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Drop in Price of Food Items: Government Stabilizing the Economy or Compassion by Business Community?

Recently, there has been a noticeable drop in the price of food items across major markets in many parts of Nigeria. Nigerian Tracker News monitored the situation and visited one of the major markets in Northern Nigeria, the Yankaba market in Kano, to understand the reasons behind this trend.

Alkasim Ahmad, a businessman who sells cereals, shared the old prices and the new dropped prices in the market. "Before, maize was sold at 1,800 Naira per mudu, but now it's 1,500 Naira. Millet used to be 1,700 Naira, but now it's between 1,560 and 1,600 Naira. A bag of millet was previously 65,000 Naira, but now it's 58,000 Naira," he said.

Similarly, guinea corn is now being sold at 58,000 Naira per bag, with the price per mudu at 1,500 Naira. Previously, it was sold at 1,800 Naira per bag. However, the price of rice has not seen much change. Reports indicate that spaghetti, especially foreign brands, has dropped from 20,000 Naira to 17,000 Naira, and in some places, even 16,000 Naira.

The price of soya beans has also seen a reduction. "The price per mudu has dropped to 2,400 Naira, and in some places to 2,350 Naira, from the previous 2,800 Naira. The whole bag of soya beans used to be 110,000 Naira, but now it has dropped to 90,000 Naira," Alkasim Ahmad added.

For normal beans, the price per bag was previously 95,000 Naira, but now it's being sold at 85,000 Naira. The price of wheat has remained unchanged, with the price per mudu still at 3,000 Naira and the bag at 115,000 Naira.

Dr. Mustapha Garin Gabas, a Lecturer of Economics at Sule Lamido University, Jigawa State University Kafin Hausa, explained the reasons for the drop in food prices to NIGERIAN TRACKER. He said, "The inflation in Nigeria is not necessarily due to some external forces, but is typically driven by scarcity, especially for food items. Now is the harvesting period for cereals like sorghum, millet, rice, and beans. This is the peak harvesting period, and the availability of these items has led to the drop in prices."

He added, "Rural households now have food items at their disposal until their supply is exhausted. This year's rainy season has resulted in a bumper harvest, particularly in the northern part of the country, compared to last year. Sometimes, prices go up when items are not available in the market. There is also a little stability in the exchange rate, which, although not completely stable, has remained between 1,000 and 1,600 Naira for a long period of time, facilitating stability in prices."

The drop in food prices raises questions about whether the government's efforts to stabilize the economy are yielding results, or if it is the compassion and cooperation of the business community that is driving this positive change.

Regardless of the reason, the reduction in food prices is a welcome relief for consumers across Nigeria, providing them with much-needed economic respite.



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BUK Convocation Lecture: NASENI Boss Emphasizes Innovation for National Development

Mr. Khalil Suleiman Halilu, the Executive Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the National Agency for Science and Engineering Infrastructure (NASENI), delivered the 39th Convocation Lecture at Bayero University, Kano (BUK) on Friday, 14th February, 2025.

Notably, Mr. Halilu, at a relatively young age, became the youngest convocation lecturer in the history of Bayero University, underscoring his exceptional leadership and contributions to Nigeria's science and engineering landscape.

Chaired by Chief Uche Geoffrey Nnaji, the Minister of Innovation, Science, and Technology, the lecture was attended by distinguished personalities, including Alh. Suleiman Halilu, the father of the convocation lecturer, as well as former vice-chancellors, registrars, traditional rulers, and members of the academic community from BUK and other tertiary institutions.

Titled "Innovation and Entrepreneurship: A Pathway to National Development," Mr. Halilu's lecture emphasized the urgent need for Nigeria to harness its youthful population and leverage technology-driven entrepreneurship to drive economic growth and global competitiveness.

Highlighting Nigeria's demographic challenges and opportunities, Mr. Halilu noted that the country's projected population of 264.1 million by 2030 presents a critical challenge: how to turn its demographic strength into an economic advantage. He stressed that Nigeria must produce a generation of skilled leaders equipped to navigate the fourth industrial revolution.

The NASENI boss also underscored the importance of innovation and entrepreneurship in driving economic prosperity, citing global data showing that high-income nations boast significantly higher entrepreneurial density than developing economies.

To address Nigeria's development challenges, Mr. Halilu recommended that the government recalibrate its policies to support innovation and entrepreneurship, citing global success stories such as Estonia's e-Residency program. He also emphasized the need for universities to align with global trends, adopt multidisciplinary curricula, and enhance partnerships between academia, industry, and government.

