

DEATHS IN NIGERIA: Data Shows Where Nigerians Are Most Likely to Die Violently

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- **Three Northern Regions Record Two-Thirds of All Reported Deaths Nationwide**
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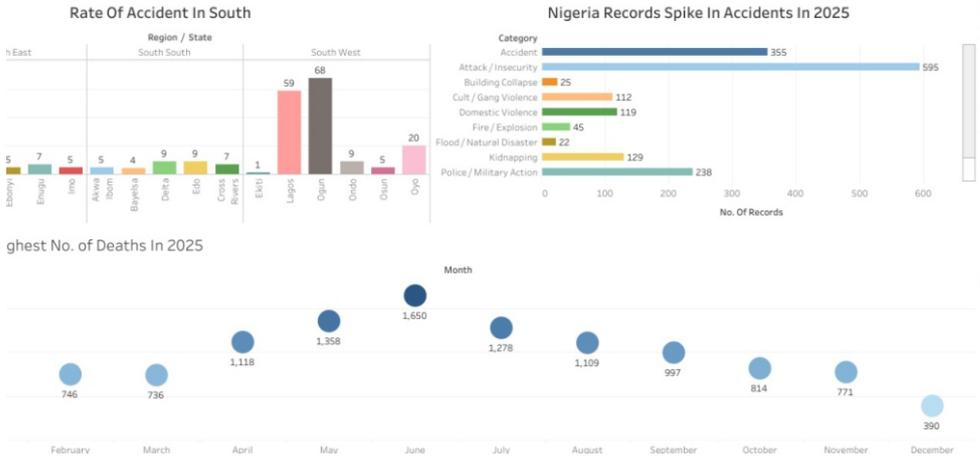
Students Turn to Online Skills to Survive Economic Strain *pg 4*

DEATHS IN NIGERIA: Data Shows Where Nigerians Are Most Likely to Die Violently

Ikuemenisan Omolade

2025 CONFLICT DATA

SOURCE: NIGERIA WATCH | CREATED BY: FAWAZ ADEBISI



farmers hesitant to till their fields, traders unwilling to traverse long distances, and children growing up amid soundtracks of violence.

A Different Threat in the South-West: The Daily Danger of the Road

The story in the South-West paints a contrasting picture.

Here, Nigeria Watch's 2025 data reveal fewer deaths from armed attacks and insurgency, but a significant share of violent fatalities comes from road accidents, a category Nigeria Watch includes under violent deaths because the outcomes, life lost, families shattered, futures ended, are no less abrupt or devastating.

Among South-West states, it is Ogun that stands out as a persistent hotspot for accident deaths. Road incidents on major highways, in inter-city traffic, and on rural connectors have placed Ogun among the highest South-West contributors to Nigeria's violent death count, particularly on sections of the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway, one of the country's busiest road arteries.

Lives Lost on the Roads: A Human Tragedy in Numbers

National road safety data from the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) paints a grim backdrop to this pattern: From January to September 2025, the FRSC reported over 3,400 road crash deaths nationwide and more than 22,000

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In Nigeria today, the risk of dying violently depends largely on where you live. In some parts of the country, death comes from gunshots and raids; in others, it arrives suddenly on highways packed with speeding vehicles and failing infrastructure. Though the threats differ, the outcome is the same, families shattered, livelihoods cut short, and communities left to absorb yet another loss.

An analysis of 2025 data from Nigeria Watch, a national database that documents incidents and violent deaths from media reports and human-rights sources, shows that Nigeria's three northern regions continue to account for nearly two-thirds of all reported fatalities nationwide, driven largely by insurgency, banditry and communal violence. In contrast, the South-West records far fewer conflict-related deaths, but faces a different killer: road accidents, with Ogun State emerging as a regional hotspot due to repeated crashes along major expressway corridors.

Together, the figures expose a country divided by risk, where geography shapes how people die, and where both insecurity and unsafe infrastructure remain deadly in different ways.

The Map of Fatal Risk: North vs South

Across Nigeria, the risk of dying violently remains uneven. After carefully analyzing and cleaning the data found on the Nigeria Watch website, it was discovered that in 2025, the three northern geopolitical zones,

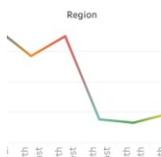
North West, North East and North Central, continued to record a disproportionate share of violent deaths.

According to Nigeria Watch tallies for the year so far, these regions together account for more than two-thirds of all reported fatalities nationwide from killings, insurgency, banditry, and related violent incidents.

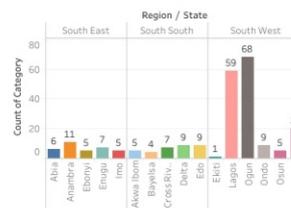
From Borno and Zamfara in the North East and North West to Niger and Plateau in the North Central, a handful of northern states repeatedly feature at the top of Nigeria Watch's fatality rankings — illustrating a persistent pattern where conflict, communal clashes, and criminal violence inflict the highest death tolls.

In towns across these regions, the echoes of gunfire, the charred remains of burnt vehicles, and the bullet-scarred walls of homes form everyday backdrops to lives marked by fear and vulnerability. Many families in these areas live in a state of perpetual anxiety:

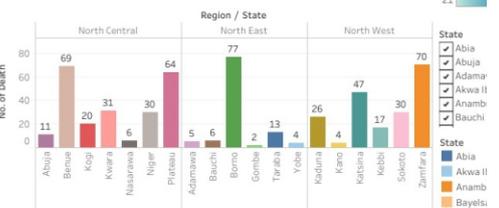
Recorded In Nigerian Regions --- 2025



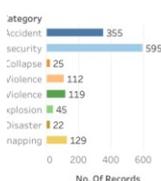
Rate Of Accident In South



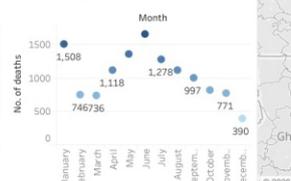
Rate of Insecurity In North



ia Records Spike In cidents In 2025



June Records Highest No. of Deaths In 2025



Borno Records Highest No. of Deaths In 2025



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injuries in roughly 6,858 crashes, illustrating a rising trend in traffic fatalities.

These figures, while distinct from Nigeria Watch's violent death counts, underscore a reality many Nigerians already know: daily travel carries risks as real and present as any threat from armed groups.

For families in Ogun, the death of a loved one on the expressway, often breadwinners, parents, or young adults, is not a statistical abstraction but a lived consequence of structural neglect.

Anthony Joshua's Crash: A Tragic Wake-Up Call

Late in December 2025, international attention turned briefly to Nigeria when former world heavyweight boxing champion Anthony Joshua was involved in a serious crash on the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway in Ogun State.

According to the FRSC, the preliminary cause was excessive speed and wrongful overtaking, behaviours that mirror the leading risk factors in Nigeria's broader road-safety crisis.

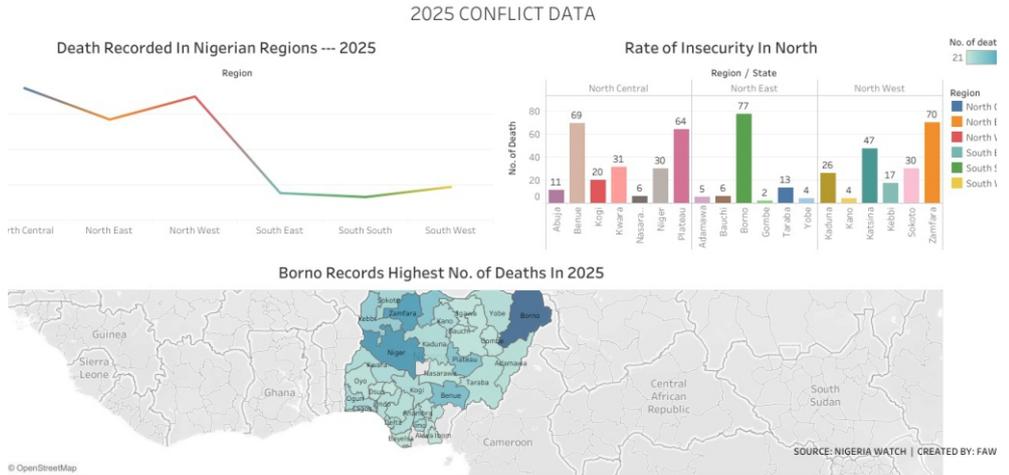
Two of Joshua's close associates died in the collision; he survived with minor injuries. Their deaths, while highly publicised because of Joshua's fame, reflect the broader tragedy of Nigerian roads: crashes that kill ordinary citizens every day, many without headline coverage, many unnoticed beyond local mourning.

FRSC Voices: Road Safety Officials Speak

Officials from the FRSC, Nigeria's primary road-safety agency, have repeatedly spoken about the scale and gravity of the problem in 2025.

Corps Marshal Shehu Mohammed, addressing the press in Abuja, warned that road crashes have been increasing and urged stronger compliance with traffic regulations, especially speed limits and proper vehicle maintenance, measures he said are critical to reducing fatalities.

"Every road crash is not just a number, it is a human tragedy and a national



development challenge," said national safety officials during the rollout of the 2025 Ember Months Road Safety Campaign, emphasising that safer driving culture is a collective responsibility.

This official framing acknowledges the human dimension of the statistics, each crash is a family broken, a future curtailed.

Behind the Numbers: Everyday Lives Shattered

Nigeria Watch's data bring cold numbers; the human stories make them vivid.

In the North, parents bury children lost to bandit raids, farmers abandon fields laced with danger, and communities externalise grief as a backdrop to subsistence.

In Ogun and other South-West communities, mothers wait at home for husbands who will never return from the market route, students' uniforms lie unused after crush injuries end schooling prematurely, and siblings grieve at junctions where road collisions have turned asphalt into grief memorials.

For the family of a commuter who might have been returning home from Lagos that afternoon, or a trader whose produce truck never reached Ibadan, the death statistics are not distant figures, they are the final records of lives that once mattered deeply in homes and markets across the country.

A Crisis of Systems, Not Chance

What Nigeria Watch's 2025 data reveal, and what lived experiences reinforce, is that violent deaths in Nigeria are not random. They are the product of systems stretched thin, infrastructure left to decay, and enforcement that lags behind behaviour on the ground.

In the North, fragile security and fragmented state presence have allowed insurgency and criminal violence to thrive for decades.

In the South, decades of underinvestment in road infrastructure, enforcement gaps, and inadequate emergency response compound the risks of travel.

Fixing this will require not just policing or road construction, but institutional reform, civic education, and sustained political will.

Incomplete Data, Real Lives Lost

The 2025 Nigeria Watch counts reflect violent deaths recorded up to the moment this report started; the year had not yet ended, and subsequent incidents, including crashes, water transport mishaps and security operations, had not been added to the toll. The Anthony Joshua collision, for example, is a high-profile case that had not been published, among many others, when this investigation started.

This means the figures presented here are conservative estimates of a wider mortality burden.

Bad Roads, Rising Transport Fares Squeeze Small Businesses In Ifo

Ikuemenisan Omolade

Small business owners in Ifo, Ogun State, are struggling to keep their businesses afloat as poor road conditions and persistent traffic congestion drive up transport fares and delay the movement of goods to local markets.

Traders say the deteriorating state of major access roads within the town has made it difficult for commercial vehicles to move freely, forcing drivers to increase fares to cover longer travel times and frequent vehicle repairs.

As a result, many traders now spend a large portion of their daily earnings on transportation, reducing their profits and limiting the quantity of goods they can afford to buy for resale.

Market women are among the worst affected, as most rely on public transport to convey food items from farms and wholesale markets to their stalls. Delays caused by gridlock often mean they arrive late to the market, missing early customers and losing potential sales.



Some traders also report that customers are buying less due to higher prices, which they say are partly driven by increased transport costs passed on to buyers.

Commercial drivers operating in the area attribute the fare hikes to the poor condition of the roads, saying constant breakdowns and fuel wastage in traffic have made daily operations more expensive.

Residents argue that the situation has become a regular hardship

and are calling on the relevant authorities to rehabilitate the affected roads to ease movement and reduce transport costs.

Efforts to get a response from local government officials on plans to fix the roads were unsuccessful as of the time of filing this report.

The continued state of the roads, residents warn, could further weaken small-scale businesses that form the backbone of Ifo's local economy if urgent intervention is not made.

Students Turn to Online Skills to Survive Economic Strain

Kosebinu Anuluwapo Elizabeth

Forced to navigate rising tuition costs, expensive data, and a shrinking job market, an increasing number of students across Nigerian campuses are turning to online skills to earn income while staying enrolled in school.

For Adesumbo Taiwo, a 300-level student at Lagos State University, mastering graphic design and social media management has become more than a side hustle — it is her means of survival.

“When school fees and transport costs went up, I had no part-time job to fall back on,” Kosebinu said. “I started with free tutorials on YouTube and now earn money doing design work for clients here and abroad. I pay my school fees and support my family with what I earn.”

Education analysts say the trend reflects an emerging shift in how Nigerian students cope with economic pressures, leveraging digital technology to create income streams outside traditional employment.

“More students are learning



marketable skills online because formal sectors can't absorb them,” said Dr. Ibrahim Musa, a lecturer in media studies. “Access to smartphones and connectivity means they no longer depend solely on part-time manual jobs.”

Across campuses, students are enrolling in online courses and tutorials to learn skills such as content writing, video editing, web development, and digital marketing. Freelance platforms and social media marketplaces have made it easier for students to find work locally and internationally.

Yet the rise of this new student workforce comes with challenges. Many students struggle with poor internet connectivity, high data costs, and

balancing academic responsibilities with client deadlines.

“I sometimes work late at night to meet editing deadlines, and then I have class in the morning,” said Chinedu Okafor, a student at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. “It's stressful, but I have no alternative.”

Data from the National Bureau of Statistics shows youth unemployment remains high, with limited part-time opportunities available for students. Analysts argue this economic reality is partly driving the surge in digital skill acquisition among young people.

Experts say institutions should harness this momentum by integrating practical digital training into curricula, equipping students with skills relevant to the modern economy.

“Universities and polytechnics can no longer ignore digital skills training,” Dr. Musa said. “Formal inclusion of these competencies will improve student employability post-graduation.”

As Nigeria's economy continues to reshape student life, online skills are increasingly becoming not a luxury, but a lifeline.

“We Are Struggling”: Rising Cost of Living Hits Students in Ogbomoso

Modupe Igboasanu

Ogbomoso, a town long known for its relatively affordable cost of living for students, is becoming increasingly difficult to survive in as prices of food, rent, and transportation continue to rise, students across tertiary institutions in the area have said.

From Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH) to surrounding private hostels and off-campus settlements, students report that basic expenses now consume a larger share of their limited allowances, forcing many to cut back on meals, share accommodation, or seek part-time jobs to stay afloat.

“I spend more now on food in one week than I used to spend in two,” said Ayomide, a 200-level student of LAUTECH. “Beans is now over 1,000 per paint, and even garri, which students depend on, is no longer cheap.”

Food vendors around major student areas such as Under-G, Stadium



Road, and Adenike also confirm steady increases in food prices, attributing the situation to higher costs of raw food items, transportation, and cooking gas. Some vendors said they have reduced portion sizes to avoid frequent price changes that could drive customers away. Beyond food, housing has become one of the biggest pressures on students. Several students told this reporter that rents in popular student neighborhoods have increased significantly within the last year, with little or no improvement in facilities.

“Last year I paid 60,000 for a room. Now the same room is 85,000, and nothing has changed,” said Ibrahim, a 300-level engineering student. “There is still no steady water and electricity is not guaranteed.”

Students living in shared apartments said overcrowding is becoming more common as more people move into single rooms to split costs. While this reduces individual rent, it often leads to poor sanitation and health concerns, especially in hostels without adequate toilet and water facilities.

Transportation costs have also added to the burden. With many students living far from campus due to rising rents, daily transport expenses now take up a noticeable part of weekly budgets. Some students said they now trek long distances to reduce costs, especially when they have only one or two lectures in a day.

Student leaders acknowledge that the situation is affecting academic performance. A representative of a

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Residents Lament Rising Cost of Childbirth in Ogun Suburbs

Ogundana Joy

Residents of suburban communities across Ogun State are lamenting the rising cost of childbirth, a burden they say is pushing pregnant women into fear, debt and unsafe delivery options.

In towns such as Ifo, Ado-Odo/Ota and Sagamu, many expectant mothers now resort to traditional birth attendants, not by choice but because the cost of delivering in public and private hospitals has become unbearable.

For Mrs Abiola, a petty trader in Sango-Ota, the experience was heartbreaking.

“They asked me to pay 35,000 before admission and another 20,000 for delivery items,” she said. “I was already in labour. I didn't have that kind of money, so I went to a local midwife.”

According to findings, public hospitals in Ogun State now charge between 30,000 and 60,000 for normal deliveries, while private

clinics demand up to 120,000, excluding additional medical expenses.

Antenatal care costs between 5,000 and 10,000, while blood tests and ultrasound scans range from 10,000 to 20,000. Postnatal care costs an extra 2,000 to 5,000 per visit. New mothers also spend between 50,000 and 100,000 on basic baby items such as diapers, clothing and toiletries.

For families faced with caesarean sections, the cost can exceed 200,000, an amount many low-income households say is impossible to raise.

“We are not refusing hospital care,” said Aisha, a 22-year-old expectant mother in Sagamu. “But when you calculate everything, it is more than what my husband earns in months. We just pray and hope for the best.”

Health workers attribute the rising costs to inflation, inadequate government funding and shortages of

essential medical supplies. Dr Tunde Afolabi, a medical officer in Ijebu Ode, said hospitals are often forced to shift expenses to patients.

“Sometimes patients are asked to buy gloves, syringes and even drip stands because supplies are not sufficient,” he explained. “That increases the final cost of delivery.”

Community health workers warn that the situation has led to an increase in unattended home births, birth complications and maternal deaths, particularly in remote areas.

Concerned residents and civil society groups are now calling on the Ogun State government to increase funding for maternal healthcare, provide essential drugs and equipment, and subsidise delivery costs for low-income families.

Until such measures are implemented, residents say childbirth in Ogun's suburbs will remain a painful test of survival, where bringing new life into the world comes at a cost many families simply cannot afford.

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“We Are Struggling”: Rising Cost of Living Hits Students in Ogbomosho

Modupe Igboasanu

student association, who asked not to be named, said financial stress has made it harder for many students to focus on their studies.

“When students are worried about what to eat or how to pay their next rent, learning becomes difficult,” the representative said. “We have raised these concerns in meetings, but there is only so much the school can do when the larger economic situation is affecting everyone.”

