and communities.

“It is a honor to be part of this charity team. We unite with the common goal of giving to Nigeria and empowering lives. Together we are changing lives,” they said.

Adeoye Ojuroye, ED and CEO of Providus Bank, who spoke during the launch commended the work IWOC does over the years, including how the organisation dedicates resources to empowering women and supporting over 300 charities.

As IWOC continues to expand its reach, the Coffee Table Book stands as both a historical archive and a call to action, inviting new sponsors, institutions, and individuals to join in sustaining the organisation’s community impact.

“What is good about the charities you support is that it covers all aspects of human lives, and we are proud to be associated with you. In the private sector, we are aware that it is important for us to support the communities that we work with. We look for credible organisations like IWOC to work with in a bid to support communities,” Ojuroye said.

He said the book, ‘Threads of The Journey, is an inspiration and a call to duty.

“As you go through this book, see it as an inspiration and call to duty,” the CEO of Providus Bank said.

“Your philosophy aligns with us and we assure you that in Providus we will continue to



LEVERAGING EMOTIONAL TRIGGERS IN END-OF-YEAR ADVERTISING

FEYISITAN IJIMAKINWA

The world is full of great ideas. Brands launch every day with a great idea to market, but not all of them will get a customer to buy into it. No matter how passionate you are about your product offering, or no matter how great you think your idea is, not all your customers will get it. Each year, as we approach the last quarter of the year, brands are eager to share with everyone the commercials they've laboured over for months. The hope is they've created an ad with such strong emotional triggers that it generates millions of views and massive positive impact for the brand.

Producing an end-of-year advertising campaign (or, specifically Christmas advertising campaigns, as related to this part of the world) that creates emotional connections to truly connect with the target audience doesn't happen by accident. They're the result of weeks or months of carefully planned quantitative, qualitative, and biometrics shopper insights research digging deep into the emotions triggered by every component of an ad.

A perfect example of emotional triggering that tugs at the heart is Amazon's 2023 holiday ad called "Joy Ride." It's impossible to watch this ad and not feel a meaningful connection with the story and the characters.

Ground emotional triggers in authenticity

The most important component of building emotional triggers into Christmas advertising is authenticity. Brands that are perceived to be genuine and true to their values create more trust and positive perceptions among

consumers. Their advertising is more relatable on a deeper level which creates stronger bonds with consumers. By showing compassion and empathy for elderly people's needs and desires, Amazon's mission "to be Earth's most customer-centric company" comes out loud and clear in their holiday ad.

Build storytelling into emotional triggers

Think about some of your favourite commercials of all time. Did they show a product and describe a series of key features and benefits? Did they list out a set of discounts and qualification criteria that would be available at an upcoming sale? It is more than likely your favourite commercials told a story that felt familiar and meaningful.

Bring joy with positive emotional triggers

Not surprisingly, many people say they dislike advertising. For some, ads feel manipulative, irrelevant, and unengaging. For others, holiday ads are disappointing reminders of over-consumption and lost family connections. At a time when people really need more joy and generosity in their lives, the Christmas season can actually be a sad time.

As such, there is a great opportunity for Christmas advertising to promote goodwill and generosity. A 2023 Coca-Cola advert called "The World Needs More Santas" shows that there is space for people from all walks of life to bring joy to others through good deeds and generosity.

Warm the heart with familiar emotional triggers

Using emotional triggers can create a sense of familiarity which, over time, extends to the brand. Ads that incorporate relatable holiday experiences, like family gatherings, gift exchanges, and traditions, resonate with people more, and are more memorable.

In particular, evoking emotions such as love, happiness, nostalgia, and excitement will make those ads even more memorable, build stronger emotional connections, and build positive associations that can lead to brand loyalty.

A 2023 ad from Sephora called “The Gift That Says Everything” illustrates a few of many kinds of love. Seeing expressions of love from close friends, kindly neighbours, and people who just want to be seen for who they are tugs at the heart of just about anyone.

Create escapism with fantastical emotional triggers

Finally, the use of emotional triggers in Christmas advertising can tap into a desire for much-needed escapism and fantasy.

While consumers are still in the gift-giving mindset, strategic marketers are already planning ahead for Valentine’s Day. A 2020 Valentine’s Day ad from Match called “Match Made in Hell” is a great example of using storytelling along with escapism.

In a year when everyone was (and still is!) desperate to escape the consequences of the pandemic, this ad tells a fantastical story

of how Satan finally found his true match. We can all relate to and share the dream of the protagonists in this ad!

