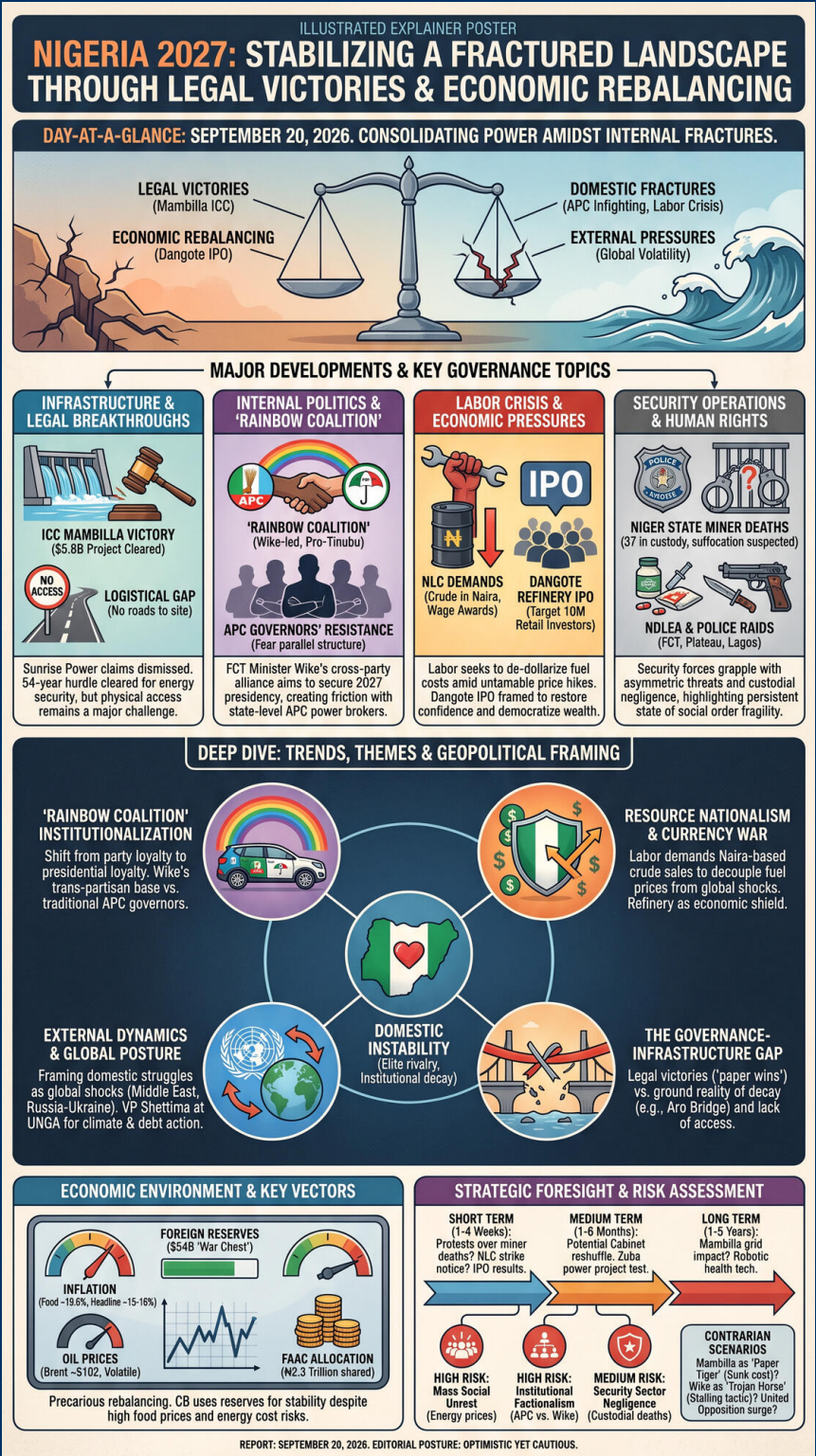


TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

TVCNEWS

SEPTEMBER 20, 2026

THE GDELT PROJECT



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NIGERIA LEVERAGES STRUCTURAL
LEGAL VICTORIES AND ECONOMIC
REBALANCING EFFORTS TO
STABILIZE A FRACTURING
DOMESTIC LANDSCAPE AHEAD OF
THE 2027 ELECTORAL CYCLE.