Efforts to get official comments from LAUTECH’s Student Affairs Division on whether any relief measures are being considered were unsuccessful as of the time of filing this report.

Some landlords contacted in student-populated areas defended the rent increases, citing higher costs of building materials, maintenance, and local government levies. One property owner in the Stadium area said,

“Everything is expensive now. We also pay more for repairs and taxes. We are not increasing rent because we want to punish students.”

However, students argue that the increases are happening faster than their incomes or allowances can adjust, especially for those from low-income families who depend entirely on parents or guardians already struggling with rising household expenses.

For many students, coping

strategies now include skipping meals, buying cheaper but less nutritious food, and relying on credit from food vendors. Others take on small jobs such as phone repairs, online freelancing, or weekend labor to supplement their income.

“I didn’t plan to work while in school, but now I have no choice,” said Sadiya, a 100-level student. “If I don’t work, I won’t be able to eat properly or save for rent.”

As inflation continues to affect cities and small towns across Nigeria, students in Ogbomosho fear that the town may lose its reputation as a student-friendly environment if conditions continue to worsen without targeted support or intervention.

For now, many say they are simply trying to survive each semester, hoping that economic conditions will ease before the pressure forces more students to suspend their education.



Poultry Farmers Lament Over Rising Feed Costs In Abeokuta

Akinola Olusola

Poultry farmers in Abeokuta, the Ogun State capital, say soaring feed prices are threatening their livelihoods, forcing many to cut down production or consider quitting the business altogether.

Adamu Salisu, who operates a medium-scale poultry farm with about 1,200 birds, said the sharp increase in feed costs over the past year has made farming increasingly unsustainable.

“Just last year, I bought a 50kg bag of feed for 5,000. Now, it sells for more than 9,000,” Salisu said. “With these costs, I honestly don’t know how long I can keep going.”

He explained that while production costs have risen significantly, the prices of eggs and poultry products have not increased at the same pace, leaving farmers with shrinking profit margins. According to him, attempts to raise prices often meet resistance from consumers.

Another farmer, Mrs. Rachael Bankole, said she has already been forced to reduce her stock due to the

rising cost of feed. “I had no choice but to sell off half of my birds,” she said. “Feeding all of them became impossible, and customers still complain whenever we try to increase prices.”

Agriculture experts attribute the rising cost of poultry feed to a combination of inflation, foreign exchange challenges, and Nigeria’s dependence on imported feed ingredients such as soy products and maize alternatives. Farmers are now appealing to the government for urgent intervention, warning that many more farms could shut down if the situation persists.

The worsening conditions in the sector are also discouraging young Nigerians from taking up farming as a career. Emmanuel Nwankwo, 27, who recently relocated to Abeokuta for a job in a logistics startup, said agriculture no longer offers the incentives it once did.

“I grew up on a farm, but I don’t see myself doing that for a living,” he said. “The work is stressful, and the returns

are too low.”

Data from the National Bureau of Statistics indicate a steady decline in youth participation in agriculture, despite efforts by the government and non-governmental organisations to attract young people into the sector.

Agro-entrepreneur Halima Tijani said the challenges facing young farmers are largely structural. “Young people need access to land, capital, and reliable markets,” she said. “Without these, passion alone cannot sustain them.”

She warned that unless significant investment and policy support are introduced, Nigeria’s food security could be at risk as older farmers retire with few younger people willing to replace them.

As production costs continue to rise and youth interest declines, farming in Nigeria is increasingly being left in the hands of an aging population, raising concerns about the future of local food production.

Finally, MAPOLY Unbundles Mass Communication - A New Dawn for the Department

December last year marked a historic moment for Moshood Abiola Polytechnic (MAPOLY) as the Head of the Department of Mass Communication, Dr. Wasiu Tejuoso, officially announced the unbundling of the Mass Communication programme after more than four decades.

This milestone aligns with the National Board for Technical Education's (NBTE) requirements for polytechnics offering Mass Communication, following similar initiatives by the National Universities Commission (NUC).

Prior to this unbundling, Mass Communication had been one of MAPOLY's flagship programmes since its inception 47 years ago, widely regarded as a source of strength and pride for the institution.

The unbundling, however, promises to elevate the department's profile even further, creating more specialized pathways for students and enhancing the depth of academic and practical training.

Significantly, the management has urged students and faculty to take this initiative seriously, emphasizing that it should extend beyond the typical eight-week schedule. They described this unbundled programme as a "cardinal cord" of the department, crucial for equipping graduates with both theoretical knowledge and practical experience. By extending the duration and



rigor of this initiative, the programme will ensure that students acquire the hands-on skills, professional exposure, and entrepreneurial mindset necessary to excel in a highly competitive media industry.



This development is more than a bureaucratic adjustment; it is a strategic move that strengthens the critical link between the academy and the wider society.



Over the years, MAPOLY's Mass Communication students have actively engaged with the community through programmes like Career Readiness and Entrepreneurial initiatives. These programmes equip students with the essential competencies, skills, and mindsets needed to thrive in the modern workforce or to establish their own ventures, effectively bridging the gap between classroom learning and real-world demands.

With the unbundling of Mass Communication, and the management's insistence on a more extended and robust programme, MAPOLY is poised to deepen these engagements, fostering stronger town-and-gown relationships and producing graduates who are not only academically sound but also practically competent.

For students, faculty, and the community alike, this is an opportunity to redefine excellence in technical and vocational education, ensuring that MAPOLY remains at the forefront of innovative, socially responsive Mass Communication training.

Indeed, the unbundling of Mass Communication is a decisive step toward reinforcing the relevance of polytechnic education in Nigeria's rapidly evolving media landscape.

MAPOLY has not only kept pace with national standards but has also set a precedent for other institutions seeking to marry tradition with innovation.

Celebrating One Year of Transformative Leadership: Arch. Dr. Koyejo Jolaoso, 10th Rector of Moshood Abiola Polytechnic, Abeokuta



implemented reforms aimed at enhancing student-management engagement, improving campus security, and streamlining academic processes. The Students' Representatives Council (SRC) and the Student Union Government (SUG) have publicly commended his approach, noting the increased transparency, accessibility, and responsiveness of the management under his stewardship.

various campus groups underscore the genuine affection and respect the polytechnic community holds for him. His administration's emphasis on collaboration, accountability, and institutional modernization has not only uplifted staff morale but also reinforced MAPOLY's reputation for progressive governance.

Official Recognition and Messaging

MAPOLY's official communications have highlighted these milestones, emphasizing the themes of love, unity, and progress that have characterized Dr. Jolaoso's first year. The rector, in his reflections, expressed deep gratitude for the support and cooperation of the polytechnic community, noting that the success of his initiatives is anchored in collective effort.

Looking Ahead

As MAPOLY celebrates this one-year milestone under Arch. Dr. Koyejo Jolaoso, the polytechnic is poised for continued growth and excellence. With a strong focus on modernization, accountability, and student success, his leadership promises a future where MAPOLY not only meets national standards but also becomes a benchmark for innovation and student-centered education in Nigeria.

Academic Excellence and Infrastructure Development

Academic and infrastructural growth have been central to Dr. Jolaoso's agenda. One of the hallmark achievements of his first year has been fostering strategic partnerships to enhance technical and vocational skills. In collaboration with GIZ, the German development agency, MAPOLY has strengthened its engineering facilities and created avenues for human capital development. Additionally, Dr. Jolaoso has championed digital transformation initiatives, including projects to develop a national repository of academic manuscripts, positioning MAPOLY as a forward-looking institution embracing modern educational technologies.

Institutional Development and Community Engagement

Beyond academics, Dr. Jolaoso has focused on creating a more inclusive and collaborative institutional culture. Staff and students alike have expressed admiration for his humility, accessibility, and approachable leadership style. Surprise celebrations organized by

December 2025 marks the first anniversary of the appointment of Arch. Dr. Koyejo Jolaoso as the 10th Rector of Moshood Abiola Polytechnic (MAPOLY), Abeokuta. Notably, he is the first alumnus to rise to this distinguished position, bringing with him a unique blend of insider experience, visionary leadership, and a deep commitment to student welfare and institutional excellence.

Since assuming office in December 2024, Dr. Jolaoso's tenure has been characterized by a remarkable drive to reposition and rebrand the polytechnic. Under his leadership, MAPOLY has witnessed a series of transformative initiatives that have strengthened academic integrity, enhanced infrastructure, and improved student-management relations. These efforts have fostered a vibrant campus atmosphere that prioritizes both academic and personal growth.

Student-Centric Leadership

Dr. Jolaoso has been widely praised for his student-first philosophy, which has translated into tangible improvements across the campus. His administration has

The first year of Arch. Dr. Jolaoso's rectorship has been marked by significant positive transformation. His visionary and inclusive leadership style has established a legacy of progress, setting the stage for further institutional development and the continued upliftment of the student experience at Moshood Abiola Polytechnic.

Cultism in Tertiary Institutions: The Hidden Plight of Students

Abdullateef Rofiat Ibukunoluwa

Cultism remains a persistent and deeply troubling challenge in Nigeria's tertiary institutions. These secretive groups operate under rigid codes of membership, initiation, and conduct, often concealing their activities from public scrutiny.

While some students join voluntarily in search of protection, influence, or a sense of belonging, many others are coerced through threats, intimidation, or outright violence.

The consequences for students entangled in cult activities are severe, ranging from poor academic performance and psychological trauma to serious physical injury and, in extreme cases, death.

Available national data underscore the scale of the problem. Records from security agencies and reports by the National Universities Commission (NUC) indicate that cult-related violence has been reported in virtually all categories of tertiary institutions in Nigeria, including universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education.

Between 2015 and 2023, law enforcement agencies recorded hundreds of cult-related arrests and violent incidents annually, many of which involved students either as perpetrators or victims.

The Nigerian Police Force has



repeatedly identified campus cultism as a major contributor to youth-related violence in urban centres.

The plight of students caught in these networks is complex and deeply personal. Academic progress is often disrupted as students struggle to balance their studies with the demands and risks imposed by cult membership.

Psychological stress, constant fear of retribution, and social isolation further compound the problem. In many cases, families are drawn into the crisis, forced to make painful decisions about intervention while prioritising the safety of their children.

One such case is that of Hamed Ibrahim, a 300-level student of Tai Solarin University of Education, whose encounter with cultism dramatically altered his academic journey. After a long day of lectures, Ibrahim was approached

Trapped by Trade: Inside Lagos' Market Gridlock

By Lawal Motunrayo Eunice

At dawn in Ketu, Lagos, the city is already awake. Hawkers arrange tomatoes into neat red pyramids, buses jostle for passengers, and the smell of roasted corn drifts through the air. The market hums with life, promise, and profit. Yet just beyond the stalls, engines idle endlessly, horns blare in frustration, and time grinds to a halt. In Ketu, commerce thrives—but movement suffers.

Lagos markets are the lifeblood of the city's informal economy. They feed millions, employ thousands, and keep money circulating at street level. But in places like Ketu-Ojota, where an open market sits directly on one of Lagos's busiest transit corridors, economic vitality collides daily with urban chaos.

Ketu occupies a strategic position along Ikorodu Road, linking the mainland to inner-city routes. What should be a smooth artery for movement has become a choke point. Narrow roads, aging infrastructure, and a lack of organized parking struggle to accommodate the relentless surge of

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After Fireworks: Traders Count Losses, Drivers Feel Strain as Abeokuta Faces Post-Festive Reality

Adeniran Basirat

When the fireworks faded and the crowds thinned in Abeokuta, Ogun State, the festive season left behind more than memories of celebration. Across markets, homes and highways, traders, families and commercial drivers began counting the real cost of Christmas and New Year—measured not only in joy, but also in losses, sacrifices and exhaustion.

At Panseke Market, the days leading up to Christmas and New Year's Eve were marked by brisk sales and



swelling crowds. A 22-year-old fruit trader, Esther, said she stocked heavily to meet the surge in demand as customers shopped for celebrations and travel.

However, the rush was short-lived. As the city emptied after New Year's Day, patronage dropped sharply, leaving traders like Esther with unsold perishable goods and mounting losses. She explained that fruits such as oranges, pineapples and watermelons began to spoil within days, eroding the profits made during the peak period.

For many families, celebration came with careful compromise. In Onikolobo, a 27-year-old self-employed mother, Adesina Fatimah, said she stretched her limited income to ensure her child experienced the joy of the season.

Rising food prices and transport costs, however, forced her to cut back on meals and personal needs.

According to data from the National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria's food inflation stood above 30 per cent at the end of 2025, with staples such as rice, poultry and cooking oil recording sharp price increases during the festive period.

Fatimah described the holidays as emotionally fulfilling but financially draining.

On the roads, the festive movement told a different story.

Commercial drivers worked longer hours amid fuel price hikes, heavy traffic and increased union levies. Mr Tunde Awodeji, a commercial driver who plies the Abeokuta-Ibadan route, said passenger traffic surged as people travelled to reunite with family or returned after the holidays.

At peak periods, he recalled, travellers panicked when vehicles became scarce, fearing they would be stranded

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Cultism in Tertiary Institutions: The Hidden Plight of Students

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by a fellow student identified as Emmanuel, who demanded to know “which group he belonged to.”

When Ibrahim failed to respond, he was physically assaulted and forced to follow Emmanuel to a secluded location outside the campus. There, he was confronted by several other students and coerced into joining their group.

Unable to seek immediate help and fearing further harm, Ibrahim reluctantly submitted to the initiation. Traumatized by the experience, he returned home to Ilorin and confided in his parents, who were alarmed by the danger he faced.

After careful deliberation, they advised him to withdraw from the university to protect his life. Ibrahim complied, abandoning his academic pursuit at Tai Solarin University.

The following year, he retook the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) examination and enrolled in a private university, effectively starting his education anew because of the traumatic encounter.

Ibrahim’s experience highlights the enormous human cost of cultism in Nigeria’s tertiary institutions.

According to education-sector stakeholders and civil society organisations, many students drop out, change schools, or suffer long-term emotional damage as a result of cult-related threats and violence.

The impact extends beyond individual victims to their families, who must live with fear, uncertainty, and

financial strain.

Addressing this challenge requires a multi-layered and sustained approach. Educational institutions must enforce anti-cultism policies more rigorously through improved campus surveillance, intelligence gathering, and collaboration with security agencies.

The NUC and state governments have repeatedly emphasised the need for zero tolerance for cult-related activities, including swift disciplinary measures against offenders.

Equally important are counselling and rehabilitation programmes for students seeking to disengage from cult groups.

Such initiatives can help victims recover psychologically and reintegrate safely into academic and social life. Public awareness campaigns, peer education programmes, and student-led advocacy can also empower young people to resist coercion and report suspicious activities without fear of reprisal.

Parents and guardians have a critical role to play by maintaining open communication with their children and working closely with school authorities to ensure their safety. Cultism in tertiary institutions is not merely a disciplinary issue; it is a broader social problem with far-reaching consequences for education, security, and national development.

By combining preventive measures, strong support systems, and strict enforcement of existing laws and policies, Nigeria’s tertiary institutions can better protect vulnerable students and restore the focus of education to its rightful purpose: learning, personal growth, and opportunity.

After Fireworks: Traders Count Losses, Drivers Feel Strain as Abeokuta Faces Post-Festive Reality

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Despite higher fares and heavy passenger demand, he said drivers’ earnings often declined. Petrol prices in Ogun State hovered between 620 and 650 per litre during the festive period, forcing many drivers to work longer hours just to break even.

Traffic congestion further eroded productivity. Awodeji blamed poor road conditions and accidents along the Abeokuta-Ibadan axis for prolonged delays, noting that time lost in traffic reduced the number of trips drivers could make while increasing fuel consumption.

“You can spend hours on the road and still not make enough,” he said.

He also lamented the rise in union ticket fees collected by the National Union of Road Transport Workers and the Road Transport Employers Association of Nigeria, saying the levies further reduced drivers’ take-home income.

After deducting fuel costs, union tickets and routine maintenance, Awodeji said his daily earnings sometimes fell below 10,000. The reality, he noted, sharply contrasts with the public perception that commercial drivers make large profits during festive seasons.

Calling for intervention, he urged the government to stabilise fuel prices, regulate union levies and urgently repair bad roads to ease the burden on drivers and commuters alike.

Trapped by Trade: Inside Lagos’ Market Gridlock

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The market spills beyond its boundaries. Traders extend stalls onto sidewalks and carriageways. Delivery vans stop wherever space allows.

Motorcycles weave through impossible gaps, while buses halt abruptly to load passengers. Each small act, driven by survival and opportunity, collectively fuels a larger crisis: gridlock.

For commuters, congestion translates into lost hours and rising stress. For traders, it means delayed deliveries, reduced customer access, and financial losses hidden beneath the bustle. Ironically, the very market that sustains livelihoods also undermines them.

Yet the problem is not the market itself. It is the absence of thoughtful planning. Urban growth in Lagos has often outpaced regulation, leaving economic spaces to evolve without adequate infrastructure or traffic control. The result is a fragile balance where commerce flourishes at the expense of mobility.

Solutions exist. Purpose-built market spaces, designated loading bays, stricter enforcement against roadside trading, and improved road networks could ease the tension between trade and transport.

More importantly, urban planning must recognize that markets are not obstacles to development but essential components of it—deserving of structure, space, and support.

Ketu’s story is not unique. Across Lagos, markets tell the same tale: of resilience, hustle, and disorder. They remind us that a city’s success is not measured only by how much it produces, but by how well it moves.

Until commerce and mobility are allowed to coexist rather than compete, the roads of Lagos will remain places where opportunity and congestion meet—every single day.

Inside Ogun's Digital School Reforms Where Power Failures, Tool Shortages Strain Teachers

Jelili Gbadamosi

When Mrs. Gbemisola Adepena logs into Ogun State's official digital platform to upload her students' results, she does so with a mix of hope and dread. Hope, because the state's digital reforms promise efficiency and transparency. Dread, because she knows that hours of work could disappear in seconds if power fails or the network drops. Often, the calls come later from anxious students, their results showing "zero."

Her experience as a senior secondary school teacher at one of Ogun State's public secondary schools, captures the everyday reality behind Ogun State's ambitious drive to digitise public education. Over the past few years, the state government has introduced platforms such as the Digital Platform for Education Records, DIPER, to modernise school administration, streamline admissions, and secure students' academic records across public schools.

On the surface, the reforms align with global trends. International education research by bodies such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO and the World Bank consistently links digital record systems to improved accountability, reduced data loss, and more transparent access to schooling. Nigeria's National Digital Economy Policy also positions education as a key sector for technological transformation, encouraging states to adopt digital tools in public institutions.