Last line

After viewing some of the most emotionally triggering commercials that were prepared for this year’s gift giving and Valentine’s Day seasons, your eyes might have a few more tears than usual right now. It’s clear that using emotional triggers can go a long way to help people connect more authentically with a brand. With Valentine’s Day, Mother’s Day, Independence Day, as well as Father’s Day, amongst others, coming up on the marketing calendar, it’s time to ensure your brand has the necessary emotional insights that will help you connect with people on a deeper level.



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THE ODD ONE

UDY OSARO-EDOBOR



In a world where almost everything was sexualized and virginity was considered old-fashioned, I took pride in being a virgin at 24. I often boasted that I was a “nine-month bride.” In my circle, this meant you were likely to have your first child soon after marriage. For many of my friends, it happened naturally but not for me. After Victor and I married, it felt as if the doors of fertility were closed to us.

For nine years, we visited several gynecologists and fertility clinics both at home and abroad. Each time, we were told the same thing: nothing was wrong with either of us. Those were tough years but we held on to hope.

Our story changed in the tenth year of our marriage when our precious son Michael came. He arrived when we were almost losing hope, a true miracle. Michael was sweet and playful, rarely cried and brought joy to everyone around him.

I remember the first time he called me “Mama.”

I was overwhelmed with emotion and cried for two days. Each time he smiled and said “Mama,” my heart melted. Victor couldn’t understand why I was so emotional until the day Michael called him “Dada.” He cried too, but with joy and in celebration, he flew the three of us to Seychelles.

The trip was meant as a holiday but I became pregnant while we were there. We were blessed with twins and soon after, I became pregnant again with another set of twins. My quiver was full. One might expect all attention to shift to the twins but it didn’t. Michael remained special—the miracle who paved the way for his siblings. Close family even nicknamed him the “womb opener.” After years of waiting, our family was finally complete and I was truly happy.

Years later, our children were grown and successful but Michael—our little angel had changed. He became addicted to drugs and involved in every unthinkable vice.

Despite attending the best schools and even studying abroad at an Ivy League university,

he constantly picked on his siblings who had not shared the same privileges. He got a car at 18 and by 21, he was learning the ropes of his father's business. Being our miracle baby was not an excuse to behave badly. We tried to raise him responsibly but he developed shameful habits, some too terrible to describe.

Michael's greed grew when he learned the extent of his father's wealth. He tried everything to get rid of Victor but his plans were foiled repeatedly. This only made him angrier. He grew to hate all of us, especially his father. Our angel had become a demon and it broke my heart.

I became very sick, suffering panic attacks that landed me in the hospital. My children were with me but my greatest joy came when Michael visited. He looked sober and genuinely sorry for the trouble he had caused. I was happy to see my son; I could understand how the father in the Bible must have felt when his prodigal son returned. My son was back and my health improved. Our family was peaceful again.

For a few months, life was fine until Michael got into a car accident that left him with a broken neck and fractured spinal cord, confining him to a wheelchair.

I was shocked. Our cars were regularly maintained. In the past, we used a particular automotive service center until one of its staff, Mr. Sadiku, left to start his own business. He was trustworthy, skilled and treated kindly by Victor and me. We even helped him with his son, Sodiq, by getting him off the streets. Despite this, I couldn't understand how Michael's car could fail. Foul play crossed my mind but we trusted Mr. Sadiku. We accepted the accident as fate.

One morning, Mr. Sadiku and Sodiq came to see us, insisting Michael be present. This was unusual. Michael was in pain and scheduled for physiotherapy but we allowed it. Surprisingly, it was Sodiq who spoke. He thanked Victor for helping him and his father but we wanted to know the reason for the meeting.

Sodiq then played voice recordings from his phone—conversations between him and Michael over two years. Michael had repeatedly asked Sodiq to get his old friends from the streets to harm Victor. We were shocked. Our miracle son had been plotting against his own father.

It got worse. Michael had even offered Sodiq a large sum of money to tamper with his father's car brakes. When Sodiq refused, Michael approached a staff member at Sadiku's garage. But that staff, loyal to Victor, tampered with Michael's brakes instead, preventing his father from being harmed.

Michael wept, begging for forgiveness. How could a child harbor such hatred for those who had loved him unconditionally? Victor and I exchanged looks, a silent understanding between us. Despite everything, the truth had to be confronted. We had to let Michael know that he was not our biological child. He was the odd one who had received a life of abundance and love he did not deserve. He was adopted.

