# the beecroft cradle

A yearly publication of Nigerian Navy Ship BEECROFT

December 2025

## INTERVIEW WITH **THE COMMANDER**

## ENHANCING MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT AT THE REGIONAL MARITIME AWARENESS CAPABILITY TRAINING SCHOOL, APAPA

## MARITIME SECURITY AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

THE ROLE OF THE NIGERIAN NAVY

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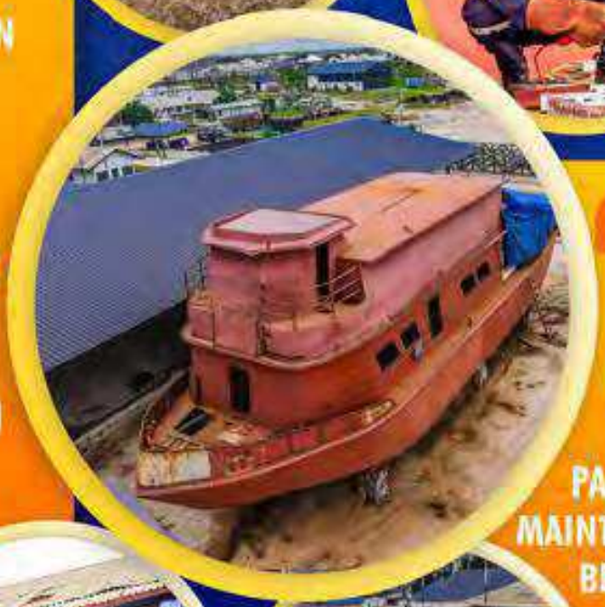

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# CHIEF OF NAVAL STAFF

## VISION

To develop a modern, agile and professionalnaval force dedicated to securing Nigeria'smaritime interests and advancing nationalsecurity objectives in synergy with other security agencies.

## MISSION

To deploy a highly motivated andprofessional naval force capable ofsafeguarding Nigeria's maritime interests andcontributing effectively to joint operations indefence of national sovereignty and maintenance ofinternal stability.

VICE ADMIRAL
**I ABBAS**
AM DGSM GSS psc fdc MSc MNIM

**GOODWILL MESSAGE BY**

# THE FLAG OFFICER COMMANDING WESTERN NAVAL COMMAND

*It is with great pride and a deep sense of honour that I extend my warmest felicitations to the Command, officers, ratings, and civilian staff of Nigerian Navy Ship (NNS) BEECROFT on the publication of the 2025 edition of "Cradle Magazine". This landmark achievement not only marks a significant milestone in your unit's history but also underscores your commitment to preserving the enduring legacy of the Nigerian Navy's premier Command, the Western Naval Command.*

NNS BEECROFT holds a unique place in the history of the NN. As the "Cradle" of naval presence in Lagos and one of the oldest operations bases of the Nigerian Navy, the Ship has for decades stood as a sentinel of our maritime approaches, a guardian of our seaward flanks, and a steady anchor in times of peace and crisis. Its strategic location at the mouth of Lagos harbour has made it a pivotal outpost for maritime security, naval operations, and inter-agency cooperation. Generations of sailors have passed through her decks and jetties, each adding a chapter to the proud history that the Cradle has documented over the years.

The 2025 Edition of Cradle Magazine is more than just the release of a publication; it is the unveiling of a reflective mirror that captures the Ship's track record, its dedicated people, its remarkable achievements, and its forward-looking aspirations. Within its pages, serving personnel, veterans, or members of the public will discover a vivid portrayal of the daily realities of life in the Nigerian Navy. Some of these are; the operational challenges of safeguarding our maritime domain, and the inspiring personal stories of courage, dedication, as well as professionalism that define our service.

In an era where information circulates faster than the tide, a publication like Cradle Magazine serves as both a record and a beacon. It preserves our past for posterity, inspires our present to higher standards of service, and charts a course for the future. It will also strengthen the bonds between NNS BEECROFT and the communities it serves, fostering understanding, trust, and cooperation in the shared mission of maritime security and national development.

I commend the Editorial Board and all contributors for the vision, creativity, and dedication that have brought this project to life. The commitment displayed in compiling, and producing this year's edition reflects the spirit of teamwork and discipline that are hallmarks of naval service. I urge you to keep the flag of excellence flying high. Let Cradle Magazine be a platform that inspires your ship's company to greater professionalism, nurtures the spirit of camaraderie, and projects the Nigerian Navy in the finest tradition of service and sacrifice.

On behalf of the officers, ratings, and civilian staff of the Western Naval Command, I congratulate NNS BEECROFT on this remarkable achievement. May this publication endure as a proud testament to your role as the Cradle of naval operations in Lagos, and may your future editions sail on the fair winds of inspiration, truth, and excellence. "Fair winds and following seas"

ONWARD TOGETHER!!!