In his remarks, Chief Uche Geoffrey Nnaji, the Minister of Innovation, Science, and Technology, described the lecture as timely, aligning with the Federal Government's intensified efforts to tackle poverty, unemployment, and infrastructure deficits. He emphasized that while Nigeria is endowed with abundant talent and resources, the real challenge lies in effectively harnessing them.

Bayero University's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sagir Adamu Abbas, highlighted the significance of the lecture, emphasizing NASENI's pivotal role in addressing Nigeria's scientific and technological challenges.

The lecture concluded with Mr. Halilu offering five lessons to the graduands, emphasizing self-determination, continuous learning, and the power of networking. He urged them to be adaptable, entrepreneurial, and solution-driven, and to never underestimate the value of their skills and knowledge.

As the youngest convocation lecturer in BUK's history, Mr. Halilu's address will undoubtedly inspire a new generation of leaders, innovators, and entrepreneurs to drive Nigeria's development and global competitiveness.





Kano Government Condemns APC Plan to Form Shadow Government, Describes It as Illegal

The recent statement credited to the National Chairman of the APC Patriotic Volunteers, Alhaji Usman Alhaji, announcing the group's intention to form a shadow government in Kano State, has sparked controversy and condemnation from the Kano State Government.

The move has been described as a desperate and politically motivated scheme with serious social and legal implications for the entire state and Nigeria's democratic system

In a strongly worded statement, the Kano State Government reminded the APC elements within the state that forming a government within a government is entirely illegal and unconstitutional in Nigeria.

“A shadow government, as practiced in the United Kingdom, exists within a parliamentary system where opposition parties appoint ‘shadow ministers’ to scrutinize the ruling government. However, Nigeria operates a presidential system, which neither recognizes nor supports such a structure outside the institutional framework of the law,” the statement read.

The government emphasized that democracy does not permit anyone to lose their sense of judgment simply because they have lost relevance within their party's political structure. The right to freedom of expression does not grant anyone the liberty to make reckless statements or take actions that undermine constitutional governance and the sovereignty of an elected government.

The APC, as a party in Kano State, has reportedly lost its political relevance and influence. This latest move by some elements within the party is seen as a desperate attempt to remain relevant after its overwhelming rejection at the polls. Governor Abba Kabir Yusuf's administration was duly elected by the people of Kano State and has, within a short period, recorded remarkable achievements in developmental projects and policies aimed at improving the lives of the people.

Infrastructure development has also been prioritized, with numerous projects aimed at transforming Kano State into a modern economic hub.

The administration is committed to youth and women empowerment through various programs designed to provide economic opportunities and improve livelihoods. Efforts in poverty eradication have been intensified, ensuring that the most vulnerable citizens receive necessary support.

Institutional reforms in governance have been a major focus of the administration, with policies such as non-interference in the fight against corruption and an open procurement process that aligns with best practices in accountability, transparency, and openness.

The administration has taken steps to restore the integrity of the civil service and improve the welfare of government workers. Additionally, the periodic payment of gratuities and pensions for retirees, who were previously neglected by the APC government, remains a top priority.

The people of Kano State have embraced a government committed to good governance and sustainable development. No amount of political maneuvering or sinister plots can distract Governor Abba Kabir Yusuf from delivering the dividends of democracy to the people of Kano State. The APC has been reduced to nothing more than a relic of history in the state.

Consequently, the government warns that reckless and unconstitutional declarations will not change the reality that the APC has been rejected in Kano State. Instead of making self-deceiving threats, the APC Patriotic Volunteers should respect the democratic will of the people and allow Governor Abba Kabir Yusuf's administration to continue delivering on its mandate.



President Tinubu Congratulates El-Rufai On 65th Birthday

President Bola Tinubu congratulates Mallam Nasir Ahmad El-Rufai on his 65th birthday.

Mallam El-Rufai is an administrator, scholar, and politician. He is a founding member of the All Progressives Congress (APC) and highly regarded for his resourcefulness and brilliance.

He served as governor of Kaduna State for eight years, and prior to elective office, he had served as Director-General of the Bureau of Public Enterprises, and Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) from 2003 to 2007.

President Tinubu celebrates Mallam El-Rufai on this occasion and commends his endeavours for democracy; his meritorious service to the nation, and mentorship of the younger generation.