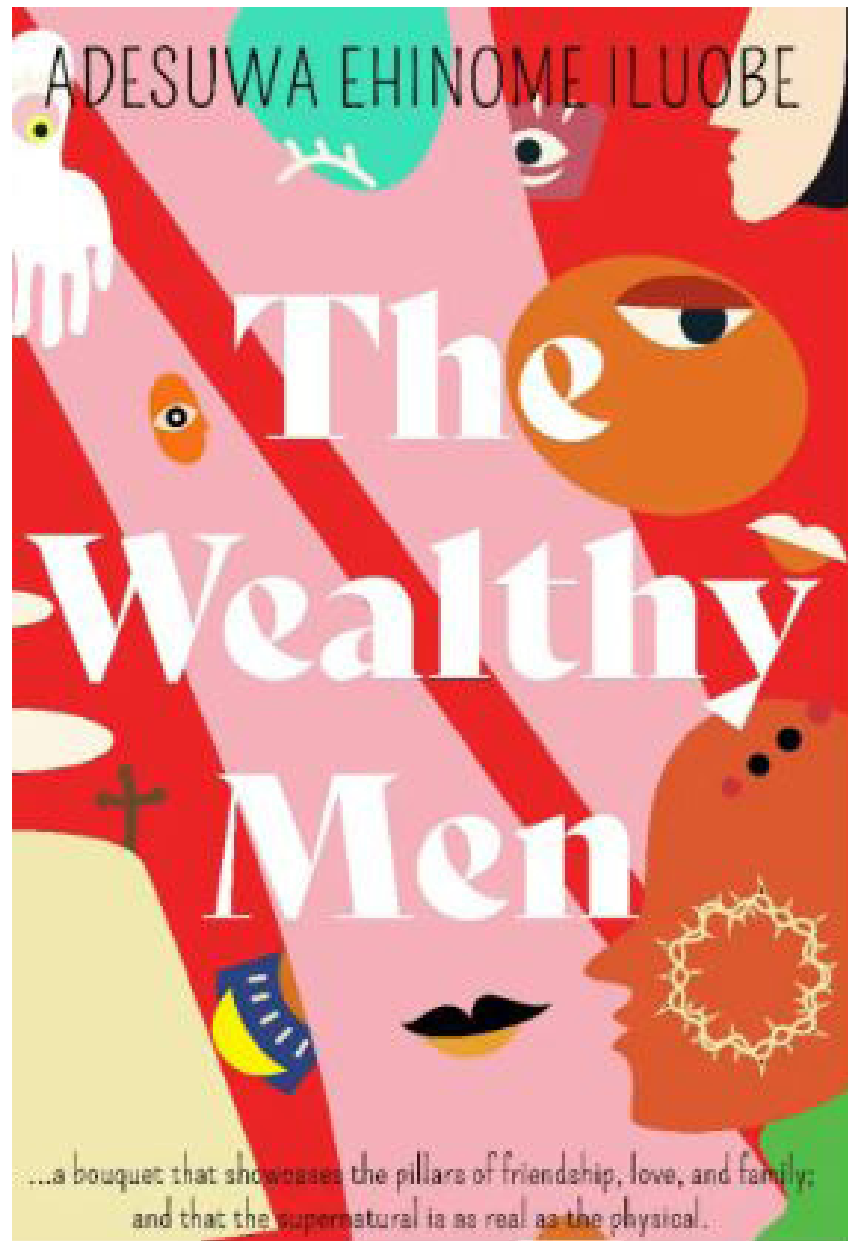


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Money, Mayhem, and Secrets-A Review of Adesuwa Ehinome Iluobe's The Wealthy Men

Title: The Wealthy Men
Author: Adesuwa Ehinome Iluobe
Number of Pages: 450
Year of Publication: 2025
Category: Fiction

THE WEALTHY MEN

TITILADE OYEMADE

When men gather, their conversations take on a special flavor, let's just call it adventurous. Yet, in fiction, we are far more accustomed to hearing what women talk about over drinks. Adesuwa Ehinome Iluobe's *The Wealthy Men* flips this script boldly, offering a rare peek into how men think, talk, hurt, hide, and navigate their world. And trust me, it's refreshing.

Ironically, though, one glance at the bright pink cover and you already know women will be the first to pick it up. How many men want to be seen holding a pink book? But those who do will be rewarded. But beyond the cover lies a story that promises intrigue: wealthy men, their money, and their seemingly glamorous lives. Surprisingly, the novel veers into something deeper. Uncomfortable truths, complex choices, and emotional battles that even money can't solve.