Open education data from Ogun State reflects early gains. Applications into model colleges have risen sharply since admissions moved online, with technology providers reporting that annual application numbers have grown from a few thousand to well over ten thousand. These figures suggest that digitisation has helped remove informal barriers, making access to public schools more

competitive and less dependent on personal connections.

Yet these gains rest on a fragile foundation. Public schools in Ogun operate within Nigeria's broader power crisis, where national grid supply remains erratic. In many communities, electricity is available for only a few hours a day, if at all. For schools expected to function on digital platforms, power outages routinely halt result uploads, data access, and basic administrative work.

For teachers, the impact is personal and immediate. Many rely on personal mobile phones to upload results because laptops are not provided. Attendance must be taken both manually and online. When systems fail, teachers are required to repeat the entire process, adding hours of unpaid labour to already demanding workloads, making what was designed as an efficiency tool become a source of stress.

Connectivity challenges compound the problem. Broadband access remains uneven, and school-specific internet subscriptions are rare. Education technology experts warn that without stable internet and basic devices, digital reforms risk becoming symbolic, appearing modern on policy documents while failing in daily classroom practice.

Adepena's experience with the lack of access has raised serious concerns over access to proper internet and solutions to technical and welfare issues affecting teachers, particularly in digital result management.

She lamented that teachers are under intense pressure due to frequent network failures on the state-approved digital platforms for uploading students' results. According to her, after painstakingly marking examination scripts, inputting scores, and uploading results, students often later discover that their results appear as "zero" or blank when accessed online.

"At the end of the day, after we have uploaded the results successfully, students will call us again that their results are showing zero or nothing. We



Mr. Adekunle Durosimi

are then asked to re-upload everything, and the major issue is poor network connectivity," she lamented.

She noted that teachers previously used the Ogun State Education Resource Application, OGSERA before the transition to the DIPER, adding that the changeover has come with unresolved challenges. According to her, access to OGSERA has been discontinued, while DIPER remains unreliable due to unstable internet service.

"Once you start uploading on DIPER, you cannot return to OGSERA. We cannot upload scores, download results, or even allow students to check their records until everything is completed, yet the network does not support the process," she said.

Mrs. Adepena also criticised the lack of basic working tools for teachers, stressing that many educators rely on personal mobile phones to upload results, an approach she described as inefficient and inappropriate.

"Every teacher should have a laptop. Phones are not suitable for uploading and correcting results. With laptops, it will be easier to work effectively," she stated.

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Inside Ogun's Digital School Reforms Where Power Failures, Tool Shortages Strain Teachers

Jelili Gbadamosi

Drawing comparisons with Lagos State, she noted that teachers there are provided with laptops, data support, and digital teaching resources, which significantly reduce stress and technical failures.

"In Ogun State, students go to cyber cafés to print their results only to see zero or incorrect scores. This causes embarrassment and frustration for both students and teachers," she added. Beyond result management, she observed that teachers are required to mark attendance both manually and online, increasing workloads without adequate support. She therefore called

When power eventually returns, the digital platform is often slow or inaccessible, forcing teachers to repeat the process.

The teacher noted that digital systems cannot function in isolation from basic infrastructure. Without stable electricity to power devices and network equipment, the promise of efficiency that digitisation offers remains largely unrealised, lamenting that what should take minutes often stretches into hours or days, creating frustration for both teachers and students.

Another teacher, who simply wanted to be identified as Mrs

educators.

A computer studies teacher, simply identified as Babs, highlighted the contradiction of promoting digital learning in schools that lack basic digital facilities. He explained that while students are taught about online platforms and modern computing concepts, many schools do not have functional computer laboratories or reliable internet access to support practical learning.

He added that the absence of tools turns computer education into a largely theoretical exercise, limiting students' exposure to real-world digital skills. Without adequate facilities, he said, the state risks producing students who understand technology in theory but lack hands-on competence.

In the same vein, an art teacher, Mr Philip focused on the workload implications of the digital transition. He said teachers are required to keep manual records alongside digital submissions, effectively doubling their tasks. In many cases, teachers use personal mobile phones to upload results because laptops are unavailable. While acknowledging that digital records are safer and more permanent than paper files, he warned that the reform places an uneven burden on teachers. According to Philip, educators are willing to embrace technology, but without proper tools, power supply, and institutional support, digitisation has become an added strain rather than a relief.

However, amidst the crisis, a teacher at Macjob Grammar School, Mrs. Oshipitan O.A., commended the Ogun State Government for adopting digital technology in academic record management, describing DIPER as a major milestone in the education sector.

According to Oshipitan, the platform has eliminated the long-standing practice of carrying bulky broadsheets and manually writing report sheets.

"With DIPER, continuous assessment, tests, and examination results are



on the Ogun State Government to urgently provide laptops, improve network infrastructure, enhance teachers' welfare, and introduce better motivation packages.

"Teachers are training future doctors, engineers, lawyers, and leaders, yet many young people no longer want to become teachers because of how poorly teachers are treated," she said.

According to a science teacher, who wanted to be anonymous, there are days when results are fully prepared but cannot be uploaded because there is no electricity or internet access.

Olusegun, described how the reforms have quietly expanded teachers' responsibilities beyond teaching. She explained that educators are now expected to handle technical issues, troubleshoot system errors, and respond to student complaints when platforms fail, despite having little or no technical training.

In her words, when students see missing or incorrect results online, they rarely blame the system. Instead, they direct their anger and confusion at teachers, who are then asked to fix problems they did not create, adding that this has increased stress levels and weakened morale among many

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Inside Ogun's Digital School Reforms Where Power Failures, Tool Shortages Strain Teachers

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recorded online. Students can print their results without fear of loss or damage," she explained.

Mrs. Oshipitan noted that each student is assigned a Student Identification Number (SIN) from primary school, which remains valid throughout secondary education, ensuring long-term security and traceability of academic records.

"The era of carrying report sheets from place to place is gone. Even after ten or twenty years, students can still access their results online," she said.

While applauding the initiative, she emphasised the need for improved infrastructure to maximise its benefits, identifying unreliable power supply, lack of gadgets, and inadequate facilities as major obstacles.

"Our students and teachers are computer-literate and ready. What we need now are laptops, facilities, and solar power to support the system," she added.

DIPER and the Fight Against Educational Inequality

Meanwhile, speaking with the Chief Executive Officer of EDUTAMS, Dr. Ademola Adenubi, he stressed that the DIPER has played a crucial role in reducing inequality in education access across the state.

According to Adenubi, access to model schools was previously limited by manual application processes that favoured certain groups. Today, all applications are handled online.

"Ogun State has about 42 model schools, and applications are now online. Every child, regardless of background, has equal access," he said. He revealed that application numbers have risen from an average of 2,000-5,000 to over 15,000 annually, demonstrating how technology has removed long-standing barriers.

In the same vein, he added that DIPER



Dr. Ademola Adenubi

also ensures transparency in admissions, releases results simultaneously, and prevents schools from exceeding capacity.

Dr. Adenubi therefore traced EDUTAMS' journey from tertiary education in 2011 to its expansion into public schools during the COVID-19 pandemic, following a partnership with the Ogun State Ministry of Education.

He dismissed fears that teachers would resist technology, noting instead, the widespread enthusiasm due to the platform's simplicity and adaptability. He further added that DIPER has drastically reduced result processing time, with report sheets generated automatically once scores are uploaded.

Stressing his point, he shared a notable incident where the Ogun State Governor, Dapo Abiodun, was able to instantly retrieve a student's academic records during a campaign rally and award a scholarship on the spot, an opportunity that might previously have been lost to bureaucracy.

Expert Stress Teacher Training, Infrastructure as Key

The President of the Ogun Tech Community, Mr. Adekunle Durosinmi, stressed that continuous teacher training is essential to improving digital literacy and strengthening the education system.

He said the tech community has organised seminars, workshops, online training, media engagements, and meet-and-greet sessions to equip teachers with relevant digital skills.

"Education is the bedrock of any nation. If teachers are not trained, they cannot effectively impact students," Durosinmi said.

He explained that computer education has evolved rapidly, moving beyond basic concepts to modern programming languages and digital platforms, making it difficult for teachers to cope without adequate retraining and infrastructure.

"Computer science is no longer static. Today, it is about web applications, mobile platforms, and emerging technologies. Teachers cannot teach what they do not have access to," he said.

Durosinmi lamented the poor state of facilities in many public secondary schools, citing lack of electricity, water, functional computer laboratories, and affordable internet access as major barriers. He also called for government-subsidised internet services tailored strictly for educational use.

He commended recent curriculum reforms by the Minister of Education, Dr. Tunji Alausa, and praised Dr. Ronke Soyombo, Registrar of the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria and Special Adviser to the Ogun State Government on education, for her reform-driven efforts.

He further advocated the creation of a dedicated Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, ICT, in Ogun State to properly manage digital initiatives.

How Ipaja Residents Suffer Rising Burglary Amid Lagos' Security Gaps

Oderinde Mayowa

At exactly 2:17 a.m., the sharp sound of a whistle cut through the silence on Ijegan Road, Ipaja, jolting Madam Kemi awake from her sleep. Moments earlier, unknown burglars had forced their way into the next compound, escaping with mobile phones and household electronics before anyone could raise an alarm. By morning, neighbours gathered around the shattered window frames, counting losses and asking the same question that now hangs over many homes in Ipaja — who will be next?

For residents like Madam Kemi, sleeping through the night has become a rare luxury. Every creak of the gate, every unfamiliar footstep sends waves of fear through households already on edge. “You lock your door, but your mind is not locked,” she said, pointing to the iron protectors recently welded onto her windows after repeated burglary incidents on her street.

Across Ipaja and surrounding communities such as Ayobo and Iyana-Ipaja, similar stories are becoming routine. Conversations in markets, bus parks, and crowded compounds are no longer limited to food prices or transport fares, but increasingly revolve around night-time break-ins, stolen valuables, and narrow escapes.



On Ijegan Road, shop owners say burglary attempts occur almost weekly, especially in the early hours of the morning when police patrols are barely visible. A trader who opens his shop before dawn described the fear as constant. According to him, thieves strike quickly and vanish long before help can arrive. “Police try,” he said, “but they can’t be everywhere.”

With formal security appearing overstretched, many streets have turned to informal solutions. Community vigilantes now patrol from dusk till dawn, armed with whistles, touchlights, and in some cases, crude weapons. Their presence offers residents a fragile sense of comfort, with the sound of a whistle at night serving as reassurance that someone is watching.

However, the growing dependence on vigilantes exposes deeper

security gaps within the neighbourhood. Poor street lighting, narrow access roads, and abandoned buildings provide easy hiding spots for criminals. In many areas, the absence of surveillance cameras and organized resident associations leaves communities vulnerable and reactive rather than prepared.

Beyond the physical environment, residents point to a more troubling root cause, youth unemployment. Throughout Ipaja, young people roam the streets daily in search of jobs that rarely come. Community members say prolonged joblessness has pushed some youths toward petty crimes, not out of long-term criminal ambition, but desperation.

For families already battling rising living costs, insecurity has become an added burden. Money meant for food, school fees, or rent is now spent on extra locks, window protectors, and contributions to night guards, expenses residents say should not be theirs alone to bear.

Beyond night-time burglaries, residents say petty crimes such as phone snatching and bag theft have also increased during the day, particularly around bus parks and busy junctions. Commuters heading to work early in the morning or returning late in the evening are frequent targets, adding another layer of fear to daily life. What was once considered routine movement within the neighbourhood now requires caution and constant alertness.

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Housing Crisis Bites as Rent Jumps Hit Low-Income Earners in Sango-Ota

Olanrewaju Olayinka Emmanuel

Tenants in Sango-Ota, a fast-growing industrial town in Ogun State, are struggling to cope with rising house rents as landlords impose sudden and steep increases, deepening the cost-of-living crisis for low- and middle-income earners.

Sango-Ota has recorded rapid population growth in recent years, driven by its proximity to Lagos, the presence of factories and industrial estates, and relatively cheaper living costs compared to the commercial capital. But the influx of workers and traders has intensified demand for housing, making affordable accommodation increasingly scarce.

Many residents say rent increments are no longer occasional but frequent and unpredictable, with little or no prior notice from landlords.

A female tenant, who asked not to be named, said her annual rent was recently increased from 60,000 to

90,000, an increment she described as unbearable given her income level.

“My salary has not increased, but food and transport are more expensive now,” she said. “The extra 30,000 is money I used to spend on food and my children’s school needs. Now it is going into rent.”

Another tenant, Mr. Kehinde, said attempts to negotiate with his landlord failed after tenants were informed of a new rent figure without prior discussion.

“We just woke up one day and were told the rent has gone up,” he said. “When we tried to talk, the landlord said there was nothing he could do. There was no notice and no meeting with tenants.”

A car parts seller in the area said the rent increase was not matched by improvements in living conditions, adding that his apartment leaks whenever it rains.

“The house is not worth the price they are asking,” he said. “My room leaks,

and nothing has been repaired. I have started looking for another place, but everywhere in Sango-Ota is expensive now.”

Residents say the housing pressure is forcing families to cut spending on food, healthcare, education and savings, with some considering relocating to more distant towns despite the higher transportation costs.

Urban growth around the Lagos–Ogun corridor has continued to stretch housing supply, while the construction of low-cost rental housing has not kept pace with demand, according to residents and community leaders.

Tenants are now calling on the government and housing authorities to regulate rent increases and strengthen tenant protections, particularly in industrial towns experiencing rapid population growth.

How Ipaja Residents Suffer Rising Burglary Amid Lagos' Security Gaps

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Speaking with some youths, the story is the same. A 24-year-old secondary school graduate, who identified himself as Sadiq, said he has spent nearly two years searching for steady work without success. Each morning, he leaves his family's one-room apartment in Ipaja with hope that often fades by evening.

"People think youths are just lazy, but that is not true," he said. "I have gone to construction sites, supermarkets, even mechanic workshops. They say they will call me, but they never do. When you are hungry and you see others surviving through bad ways, the thought enters your head, even if you don't want it."

Blessing, a 22-year-old hairdresser in training, said the lack of startup support has left many young women equally vulnerable. According to her, learning a skill without financial backing only deepens frustration.

"I finished learning hairdressing, but where is the money to start?" she asked. "My parents are struggling, and customers don't come often. Some girls follow boys who promise quick money. When nothing is working, temptation becomes strong."

Tunde, a 27-year-old university graduate, said unemployment has stripped many young men of dignity and direction. After graduating three years ago, he returned to Ipaja hoping to find work, but remained jobless.

"You wake up every day feeling useless," he said. "No job, no income, no respect. Some people now see crime as the only option to survive. It is not because they love stealing, but because society has abandoned them."

A community leader who asked not to be named explained that many of the offenders are known faces. "Most of these boys did not plan to become thieves," he said. "But hunger and frustration can change a person's thinking when there is no opportunity."

In estates such as Abesan and other inner streets of Ipaja, tenants say the sound of vigilante whistles has become part of the night's soundtrack. While some residents find comfort in knowing someone is awake, others worry about how much power these informal guards wield. "At least when we hear the whistle, we know someone is watching," a tenant said, "but we don't even know who is truly in charge."

A major challenge, residents note, is the

lack of organized resident associations on many streets. Without a formal structure, security decisions are often inconsistent. Some streets contribute money for night guards, while neighbouring streets do nothing, creating uneven protection that criminals easily exploit. This absence of coordination leaves entire blocks vulnerable and encourages a reactive approach to crime.

Security analysts warn that while vigilante groups may fill immediate gaps, their unregulated nature poses risks. Cases of wrongful accusations, harassment, and excessive force have been reported in similar communities across Lagos. Without proper oversight or collaboration with law enforcement, vigilante activities can escalate into conflict, especially when arrests are made without legal backing.

There is also the issue of strained relationships between vigilantes and the police. Residents say confusion often arises over authority, particularly during emergencies. In some cases, by the time police arrive, suspects have either fled or been handled by vigilantes, complicating investigations and raising questions about accountability.

Infrastructure deficiencies further worsen the situation. Many streets remain poorly lit, while surveillance cameras are either absent or non-functional.

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Water Scarcity Disrupts Daily Life At MAPOLY Community

Yusuf Olamide

At dawn in Ojere, the community that hosts Moshood Abiola Polytechnic (MAPOLY), while many students across Abeokuta prepare for lectures, some students of the institution are already on the move—not to class, but in search of water.

Plastic buckets in hand, they navigate dusty streets, stopping at wells, filling stations, or neighbours' compounds, hoping to secure enough water to bathe, cook, or brush their teeth before the day begins. In Ojere, water is not guaranteed; it must be chased.

"For us here, water comes before school," said Miss Kahdijat, a MAPOLY student, as she waited her turn at a community well. "If there is no water to clean up, I can't even think of going to lectures."

Water scarcity is not new in Ojere. Residents say it has been their reality for years, growing worse as the community population rises with the

influx of students. Taps in many compounds have been dry for months. Boreholes that once served tenants are now blocked, broken, or abandoned.

In one compound, tenants said their rent was increased from 150,000 to 200,000 after landlords promised to repair water facilities. Months later, nothing has changed.

"There's no water, no electricity," Miss Kahdijat added, her frustration evident. "And the place we fetch water

from is very far. We are suffering seriously."

For those unable to walk long distances, the alternative is to buy water. Vendors sell a 25-litre jerrycan for as much as 500—a heavy burden for students already struggling with school fees, food, and transport.

"As a student, spending 500 for just one jerrycan is very hard," another MAPOLY student said. "Not all of us can afford it."

Some residents resort to begging neighbours for water just to cook. Others rely on sachet (pure) water to brush their teeth or prepare meals, an option many admit is unsustainable.

The water crisis has quietly crept into lecture halls and examination rooms. Several students admitted they have missed classes or arrived late because they had to fetch water first.

"Sometimes, you boil dirty well water before bathing," one student explained. "It wastes time and gas. Early

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How Ipaja Residents Suffer Rising Burglary Amid Lagos' Security Gaps

Oderinde Mayowa

Abandoned and uncompleted buildings dot the area, providing hideouts for criminals who understand the terrain better than those meant to police it. Residents say these environmental weaknesses make burglary easy and detection difficult.

Police response time remains a sore point. Several residents recount incidents where calls for help were answered long after criminals had escaped. The delays are most pronounced at night, when manpower is stretched thin across multiple communities. "They usually come after everything has happened," one resident said. "By then, it's just stories."

Underlying all these challenges is the persistent problem of youth unemployment. Community leaders say idle youths, many of whom grew up in the same neighbourhoods, are increasingly drawn into petty crimes as economic hardship deepens across Lagos. The gap between aspiration and opportunity continues to widen, leaving frustration

in its wake.