REAR ADMIRAL
**AA MUSTAPHA** DSS psc(+) MSc MA USNI mni

**GOODWILL MESSAGE FROM**

# ADMIRAL SUPERINTENDENT NAVAL SHIP YARD LIMITED

I am delighted to see the release of yet another edition of 'The Cradle' Magazine, which showcases the remarkable activities of the Base.

This latest edition not only honours the achievements of the Base but also underscores its dedication to fulfilling its mission.

Let me commend the Commander NNS BEECROFT, along with the officers, ratings, and civilian staff, for their commitment to ensuring the safety and security of our maritime domain.In recent months, the remarkable progress made by the Base in addressing maritime crimes including crude oil theft, kidnapping, and pipeline vandalism has been both noteworthy and commendable. I encourage the commander, officers, and crew of the NNS BEECROFT to sustain their current momentum in eliminating criminal activities in our waters and to remain vigilant in their efforts.

I want to commend the Editorial Board of 'The Cradle' magazine for their unwavering commitment to upholding a high standard in both the quality of content and the overall presentation of the publication. As a member of the NN community, I believe that this level of excellence is essential. I eagerly anticipate the continued publication of this periodical, which will undoubtedly serve as an invaluable reference and a trustworthy source of information for its target audience.

Rear Admiral
**IU UBANI**
DsS psc+ fde+ fusnwe B.Eng MBA MNSSS MNIM COREN

**GOODWILL MESSAGE BY**

# COMMANDER 9 BRIGADE NIGERIAN ARMY

It is with great pleasure that I convey this goodwill message to the Commander, Officers and men of the Nigerian Navy Ship (NNS) BEECROFT on the publication of the Year 2025 Cradle Magazine.

Let me start by congratulating the Commander on his monumental achievements and successes recorded in the area of maritime security in support of Op MESA in Lagos State. This publication serves as a vital means to educate all readers on the operational activities, achievements, community engagement as well as inter-agency collaborations of NNS BEECROFT. The publication will also in no small measure accentuate the contributions of the Nigerian Navy (NN) in the area of joint and collaborative operations between the Services and other security agencies. The publication equally offers a comprehensive account of the achievements of NNS BEECROFT in support of Op MESA in Lagos State under the leadership of the Commander NNS BEECROFT, Cdre PP Nimmyel.

I therefore on behalf of the Officers and Soldiers of 9 Brigade NA commend the Commander NNS BEECROFT and his able Editorial Team for their efforts to ensure the production of this magazine to truly reflect the image of the Command. Let me also use this opportunity to appreciate all the personnel of NNS BEECROFT for supporting the Brigade through unalloyed dedication to all Op MESA duties. Your efforts are indeed worthy of recognition and highly commendable. For our readers, I believe this publication would better equip you as vanguards in projecting the image of NNS BEECROFT, and indeed the Western Naval Command.

BRIG GENERAL
AO OWOLABI
DSS psc fwc ndc (Chile) MSc MIASS

**GOODWILL MESSAGE BY**

# THE COMMANDER 651 BASE SERVICES GROUP SAM ETHNAN AIR FORCE BASE

It is with profound respect and a deep sense of admiration that I, on behalf of the officers, airmen/airwomen, and civilian staff of 651 Base Services Group (BSG), SEAFB Nigerian Air Force, extend heartfelt felicitations to the Commander, officers, ratings, and civilian staff of Nigerian Navy Ship (NNS) BEECROFT on the successful publication of the 2025 edition of Cradle Magazine.

For decades, NNS BEECROFT has stood as a beacon of naval presence, a bastion of maritime security, and a hub of joint operational synergy. The unit's strategic contributions to national security, especially within the Lagos maritime corridor, have not gone unnoticed. The 2025 edition of Cradle Magazine serves as a mirror reflecting not only your operational milestones but also the inspiring stories of dedication, courage, and professionalism that define your Command.

Beyond being a repository of historical records, Cradle Magazine serves as a unifying platform that strengthens civil-military relations and fosters inter-service understanding. At a time when jointness and collaboration among the Armed Forces are critical to national development and security, such initiatives significantly enhance cohesion and shared purpose. I commend the Editorial Board and all contributors for their vision, diligence, and attention to detail in curating this exceptional publication. Your efforts exemplify the spirit of teamwork and discipline that are hallmarks of military service. I encourage you to sustain this tradition of excellence in future editions.