Iluobe is impressively generous with her storytelling. It feels like she gives you four novels in one, each part inspired by something meaningful and beautifully intertwined.

The characters are memorable. Funny, flawed, and wonderfully chaotic. There's the single man secretly in love with his employee's wife, the bold woman who refuses to return her ex-fiancé's car, the overwhelmed young man carrying the weight of his entire family, Madame, who seems to know everything, is ever ready to help, yet somehow manages to annoy someone in the process and many more colourful characters. With so many altars to break and battles to fight, one thing becomes clear: the person seated highest often has the final say.

Very quickly, you start to question whether you truly envy the lives of these wealthy men. As it turns out, great wealth comes with great drama, though the book reassuringly shows that problems no matter how large can find their solutions.

The pacing is relentless. The author barely gives the reader time to breathe. Just when you finish the first part and think you've earned a short break, the second part erupts with brand-new complications, none resembling the ones before. The ride is fast, dramatic, and entertaining.

Themes of friendship, love, family expectations, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law tensions, infidelity, grief, and generational consequences run through the pages. The book subtly shows how our past can shape our future and even spill into the next generation.

The language is simple, which makes the book easy to read. However, while the book isn't meant to be long, the author's very detailed breakdown of conversations sometimes makes it feel longer than it should and a bit overwhelming in parts.

By the final pages of each part of the book, several characters find their own happy endings. And you begin to realise that you've probably met people just like them or even lived through similar situations yourself. Though fictional, *The Wealthy Men* mirrors real-life struggles, offering insight, comfort, and, in some cases, solutions. A light, engaging, and thought-provoking read.



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WEEKENDER

MOVIE REVIEW

TRAIN DREAMS (2025)

Welcome to a brand-new week and this week, I am taking a deep dive into another movie quite different from our usual Christmas movies for novella. In this movie Robert Grainger was a renowned logged who moved from place to place helping to build and develop cities with advanced buildings, roads and trains that lead to the development of the 21st century edifices. Along the line, he met this amazing pretty lady one day after a church service, they fell in love and got married, after a while they had a pretty daughter and lived happily, until a tragedy occurred that destroyed his home and family. This was so difficult for Robert to manage, his entire world crumbled and his life halted. You will need to go check out the move to see what happened and how it ended his career and life. The 103m period drama, drama movie was directed by Clint Bentley, they featured actors like Joel Edgerton, Cliton Collins Jr., Felicity Jones, Alfred Hsing, David Paul Olsen, John Patrick Lowric, Chu Trucker, Rob Price and many more.



A BOY CALLED CHRISTMAS (2021)

In this movie Aunt Ruth was assigned to take care of her little relatives, and before taking them to bed, she decided to tell them a bed time story about a young boy who believed strongly in Christmas.

Nikolas was an ordinary young boy who decided to set on an adventure into the snowy north in search of his father, who went on a quest to unravel the mystery behind a fabled village of the elves, Elfhelm. Nikolas had to work with a headstrong reindeer called Blitzzen and a loyal pet mouse; they all assisted him in discovering his destiny and helping kids all around the world. The 106m family fantasy movie was directed by Gil Kenan, they featured actors like Henry Lawfull, Toby Jones, Sally Hawkins, Kristen Will, Michael Huisman, Zoe Collette, Jim Broadbent, Stephen Merchant, and many more.



LAST CHRISTMAS (2019)

So, let's go down memory lane to 2019 to review this romantic Christmas movie about Kate and Tom. Kate worked as an elf in a Christmas store, despite her daily job and task, Kate didn't believe in traffic, she wanted to sing and perform and despite all her auditions and practice she couldn't get on any show and resulted back to her day job. Kate's world took a 360 degree turn when she met Tom, who touched her soul and brought faith, hope. Everyday Kate looked forward to seeing Tom and sharing her day with him. They went to various parks, went out for dinner, drinks and helped the needy in the community. The entrance of Tom into Kate's life changed her for good. You will need to go check out the movie to see how things ended for Kate and Tom. This movie left me wondering what life was really about, you must pay full attention to totally understand this movie. The 102m music, romantic comedy film, drama, comedies, romance movies was directed by Paul Frog, they featured actors like Emilia Clarke, Henry Golding, Emma Thompson, Michelle Yeah, Boris Isakonic etc.