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

September 20, 2026, was characterized by the Nigerian government's attempts to consolidate power through major infrastructure breakthroughs and the management of deepening internal political fractures. The most significant strategic win was the **International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) arbitration ruling** regarding the [Mambilla hydroelectric project](#), which dismissed claims by Sunrise Power and Transmission Company. This clears a two-decade legal hurdle for a \$5.8 billion project essential for national energy security. Concurrently, the administration is navigating a **labor crisis**, as the Nigeria Labor Congress (NLC) demands [immediate wage awards](#) and a shift to selling crude oil to local refineries in Naira to mitigate the impact of untamable fuel price hikes.

Domestic political stability is increasingly threatened by **elite infighting** within the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC). The emergence of the "Rainbow Coalition," led by FCT Minister Nyesom Wike, has created a [parallel power structure](#) that aims to secure President Tinubu's 2027 reelection while potentially undermining APC governors at the state level. This tension between the presidency's cross-party alliances and the party's formal structure suggests a looming institutional crisis. Meanwhile, security forces continue to grapple with **asymmetric threats**, parading hundreds of suspects in the [Federal Capital Territory \(FCT\)](#) and Plateau State, highlighting a persistent state of social order fragility.

On the economic front, the day saw a push for **industrial stabilization** and capital market expansion. Manufacturers are calling for a [1 trillion Naira stabilization fund](#) to manage financing pressures, even as the **Dangote IPO** targets 10 million Nigerian investors to deepen market participation. Internationally, Nigeria is projecting its interests at the [81st UN General Assembly](#), with Vice President Kashim Shettima leading a delegation focused on climate action and debt development. This external posture seeks to frame Nigeria as a stabilizing regional power despite the significant **macroeconomic volatility** driven by global energy prices and internal currency fluctuations.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

Infrastructure & Legal Breakthroughs

- The ICC arbitration tribunal rejected all claims by **Sunrise Power and Transmission Company** regarding the [Mambilla project](#), theoretically allowing the 3,500 MW-4,000 MW hydroelectric plant to proceed after 54 years of stagnation.
- The project site remains largely inaccessible, requiring significant **logistics and road construction** before physical work can commence in Taraba State [at the Highland tea area](#).

Internal Factionalism and Electoral Strategy

- APC governors are resisting Nyesom Wike's **Rainbow Coalition**, fearing it will weaken the party's grip on state-level contests while focusing solely on the presidency [in 2027](#).
- Political analysts suggest the opposition (Atiku Abubakar and Peter Obi) is failing to build a **united front**, which inadvertently strengthens the incumbent's path [to reelection](#).
- The death of former Kogi Governor **Ibrahim Idris** at age 77 triggers three days of mourning, marking the end of a long political era in the state [at an UK hospital](#).

Labor and Economic Pressures

- The NLC is leveraging the **Middle East crisis** and its impact on oil prices to demand that crude be sold in Naira to local refineries to lower domestic pump prices [for citizens](#).

- The **Dangote IPO** is being framed as a move to restore investor confidence and democratize wealth through [retail interest](#).

Security Operations and Human Rights

- Niger State lifted a curfew following the death of **37 suspected illegal miners** in custody; investigations are ongoing to determine if the cause was [suffocation or disease](#).
- The NDLEA intercepted **1.8 billion Naira worth of Canadian Loud** and other opioids in major breakthroughs across Lagos and Niger states [by operatives](#).
- FCT and Plateau police paraded hundreds of suspects for **robbery and illegal arms possession**, signaling intensified urban security measures [in crime flashpoints](#).

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

Energy & Critical Infrastructure Security

- The **Mambilla Hydroelectric Project** is identified as a critical national asset that has been compromised by [decades of corruption](#) and predatory legal claims.
- Nigeria's current **transmission capacity** is noted to be less than 6,000 MW, leading to frequent [system collapses](#) despite higher potential generation.
- The 50 MW **Ido industrial power project** was launched in Abuja to provide 24-hour electricity to manufacturers [in the Zuba area](#).