The President acknowledges Mallam El-Rufai's role in the dialogues leading up to the formation of the APC and his contributions to the success of the party in the three consecutive elections of 2015, 2019, and 2023.

In a statement by Bayo Onanuga Special Adviser to the President on Information and strategy said President Tinubu wishes El-Rufai good health and strength for continuous service to the nation.



Late Danzago Shaped Governance & Entrepreneurship – Comrade Waiya

Kano state commissioner of information and internal affairs Comrade Ibrahim Abdullahi Waiya has paid condolences visit to the family of Late Alhaji Amadu Haruna Danzago over the death of the renowned politician and businessman.

During the visit on Saturday evening, the commissioner described the death as a great loss to Kano, business community and Nigeria as a whole.

He said, Dazago's death has created a wide vacuum in Nigerian politics, and the business community due to his active role in shaping governance and entrepreneurship development.

He urged politicians to emulate the leadership qualities of Late Danzago' who before his death served as managing Director Kano Refuse management and Sanitation Board (REMASAB)

” Late Amadu Haruna Danzago will continue to be remembered for his contribution to the economy as a business man, as well as the political space, because throughout his active live was dedicated to serving humanity and building younger generation ”

Waiya prayed for the soul of the late elder statesman and for his family to bear the lost.

He also extended his condolences to governor Abba Kabir Yusuf and the national leader of the NNPP engineer Rabi'u Musa Kwankwaso over the loss.



Locating Nigeria in the Global Digital Landscape by Y. Z. Ya'u, CITAD

Late last year, the Portulans Institute, an independent, nonpartisan research and educational institute based in Washington, DC, released the 2024 Global Network Readiness Index (NRI 2024). The NRI annually ranks countries across over 100 indicators grouped into four broad areas or pillars: technology, people, governance, and impact. The extensive data used for the ranking allows for an assessment of countries' progress (or lack thereof) in the preceding year.

In the 2024 ranking, Nigeria is placed 112th out of 133 countries, positioning it near the bottom of the ladder. This ranking indicates a lack of progress, as the country dropped from 106th last year to 112th. Nigeria is not even among the top 20 performing countries in Africa.

The results show that Nigeria's performance declined in three of the four pillars. For instance, in the Technology pillar, the country dropped from 88th last year to 94th in 2024, while in the People pillar, it fell from 96th to 112th. Similarly, in the Impact pillar, Nigeria moved down from 116th to 118th. The Governance pillar also reflects a low ranking, holding steady at 114th.

Among the three sub-pillars of Technology, Nigeria performed relatively well in Content, being ranked 49th. However, in Access and Future Technologies, it was ranked 110th and 99th, respectively. Access remains a key challenge to the effective utilization of digital technology in the country. With the arrival of Starlink, there is presumably universal coverage, which should improve access. However, affordability has worsened over the year due to predatory pricing by Starlink and the collapse of the national currency. This situation is expected to worsen as telecom operators plan to increase tariffs. Additionally, there have been no significant efforts to improve both connectivity and accessibility in the country.

Despite advocacy for community networks as a means to bridge the digital divide in underserved communities, the country has yet to embrace this solution. While the recent launch of the National Broadband Alliance includes an ambitious plan to roll out more fiber, the reality is that fiber deployment without initiatives to reduce costs will not effectively bridge the connectivity gap.

In the Governance pillar, Nigeria's rankings are 119th, 113th, and 114th for Individual, Regulation, and Inclusion, respectively. In the Impact pillar, the country is ranked 98th in the Economic sub-pillar, 105th in Quality of Life, and 112th in SDG Contribution.

The overall picture becomes even more worrisome when examining the scoring details. Nigeria's overall score dropped from 35.73 in 2023 to 34.87 in 2024. Similarly, the Technology pillar regressed from a score of 34.42 in 2023 to 32.50 in 2024. Notably, the Access sub-pillar score fell from 55.57 in 2023 to 38.87 in 2024. The People pillar also saw a decline, from 33.89 to 32.50, while the Governance pillar score fell from 37.40 to 28.40. A slight improvement was observed in the Impact pillar, which increased from 37.20 to 39.89.

Among the indicators where the country performed relatively well are Regulatory Environment (ranked 46th), Cybersecurity (55th), Data Capabilities (55th), Annual Investment in Telecommunication Services (27th), AI Scientific Publications (13th), and Domestic Market Scale (26th). However, indicators such as e-commerce, where Nigeria scored 75.00, reflect a ranking of 87th, indicating that most countries performed well in this area.