Residents and experts alike argue that addressing insecurity without tackling unemployment is unsustainable. They call for skills acquisition programmes, job creation centres within local councils, and economic interventions targeted at vulnerable youths. Without these measures, they fear the cycle of crime and fear will persist.

In the meantime, residents say what they desire most is not aggressive policing or punishment alone, but prevention. Structured community policing linked directly to nearby police commands, regular security meetings involving residents, vigilantes and officers, improved lighting, surveillance, and faster response teams are among the measures they believe could restore a sense of safety, one step at a time.

Behind the shattered windows and sleepless nights lies a wider crisis unfolding in Ipaja and neighbouring communities of Ayobo and Iyana-Ipaja.

This report examines the rise in burglary and petty crime, the security gaps exposing residents to danger, and how worsening youth unemployment is pushing communities toward informal vigilante systems in the absence of effective state protection.

For now, residents say they are trapped between fear and improvisation, relying on vigilantes they did not choose and security systems they do not fully trust.

While community efforts have helped deter some attacks, many believe lasting safety can only come from a coordinated response that combines effective policing, improved infrastructure, and real economic opportunities for young people.

Until then, nights in Ipaja remain tense. Doors are locked earlier, lights stay on longer, and families listen closely for the sound of a whistle in the dark. For residents, safety has become a daily negotiation, one shaped not only by crime, but by the absence of solutions they believe should already exist.

Water Scarcity Disrupts Daily Life At MAPOLY Community

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In extreme cases, students say they have arrived late for examinations after trekking long distances to get water—an ordeal that affects both academic performance and mental health.

Beyond inconvenience, the lack of clean water has serious health consequences. Many residents rely on shallow wells, especially during the dry season, despite knowing the risks.

Daniella, a tenant in Ojere, recalled how using well water for cooking once left her ill.

"I got an infection from it," she said quietly. "It took a lot of money and time before I recovered."

Since then, she avoids well water for cooking and drinking, using it only for washing clothes. Like many others, she now spends more daily just to stay healthy.

Honourable Wale Matanmi Badmus, an indigene of Ojere, described the

situation as "very severe," especially when rainfall stops.

"In the dry season, the problem doubles," he said. "There is no river around us, and the boreholes we had before are spoiled."

According to him, a community borehole once provided through collective effort no longer works due to faulty pumping machines and unstable electricity. Today, residents depend largely on a woman who buys water from a company and sells it from a storage tank.

While this has reduced sickness, Badmus insists it is not a long-term solution.

"Ojere is too developed to be suffering from water," he said.

Residents blame the crisis on faulty boreholes, poor electricity supply, high repair costs, unaccountable landlords, and rapid population growth driven by student housing. They are calling on landlords, community leaders, the government, and MAPOLY management to act—by fixing boreholes, providing

stable electricity, and holding landlords accountable for rent increases tied to water facilities.

Until then, life in Ojere remains shaped by scarcity. Here, water decides who goes to class, who falls sick, and who can afford to live with dignity. For students and residents alike, the struggle for water is no longer just about survival—it is about the right to live, learn, and thrive.



Power Outages Take Toll on Small Businesses in Abeokuta

Boluwatife Benjamin Awoderu

Small business owners in Abeokuta, Ogun State, are struggling to stay afloat as persistent power outages continue to disrupt daily operations and increase operating costs, particularly for service-based businesses such as barbershops.

For many barbers in the city, electricity is not just a convenience but a necessity. Frequent blackouts force them to rely heavily on petrol-powered generators, significantly cutting into daily earnings.

Phillips, a barber who operates in Abeokuta, said unstable power supply has affected both his business expenses and customer comfort.

“Power outages affect my business a lot,” he explained. “Before now, we didn’t have rechargeable clippers, so we needed constant electricity to work. Even with rechargeable clippers today, electricity is still important for customers’ comfort, especially because of fans and lighting.”

According to Phillips, the cost of



fueling generators has become one of the biggest challenges facing barbers and other small-scale business owners.

“How much I spend on fuel depends on customer turnout,” he said. “On busy days, the cost is much higher. Without electricity, I spend about 5,000 on fuel every day, sometimes even more. If there is stable power supply, that expense will reduce significantly.”

He added that although customers pay for services, the rising cost of fuel reduces overall profit and sometimes forces business owners to increase prices, which can discourage customers.

Phillips called on the government and electricity distribution companies, including the Ibadan Electricity Distribution Company

(IBEDC), to improve power supply, noting that electricity plays a vital role in sustaining small businesses.

“Electricity helps all businesses,” he said. “If the government can help provide more stable power, it will help Nigerian businesses at large.”

Across Abeokuta and other parts of Ogun State, traders, artisans, and remote workers continue to face similar challenges, relying on generators and alternative power sources to survive amid inconsistent electricity supply. While many acknowledge that power outages may not be completely eliminated, residents say improved stability would go a long way in easing the financial burden on small businesses.

Rent Hikes Squeeze Tenants in Ogun’s Industrial Hub as Housing Costs Soar

Olayinka Olanrewaju

Residents of Sango-Ota, a fast-growing industrial town in Ogun State, are raising alarm over sudden and repeated increases in house rents, a trend many say is worsening their cost of living and pushing households to the brink.

Tenants across several neighbourhoods told Platform Times that rent hikes have become frequent and unaffordable, with little or no notice from landlords. The situation comes amid rapid population growth in Sango-Ota, driven by its proximity to Lagos, the presence of manufacturing companies, and what was once a relatively lower cost of living.

A female tenant said her annual rent was recently increased from 60,000 to 90,000, a jump she described as unbearable. “I cannot afford this increase,” she said. “My income has not gone up, but food prices and other costs keep rising. The extra 30,000 has seriously affected my budget. Money meant for food, school needs and other expenses is now going to rent.”

Another resident, Mr. Kehinde, said efforts to negotiate with his landlord

after a rent increase were unsuccessful. According to him, tenants were given no prior notice. “We just woke up one day and were told the rent had gone up,” he said. “There was no discussion. The landlord said there was nothing he could do.”

A car parts seller also lamented that rising rents no longer reflect the condition of many apartments. He said his room leaks whenever it rains, yet the rent was still increased. “The house is not worth the price,” he said. “I have started looking for a cheaper place, but everywhere you go now, rent is expensive.”

Residents say the rising cost of housing is affecting their overall quality of life, forcing families to cut back on food, healthcare, education and savings. Many are calling on the government and relevant housing authorities to intervene by regulating rent increases and protecting tenants from sudden and excessive charges.

Sango-Ota continues to expand as an industrial and residential hub, residents fear that without urgent policy action, affordable housing may soon slip completely out of reach for low- and middle-income earners.

Sagamu Traders Struggle as Poor Roads Eat Into Profits

Sagamu, a major commercial hub in Ogun State and a strategic link between Lagos and other parts of the Southwest, is facing a growing economic challenge as deteriorating road conditions continue to disrupt trading activities across the town.

Once known for its easy access to major markets via the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway, Sagamu now struggles with pothole-ridden highways and flooded inner roads that traders say are steadily eroding their profits and threatening their livelihoods.

From the Sagamu-Ogijo-Ikorodu road to market access routes within the town, transportation of goods has become increasingly difficult.

Traders report that journeys that once took minutes now last several hours, leading to higher transportation costs and significant losses, especially for those dealing in perishable goods.

“I used to bring vegetables from the farm and sell everything within the twinkle of an eye,” said Mrs. Oyinda Adeoyo, a foodstuff trader at Sabo Market. “Now, by the time we arrive, half of the goods are already damaged because of the bad road.”

Commercial transport operators also say the poor state of roads has doubled their vehicle maintenance costs. Frequent breakdowns, they explained, have forced them to raise transport fares, a burden that ultimately falls on traders.

“Every week it’s shock absorbers, tyres or wheel alignment,” said Mr. Bolu Olaturunji, a commercial tricycle operator in Sagamu. “If I don’t increase fares, I

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Workers, Students Call For Expansion of Ajah Roads as Traffic Threatens Livelihood, Education

Lawal Suliat Nifemi

Workers, students and commercial transport operators in the Ajah axis of Lagos State have called on the government to urgently expand and rehabilitate roads in the area, warning that persistent traffic gridlock is threatening livelihoods, education and overall quality of life.

Residents of Ajah, Sangotedo and surrounding communities along the Lekki-Epe corridor say daily traffic congestion has become a routine hardship, with commuters spending several hours on journeys that should take far less time. The gridlock, which often begins before dawn, affects movement toward Lekki, Victoria Island and other business districts.

By as early as 6:00 a.m., traffic around the Ajah under-bridge and roundabout is already heavily congested, with buses, private vehicles and commercial motorcycles competing for limited road space. The situation usually eases by mid-morning before returning in the late afternoon and lasting well into the night. Funke Adebayo, a 32-year-old accountant who lives in Sangotedo and works on Victoria Island, said she leaves home as early as 5:15 a.m. to meet her 8:00 a.m. resumption time.

"Some days, it takes two to three hours just to cross Ajah and get towards Lekki," she said. "You start the day already tired." According to her, the delays have begun to affect her job performance and family life.

"I've received warning letters for coming late," she said. "My employer says where I live is my personal choice. Most nights, I get home after 8 or 9 p.m. when my children are already tired. It feels like I live on the road."

Students are also affected by the congestion. Daniel Adeyemi, a 16-year-old secondary school student who lives near Ajah and attends school in Lekki, said traffic regularly causes him to miss early lessons.

"Our school bus starts picking us up past 5:30 a.m.," he said. "If we get stuck

at Ajah, we can arrive after 8:00 a.m. Some days, we miss assembly or the first class."

He added that the long commute leaves him exhausted and affects his ability to study.

Commercial drivers say the gridlock has reduced their daily earnings while increasing operating costs. Ibrahim Musa, a danfo driver who operates the Ajah-CMS route, said traffic has worsened significantly in recent years.

"Before, traffic was there, but not like this," he said. "Now, from morning till almost 10 a.m., and again from evening till night, everywhere is blocked."

According to him, fewer completed trips mean reduced income, despite rising fuel prices.

"If the road was free, I could make about six trips a day," he said. "Now, I'm lucky to do three or four. Fuel is expensive, traffic wastes it, and passengers still want to pay the old fare."

Motorcycle operators have become an alternative for commuters trying to escape the gridlock. Chinedu Okafor, an okada rider operating near the Ajah under-bridge, said demand for motorcycles increases during peak hours.

"If a bus will take two hours from Ajah to Lekki Phase 1, a bike can do it in about 30 minutes," he said. "That's why office workers use us."

However, he warned that the option comes with safety risks, especially during heavy traffic and rainfall.

Residents and transport operators attribute the congestion to narrow road capacity, poor road conditions, flooding, indiscriminate parking and the movement of heavy-duty vehicles.

They are calling for road expansion, improved drainage, stricter traffic enforcement and better public transport systems.

As traffic congestion continues to worsen, residents warn that without urgent government intervention, the gridlock in Ajah could further undermine productivity and educational outcomes in one of Lagos' fastest-growing corridors.

Sagamu Traders Struggle as Poor Roads Eat Into Profits

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won't survive. I still have to meet my daily delivery obligations to the tricycle owner."

As transport costs rise, many traders are left with little choice but to increase prices or absorb the losses themselves. In an already fragile economy, higher prices have driven many customers away, further reducing sales.

For traders who depend on bulk buyers from neighboring towns, the impact has been severe. According to Mr. Bawa Suleiman, a rice dealer in Sagamu, customers from Ijebu, Abeokuta, Ogijo and Ikorodu no longer visit the market.

"They say the road will damage their vehicles," Suleiman said. "That alone has reduced my sales by almost half."

Market leaders confirm a noticeable decline in daily turnover, particularly during the rainy season when many roads become nearly impassable due to flooding and deep potholes.

Beyond economic losses, traders also face growing safety and health concerns. Stagnant water trapped in potholes has become a breeding ground for mosquitoes, increasing the risk of malaria, while accidents caused by poor visibility and deep craters are becoming more frequent.

"I was injured when my motorcycle fell into a pothole at night," said an elderly trader who requested anonymity. "I couldn't open my shop for almost three weeks."

Health experts warn that prolonged exposure to such conditions can contribute to stress-related illnesses and higher malaria cases among traders who spend long hours navigating damaged roads.

Traders and residents are now calling on the Ogun State Government and relevant agencies to prioritize the rehabilitation of Sagamu's road network, stressing that improved infrastructure would ease transportation challenges, revive commercial activities and boost the state's internally generated revenue.

"We are not asking for luxury roads," said Mrs. Shoremekun, a trader and community leader. "We just want roads that allow us to move our goods without fear."

As Sagamu continues to serve as a vital commercial gateway in Ogun State, traders insist that urgent attention to road infrastructure is no longer optional but essential for the town's economic survival.

Health Risks Rise in Oworoshoki as Flooding, Pollution Hit Fishermen, Residents

Adekoya Jumoke Omotayo, Michael Omojola Olamide

Residents of the Oworoshoki waterfront community in Lagos have raised alarm over worsening flooding and environmental pollution, warning that the situation is reducing fish harvests and increasing health risks. The concerns intensified after heavy rainfall earlier this month submerged several streets and homes in the densely populated settlement.

Oworoshoki, located beneath the Third Mainland Bridge along the Lagos Lagoon, is home to generations of fishing families who depend largely on daily catches for survival. However, fishermen say increasing pollution,

dredging activities, and waste discharge into the lagoon have driven fish away, leaving many with little or nothing to sell.

“I have been fishing here for more than 15 years, but now I can spend the whole day on the water and return with almost nothing,” said Salisu Adamu, a fisherman and father of four. “Before, I could feed my family and still sell fish in the market. Now, I borrow money just to survive.”

Environmental experts have linked declining fish populations in parts of the Lagos Lagoon to untreated sewage, plastic waste, and industrial effluents discharged into waterways. According to

the Lagos State Environmental Protection Agency (LASEPA), several sections of the lagoon record pollution levels above safe limits, affecting aquatic life and human livelihoods.

Beyond declining fish catch, residents say flooding has become an annual crisis, turning streets into waterways whenever there is heavy rainfall. Several houses near the waterfront were flooded during the most recent downpour, forcing families to move their belongings to higher ground.

“Our children could not go to school for two days because everywhere was flooded,” said Kemi Ogunleye, a food vendor who lives close to the lagoon. “Water entered our room and spoiled foodstuffs. This happens almost every rainy season.”

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Silent Killer: Why Young Nigerians Ignore Blood Pressure Checks

Esther Olorunyomi

High blood pressure, medically known as hypertension, is one of the world’s most widespread yet underdiagnosed health conditions. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), an estimated 1.4 billion adults globally live with high blood pressure, many of whom are unaware of their condition because it often presents no obvious symptoms. Regular screening remains the only reliable way to detect elevated blood pressure.

Despite this reality, many young people rarely check their blood pressure. Traditionally regarded as a condition affecting middle-aged and older adults, hypertension is increasingly being identified among younger age groups, including adolescents and adults in their 20s and 30s.

Recent research shows that hypertension among young adults is not uncommon. Some studies estimate that nearly one in four young adults may have elevated blood pressure or hypertension, often linked to obesity, poor diet, stress, and sedentary lifestyles. These findings challenge the long-held belief that youth automatically protects against cardiovascular disease.

A major factor contributing to low testing rates among young people is lack of awareness. Many youths assume that feeling healthy means they cannot have



high blood pressure. However, the WHO notes that hypertension often develops silently, without pain or early warning signs, allowing it to progress unnoticed until serious complications occur.

Public health messaging also plays a role. Campaigns on heart disease and stroke frequently target older adults, reinforcing the perception that high blood pressure is an “older person’s disease” and leaving younger populations complacent.

Lifestyle factors further compound the problem. Diets high in salt and processed foods, low physical activity, excessive alcohol consumption, and chronic stress—now common among young people—are all known contributors to rising blood pressure levels.

Global data underline the growing concern. Studies show that rates of high blood pressure among children and adolescents under 19 have nearly doubled over the past two decades, with

obesity identified as a major driver. Yet screening remains limited. Fewer than one in five adolescents and young adults report checking their blood pressure regularly, even when risk factors are present.

Health workers say the consequences of this neglect can be severe. Undiagnosed hypertension in young adults can quietly damage the heart, brain, and kidneys, significantly increasing the risk of heart attack, stroke, kidney failure, and other chronic conditions later in life.

At clinics and diagnostic centres, health professionals observe that fear, denial, and poor health-seeking behaviour discourage young people from routine checks. Many only discover dangerously high readings accidentally during unrelated medical tests.

Experts stress that early detection and lifestyle modification are critical. Regular blood pressure monitoring, combined with healthier diets, physical activity, reduced alcohol intake, and stress management, can significantly lower long-term cardiovascular risk.

Public health advocates are now calling for targeted awareness campaigns, school- and workplace-based screening programmes, and the integration of blood pressure checks into routine health assessments for young people.

Their message is clear: youth is not a shield against hypertension, and ignoring regular blood pressure checks today may come at a high cost tomorrow.

Why Malaria Is Rising in Ogun State, Despite National Decline

Shittu Babatunde

Malaria cases are rising in Ogun State even as Nigeria records a gradual decline in prevalence nationwide, raising concerns among health authorities and exposing gaps in prevention, healthcare access, and environmental control across the state.

Data from health officials show that malaria prevalence in Ogun increased from about 22 per cent in 2018 to roughly 25 per cent in 2021, while the national average fell from 42 per cent in 2010 to about 22 per cent in 2021. Malaria now accounts for an estimated 60 per cent of outpatient visits and about 40 per cent of hospital admissions in the state, with pregnant women and children under five the most affected.

Public health experts attribute the trend to a combination of environmental conditions, weak primary healthcare systems, and inconsistent use of preventive tools.

One major factor is poor



environmental sanitation. Across many communities in Abeokuta, Ifo, Sagamu and border towns, stagnant water from blocked drainage channels and uncollected refuse provides breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Rapid urban expansion, especially in peri-urban settlements, has also outpaced basic infrastructure, leaving many areas without proper waste management or drainage.

Health workers say access to early diagnosis and treatment remains uneven, particularly in rural communities. Several primary healthcare centres lack consistent supplies of rapid diagnostic kits and antimalarial drugs, forcing residents to

rely on patent medicine vendors or self-medication, which delays proper treatment and increases transmission. “The earlier people are tested and treated, the lower the chance of further spread,” a community health worker in Yewa North said. “But many patients only come when symptoms are severe, and by then, they may have infected others.”

Another challenge is the limited and inconsistent use of insecticide-treated nets (ITNs). Some households do not sleep under the nets due to heat, discomfort, or lack of awareness about their importance, while others use the nets for non-health purposes.