Leadership Dynamics & Governance

- The **Wike-Tinubu relationship** is described as a "marriage of convenience" that creates significant friction with the APC's established [state-level governors](#).

- Governor Zulum of Borno State is commended for using **bicycles for students** and agro-rangers to protect farmers, demonstrating a localized "people-focused" governance model [against insecurity](#).

Macroeconomics & Trade

- Nigeria's **foreign reserves** stand at \$54 billion, providing the Central Bank with "war chests" to maintain currency stability despite [inflationary pressures](#).
- A **2.3 trillion Naira** allocation was shared among the three tiers of government, raising questions about **value for money** and state-level prudence [in governance](#).

Geopolitical Competition & Bloc Politics

- Nigeria is navigating **global oil price volatility** caused by Saudi-Iran and US tensions, framing domestic economic struggles as part of a [global context](#).
- The **UN General Assembly** mission aims to reposition Nigeria as a leader in "managing transformation" for the [Global South](#).

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

Institutionalizing the "Rainbow Coalition"

A definitive shift is occurring in Nigerian politics where **individual loyalty to the presidency** is being prioritized over traditional party cohesion. The Wike-led Rainbow Coalition is not merely an electoral vehicle but an attempt to bypass the influence of **APC governors** who traditionally act as power brokers [within their states](#). This trend suggests the presidency is seeking to build a **trans-partisan base** that can absorb

opposition elements (PDP and Labour Party) to ensure reelection, even if it causes internal party fractures [at the subnational level](#).

Resource Nationalism and Currency War

Labor unions are increasingly framing the energy crisis through the lens of **resource sovereignty**. The demand to sell crude to local refineries in Naira is an attempt to de-dollarize the most critical component of Nigeria's [consumer price index](#). This movement coincides with the Dangote Refinery's operational ramp-up, suggesting that the government is under immense pressure to use the refinery as a **shield against international price shocks** rather than treating it as a purely commercial entity [in the capital market](#).

The Governance-Infrastructure Gap

While the government celebrates legal victories for "mega-projects" like Mambilla, the reality on the ground remains one of **disconnect and decay**. Transcripts reveal that after decades of talk, there is **no road** to the Mambilla site [in Taraba State](#), and historic infrastructure like the **Aro Bridge** in Ogun State remains in a state of [vandalized abandonment](#). This creates a narrative of "paper victories" that fail to translate into immediate socio-economic relief for a population facing [rising living costs](#).

INTERNAL DYNAMICS & DOMESTIC INSTABILITY

The Nigerian domestic landscape is characterized by **institutional decay** and **elite rivalry**. The controversy over the **death of 37 miners in custody** reflects a systemic failure in the security sector, where "law enforcement gone wrong" resulted in a mass casualty event [in Niger State](#). This incident,

coupled with the **vandalization of public bridges** for scrap metal in Ogun State [highlights a breakdown](#) in social order and the state's inability to protect its heritage or its citizens in detention.

Furthermore, the **partisan polarization** is deepening within the APC itself. Governors are openly "jittery" about Wike's influence, seeing it as a **parallel structure** that could render them irrelevant by 2027 [in the long term](#). This suggests that the ruling party is not a monolith but a fragile collection of interests held together by the presidency. The **labor demands** for wage awards and Naira-based crude sales indicate a loss of government mandate among the working class, who see their [essential living costs](#) becoming unsustainable.

EXTERNAL DYNAMICS & GLOBAL POSTURE

Nigeria is framing its external operating environment as a **turbulent and interconnected system** where foreign shocks dictate domestic stability. The administration points to the **Middle East conflict** between Saudi Arabia, Iran, and the US, as well as the **Ukraine-Russia war**, as the primary drivers of the fuel price hikes [afflicting Nigerians](#). By doing so, the state seeks to deflect blame for domestic inflation while positioning itself as a resilient player capable of winning **international legal battles** against companies like Sunrise Power [at the ICC](#).