It is concerning that several of Nigeria's higher-ranked indicators are not directly related to digital technology. For instance, the highest score of 86.90 for Regulatory Environment reflects the policies and regulations in place rather than technological achievements. Similarly, the scores for Domestic Market Scale (69.39), AI Scientific Publications (61.77), and Annual Investment in Telecommunication Services (63.90) emphasize the size of the population, academic activity, and speculative investment rather than tangible technological outcomes.

Once again, as in the previous year, many indicators for Nigeria had no data available, which negatively impacted the country's score. These include critical areas such as Internet Access in Schools, Robot Density, Gender Gap in Internet Usage, AI Talent, Government R&D Expenditure, and Quality of Education.

It seems that as a country, we have not learned lessons from previous rankings. No deliberate efforts have been made to ensure data availability in areas where zero scores were recorded in prior years. Despite advocacy and repeated commitments from the government to bridge the gender digital divide, there is still no relevant data to determine whether these efforts are yielding results. This lack of interest or inability to collect disaggregated data along gender lines highlights the absence of a genuine commitment to addressing the gender digital divide. Progress cannot be achieved within a gender-blind framework.



Ramping Up Vaccination: Emir of Dass Launched New Incentives' Program Addition In Bauchi

To improve routine immunization and retention rates in Bauchi State, His Royal Highness, the Emir of Dass, Alhaji Usman Bilyaminu Othman, and New Incentives All Babies Are Equal (NI-ABAE) launched the All Babies Livelihood Grant program addition. This initiative offers ₦5,000 to caregivers who complete their child's vaccination schedule.

The launch ceremony took place at the Town Primary Health Care Center (PHCC) Dass, and was organized by the Bauchi State Primary Health Care Development Board (BSPHCDB) with support from NI-ABAE. Attendees included the Executive Chairmen of Dass Local Government Area (LGA) and BSPHCDB, a WHO representative, District Heads, and other traditional and community leaders.

In his speech, Umar Faruq Abubakar, the Head of Administration of Dass LGA, representing the Chairman, described the launch as a milestone in Bauchi State's healthcare system. "Today's event marks the beginning of a new chapter in health service delivery in Bauchi State. The additional NI-ABAE program represents a significant effort to improve access to quality healthcare services and reduce disparities," he said. He also commended the Bauchi State Emirs, district heads, health workers, and partners for their support in making the ABAE program successful. "Your support, commitment, and collaborative effort are pivotal in ensuring that this program reaches those most need it."

Dan Asabe Abdullahi, State Director of Public Health, representing the Commissioner of Health, praised the initiative, especially amid economic hardship. "If sustained, this program will help reduce childhood deaths from preventable diseases," he said. He urged caregivers to give birth in health facilities and complete their children's immunizations. "When caregivers bring their infants in for their routine immunizations at a government clinic, the All Babies program.



Chief Ayo Adebajo, Afenifere Leader Dies at 96

A foremost nationalist, elder statesman and leader of the Pan-Yoruba socio-cultural group, Chief Ayo Adebajo, has died at the age of 96.

The elder statesman died Friday at his residence in Lekki, Lagos, at age 96.

He died peacefully at his residence in Lekki, Lagos State on the morning of Friday, February 14, 2025.

The family confirmed his passing in a statement made available to Channels Television on Friday.

"With a heart full of gratitude for a selfless life spent in the service of God, the nation and humanity, we announce the passing on of our beloved patriarch, Chief Samuel Ayodele Adebajo.

He died peacefully this morning, Friday, February 14, 2025, at his Lekki, Lagos Nigeria home at the age of 96," the family statement read.

Adebajo is survived by his 94-year-old wife, Chief Christy Ayo-Adebajo, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

"We will forever cherish his commitment to fighting for truth, equity and justice. His belief and struggle for a truly independent and progressive Nigeria was total and this he fought for until he breathed his last breath," the statement added.

The family said they are consulting with Adebajo's friends, associates, numerous interest groups across the length and breadth of Nigeria and beyond, to fine tune plans for a befitting funeral details which will be communicated in due course.



NNPC Refutes Misleading Claims in Viral Video

The Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC) Ltd strongly refutes the false and misleading allegations made in a viral video circulating online, which claims that NNPC fuel does not last. This assertion is baseless and entirely unfounded, originating from unverified and amateur research that lacks credibility, accuracy, and professional oversight.