Speaking during a recent flag-off of the distribution of over three million ITNs in Abeokuta, the Minister of Health, Prof. Ali Pate, expressed concern that malaria prevalence was rising in Ogun while declining in other parts of the country. He noted that Nigeria still accounts for about 27 per cent of global malaria cases and 31 per cent of global malaria deaths, urging states to intensify local control efforts.

Socio-economic pressures also play a role. Poor housing conditions, including overcrowded rooms without window nets or proper ventilation, increase exposure to mosquito bites. In farming and riverine communities, residents are exposed during early morning and late-evening outdoor activities, peak periods for mosquito activity.

Climate patterns may be worsening the situation. Prolonged rainy seasons and flooding in low-lying areas create persistent pools of water that extend mosquito breeding cycles, making year-round transmission more likely.

State health officials say they are scaling up interventions through mass ITN distribution, community sensitisation campaigns, and support for primary healthcare centres. However, public health advocates argue that long-term reduction will require stronger environmental enforcement, sustained funding for community health services, and regular monitoring of malaria trends at local government level.

For many residents, the impact is already being felt in lost productivity, rising medical costs, and preventable deaths. As Ogun struggles with a malaria burden moving against the national trend, health experts warn that without coordinated action across sanitation, housing, and healthcare delivery, the state may continue to record rising infections despite ongoing national gains.

Health Risks Rise in Oworoshoki as Flooding, Pollution Hit Fishermen, Residents

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Community members blame blocked drainage channels, unregulated construction, and indiscriminate waste dumping for worsening the floods. Plastic waste, household refuse, and sewage are frequently seen flowing directly into the lagoon and open gutters, creating stagnant pools of polluted water around homes.

Health concerns are also mounting. Residents report a rise in mosquito infestations after floods, leading to frequent malaria cases, while contaminated floodwater mixed with sewage has raised fears of waterborne diseases such as diarrhoea and cholera. Data from the Lagos State Ministry of Health show that malaria remains one of the leading causes of illness in flood-prone communities during the rainy season.

“At night, the mosquitoes are too much, especially after flooding,” said Aisha Lawal, a mother of three. “My youngest child has had malaria twice this year already. We are always afraid when the rain starts falling.”

Community leaders note that many

houses in Oworoshoki were built close to the water without proper drainage systems, making evacuation difficult during severe flooding. They say repeated complaints to relevant authorities about waste management and drainage maintenance have yet to yield lasting solutions.

The situation in Oworoshoki reflects broader challenges faced by waterfront settlements across Lagos, where rapid urbanisation, poor waste disposal, and environmental degradation continue to threaten low-income fishing communities. Lagos, a coastal megacity of over 20 million people, experiences intense seasonal rainfall, which often overwhelms existing drainage infrastructure in informal settlements.

Residents are calling for urgent government intervention to improve drainage systems, enforce waste management regulations, curb pollution in the lagoon, and protect fishing livelihoods that remain the primary source of income for many families.

“We are not asking for too much,” Adamu said. “We just want to fish in clean water and live without fear whenever it rains.”

A Thriving Market Without Toilets: The Untold Struggles Behind Atikori's Success

Omotayo Angela

Every third day in Ijebu Igbo, Ogun State, a familiar transformation takes place. What is usually a quiet open space suddenly fills with traders, farmers and buyers moving with purpose. Mats are spread on bare ground, baskets of garri and bananas are arranged, and motorcycles arrive heavily loaded. This is Atikori Market, known formally as Oja Sare Kwowo Atikori, a market that has survived for generations, even as it operates without some of the most basic facilities.

For many, Atikori Market is simply a place to trade. For the people of Ijebu North Local Government, it is a living reminder of history. According to local accounts, the market was founded by siblings, Ojowo and Atikori, who created a trading space for livestock and farm produce. Over time, the market grew, but its rhythm never changed.

Unlike modern markets that open daily, Atikori operates fully once every three days. The system, traders say, is not accidental. It was designed around farming life. Cocoa, palm oil, bananas and garri take time to harvest, process and transport.

"This market understands farmers," said Mrs. Eniola, who has sold garri here for 15 years. "After market day, we go back to our farms. By the next market day, we have something new to sell."

The three-day cycle has outlived many attempts to modernize it. Market leaders confirmed that efforts to run Atikori as a daily market failed. Traders stopped coming, sales dropped, and the market lost its energy. Today, only a few sellers, such as fish traders, operate on non-market days, and even they admit business is slow.

The present market leadership, including the Babaloja, now over 60, Chief Abiodun Okutero who joined the leadership in 2002, and Mrs. Animashaun Adija, who became Otun in 2020, say the market's survival lies in respecting its structure. On market days, traders arrive not just from nearby communities, but from places like Iketi and Lagos. Among them is Balkis Eleja, a fish seller who has spent 11 years in the market. Her connection runs deep. "I inherited this trade from my great-

grandfather," she said. "This market is how I survive."

But behind the lively scenes of bargaining and sales lies a quieter struggle. Despite its long history and economic importance, Atikori Market has no toilet facilities. Traders, many of whom spend long hours at the market, are forced to find uncomfortable alternatives.

Yet, in spite of these challenges, the market remains deeply rooted in culture and spirituality. One of its most sacred traditions is the Spiritual Market Prayer. On this day, the market shuts down completely. Everyone wears white, and outsiders are not allowed in. For the traders, it is a reminder that Atikori Market is not just about profit, but about identity and community.



"It is not easy, especially for women," said Mrs. Melora Akinyemi, who has sold assorted items in the market for almost 30 years. "We are managing, but we should not be managing like this."

Beyond toilets, traders also complain about poor infrastructure. There are no proper stalls or shelters, leaving sellers of farm produce exposed to harsh sunlight and heavy rain. During the rainy season, garri and other goods are at constant risk of being soaked and spoil.

As trading winds down and sellers begin to pack up, the resilience of the market becomes clear. It has survived without daily trading, without modern structures, and without basic amenities. But the voices of the traders are growing louder.

They are calling on the government to recognize the market's importance by providing toilets, improving access roads, expanding the market space and building shelters for farm produce sellers. Such support, they believe, would protect livelihoods and preserve a market that has fed generations.

Atikori Market may be thriving, but its success comes at a cost borne quietly by the people who keep it alive — every third day.

In Ibadan, Students Chase Degrees As Ancient Crafts Slip Away

Babalola Elizabeth

In the early hours of the morning, long before lecture halls begin to fill, many students across Ibadan are already at work—selling goods, learning trades, or offering services to survive in a city where education alone no longer guarantees economic stability.

For these young people, schooling and survival now run side by side, each competing for time, energy, and hope.

Ibadan, the capital of Oyo State and one of West Africa’s largest indigenous cities, with a metropolitan population estimated at over 3.5 million, stands at a crossroads between tradition and modern economic pressure.

While its hills, family compounds, and cultural festivals reflect deep Yoruba heritage, its youths are increasingly burdened by harsh economic realities that force them to juggle education with daily hustles.

For many undergraduates, part-time work has become essential rather than optional. Some work in markets and restaurants, others assist artisans, while many engage in informal businesses such as phone repairs, fashion design, online trading, and ride-hailing services to

cover feeding, transportation, and academic materials.

These daily struggles shape their academic experiences and, in some cases, influence how long they remain in school.

According to data from Nigeria’s National Bureau of Statistics, youth unemployment and underemployment remain persistently high, pushing many students into the informal economy even while enrolled in tertiary institutions. Rising living costs and reduced family income have further deepened this trend in urban centres like Ibadan.

Beyond classrooms and street

corners, another quiet struggle is unfolding: the survival of Ibadan’s traditional craft industries, particularly adire, the indigenous indigo-dyed fabric long associated with Yoruba identity.

In traditional compounds across the city, elderly artisans still practise the labour-intensive process of tying and stitching fabric, applying cassava starch as resist, and dyeing cloth in deep indigo pots. Patterns such as “Ibadan dun”—meaning “Ibadan is sweet”—are created using techniques passed down through generations.

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Students Turn to Street Hawking to Fund Education in Sagamu

Rasaq Ridwan Afolabi

As students across Sagamu prepare for classes each morning, many are also preparing for the streets. Along busy roads and market areas in Sabo and its environs, young students can be seen hawking sachet water, fruits, snacks, and other items in a bid to finance their education amid worsening economic hardship.

For these students, street

hawking is not a matter of choice but survival. Many attend school during the day and return to the streets in the evenings to earn money for school fees, textbooks, and other academic expenses.

Azeez Ibrahim, a 19-year-old National Diploma student of Abraham Adesanya Polytechnic, Ijebu-Igbo, said he hawks cold drinks after lectures to supplement his income.

“My parents cannot afford my school fees alone,” he said. “What I sell helps me pay for registration and buy textbooks. I also sell clothes online to support myself.”

Several students interviewed attributed their situation to the rising cost of education and the economic pressure on families. On a good day, some said they earn between 2,000 and 4,000, though sales are often unpredictable.

Beyond financial stress, street hawking exposes students to significant safety risks. Khadijat Sadiq, a secondary school student who sells fruits near Agura Junction in Sabo, said she constantly fears for her life.

“I almost got hit by a car once,” she recalled. “Drivers don’t slow down. But if I stop selling, I may not return to school.”

Samuel Olatunji, a final-year student who operates a Point of Sale (P.O.S) business during breaks and sells snacks in the evening, said the practice has affected his academic performance.

“After selling, I’m always tired,” he said. “Sometimes I sleep without reading. But I

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Multiple Distractions Undermine Academic Focus at MAPOLY, Students Raise Alarm

Ogunjobi Oluwatomisin

Students of Moshood Abiola Polytechnic (MAPOLY), particularly those in the Department of Mass Communication, have raised concerns over mounting academic, economic, and social challenges they say are steadily eroding effective learning and productivity on campus.

Interviews conducted with several students revealed that economic hardship remains one of the most significant obstacles to academic focus. Many undergraduates, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said they struggle to afford basic necessities such as transportation to lectures, regular meals, and essential learning materials.

According to the students, these financial pressures force them to constantly balance academics with daily

survival, making sustained concentration difficult, especially for those from low-income backgrounds.

Beyond economic challenges, students identified social engagements and personal ambitions as major sources of distraction. An anonymous Mass Communication student disclosed that involvement in political activities, social events, and campus entertainment often leads to irregular lecture attendance.

Although such distractions may not immediately affect grades, the student noted that consistent absence from lectures weakens academic stability and negatively impacts long-term performance.

Excessive phone usage and social media engagement were also highlighted as growing concerns. Students pointed to constant interaction with platforms such as WhatsApp, TikTok, and Instagram,

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In Ibadan, Students Chase Degrees As Ancient Crafts Slip Away

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However, these crafts are rapidly declining.

Artisans attribute the downturn to the influx of cheap imported textiles, the widespread use of synthetic dyes, and the steady loss of young apprentices who now seek faster and more lucrative sources of income. Workshops that once trained dozens of youths now operate with only a handful of ageing practitioners.

Some artisans recall that between the 1930s and 1950s, adire production was a major economic activity in Ibadan and other Yoruba cities, supporting families and sustaining entire communities. Today, many fear that without deliberate intervention, the skills may disappear entirely.

Still, signs of revival are emerging. A small but growing number of young designers are reintroducing adire into contemporary fashion, blending traditional patterns with modern cuts that appeal to urban consumers and online markets. Social media and e-commerce platforms have

enabled some artisans and designers to reach buyers beyond Nigeria, creating new income streams and renewed interest in indigenous textiles.

Cultural festivals also remain vital expressions of Ibadan's identity and potential economic engines.

Annual events such as the Egungun masquerade festivals and the Oke'Badan festival, which commemorates the city's founding, attract large crowds for performances, prayers, and traditional displays.

During festival periods, local businesses experience increased patronage, artisans sell more products, and temporary jobs are created in areas such as costume-making, drumming, catering, and merchandising. Despite this, many residents believe the tourism potential of these festivals remains largely untapped due to limited promotion, inadequate infrastructure, and insufficient government-backed cultural investment.

For many young people, festivals are more than celebrations. They offer moments of cultural reconnection and opportunities to learn traditional skills,

perform, and temporarily escape daily economic stress. Some students actively participate in festival-related trades, using the experience to supplement their income and build creative skills.

Experts in cultural development argue that stronger investment in creative and cultural industries could transform heritage into sustainable employment for youths while preserving endangered traditions.

Across Africa, cities are increasingly leveraging culture as a tool for tourism development, job creation, and urban renewal.

The intersection of education, economic struggle, and cultural survival now defines the modern Ibadan youth experience. Students are not only fighting to remain in school; they are also, often unknowingly, positioned as the last link between disappearing traditions and future innovation.

As artisans struggle to keep their skills alive and students dream beyond mere survival, Ibadan's story reflects a broader Nigerian reality—one where cultural heritage remains rich, but opportunity remains fragile.

Multiple Distractions Undermine Academic Focus at MAPOLY, Students Raise Alarm

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saying it reduces attention span, encourages procrastination, and limits the ability to engage in focused study.

Financial pressure has also pushed many students into side hustles to support themselves. While these activities help them meet immediate needs, students said they consume valuable study time and often leave them exhausted and unprepared for academic work.

Another major issue raised was the delay in academic processes, particularly the postponement of examinations and the late release of results. A Mass Communication student, Jelili Gbadamosi, explained that delayed results create anxiety and uncertainty over academic standing, possible carryovers, and eligibility for progression.

He added that such delays often come with unexpected financial

burdens, including repeated follow-ups and result-related expenses, further straining students' limited resources.

Students warned that the combined effect of financial stress, academic uncertainty, and divided attention has far-reaching consequences on performance.

They said these pressures reduce focus during lectures, weaken exam preparation, and negatively affect motivation, time management, and academic confidence. In some cases, students noted that the pressure leads to disengagement from academic activities.

Despite the challenges, students said many have adopted personal strategies to maintain focus. These include early preparation for examinations, creating personal reading timetables, disciplined budgeting, limiting phone use during study periods, and ensuring regular lecture attendance. Libraries and other quiet study spaces

were also identified as crucial to concentration and academic growth.

Looking ahead, students called for urgent intervention from MAPOLY management, urging the institution to strictly adhere to its academic calendar, ensure timely processing and release of examination results, and improve digital academic systems.

They also appealed to student leaders to act as effective intermediaries between students and management by promoting transparency, addressing complaints, and advocating academic support initiatives.

In addition, students called on the government to address the root causes of many of the distractions. They recommended welfare programmes such as financial assistance, food support, and the provision of essential learning tools, including laptops, noting that such measures would significantly ease economic pressure and enable students to focus more effectively on their academic pursuits.

Hostel Rent Soars Around MAPOLY, Students Lament Exploitation by Agents

Obimuyiwa Ruth Abimi

The cost of hostel accommodation around the Moshood Abiola Polytechnic (MAPOLY), Abeokuta, has continued to rise sharply, leaving many students struggling to secure affordable housing and raising concerns over alleged exploitation by accommodation agents.

Investigations conducted around student-populated areas such as Oluwo and Obada reveal significant rent increases, hidden charges and pressure tactics allegedly employed by some agents, forcing students to accept unfavourable terms to avoid homelessness.

Tunde, a former MAPOLY student who graduated last year, recalled that hostel accommodation was more affordable during his time as a student.

“Back then, I lived at Oluwo. I paid 50,000 per year, with an agent’s commission of 5,000. The agreement was straightforward—a room, a bed and basic amenities,” he said.

According to him, the situation has since worsened, with agents imposing additional charges and increasing rent without clear justification.

“They show you a nice room at first, but after you pay the deposit, you discover the accommodation is substandard. They prey on students’ desperation,” he added.

Fresh students are also feeling the impact of the rising costs. Opeyemi, a first-year student currently residing in Oluwo, said she paid 120,000 for a single room, excluding an agent commission of 10,000.

“The agreement was full of clauses, and I felt pressured to sign because I didn’t want to be homeless,” she said.

She further complained about poor living conditions, noting that the room leaks during rainfall and that complaints to the landlord have yielded no response.

Similarly, Morayo, a MAPOLY student living in Obada, reported a drastic increase in rent within a short period.

According to her, she moved into her apartment in November 2024 when the rent was 25,000 per month. The rent has since been increased to 80,000 monthly.

“The agent increased the rent significantly this year without a clear reason. I felt pressured to pay,” she said.

Students interviewed expressed frustration over the lack of transparency in rent agreements and called for better regulation of accommodation agents operating around the institution.

They urged fellow students to remain cautious when dealing with agents and to report suspicious practices to relevant authorities. Some also stressed the need for collective action and student solidarity to address the growing housing challenge.

As hostel rent continues to rise, many students fear that access to a affordable and decent accommodation around MAPOLY may soon become unattainable unless urgent measures are taken to protect student tenants.

Students Turn to Street Hawking to Fund Education in Sagamu

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still have to do it to pay for my project and clearance.”

Parents also acknowledge the difficult reality. Mrs. Funke Adebola, a trader in Sabo, said allowing her son to hawk was a painful decision.

“I don’t like it, but education is expensive,” she said. “We are just trying to survive.”

An interviewed teacher at Remo Divisional High School warned that while street trading may provide short-term financial relief, it poses long-term dangers to students’ safety and academic success. He stressed the need for government intervention through scholarships,

grants, and safer income opportunities for students.

Similarly, a youth development advocate in Sagamu, Mr. Kunle Ajayi, popularly known as “Warrior,” described the situation as alarming.

“These students are hardworking and determined,” he said. “But no child should risk their life on the road just to get an education. Authorities must step in to support them.”

Despite the risks and exhaustion, many student-hawkers remain hopeful. They believe education offers a pathway out of poverty and a chance to build better futures for themselves and their

families.

As evening approaches in Sabo and the streets gradually grow quieter, the voices of hawkers fade. Yet, for many students, the struggle continues — one sale at a time, in pursuit of education and a better life.



Ayobo-Ipaja Traders Lament Poor Waste Collection as Overflowing Refuse Disrupts Business

Hameedah Balogun

Traders at the Ayobo-Ipaja Market in Lagos State have raised concerns over the persistent accumulation of uncollected refuse in the market, saying the situation is affecting their businesses, health, and overall well-being.

Several traders who spoke with this reporter said overflowing dustbins and heaps of waste have made it difficult to operate in a clean and hygienic environment, discouraging customers and exposing traders to health risks.

A vegetable seller identified as Morenikeji said the presence of refuse close to trading points gives customers a negative impression and threatens the quality of perishable goods.

“If I sell my vegetables near the dustbin, I look dirty because of the environment. If I stop selling, the market will still be dirty,” she said. “Even when the vegetables are well covered, the dirt still affects them.”