The upcoming participation in the **UN General Assembly** is a key power projection move. The delegation intends to emphasize **climate action and the rights to development**, seeking to forge new alliances that can secure funding for Nigeria's

infrastructure [in a fracturing multipolar arena](#). This global posture is one of defensive adaptation, where Nigeria attempts to weaponize its **foreign reserves** and resource potential to attract foreign portfolio investors while simultaneously managing the [macroeconomic fallout](#) of being a net importer of refined fuels.

THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The Nigerian economic environment is in a state of **precarious rebalancing**. While headline inflation has dipped to **15-16%** after rebasing, food inflation remains high at **19.57%**, and energy costs continue to pose a severe [stabilization risk](#). The Central Bank is utilizing its **\$54 billion reserves** to maintain currency stability, but manufacturers are warning of imminent factory closures without a [trillion Naira fund](#).

Key Economic Vectors

- **IPO Market:** The **Dangote IPO** aims to raise **2.15 trillion Naira**, making it Africa's largest ever share offering [targeting 10 million retail investors](#).
- **Commodity Prices:** Brent crude features trade at **\$102.50/barrel**, while WTI crude sells for **\$99.88**, with high volatility driven by [Middle East conflict](#).
- **Revenue Sharing:** The Federation Account Allocation Committee (FAAC) shared **2.3 trillion Naira** among federal, state, and local governments [in a material increase](#).
- **Global Monetary Policy:** The **Bank of Japan** raised interest rates to **1.25%**, its highest in 31 years, while **Uganda** increased cash reserve requirements to **13.5%** to support its [local shilling](#).

LEADERSHIP CHANGES

Leadership dynamics are focused on the removal of "old guard" influencers and the consolidation of the presidency's inner circle through strategic appointments and the management of political departures.

- **Ibrahim Idris:** The former Governor of Kogi State died at 77 in a UK hospital, marking a significant **succession transition** in the state's political history [with a three-day mourning period](#).
- **Nyesom Wike:** Continues to operate as a **hybrid actor**, serving as FCT Minister in an APC government while remaining a "legal" PDP leader, creating a [Rainbow Coalition winner](#) scenario.
- **Kashim Shettima:** Appointed as the primary **representative at UNGA**, signaling his role as the administration's top diplomat for [international cooperation](#).
- **Professor Kingsley Ekwueme:** A UK-trained robotic surgeon leading Nigeria's first **state-owned robotic center** in Imo State, signaling a shift toward [high-tech specialized medical leadership](#).

EDITORIAL POSTURE & STORY HIERARCHY

The editorial tone of the day was **optimistic yet cautious**, prioritizing major infrastructure wins and administrative reforms while downplaying the severity of civil unrest. The lead stories focused on the **Mambilla Project victory** and the **Dangote IPO**, framing them as signs of a "recovering" and "modernizing" nation. The network frequently used terms like "renewed hope" and "breakthrough" to describe government actions [in power and law](#). However, stories regarding the **suffocation of 37 miners** in

custody were presented with a more **skeptical and investigative tone**, suggesting a gap between government explanations and [ground reality](#).

Buried stories included the electoral defeats of incumbent forces in Germany and the specific details of the **ADC flight crash survivors** in the Ibrahim Idris tribute, which were minimized to avoid dwelling on past tragedies. A **conspicuous omission** was the lack of detailed analysis on the specific "harmful herbal concoctions" causing deaths in Ondo State, which was mentioned only as a [coroner's inquest matter](#).

GEOPOLITICAL FRAMING

The transcripts portray a world where **multilateralism is failing** and individual states must resort to aggressive legal and economic maneuvering to survive. The Western world is framed as a source of **monetary volatility**, while regional allies (like Morocco and Ghana) are partners in [military training and development](#).

COUNTRIES

- **Nigeria:** Portrayed as a **principled but embattled** leader in West Africa, fighting "predatory" legal claims and managing internal economic hardship through **strategic resilience**. Quote: "We would never succumb to predatory or opportunistic claims" [regarding Sunrise Power](#).
- **Germany:** Framed as **chaotic and politically unstable**, with a "chancellor swap" rumored following "damaging defeats" in local elections [for the center-right](#).

- **Israel/Middle East:** Portrayed as a zone of **senseless war** that directly increases the price of diesel for the average Nigerian worker [on the street](#).