NNPC Ltd reaffirms that its fuel is carefully formulated with one of the best compositions, ensuring optimal efficiency, durability, and environmental sustainability for consumers.

Furthermore, it is important to emphasize that a significant percentage of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) sold at NNPC retail stations in Lagos—where this deceptive video was created—is sourced from the Dangote Refinery, a strategic partner in promoting local production and energy security. Dangote Refinery adheres to strict industry standards, guaranteeing the quality of petroleum products supplied to our consumers.

This misleading video represents yet another desperate attempt by economic saboteurs to misinform the public and tarnish NNPC Ltd's reputation. We will not tolerate deliberate misinformation designed to undermine our operations and mislead Nigerians.

Henceforth, NNPC Ltd will take firm legal action against individuals or groups who intentionally spread falsehoods about our brand and operations. Those engaged in such malicious activities will be held fully accountable under the law.

We urge the public to disregard such fabricated content and rely on verified sources for accurate information. NNPC Ltd remains steadfast in its mission to ensure fuel availability, affordability, and quality for all Nigerians while maintaining global industry standards.



Kano Government Inducts 70 New State Counsel

The Kano State Government has formally inducted 70 new state counsel into the Ministry of Justice, in a bid to enhance the state's justice sector. The induction ceremony took place at the Institute of Anti-Corruption in Goron Dutse.

The Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, Barrister Haruna Isah, disclosed this while declaring the ceremony open. He emphasized that the 70 new state counsel will strengthen the state's justice system, ensuring timely and effective justice services.

Barr. Dederi commended the incumbent administration of Alhaji Abba Kabir Yusuf for employing 70 state counsel, a historic first of its kind since the state's creation in 1967.

The 3-day induction training program covered essential topics, including court procedures, legal drafting, and advocacy. The training equipped the new state counsel with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively discharge their duties.

In his remarks, Barr. Dederi praised the Kano Ministry of Justice, describing it as a place of pride that produces reputable individuals who excel at state and federal levels. He emphasized that the ministry is not a dumping ground for lazy lawyers, but rather a hub for dedicated professionals.

Barr. Dederi also commended the expertise of the resource persons and urged the counsel to continue tapping knowledge from their seniors.

The induction of new state counsel is expected to have a positive impact on the administration of justice in the state, ensuring citizens have improved access to justice services and their rights are protected.



Nigerian Photographer From Yobe Receives Guinness World Record Certificate

Yobe state photographer Saidu Abdulrahman presented his Guinness World Record Certificate to Governor Mai Mala Buni at Government House in Damaturu.

The remarkable achievement was recorded by the young man last year when his 897 head shots in just 60 minutes won him the Guinness World Record.

Governor Buni who said it was a proud to the state emphasized that Saidu Abdulrahman's accomplishment would served as an inspiration to the youth in the state and beyond .

He encouraged him to continue striving for excellence and to use his platform to motivate others to pursue their dreams despite challenges.

The Governor also reaffirmed his administration's commitment to supporting and nurturing talents across various fields, ensuring that as many young achievers would be given the recognition and opportunities they deserve.

The event marked a significant moment of celebration not only for Saidu Abdulrahman but also the state, as it has showcased Yobe's potential on the world stage.



House of Representatives Passes Tax Reform Bills

The House of Representatives has passed for second reading of the four Tax Reform Bills submitted to the National Assembly by President Bola Tinubu.

These bills—the Nigeria Tax Bill 2024, the Tax Administration Bill, the Nigeria Revenue Service Establishment Bill, and the Joint Revenue Board Establishment Bill—seek to overhaul Nigeria's tax system, ensuring efficiency, transparency, and improved revenue collection.

The tax reform bills scaled second reading after five months of consultations among lawmakers, during which critical concerns were addressed to achieve consensus on contentious provisions. During deliberations, legislators emphasized that the proposed reforms would harmonize tax administration, eliminate multiple taxation, and create a structured framework for tax dispute resolution.

The bills also propose the establishment of an ombudsman system to expedite tax-related conflicts between taxpayers and the government.

The lawmakers noted that the reforms are aimed at: Expanding the tax base by integrating more businesses and individuals into the formal tax system. it also aims at ensuring uniform tax policies across different levels of government to prevent arbitrary levies.

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