Morenikeji added that the poor sanitary condition has disrupted her daily life, noting that the



unpleasant environment sometimes forces her to stay away from her home. She said she is considering relocating to another market if the situation does not improve.

Calling for urgent government intervention, she appealed for the provision of functional waste evacuation trucks and more regular refuse collection. According to her, waste evacuation often stops whenever the designated truck breaks down.

“They will tell us the vehicle is faulty, and once that happens, nothing is done,” she said.

While acknowledging the efforts of the market chairman, Morenikeji noted that the refuse problem persists due to logistical challenges. She added that customers

often show understanding when traders explain that waste collection vehicles are not functioning. “The dustbin was not like this before. Sometimes the vehicle comes at any time to pack the dirt,” she said.

Another trader, a garri seller who requested anonymity, also expressed concern over what he described as declining attention to waste management in the market. He said the continued presence of refuse affects both traders and customers. “There is no way dirt will be here and it will not affect us,” the trader said.

The trader recalled that waste was previously evacuated two to three times weekly but noted that such regularity has reduced in recent times.

“Before, they used to pack the dirt two or three times a week, but now they don’t pay attention like before,” he said.

The traders jointly appealed to relevant authorities to restore regular waste collection services, warning that prolonged neglect of sanitation in the market could pose serious environmental and public health risks if not urgently addressed.

How Rising Food Prices Are Squeezing Families in Ado-Ekiti

Omodunni Ifemiposi

Every morning at Oja Oba and Oja Bisi markets in Ado-Ekiti, traders arrange their goods neatly as they have always done. But these days, the familiar bustle of eager buyers has thinned. What now fills the air are complaints, long sighs, and anxious calculations as residents struggle to cope with the rising cost of basic food items.

Foods that once formed the backbone of daily meals—garri, rice, and beans—have become increasingly unaffordable for many families. For market women and buyers alike, the impact is personal and painful.

A bag of garri that sold for about 18,000 just months ago now goes for between 27,000 and 30,000. Rice has jumped from roughly 35,000 to 55,000

per bag, while beans, once 40,000, now cost close to 70,000.

At Oja Oba Market, Mrs. Funke Adeyemi, a garri seller, shook her head as she watched a customer price half paint of garri and walk away.

“Before, people bought plenty garri,” she said. “Some would buy a full bag or at least half. Now, they buy small-small, and some just ask for price and leave. We too are suffering because if we don’t sell, how do we feed our own families?”

Buyers tell similar stories. Mrs. Bolanle Ojo, a mother of four, said shopping has become a daily struggle.

“With 5,000 before, I could buy garri, beans, and still add pepper,” she explained. “Now, that same money cannot even buy enough beans to last us three days. Sometimes, we skip rice and manage garri alone.”

At Oja Bisi Market, rice sellers complain that customers now argue more than they buy. Mr. Sola Ajayi, a rice dealer, said the price increase has scared many people away.

“People think we are the ones increasing the price,” he said. “But we buy it costly too. Transport, fuel, everything has gone up. If we sell cheap, we run at a loss.”

For low-income earners, the rising prices are forcing painful choices. Students, artisans, and pensioners now cut meal portions or depend on less nutritious options. Some families admit they eat twice a day instead of three times.

“I have children in school,” said Mr. Kehinde Adebayo, a commercial motorcyclist. “After paying transport and school needs, food is now the biggest problem. Beans is like gold now. We only cook it on special days.”

Adire Tie-Dye Craft Thrives Amid Rising Costs In Market

Bello Omolola Rodiat

Adire artisans in the Adire Market continue to preserve the traditional Yoruba tie-dye craft despite rising production costs and increasing competition from mass-produced fabrics, traders said.

Adire, which means “tie and dye,” is produced through resist-dye techniques that prevent colour from penetrating certain areas of fabric, creating distinctive patterns. The craft remains a major source of livelihood for many artisans and traders, particularly women, in the market.

Mr. Adekola, an experienced Adire maker who has practiced the craft for more than 30 years, said artisans use various techniques to achieve different designs.

“There are many techniques we use in Adire making,” he said. “They include pleating, tying, marbling, twisting, knotting, folding, clumping and tinting. The method you choose determines how the final design will look.”

Mr. Adekola explained that he learned the craft through formal schooling before practicing it professionally, a foundation he said helped him master the techniques.

“We were taught Adire making in school,” he said. “That training helped us understand the techniques properly,

and with years of practice, we can combine them to create better patterns.”

According to him, the production process begins with plain cotton fabric, which is tied or folded using raffia strings to resist dye penetration. Raffia is commonly used in tie-dye, while wax is mainly used in batik production.

Dyeing is carried out gradually, starting with lighter colours before moving to darker shades to maintain colour clarity. After dyeing, the fabric is rinsed, untied and spread under the sun to dry.

However, Mr. Adekola said the craft faces several challenges, including the rising cost of materials and unfavourable weather conditions.

“The cost of dyes and cotton fabric is high now,” he said. “During the rainy season, drying becomes difficult,

and that affects our work.”

He also said competition from factory-made fabrics and limited support for local artisans threaten the sustainability of the trade.

“Many people prefer cheaper factory-made fabrics,” he said. “But Adire is handmade and takes time. Without support, it is not easy to keep the tradition alive.”

Despite these challenges, Adire production remains significant to the local economy, attracting fashion designers, students and cultural enthusiasts seeking handmade and culturally authentic textiles.

Artisans in the market say they remain committed to preserving the craft, ensuring that Adire continues to be produced and passed down to future generations.



Historical Buildings Disappearing on Lagos Island Amid Development Pressures

Ajiboye Ahmad

Lagos Island, one of Nigeria’s oldest urban settlements and a custodian of colonial and Afro-Brazilian architectural heritage, is witnessing the steady disappearance of its historic buildings as development pressures, neglect and weak preservation efforts take their toll.

Across parts of the island, several decades-old structures have either been demolished or left in severe disrepair, sparking concern among residents, historians and cultural advocates who fear the gradual erosion of the area’s historical identity.

Urban redevelopment remains a major driver of the trend. Lagos Island

occupies some of the most valuable land in the country’s commercial capital, making it attractive to developers seeking to replace old structures with modern commercial buildings, apartments and infrastructure.

A long-time resident of the island, Mr. Kunle Adebayo, lamented the pace at which historic buildings are being lost.

“Every year, another old house disappears. These buildings tell the story of who we are and where we came from, but nobody seems to care once money is involved,” Adebayo said.

Developers often view new construction as more profitable than preserving aging buildings. As a result,

several Afro-Brazilian houses and colonial-era structures that once defined the architectural character of Lagos Island have been replaced by modern developments.

Beyond redevelopment, neglect and lack of maintenance have worsened the situation. Many historic buildings are abandoned by their owners and left without repairs for years, accelerating their deterioration. Once such structures are deemed unsafe, demolition is often considered the easiest option.

Mrs. Raliat Sadiq, a trader who operates near one of the affected areas, expressed sadness over the loss of the old buildings.

“Some of these houses have been here since our grandparents’ time. Now they are just left to collapse. When

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Refuse Menace Deepens in Agege as Poor Waste Management Threatens Public Health

Johnson Favour Chukwuneku

In the early hours of the morning, before the bustle of daily activities fully sets in, the scale of the waste crisis in Agege, a densely populated area of Lagos State, is difficult to ignore. Along major roads, residential streets and open spaces, heaps of refuse remain unattended, emitting pungent odours and forcing pedestrians to manoeuvre around them.

An on-the-spot assessment across key locations in the community—Pen Cinema, Dopemu, Oko-Oba and areas adjoining the railway line—revealed overflowing refuse points packed with household waste. Plastic bottles, food remnants, nylon bags and discarded cartons were seen spilling far beyond designated dumping areas, creating unsightly and hazardous conditions.

Beyond the visual nuisance, the waste problem poses serious environmental risks. Drainage channels originally constructed to convey rainwater are now clogged with refuse. As the rainy season intensifies, residents fear that blocked drainages could result in flooding, property damage and the spread of waterborne diseases.

Pools of stagnant, contaminated water were also observed around several refuse points, providing ideal breeding grounds for mosquitoes. This has heightened concerns over the risk of malaria and other vector-borne diseases, particularly among children and the



elderly.

Many residents attribute the worsening situation to irregular waste evacuation and the high population density of Agege. Mrs. Funke Adeyemi, a resident of Dopemu, said refuse collection in her area is inconsistent.

“Sometimes the refuse stays here for days before they come to evacuate it. When it rains, the water flows back into the compound, and the smell becomes unbearable,” she said.

Another resident, Musa Ibrahim, identified weak monitoring and enforcement as key contributors to indiscriminate dumping.

“People dump refuse at night because they know nobody is watching. Even when the refuse point is already full, people still add to it,” he explained.

In the absence of reliable official waste collection services, many households in Agege rely on informal waste collectors, commonly known as

cart pushers, who collect refuse from homes for a small fee.

One such collector, who identified himself simply as Sadiq, described the difficulties associated with the job.

“We collect refuse from houses, but sometimes the dumpsites are far or already full. If you don’t dump the refuse somewhere, you won’t get another customer,” he said.

While cart pushers help reduce waste accumulation within residential compounds, residents complain that refuse is often dumped along roadsides or at unauthorized locations, further compounding the sanitation challenge.

Impact on Livelihoods and Public Health

The refuse menace is also affecting economic activities within the

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Historical Buildings Disappearing on Lagos Island Amid Development Pressures

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they finally pull them down, it feels like a part of our history is gone forever,” she said.

Observers also blame weak regulation and ineffective heritage preservation policies. According to them, existing laws meant to protect historical sites are poorly enforced, allowing developers to bypass conservation requirements.

An architecture enthusiast and heritage advocate, Tunde Martins, said economic pressure often pushes

property owners to sell rather than preserve.

“Restoration is expensive, and there are no real incentives from the government. Owners would rather sell to developers than maintain buildings that bring them no financial benefit,” he explained.

Cultural attitudes also contribute to the problem, as some residents see historic buildings as outdated and unsuitable for modern use. Experts say this perception reduces public advocacy for conservation and

allows demolition to continue unchecked.

Urban planners warn that unless urgent steps are taken to protect what remains, Lagos Island risks losing a significant part of its cultural and architectural heritage. They are calling for stronger enforcement of preservation laws, incentives for restoration, and increased public awareness about the value of historic buildings.

As redevelopment continues across Lagos Island, residents fear that without deliberate intervention, the balance between modernization and heritage conservation may permanently tilt against history.

Refuse Menace Deepens in Agege as Poor Waste Management Threatens Public Health

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community. Traders operating close to refuse points report declining patronage due to persistent stench and unhygienic conditions.

A food vendor near Pen Cinema lamented the impact on her business.

“People complain about the smell, especially in the afternoon when the sun is hot. Some customers don’t even want to stop,” she said.

Health concerns remain one of the most troubling aspects of the crisis. Residents report an increase in flies, mosquitoes and rodents around refuse dumps, raising fears of outbreaks of diseases such as malaria, cholera and typhoid fever.

Some community members also blame poor public awareness and weak enforcement of sanitation laws for the situation. According to them, many residents lack adequate information on proper waste disposal



practices and the long-term dangers of indiscriminate dumping.

Although waste management trucks are occasionally sighted in parts of Agege, residents insist that current efforts are inadequate for a community of its size and population density. They are calling on relevant authorities to increase the frequency of waste

evacuation, provide additional refuse bins, and strengthen monitoring and enforcement mechanisms.

Environmental observers argue that effective waste management requires a coordinated approach involving government agencies, community leaders and residents. Without proper planning, public education and strict enforcement of sanitation regulations, they warn that the refuse crisis will continue to pose serious environmental and public health risks.

As daily life continues around towering heaps of waste, residents of Agege can only hope that sustained and practical action will be taken to address the growing sanitation challenge. Until then, the community remains caught between coping with the immediate dangers of poor waste management and waiting for long-term solutions that can restore cleanliness, safety and dignity to their environment.

Nigeria’s New Tax Reform: Reliefs and Exemptions To Know

Grace Adeleye

The Federal Government implemented a sweeping package of 50 tax reliefs and exemptions for individuals and businesses on January 1, 2026, in what officials describe as a major effort to ease financial pressure on Nigerians and stimulate economic activity.

The reforms were announced by Taiwo Oyedele, Chairman of the Presidential Fiscal Policy and Tax Reforms Committee, in a post on his verified X (formerly Twitter) handle.

According to the committee, the measures apply nationwide and are designed to benefit a wide range of Nigerians, including minimum-wage earners, salaried workers, small-business owners and startups, amid ongoing economic challenges.

Officials said the policy aims to increase disposable income, encourage investment, and support consumption while improving compliance with the

tax system.

Under the new framework, individuals will be allowed to deduct several expenses from their taxable income, including pension contributions, National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) payments, National Housing Fund contributions, mortgage interest, life-insurance premiums, and rent relief of up to 20 per cent of annual rent, capped at 500,000.

Pension funds, gratuities and retirement benefits paid under the Pension Reform Act will remain fully exempt from tax, while compensation for loss of employment of up to 50 million will also not be taxed.

The reforms also introduce broad capital-gains tax exemptions. Sales of owner-occupied houses, personal belongings valued at up to 5 million, and up to two privately owned vehicles per year will be exempt. Gains from share sales below 150 million — or 10 million if reinvested — will also not

attract capital-gains tax.

For businesses, companies with annual turnover of 100 million or less and fixed assets not exceeding 250 million will pay zero corporate income tax. Eligible startups will also enjoy tax holidays under the revised policy.

Value Added Tax (VAT) will be removed from several essential goods and services, including basic food items, rent, education, health services, pharmaceuticals, agricultural inputs and electric vehicles, among others.

In addition, stamp-duty exemptions will apply to electronic transfers below 10,000, salary payments, intra-bank transfers, and transactions involving government securities or shares.

The committee said the comprehensive set of reliefs is intended to strengthen household finances, improve business survival rates and support broader economic recovery as Nigeria enters 2026.

From TV to TikTok: Nigeria's Entertainment Revolution

Sulaimon Boluwatife

On a typical evening in Lagos, mobile phone screens often shine brighter than television sets. Comedy skits scroll endlessly, new songs debut on timelines, and movie trailers trend online long before they hit cinema screens. Entertainment, once dominated by television stations, record labels, and film distributors, now thrives largely on social media. But has social media truly transformed entertainment in Nigeria, or has it merely provided it with a new stage?

To explore this, we spoke with music lovers, movie fans, and everyday social media users who consume entertainment daily on platforms like Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and X (formerly Twitter).

Social Media's Impact on Nigerian Entertainment

Social media has significantly reshaped



Nigeria's entertainment landscape in recent years. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and X have revolutionized how content is created, distributed, and consumed. Today, entertainers no longer rely solely on television, radio, or cinemas to reach audiences; instead, they connect directly with fans online. According to the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Nigeria has over 125 million active internet users as of 2025, creating a massive audience for online entertainment.

Direct Access to Audiences

One of the most profound changes is that social media provides creators with direct access to their audiences. Musicians, comedians, actors, and influencers can now share content instantly, bypassing traditional media gatekeepers. A song, comedy skit, or movie trailer can go viral within hours, reaching millions of people in Nigeria and abroad. For instance, the viral rise of Nigerian comedian Sydney Talker demonstrates how online platforms can propel talent to nationwide recognition almost overnight.

Rise of New Entertainment Stars

Social media has created a new generation of entertainers. Many musicians, comedians, and content creators have achieved fame primarily through viral online content. Unlike in the past, success is no longer restricted

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Students Balancing Academics and Creative Hustles

Ayantunji Toyosi Tolulope

Across colleges and universities, an increasing number of students are balancing demanding academic workloads with creative hustles. From freelance design, music production, writing, photography, and content creation to coding, app development, and small businesses, these pursuits have become a significant part of student life.

Creative hustles provide students with opportunities to explore personal interests, build professional portfolios, and gain real-world experience alongside their studies. For many, these activities also serve as sources of income and self-expression, helping them connect classroom knowledge to practical applications.

Beyond financial benefits, creative work contributes positively to students' academic development. It encourages transferable skills such as

time management, critical thinking, collaboration, discipline, and self-motivation—qualities that are essential for both academic success and future careers. For some students, creative engagement also offers emotional balance and stress relief, providing an outlet beyond lectures and examinations.

However, combining academics with creative commitments is not without challenges. University coursework often involves tight deadlines, continuous assessments, long-term projects, and examination preparation. These academic demands can clash with creative schedules, client expectations, or moments of inspiration. Without clear boundaries, students risk burnout, increased stress, and declining academic performance.

Students who successfully manage both responsibilities often rely on effective planning and realistic goal-setting. Creating structured schedules, using digital planners,

breaking tasks into manageable goals, and prioritizing academic responsibilities before creative work are common strategies. Clear communication with collaborators or clients about availability and limits also helps maintain balance.

Institutions can further support students by providing flexible learning options, creative spaces, and mentorship opportunities that encourage innovation without compromising academic standards. Support from lecturers, parents, and peers also plays an important role in helping students navigate competing demands.

Ultimately, balancing academics and creative hustles requires discipline, self-awareness, and intentional time management. When handled thoughtfully, students can excel academically while nurturing their creative passions—preparing themselves for dynamic and fulfilling careers beyond the classroom.

From TV to TikTok: Nigeria's Entertainment Revolution

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to those with industry concerns or expensive production backing. TikTok, in particular, has launched the careers of emerging artists such as Asake, whose song snippets first gained traction online before dominating streaming charts.

Promotion and Marketing

Artists now use social media as a primary marketing tool. Through posts, reels, and live sessions, entertainers promote new songs, movies, and shows. This approach reduces traditional promotion costs while increasing visibility and reach. Platforms like Instagram and YouTube offer algorithms that help content reach users likely to engage, making marketing more targeted and efficient.

Audience Engagement and Feedback
Social media has also transformed audience interaction. Fans can comment, like, share, and engage in live streams with their favorite stars. This direct feedback loop allows entertainers to gauge audience reactions in real-time, something traditional media rarely facilitated.

From Living Rooms to Phone Screens

The shift from television to mobile phones has redefined content consumption. Short videos, skits, and online premieres encourage faster,

more interactive engagement. In Nigeria, data shows that over 80% of social media users access platforms via smartphones, making mobile entertainment the primary mode of content consumption.

Fans Now Shape Stardom

Popularity is increasingly determined by fan engagement. Likes, shares, and comments now play a major role in determining an entertainer's success. Fans feel closer to entertainers and actively influence who rises to stardom. **Entertainment Is Now in Our Hands**
Access has become the defining factor. Before social media, audiences had to wait for scheduled television or radio programs. Today, entertainers reach fans directly online, making discovery faster, easier, and more democratic.