LEADERS

- **President Bola Tinubu:** Framed as a **brave master strategist** with the "heart of a tiger," inheriting liabilities but pushing through reforms. Quote: "Effective May 29, 2023... he's only guilty of telling us the truth" [regarding the subsidy removal](#).
- **Peter Obi:** Characterized by critics as **inept and dishonest** regarding his financial legacy in Anambra. Quote: "Obi is a master of campaigning... statistic is not all that" [according to showmi](#).
- **Nyesom Wike:** Portrayed as a **competent but disruptive** "deal maker" who is "tough" and "strong" enough to intimidate governors [across the country](#).

INFORMATION WARFARE ENVIRONMENT

The day's information environment was saturated with **narrative seeding** regarding the 2027 elections and the "Rainbow Coalition." Wike's supporters are actively weaponizing the concept of a "coalition of interests" to normalize **cross-party defections** and split-ballot voting [as a modern strategy](#). Conversely, the Anambra state government is engaging in **evidence-based counter-propaganda**, releasing video and loan records to challenge Peter Obi's "no

debt" claim, aiming to [discredit his saintly image](#).

- **Narrative Delta:** While the government claims a disease outbreak caused the deaths of 37 miners, survivors and independent reports suggest **suffocation in overcrowded cells**, indicating a likely cover-up of [negligent custodial conditions](#).
- **Disinformation:** The uncovering of "purported fake bodies" like the "National Brands Development Office" suggests that rogue elements within the government are [operating fraudulent agencies](#).

HYPOTHESES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

- **Internal APC Implosion:** The growing rift between APC governors and the Rainbow Coalition will likely lead to **purges or mass defections** if President Tinubu does not mediate soon [before the 2027 cycle](#).
- **Energy Price Escalation:** Given the Middle East volatility, domestic petrol prices will likely reach **1,500-2,000 Naira per liter** before the end of the year, triggering [mass labor strikes](#).
- **Infrastructure Delays:** Despite the ICC victory, the Mambilla project is unlikely to see significant physical progress for **1-2 years** due to the [lack of access roads](#).

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks):

- Expect **autopsy results** and intensified protests over the Niger State miner deaths [in custodial centers](#).

- The NLC will likely issue a strike notice if the **wage awards** are not formalized [this week](#).
- Dangote IPO subscription results will be announced, likely showing **over-subscription** [by retail investors](#).

Medium Term (1-6 Months):

- A significant **cabinet reshuffle** may occur to accommodate members of the Rainbow Coalition [following political negotiations](#).
- The 50 MW industrial power project in Zuba will be tested, potentially providing a **blueprint for other clusters** [by December](#).

Long Term (1-5 Years):

- Structural changes to the **Nigerian electrical grid** will depend on the successful funding and execution of the [Mambilla project](#).
- The shift toward **robotic medical technology** in Imo State could stem the tide of "medical tourism" [for elite Nigerians](#).

RISK ASSESSMENT

- **Mass Social Unrest:** Rising energy costs and inflation threaten social stability. **Triggers:** Another fuel price hike or NLC strike breakdown. **Likelihood:** High. **Impact:** Critical. **Mitigations:** Immediate rollout of **CNG mass transit** and wage awards [requested by labor](#).

- **Institutional Factionalism:** APC governors vs. Rainbow Coalition rift. **Triggers:** State-level primary interference. **Likelihood:** High. **Impact:** High for electoral stability. **Mitigations:** Presidential mediation and **negotiation with Wike** [recommended by lawmakers](#).
- **Critical Infrastructure Vandalism:** Continued stripping of historic assets like the Aro Bridge. **Triggers:** Economic desperation. **Likelihood:** High. **Impact:** Moderate (logistical disruption). **Mitigations:** Community policing and **concrete reconstruction** [requested by Assembly](#).
- **Security Sector Negligence:** Deaths in custody eroding public trust. **Triggers:** Release of suffocation findings. **Likelihood:** Medium. **Impact:** High (legal and social). **Mitigations:** Independent probe and **prosecution of NSCDC officials** [responsible](#).
- **Market Dislocation:** Failure to preserve food resulting in an "off-season" price spike. **Triggers:** Planting season arrival. **Likelihood:** High. **Impact:** High (food security). **Mitigations:** Increased **imported food items** to balance local supply [in the interim](#).

GAPS & BLIND SPOTS

A complete assessment is hindered by several unverified or missing data points:

- The specific **clinical causes** of the "harmful herbal concoction" deaths in Ondo State remain undisclosed [to the public](#).
- There is no clear timeline for when **crude-for-Naira** sales will actually lower pump prices for consumers [at the retail level](#).

- The extent of **Chinese or other foreign funding** for the Mambilla project post-arbitration is not detailed [in current reports](#).
- The specific **regulatory framework** for robotic surgery and oncology centers in Imo State is not fully explained [for health sector oversight](#).

CONTRARIAN NARRATIVE SCENARIOS

The "Paper Tiger" Hydro Project: While the legal victory is touted as a breakthrough, the Mambilla project could remain a **sunk cost** for years. The lack of infrastructure and the staggering \$5.8 billion price tag in a high-interest environment may prevent any credible financier from committing, making the ICC win a [hollow administrative triumph](#).

Wike as the Trojan Horse: Rather than Wike helping Tinubu, his "Rainbow Coalition" may be a **stalling tactic** to weaken the APC from within, allowing him to launch a third-party bid or a hostile takeover of the party machinery in late 2027 [if the presidency falters](#).

Black Swan Event: A United Opposition Front between Atiku, Obi, and Kwankwaso that succeeds despite current discord, leveraging **15,000 Naira wage dissatisfaction** to create a populist surge that overwhelms the APC's [fragmented coalition](#).

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For Statecraft/Public Sector:

- **Security Reform:** Transition to **electronic monitoring** of detention centers to prevent custodial deaths and restore international human rights standing [following the Niger incident](#).
- **Energy Strategy:** Accelerate **CNG corridors** to decouple transportation costs from international crude volatility [requested by labor](#).
- **Electoral Integrity:** Clarify the role of **cross-party ministers** to prevent institutional conflicts of interest in the lead-up [to 2027](#).

For Private Sector/Investors:

- **Capital Allocation:** Monitor the **Dangote IPO** for signs of retail fatigue; over-subscription will indicate a resilient Nigerian middle class [despite inflation](#).
- **Supply Chain Risk:** Diversify away from diesel-dependent logistics toward **rail and aquatic transport** where available [due to volatility](#).
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Stay abreast of the new **Petroleum Industry Act (PIA)** sections governing refinery subsidies and Naira-based sales [to avoid pricing traps](#).

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

Legislative and policy activity centered on curbing **cost of governance** while managing the fallout of **fake administrative bodies**. The Parliament is also working on a new **Financial Act** to tighten coordination between the Ministry of Finance and various MDAs.

BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED:

- **Statutory 10% Soft Landscaping Policy:** Aimed at enforcing green spaces in planning permits to mitigate climate impact [in urban areas](#).
- **State-Level 15,000 Naira Wage Award:** Proposed by labor to cushion the effect of fuel hikes [at the subnational level](#).
- **Petroleum Industry Act (PIA) 2021 (Sec 205):** Re-examined to determine the legality of prescribing pump prices [for refined products](#).

HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS:

- **ICC Mambilla Briefing:** President Tinubu welcomed the ruling, framing it as a win against "predatory" legal warfare [by Sunrise Power](#).
- **Rainbow Coalition Town Hall:** Wike supporters mobilized for Tinubu's second term while addressing **APC internal friction** [in Kogi and Ekiti](#).
- **NLC Press Conference:** Demanded Naira-based crude sales and immediate palliatives to avoid [national strikes](#).

KEY STORIES

- **Mambilla ICC Victory:** Nigeria wins a legal battle at the International Chamber of Commerce, clearing the path for the **\$5.8 billion** Mambilla hydroelectric project [in Taraba](#).
- **Labor Demands:** NLC demands crude oil be sold in Naira to local refineries and a **30,000-150,000 Naira** wage award to counter fuel prices [for workers](#).