Economic Opportunities

Social media has opened new revenue streams for the entertainment industry. Content creators earn from brand endorsements, sponsored posts, streaming revenue, and online advertisements. According to PwC Nigeria, the digital entertainment market is projected to grow by over 12% annually, highlighting the economic potential of social media-driven content.

Challenges of Social Media Entertainment

Despite its benefits, social media presents challenges, including cyberbullying, content theft, and the pressure on entertainers to remain constantly relevant. Some critics argue that the need for viral content has led to the prioritization of quantity over quality.

Fan Perspectives

While many fans embrace the accessibility and interactivity social media provides, others express concern about declining content quality and the relentless pressure on entertainers to trend constantly.

Expectations for Musicians and Actors
Audiences increasingly expect entertainers to be creative, consistent, and socially responsible. Fans value authenticity and hope entertainers use their influence positively while engaging with the public.

Conclusion

Social media has undeniably transformed Nigerian entertainment, making it more accessible, interactive, and audience-driven. Despite challenges, it continues to shape the future of the industry, creating opportunities for talent discovery, economic growth, and fan engagement. As platforms evolve, social media remains a powerful force in driving the growth and global reach of Nigerian entertainment.

Fashion on Campus: How MAPOLY Students Blend Style, Comfort, Identity

Awoduni Comfort

Fashion among students of Moshood Abiola Polytechnic (MAPOLY) is more than just clothing; it is a daily expression of identity, confidence, and adaptation to campus life.

Despite academic pressure and limited finances, students continue to engage actively with modern fashion trends shaped by social media, peer influence, and personal taste.

With Nigeria's youth population accounting for over 60 per cent of the

country's total population, campuses like MAPOLY naturally serve as hubs of evolving youth culture and style.

Across lecture halls, hostels, and relaxation spots on campus, one trend stands out clearly: streetwear. Oversized T-shirts, hoodies, cargo trousers, joggers, and jeans dominate students' wardrobes, usually paired with sneakers or slides.

For many, the appeal lies in comfort and flexibility. With long hours of lectures and constant movement across campus, students prefer outfits that are both

stylish and practical.

"Streetwear is easy and comfortable. I can attend lectures and still look good without stress," said a male ND II student.

Footwear also plays a major role in defining students' appearance. Clean sneakers, canvas shoes, and trainers are common sights, while loafers and slides are chosen for convenience, especially during short movements within the campus.

Many students believe footwear can make or break an outfit, even when the clothing itself is simple.

This aligns with broader youth fashion trends in Nigeria, where sneakers have

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Fashion on Campus: How MAPOLY Students Blend Style, Comfort, Identity

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become one of the most popular fashion items among young people due to their versatility and durability.

“Your shoes complement your outfit. Even if my clothes are simple, clean sneakers make it better,” explained a female HND I student.

Beyond clothes and shoes, accessories have become important style enhancers.

Wristwatches, chains, bracelets, rings, and crossbody bags are widely used to add personality to outfits.

These items allow students to upgrade their appearance without spending excessively on clothing. In an economy where many students rely on allowances from parents or part-time income, accessories offer a cost-effective way to stay fashionable.

“I don’t need expensive clothes. My watch and bag already give my outfit a nice touch,” said a female ND I student.

Hairstyles and grooming are also treated as essential parts of fashion on campus. Female students often wear braids, wigs, and natural hairstyles, while male students prefer low cuts, fades, or carefully styled barbs. Neat



grooming is commonly associated with confidence and respectability among peers, reflecting societal expectations within academic environments.

“Hair is part of fashion. If your hair is neat, everything else will look good,” noted a female HND II student.

Financial limitations have also shaped fashion choices, leading many students to embrace thrift clothing, popularly known as Okrika.

From jeans to jackets and shirts, thrift markets provide affordable options that students creatively mix with new items to achieve trendy looks. In major Nigerian cities, the second-hand clothing market remains a major source of apparel for students and low-income earners, helping them manage rising living costs.

“Most of my clothes are Okrika, but if you style it well, nobody will

know,” said a male ND II student.

At the same time, a growing number of students are embracing minimalist and gender-neutral fashion.

Plain T-shirts, neutral colours, simple trousers, and unisex footwear are becoming popular among students who prefer neat, quiet styles over flashy outfits. This trend reflects a shift toward simplicity, comfort, and confidence rather than attention-seeking fashion.

“I like simple outfits. As long as it’s neat and clean, I’m okay,” a female HND I student said.

Overall, fashion trends at MAPOLY reveal that students prioritise comfort, affordability, and individuality over luxury or brand names. Clothing, grooming, and accessories are used not only to look good but also to fit into social spaces, express personal identity, and boost confidence.

In a campus environment shaped by academic demands and economic realities, MAPOLY students continue to prove that style does not depend on wealth, but on creativity, confidence, and smart choices.

Fashion, for them, remains an important part of campus culture, quietly telling stories of resilience, self-expression, and youthful energy.

AI-Generated Song Scandal Sparks Debate in Ogun Music Scene

Adebakin Lateef Taiwo, Mathew Mercy Ohunene & Okusanya Tobi Christianah

The Nigerian music industry is facing renewed controversy following allegations that artificial intelligence (AI) tools are being used to create songs linked to emerging artists in Ogun State, raising questions about artistic authenticity, ethics, and the future of music production.

What began as quiet conversations among creatives has grown into a public debate after an AI-generated song, allegedly mimicking the vocal patterns and lyrical styles of some Ogun-based musicians, surfaced online. The development has unsettled fans, artists, and industry stakeholders

across the state.

Emerging Artists Under Spotlight

Ogun State has, in recent years, produced a vibrant crop of emerging musicians exploring Afrobeat, street-hop, soul, and alternative sounds. Among them are K-Smooth, known for his street-inspired track *Back to Ijebu*; Mira Vibe, whose emotionally driven single *Soft Life Dreams* gained online attention; and TeeFlow, an Afro-fusion act recognised for socially conscious themes in *Roots & Rhythm*.

Industry observers have praised these artists for their storytelling, cultural depth, and expressive delivery.

However, the appearance of the AI-generated track, which reportedly imitates elements of their sound, has intensified scrutiny.

“It was unsettling how closely the AI track resembled the sound of real artists from this area,” a local music producer said. “It blurs the line between creativity and imitation.”

Public Opinion Divided

Across Abeokuta, Ijebu-Ode, and Ota, music lovers remain divided on the growing role of AI in music production. While some see it as inevitable technological progress, others fear it

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Detty December: A Cultural Bridge Fueling Unity Across Nigeria

Samuel Adeniyi

The annual festive season popularly known as Detty December has once again proven to be more than a period of fun and entertainment, as Nigerians across ethnic, religious and social divides gathered to celebrate culture, reconnect with heritage and promote national unity.

From music concerts and street carnivals to traditional weddings and cultural displays, major cities such as Lagos, Abuja, Ibadan and Abeokuta witnessed an influx of celebrants, including Nigerians in the diaspora, all drawn by the vibrant atmosphere that defines the season.

Speaking with an attendee of detty December festival at Bsquared lounge ogun state, she described Detty December as a unifying force. "During this period, you see Yorubas, Igbos, Hausas and people from other

tribes celebrating together without discrimination. Music and food connect us in a way politics cannot," he said. A fashion designer Iremide who came to spend the holidays in Lagos, noted that Detty December helps strengthen cultural identity. "I enjoy wearing traditional outfits and attending cultural events. It reminds me of who I am and where I come from. The joy is shared by everyone, regardless of tribe," she said.

Religious and community leaders also acknowledged the positive social impact of the festivities, the season encourages peaceful coexistence.

"Even though people have different beliefs, the festive mood promotes tolerance and respect. People visit one another, share food and exchange goodwill messages.

Similarly, Mrs opaleye, a caterer said the celebration has economic and social

benefits. "Detty December brings people together and boosts small businesses. When people are happy and engaged, there is less tension and more understanding among communities," she said. However, some Nigerians called for moderation and improved security during the festivities. "The unity is beautiful, but authorities must ensure safety so everyone can enjoy the season without fear.

As the year draws to a close, many Nigerians believe Detty December has become a powerful cultural phenomenon that not only entertains but also strengthens bonds, reinforces shared values and reminds citizens of the beauty of unity in diversity. With smiles, music and shared experiences echoing across the nation, the festive celebration continues to stand as a symbol of hope and togetherness among Nigerians.

AI-Generated Song Scandal Sparks Debate in Ogun Music Scene

Adebakin Lateef Taiwo, Mathew Mercy Ohunene & Okusanya Tobi Christianah

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could undermine originality. "I'm fine with AI assisting in beat-making or sound engineering," said Tosin Adebayo, a university student and music enthusiast. "But once it starts writing lyrics or replicating voices, it loses authenticity. Music should reflect lived experiences." Others take a more flexible stance. "If the song is good and relatable, I'll listen," said Funke Oladimeji. "Music has always evolved with technology. This is just another stage." **Artists Respond** Several upcoming artists in Ogun State have publicly distanced themselves from AI-generated songwriting. Mira Vibe described her music as deeply personal. "My lyrics come from real emotions,"

she said. "AI can't genuinely capture feelings like love, pain, or joy." TeeFlow admitted to limited experimentation with AI but stressed clear boundaries. "I've explored AI for instrumental ideas, not for writing lyrics or generating vocals. It should support creativity, not replace it." However, an unnamed artist disclosed that some upcoming musicians quietly rely on AI tools to meet the industry's growing demand for constant content releases. **Industry Promoters Raise Concerns** Music promoters and event organisers have also reacted to the controversy. Adekunle Ojo, an Abeokuta-based promoter, warned that excessive AI use could erode audience trust. "People connect with real stories and real artists," he said. "Once authenticity is questioned, credibility suffers.

Promoters build artists, not software." Another promoter, Sola Martins, called for regulation rather than outright rejection of AI tools. "AI isn't going anywhere," he said. "What we need are clear guidelines—transparency, disclosure, and protection for original creators." **A Crossroads for the Industry** As artificial intelligence continues to reshape creative industries worldwide, Ogun State's music scene finds itself at a critical crossroads. While AI offers new creative possibilities, it also challenges long-held notions of originality and artistic identity. For many stakeholders, the controversy serves as a reminder of the need for open dialogue among artists, fans, and industry leaders to ensure that technological advancement does not come at the expense of music's human soul.

Top 10 Nigerian Hip-Hop Songs of 2025 & Why They Defined the Year

Adekunle Peter

In a year when Afrobeats continued its global takeover, Nigerian hip-hop refused to be sidelined. Instead, it roared louder, grittier, and more confident than ever. 2025 marked a turning point, a year when rap records didn't merely survive the charts but led conversations, shaped youth culture, and redefined what mainstream success looks like for Nigerian hip-hop.

From street anthems to introspective moments, these are the Top 10 Nigerian Hip-Hop Songs of 2025, ranked by impact, replay value, and cultural relevance.

1. "Pity This Boy" — Odumodublvck ft. Vicny
rated 9.8/10

If 2025 had an official hip-hop soundtrack, this would be it. "Pity This Boy" captured the pulse of a generation navigating struggle, ambition, and emotional resilience. Odumodublvck's raw, street-heavy verses meet Vicny's soulful hook in a blend that feels both painful and hopeful.

The record dominated streaming platforms and social media, cementing itself as more than a hit — it became a cultural statement.

Why it matters:

The song crowned Odumodublvck as a mainstream rap powerhouse and proved Nigerian hip-hop can be emotionally deep and commercially successful.

2. "Who's Really Rapping" — A-Q & Blaqbonez
rated 9.2/10

No frills. No distractions. Just rap. A-Q and Blaqbonez delivered one of the year's most talked-about collaborations by putting lyricism front and center. The song reignited long-needed debates around authenticity, skill, and credibility in Nigerian hip-hop.

Why it matters:

It reminded listeners that bars still matter — and rap doesn't need to dilute itself to stay relevant.

3. "Heavyweight Champion" — Odumodublvck
rated 9.0/10

Aggressive, bold, and unapologetic, "Heavyweight Champion" is Odumodublvck in his purest form. Blending drill, grime, and Afro-street energy, the track sounds like a chest-thumping declaration of dominance.

Why it matters:

This was the song fans referenced when calling Odumodublvck the face of Nigerian hip-hop in 2025.

4. "Digital Hustler" — Blaqbonez
rated 8.7/10

In the age of online money and internet fame, "Digital Hustler" felt perfectly timed. Blaqbonez delivered witty bars about ambition, content culture, and the modern grind, all wrapped in a catchy, shareable package.

Why it matters:

It connected hip-hop to Gen-Z realities, blurring the line between rap anthem and viral moment.

5. "Swag On" — DJMondo
rated 8.5/10

"Swag On" arrived with pure confidence. A trap-influenced

banger that thrived on TikTok and playlists, it proved hip-hop can dominate high-energy, fun spaces without losing its edge.

Why it matters:

The track pulled new listeners into Nigerian hip-hop beyond its traditional audience.

6. "US" — Swayvee
rated 8.3/10

Smooth, emotional, and subtly hip-hop, "US" leaned toward R&B but carried enough rap influence to resonate widely. Its viral success highlighted a softer side of Nigeria's evolving hip-hop sound.

Why it matters:

Swayvee emerged as an artist to watch, proving melody and rap can coexist effortlessly.

7. "Laho" — Shallipopi
rated 8.2/10

Though firmly rooted in Afrobeats, "Laho" earned its spot through street credibility and confident delivery. Shallipopi's rap-leaning flow made the track impossible to ignore.

Why it matters:

It showcased how fluid the line between Afrobeats and hip-hop has become in Nigerian music.

8. "EASY WITH ME" — Odumodublvck
rated 8.0/10

This record revealed a more reflective side of Odumodublvck. Slower, smoother, and emotionally layered, it showcased range beyond aggressive street rap.

Why it matters:

It proved versatility is now essential for longevity in Nigerian hip-hop.

9. "AKPOR" — Magnito & Portable ft. Odumodublvck
rated 7.9/10

Chaotic in the best way, "AKPOR" fused street rap with party energy. The collaboration truly came alive in live settings, where its hype factor peaked.

Why it matters:

It reinforced the power of street collaborations in keeping hip-hop connected to everyday listeners.

10. "OPA (S)" — Odumodublvck
rated 7.8/10

Closing the list is another solid entry from Odumodublvck. With sharp verses and a catchy hook, "OPA (S)" maintained steady replay value throughout the year.

Why it matters:

Consistency. In 2025, Odumodublvck didn't just release hits — he dominated the conversation.



No Hospital, No Ambulance: How Mologede Residents Struggle to Stay Alive

Adeyemi Victoria

In Mologede, a quiet rural community in Abeokuta, access to basic healthcare remains a daily struggle—one that often turns minor illnesses into life-threatening emergencies. With no clinic, no hospital, and no ambulance service, residents are forced to travel long distances on poorly maintained roads to seek medical attention, sometimes with fatal consequences.

According to community members, the nearest hospital is located in Idiaba, about a 30-minute journey away, while other medical facilities require more than an hour of travel. For many residents, especially during emergencies, this distance poses a serious risk.

Mrs. Adeboye Lateefat, a resident, said the absence of healthcare facilities has left the community with no option but to seek treatment outside Mologede.

“There is no healthcare centre here,” she said.

“Whenever someone is sick, we have to go to Idiaba or other towns to get treatment.”

Chief Ramon Alani Sodalubi, a prominent community leader, confirmed that Mologede has no hospital or clinic of its own.

In emergency situations, residents are usually taken to the Primary Healthcare Centre in Okolowo, a journey that is often delayed by transportation challenges and poor road conditions.

“There is no traditional healer here either,” he explained. “The only healthcare support available is a chemist



who provides drugs and refers serious cases to hospitals.”

That chemist, Mrs. Akiode Aminat, has become a critical lifeline for the community. As a trained and licensed healthcare worker, she treats common ailments such as malaria, cough, and minor infections, while referring severe cases to hospitals outside the community. “Most of the cases we see are malaria and other minor illnesses,” she said.

“When a case is serious, we advise them to go to the hospital immediately.”

In addition, a Kadi healthcare worker residing in the community assists with child delivery and basic health services, according to another resident, Oluwakayode Oluwadurotimi. However, he noted that these limited services cannot replace a properly equipped health facility with trained staff, maternity wards, and emergency response capacity.

The situation in Mologede reflects a broader national challenge. According to Nigeria’s National Primary Health Care Development Agency, thousands of rural communities across the country lack functional primary healthcare centres.

The World Health Organization has also identified poor access to emergency transport and skilled health workers as major contributors to Nigeria’s high maternal and preventable death rates, particularly in rural areas. In Ogun State, rural residents continue to face disparities in healthcare access compared to urban centres.

Transportation remains one of the most serious barriers to healthcare in Mologede.

Adejoke Adenekan, a resident, said

vehicles are scarce, especially at night and in the early hours of the morning, largely due to the deplorable state of the roads.

“There was a case where someone died because there was no vehicle to take the person to the hospital,” she recounted.

Mr. Taiwo, Chairman of the Mologede Community Development Association (CDA), described the situation as dire.

He said residents often rely on basic first aid in emergencies while struggling to arrange transport to Kolobo or Okolowo.

“We don’t even have a clinic, not to talk of a hospital,” he said. “People suffer seriously before they get help.”

Despite these challenges, the community has made efforts to improve its condition. Mr. Taiwo revealed that a private individual has begun constructing a healthcare centre in Mologede.

However, the project is still at the foundation stage due to limited funding and resources.

He appealed to the Obafemi Owode Local Government and the Ogun State Government to intervene by supporting the completion of the facility and providing medical personnel and equipment.

“Our people should not continue to risk their lives because of distance,” he said. “We need government assistance to bring healthcare closer to us.”

For now, residents of Mologede continue to live with uncertainty, knowing that in moments of illness or emergency, survival often depends not on immediate medical care, but on how quickly they can find transportation—and how far they must travel to reach help.



MAPOLY Students Leave Campus After Lectures Over Lack of Relaxation Facilities

Thomas Seun Sunday

Many students of Moshood Abiola Polytechnic (MAPOLY) leave the campus immediately after lectures due to academic pressure and the absence of adequate relaxation facilities, findings by Platform Times have revealed.

Students say lectures often last for most of the day, leaving them tired and with little motivation to remain on campus. As a result, many prefer to return to their homes rather than spend time in an environment they describe as uncomfortable.

A Mass Communication student, who spoke under anonymity, said there are very few places where students can sit and relax after classes. "Most of us just want to go home and rest because there is nowhere comfortable to stay in school," the student said.

Observations around the campus show that students often gather under trees, particularly in front of the Mass Communication department, due to the lack of designated relaxation areas. While some students appreciate the natural setting, many believe it is inadequate for a modern higher institution.

Students have also called on the management to improve campus facilities by providing more seating areas, creating a

conducive environment for reading and relaxation, and introducing more comfortable shuttle buses.

In response to these concerns, the Students' Union Government (SUG) says it is committed to advocating for better student welfare. The union listed advocacy, infrastructure development, mental and physical well-being, and transparent leadership as part of its key focus areas.

The SUG also disclosed plans to engage management through policy reviews, town hall meetings, and feedback mechanisms, while promoting initiatives such as improved internet connectivity, skill-development programmes, and sustainable campus projects.

Due to limited on-campus options, many students now seek relaxation outside the school environment. Popular spots include 1904 Bistro, which offers food, drinks, and indoor games, and Diamond Dumpling in GRA Ibara, known for its calm atmosphere and affordable meals.

Education analysts say the situation highlights the need for institutions to balance academic activities with student welfare. They note that a supportive campus environment can enhance learning, social interaction, and overall student experience.

Until such improvements are made, many MAPOLY students are expected to continue viewing the campus as a place for lectures alone, rather than a space for relaxation and community life.

Teacher Shortage Leaves Students, Staff Struggling at New Generation School

Adeyemi Victoria

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Paying School Fees With Sweat: The Untold Stories Of Self-Sponsored Students

Paul abigael

As dawn breaks on campuses across Nigeria, the race to early lectures begins. Amid hurried footsteps and half-awake greetings are students carrying more than backpacks and notebooks. They carry responsibility—rent to pay, fees to settle, meals to secure. For many of them, education is not funded by parents or guardians, but by daily hustles that begin long before lectures and stretch deep into the night.

Eighteen-year-old Ruth Okafor, a Food and Nutrition student, starts her mornings with silent prayers. The emotional weight of self-sponsorship often presses heavily on her young shoulders. “I pray and talk to friends,” she says softly. “Sometimes I cry quietly, but I don’t give up.” At an age when many depend entirely on family support, Ruth has learned to depend on faith and inner strength.

In a nearby hostel, Amina Sule, 19, a College of Education student, prepares for classes knowing her real workday begins after sunset. By night, her room becomes a temporary salon where she braids hair to earn small but crucial income. “Sometimes I pay late,” she admits. “But at least I’m trying.” The sore fingers and long nights are the price she pays to remain in school.

For Folarin Adeshola, 21, a Mass Communication student, survival runs on mobile data and determination. Between lectures, he checks messages from customers interested in

thrift clothes he sells online. Instagram, for him, is not entertainment but a business platform. “Some days, I skip meals,” he says. “I’m determined to graduate.” Hunger and hope often sit side by side.

Inside lecture halls, Mary Adebayo, a 21-year-old Nursing student, listens attentively while mentally planning her next sales round. During short breaks, she sells snacks to classmates, turning spare minutes into survival tactics. “I want to help people one day,” she says. For Mary, caring starts now—with ensuring she stays in school.

By midday, the strain of balancing academics and survival becomes more visible. Joseph Aluko, 23, an ICT student, heads to his phone-repair spot immediately after lectures. “During exams, it becomes very hard,” he says. Time meant for rest is often traded for revision, and revision sacrificed for rent.

Not far away, David Mensah, 22, a Computer Science student, edits photographs on his laptop. As a freelance photographer, he captures joy at events while quietly worrying about rent and textbooks. Each job he secures means another semester secured.

Weekends bring no rest for Samuel Ogunleye, 23, an Engineering student. While others relax, he works at a mechanic workshop, hands stained with oil. “My parents can’t afford my fees,” he says. “I want to change my family story.” Every repaired engine

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Teacher Shortage Leaves Students, Staff Struggling at New Generation School

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Paying School Fees With Sweat: The Untold Stories Of Self-Sponsored Students

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feels like a step toward that dream.

For some, the pressure has almost ended their academic journey. Blessing Tunde, 20, a Mass Communication student, admits she has considered quitting many times. What keeps her going is her younger siblings. "They are watching," she says. Staying in school, for her, is both an example and a promise.

As evening falls, Felix Onyekachi, 23, an Accounting student, reflects on the contrast between himself and classmates who focus solely on academics. "Watching others concentrate only on school while I hustle daily—that's the hardest part," he says. Yet, the pain sharpens his resolve rather than weakening it. The impact of financial hardship can stretch academic timelines. Ibrahim Sadiq, 25, a Science Laboratory student, once postponed graduation because he could not pay his fees. The delay still hurts, but it has strengthened his determination to finish what he started.

At night, Musa Abdullahi, 26, an Adult Education student, returns from construction work to attend evening classes. He once dropped out entirely due to lack of funds. "Now I'm back," he says. His story is proof that interrupted dreams can still be reclaimed.

While many students prepare to sleep, Emmanuel Johnson, 24, a Food and Nutrition student, puts on his security uniform for night duty. "Without education, opportunities are limited," he says. He works through the night and returns to lectures by morning, exhausted but hopeful.

Beyond financial strain, stigma adds another layer of hardship. Jennifer Bello, 22, a Law student, works two jobs to remain in school but often faces judgment. "Some people think I'm poor or lazy," she says. "They don't know I work two jobs." Her struggle is both economic and social.

Across faculties and age groups, the pattern remains the same—different faces, shared sacrifice. Grace Nwankwo, 20, a Business Administration student, wishes institutions better understood this reality. "Not everyone has support," she says. "Payment deadlines stress us."

Still, the students push forward. Babatunde Adeyemi, 24, an Engineering student, captures the collective spirit simply: "Don't give up. Even slow progress is progress."

On campuses where success is often measured by grades alone, these students are earning another qualification—resilience. Their stories are not just about hardship, but about courage, sacrifice, and an unshakable belief that education, no matter how hard-won, is worth the fight.

In Ajegunle, a Veteran Drummer Keeps Tradition Alive Through Rhythm and Teaching

Ademola Mistura Oluwapelumi

As the sounds of buses, traders and restless children fade into the background of a quiet street in Ajegunle, the steady beat of traditional drums takes over. For residents who pause to listen, the rhythm is familiar. For 55-year-old Ayankunle, it is the sound of a lifetime shaped by culture, movement and survival.

Ayankunle, a traditional drummer who relocated to Ajegunle about four years ago, represents a generation of indigenous performers keeping Yoruba drumming traditions alive in Nigeria's rapidly urbanising communities. Though relatively new to the area, his presence has become known through regular street performances and informal teaching.

Born and raised in Iluoke, Osun State,

Ayankunle learned drumming as a child by watching older performers at festivals, funerals and naming ceremonies. With no formal education, he relied on observation, repetition and memory to master the rhythms and meanings behind the drums.

"Drums carry messages," he said. "If you understand them, you understand people."

Over the years, he moved across towns in the South West, performing wherever cultural events and community gatherings created opportunities. Drumming became both his livelihood and his identity, sustaining him through decades of informal work.

His relocation to Ajegunle reflects a broader trend of traditional artists migrating to Lagos in search of larger

audiences and economic opportunities. Known for its vibrant street culture and creative energy, Ajegunle has long been a hub for musicians, dancers and performers working outside the formal arts industry.

Despite arriving recently, Ayankunle has already left an imprint. Former apprentices from previous communities continue to speak of his influence. One of them, Taiwo, who trained under Ayankunle for several years, is now a professional drummer and teacher.

"Baba knows everything about drums," Taiwo said. "Not just how to beat them, but where they come from and what they mean. When he teaches, you are learning culture."

Residents often gather briefly when

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“I’ve Healed Enough To Speak”: Survivor Recounts Childhood Abuse

Opeyemi

For many years, she carried the memory in absolute silence — not because it was insignificant, but because the weight of it felt unbearable. The pain was too deep to explain, too raw to revisit. The words simply would not come. Today, however, she says she has reached a place where the story no longer holds power over her, where the past no longer dictates her present.

“I’ve healed enough to talk about it without feeling strange,” she says softly, her voice steady but reflective. “For a long time, I couldn’t.”

As a child, she remembers herself as innocent, open, and trusting — a child who believed the world around her was safe. She felt protected in her environment and never imagined that danger could come from people she was supposed to trust. “At that time, I felt safe around adults,” she recalls. “I didn’t think something bad could happen to me.”

It was that deep sense of safety, she explains, that made what came next even more difficult to comprehend. The shock cut deeper because it shattered a reality she thought was secure.

When she reflects on that period now and is asked what emotion rises to the surface, her response is brief but heavy with meaning. “It was

unbelievable. Even now, I still don’t really understand why it happened.”

At the time, she did not fully understand what was being done to her. She only sensed that something was terribly wrong, yet she lacked the language, the knowledge, and the emotional capacity to name it. “No, I didn’t understand what was happening,” she says. “I was just confused.”

That confusion, she explains, became a prison of silence. How could she speak about something she did not fully understand herself? Fear crept in alongside that confusion — fear that if she spoke, her words would be dismissed, her pain doubted.

“I was afraid they would think I was lying,” she says.

When she finally gathered the courage to tell someone, the response she received cut even deeper than the original trauma. She says she had hoped, above all else, that her mother would stand with her, protect her, and believe her. Instead, she was met with disappointment that still lingers in her memory. “I was disappointed,” she says. “I really expected my mother to be there for me.”

Not being believed, she explains, forced her inward. It taught her that silence was safer than truth.

“I became quiet and more guarded,” she says. “I stopped talking much. I kept things to myself.”

That silence followed her into her later years, quietly shaping her relationships and her sense of self. She learned to be cautious, to measure her trust carefully, and to question her own worth. The trauma did not end with the act itself — it echoed through her emotions, her interactions, and her identity.

“It affected my sense of trust and my sense of value,” she explains. “I was always protecting myself.”

For a long time, she carried a heavy burden of blame — never spoken aloud, but deeply rooted within her. Healing, she says, was neither quick nor easy. It unfolded slowly, through years of reflection, growth, and painful honesty with herself.

“As the years passed, I realized that what happened was not my fault,” she says. “There was no reason for me to keep holding on to blame that did not belong to me.”

Her faith also became a source of strength during her journey toward healing. She says her belief in God helped her survive emotionally and gave her the resilience to

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Ayankunle plays, drawn by a style rooted firmly in tradition. He believes understanding the history of each drum is essential to performing it correctly.

“Every drum has a past,” he said. “You must know where it comes from to play it well.”

Away from the street, Ayankunle’s life is anchored by family. His wife, Wunmi, has supported him since his early years of moving from place to place in search of work. She recalls periods of financial uncertainty but says they remained committed to the path they chose.

“There were times we struggled,” she said.

“But drumming was his calling, and we faced everything together.”

The couple has three children — two sons and a daughter — all of whom followed different paths. Although Ayankunle never attended school, he made education a priority for his children.

“I didn’t go to school,” he said. “But my children must.”

His first son is learning drumming while continuing his education, his second son is training as an engineer, and his daughter now works as a nurse. According to her, her father’s discipline and values played a key role in shaping her career.

In a community where daily survival often depends on creativity and informal work, Ayankunle’s story highlights a quieter form of success — one built on consistency, cultural preservation and mentorship rather than public recognition.

As evening approaches and the streets of Ajegunle settle, the drums often begin again. Each beat carries traces of where Ayankunle started, the communities he passed through, and the legacy he continues to build — one rhythm at a time.

Names have been changed to protect identities.

“I’ve Healed Enough To Speak”: Survivor Recounts Childhood Abuse

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reclaim control over her life. Learning how to protect herself in healthy ways allowed her to rebuild what had been broken.

“God helped me, and I learned how to guard myself in a healthy way,” she says.

Today, she speaks not only for herself, but for countless children who may be living through similar experiences — children who are still trapped in confusion, fear, and silence, without the strength or support to speak

out.

Her message to parents is unwavering and direct.

“Your child should always come first,” she says. “Listen to them. Take them seriously.”

She believes that choosing to believe a child, even when the truth is painful or uncomfortable, can alter the entire course of that child’s life and future.

To children who are currently suffering in silence, her message is just as firm and compassionate.

“Speak up,” she says. “Whether they believe you or not, speak up anyway. What happened to you does not define you. You deserve to be heard, and you deserve to be safe.”

For her, speaking now is not about reopening old wounds, but about finally closing them the right way — and about ensuring that no child grows up believing their pain is invisible or unimportant.

“I couldn’t speak then,” she says. “But I can speak now.”

At Mapo Hill, Ibadan’s Past Still Speaks — and the People Are Listening

Kosebinu Anuoluwapo Elizabeth

On a breezy afternoon at Mapo Hill, the bronze figure of Ẹrẹ Mapo stands firm, chest out, eyes fixed on the sprawling city below. Taxis honk faintly in the distance, traders shout prices from far-off markets, and on the worn steps of Mapo Hill, schoolchildren pose for photos while an elderly man points toward the statue and begins to tell a story.

“This is who we were,” he says simply. “Warriors.”

For many residents of Ibadan, the Mapo Statue is more than a monument. It is a reminder — stubborn and unmoving — of how their city was forged by battle, bravery, and survival after the collapse of the Old Oyo Empire in the 19th century. Long before Ibadan became Nigeria’s largest indigenous city, it was an àgọ ogun, a war camp built by fighters from Oyo, Ife, and other Yoruba groups who believed leadership was earned, not inherited.

Standing beside the colonial-era Mapo Hall, the statue tells the other side of the story. Where the hall reflects British administration and paperwork, Ẹrẹ Mapo reflects muscle, vigilance, and indigenous authority. Many locals say the pairing feels deliberate.

“Mapo Hall shows how we were ruled,” says Adebola Ogunleye, a civil servant who visits the site whenever

relatives come to town. “But the statue shows who we truly are.”

The figure itself is striking — upright, masculine, watchful — often described by residents as a warrior guarding the city. Though erected in the mid-20th century as a civic symbol rather than a religious object, it has taken on a quiet reverence. Some passersby greet it with a nod; others pause for selfies, unaware that they are standing in a space once used to survey enemies approaching Ibadan’s hills.

Inside Mapo Hall, history feels closer and more personal. Chains once used on colonial tax defaulters hang silently in a small museum room, unsettling but necessary reminders. On the walls, photographs of every Olubadan gaze outward, anchoring the city’s long line of kingship. Visitors lean in, arguing softly over which reign brought progress and which brought trouble.

“This place humbles you,” says Funke Adebayo, a university student sketching the view from the balcony. “You see how far we’ve come — and how hard it was.”

From the rooftop terrace, Ibadan opens up in all directions: rust-colored roofs, winding roads, seven historic hills, and markets buzzing with life. It’s a view that locals never quite get tired of. Teenagers climb the steps with puff-puff and soft drinks, couples spread cloths for impromptu picnics, and photographers

chase the perfect angle for social media.

During festivals like Egungun, the calm vanishes. Drums thunder, dancers spin, and the hill vibrates with sound and color. Political rallies, too, have shaken these grounds — moments when Mapo Hill became a stage for voices demanding change. Elders still recall speeches that echoed across the city and helped shape Nigeria’s political journey.

“This is where we gathered when things mattered,” recalls Chief Wasiu Adesina, resting on the steps. “Mapo has seen joy, anger, hope — everything.”

Just a short walk away lies the Olubadan’s palace on one side and the statue of Iba Oluyole, one of Ibadan’s fiercest founders, on the other. History here is not tucked away; it surrounds you, presses close, and insists on being remembered.

For Oyo State residents, Mapo Hill remains a symbol of Ibadan’s nickname — the pacesetter. Families troop in during Independence Day celebrations, children racing up the stairs while grandparents recount tales of the old days, when Ibadan led in politics, education, and resistance.

As evening falls, the warrior statue still stands watch. Below it, life continues — noisy, imperfect, determined. And in that contrast, many say, lies the true spirit of Ibadan: a city born of struggle, still standing tall, with its people carrying the story forward, one voice at a time.

Olumo Rock: The Sacred Fortress Beneath Which Abeokuta Was Born

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Olumo Rock, located in Abeokuta, Ogun State, is a towering granite outcrop that once served as a natural fortress for the Egba people during the turbulent inter-tribal wars of the 19th century. Its network of caves, narrow crevices, and imposing height offered concealment and protection, earning the rock legendary status as a symbol of resilience, survival, and divine guardianship.

Over time, Olumo Rock has become woven into history and folklore, with stories that explain not only its strategic importance but also its spiritual significance to the Egba people.

Discovery and the Birth of Abeokuta

According to oral tradition, a brave hunter and farmer named Adagba first discovered the rock's hidden chambers while seeking shelter

during his expeditions. In the early 1830s, as the Egba people fled oppression from the collapsing Oyo Empire and attacks from rival groups, Adagba led warriors under the leadership of Chief Sodeke to the rock's secret passages.

Entire families—men, women, children, and elders—took refuge inside Olumo's natural tunnels, surviving for months. They ground food in stone hollows and relied on water that dripped from the rock for sustenance. Despite repeated searches, enemy forces were unable to locate them. This remarkable concealment gave rise to the name Abeokuta, meaning “under the rock.”

The name Olumo itself is believed to mean “God has molded it” or “the Lord has ended our troubles,” reflecting the Egba people's gratitude for what they saw as a divinely provided sanctuary.

An Unconquerable Stronghold

During prolonged conflicts, including wars against Dahomey forces from present-day Benin, Olumo Rock functioned as both a hideout and a watchtower. From its summit, Egba warriors monitored approaching enemies and launched defensive attacks. In one legendary account, invaders were held at bay for as long as seven months.

The rock's sheer cliffs, narrow pathways, and concealed entrances made it nearly impossible to penetrate. Local lore maintains that no one has ever fallen from its heights, a belief attributed to spiritual protection, further reinforcing Olumo's reputation as a guardian of the people.

Sacred Rituals and Eternal Protection

Beyond its military role, Olumo Rock is deeply revered spiritually. Tradition holds that Chief Sodeke consulted the Ifa oracle, which foretold prosperity and unity for the Egba people if annual sacrifices—traditionally a cow—were offered to the rock. Shrines within its grounds remain places of prayer, where supplications are made for fertility, wealth, protection, and peace.

An enduring legend suggests that the spirit of Olumo ensures victory and harmony among the Egba, transforming the rock from a physical refuge into a living symbol of divine protection and communal strength.

Today, Olumo Rock stands as more than a geological landmark. It is a powerful emblem of survival, faith, and identity. Visitors can explore its ancient caves, climb to its summit, and enjoy sweeping panoramic views of Abeokuta—walking in the footsteps of a people whose history was shaped beneath the shelter of the rock.