- **Niger State miner Deaths:** 37 suspected illegal miners die in custody; curfew lifted in Minna as investigations into **suffocation** begin [at detention centers](#).
- **Dangote IPO:** Africa's largest share offering targets **2.15 trillion Naira** and 10 million retail investors to expand market liquidity [across Nigeria](#).
- **Wike's Rainbow Coalition:** FCT Minister Nyesom Wike builds a cross-party coalition for President Tinubu's 2027 reelection, causing **friction with APC governors nationwide**.
- **Kogi Governor Death:** Former Governor **Ibrahim Idris** dies at 77 in the UK; three days of mourning declared in Kogi State [for his legacy](#).
- **NDLEA Drug Bust:** Operatives intercept **1.8 billion Naira worth of Canadian Loud** and arrest a trafficker impersonating a police officer [in Lagos](#).
- **Anambra Debt Controversy:** State government releases records to counter Peter Obi's claim of leaving the state **without debt in 2014**.
- **Imo Robotic Health Center:** Governor Uzodima launches West Africa's first robotic surgery center in Eno State, led by **Professor Ekwueme** [for specialized care](#).
- **FCT Police Raid:** Hundreds of suspects arrested in massive operations to disrupt **traffic robbery and housebreaking** in the capital [flashpoints](#).
- **UNGA 81 Mission:** VP Shettima leads a delegation to New York to deliver Nigeria's national statement on **global peace and economic growth** [during UNGA week](#).
- **German Electoral Defeat:** Chancellor Scholz (and CDU figures like Merz) face defeats in local elections, with far-right **AfD** making gains [in northeastern states](#).

- **Oguta Lake Crossroads:** Tourism decline and **environmental change** threaten the future of Imo State's historic natural treasure [in southeastern Nigeria](#).
- **Aro Bridge Abandonment:** Historic 117-year-old railway bridge in Ogun State faces decay and **vandalization** despite continued use by locals [for transport](#).
- **Plateau State Arms Recovery:** Police recover **GPMG and AK-47s** from bandits following intelligence-led operations [in Jos and Kafi Abu](#).
- **Eno State All Nigeria Editors Conference:** 500 editors to gather in Enugu to discuss "the ballot, the media, and **keeping democracy alive**" [in November](#).
- **Delta State By-Election:** APC candidate Okolosi Actor declared winner of the House of Assembly seat with **8,724 votes** [in Udu local government](#).
- **Borno Agriculture Support:** Governor Zulum distributes **bicycles and relief food** to farmers to encourage production despite Boko Haram threats [in IDP zones](#).
- **Ondo Coroner's Inquest:** Government investigates deaths linked to **harmful alcoholic concoctions** and reviews local distribution framework [for sale](#).
- **Jigawa 1 Million Man March:** Supporters mobilize for Tinubu and Governor Namadi, targeting **2 million votes** in 2027 [in Hadeja](#).
- **Albinism Awareness:** Families in Lagos speak on intentional parenting and the high cost of **extra care and medical support** for white girls [facing stigma](#).
- **Heritage DNA Entrepreneurship:** Prince John James Olomo uses DNA to reconnect the **African Diaspora** with ancestral tribes in Nigeria [from the US](#).

- **Kamchatka Volcano Research:** Geologists study young volcanoes and the **Pacific Ring of Fire** for clues on the earth's root systems [in Russia](#).

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Today's Media Trends is a public interest experiment in applying deep thematic trend analysis to television news coverage from around the world to explore how responsibly applied advanced AI can help journalists and scholars better understand the overarching trends, themes and patterns of our global world.

No data is used to train or tune any AI model.

Each morning, in collaboration with the Internet Archive's TV News Archive, we apply Google's Gemini 3 to deeply examine yesterday's coverage from each television news channel to tease out the overarching themes and trends of its news coverage into a richly annotated thematic analysis. Each high-level insight is connected back to the original broadcast, allowing journalists and scholars to understand the dominate themes and trends and instantly click out to the underlying sources for details.

By helping journalists and scholars see the broader trends and patterns of global news coverage, this analysis helps them identify relevant stories and coverage they might not otherwise have encountered and uncover connections, emphases and narrative shifts that enable more comprehensive reporting and deeper, evidence-based research.

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