Once again, I congratulate the Commander and entire ship's company of NNS BEECROFT on this laudable achievement. May Cradle Magazine continue to grow as a platform that informs, inspires, and strengthens the bond among all stakeholders in the maritime and broader defence community.

*Fair winds and following seas.*
*ONWARD TOGETHER!*

AIR COMMODORE
**MA IMAM**
MS fwc psc(+) BSC LLB BL MSc pm FISN mni

**GOODWILL MESSAGE FROM**

# THE DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF STATE SERVICES (DSS), LAGOS STATE COMMAND

*It is with great pride and professional camaraderie that I convey the warm compliments of the Department of State Services, Lagos State Command, to the Commander, Officers, Ratings, and entire personnel of Nigerian Navy Ship (NNS) BEECROFT, under the capable leadership of Commodore PP Nimmyel, on the successful publication of the 2025 edition of Cradle Magazine.*

This annual magazine remains a vital medium for showcasing the Base's operational achievements, community engagements, and the ever-deepening inter-agency collaborations that are essential to our collective security efforts. The content reflects not only the professionalism and resilience of the Nigerian Navy but also the shared values that bind our agencies in the service of our dear nation.

The DSS Lagos State Command acknowledges with appreciation the strong cooperation we continue to enjoy with NNS BEECROFT. Your steadfast commitment to maritime security and collaborative intelligence operations has contributed significantly to maintaining peace and stability in Lagos and its environs.

As the 2025 edition of Cradle Magazine is unveiled, I commend the editorial team for their diligence and vision. May this publication continue to serve as a beacon of operational excellence, joint agency cohesion, and a testament to the Navy's enduring service to Nigeria.
Please accept the assurances of my highest regards and the continued support of the DSS in Lagos State.

BABAJIDE ADISA
Director,
Department of State Services
Lagos State Command

**GOODWILL MESSAGE BY**

# THE STATE COMMANDANT NSCDC LAGOS STATE COMMAND

*It is my honour to extend my warmest felicitations to the Commander and entire crew of NNS BEECROFT on this year's prestigious publication, which is a testament to your base continuous outstanding commitments in safeguarding the nation's maritime interests.*

The Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, Lagos State Command, is always proud to partner the Nigerian Navy, leading to numerous handover of criminal cases from your Naval Base in time past, bordering on oil bunkering, oil theft and other related offences for possible prosecution.

The operational activities as highlighted in this magazine will no doubt demonstrate the Nigerian Navy's unwavering dedication to its mandate. From maritime law enforcement to humanitarian assistance and disaster response, the Nigerian Navy has consistently shown its value as a force for good in our nation.

I commend the Commander and crew of NNS BEECROFT for their tireless efforts in promoting peace and security in our maritime domain. Your achievements remains source of inspiration to us all, and we are proud to work alongside such a professional and dedicated team.

The Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, Lagos State Command, is committed to continuing our collaboration with the Nigerian Navy in areas such as intelligence sharing, joint patrols, and community engagement.

I wish the Nigerian Navy Ship BEECROFT Cradle Magazine 2025 all the best in its publication and continued success in its mission to promote the Nigerian Navy's achievements and contributions to our nation's security.

Together, we can build a safer and more secure environment for all Nigerians.

***Long Live the Federal Republic of Nigeria!***
***Long Live the Nigerian Navy!***
***Long Live the NSCDC!***

*Yours in National Service,*
*AS KESHINRO*

## GOODWILL MESSAGE FROM
# THE NIS

*I extend my warm compliments to the Commander, Nigerian Navy Shi BEECROFT, on the publication of the Cradle Magazine 2025 Edition.*

This laudable publication reflects the Navy's unwavering dedication to duty, professionalism, and its role in fostering inter-agency collaboration, national security, and community engagement. It is indeed a platform that highlights the distinguished contributions of NNS BEECROFT to the peace and stability of our maritime domain.

The entire Nigeria Immigration Service, especially Zone A, values the strong synergy and cooperation that exist between our Service and the Nigerian Navy. Together, we remain committed to safeguarding our nation's territorial integrity and ensuring the safety of our people.

While congratulating the Nigerian Navy Ship BEECROFT on this remarkable initiative, I wish the Cradle Magazine 2025 Edition resounding success as it continues to project the noble achievements of the Navy. We also look forward to learning more of your operational activities and accomplishments through this publication.
Once again, congratulations.

**EL ANUGWA,** pca fsi, tina FICA
ACG/ZONAL COORDINATOR
IKEJA LAGOS

**GOODWILL MESSAGE FROM**

# THE EFCC

The Management of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) is delighted to felicitate with the Nigerian Navy Ship (NNS) BEECROFT on the publication of the Cradle Magazine, 2025 edition.

Over the years, the NNS BEECROFT has stood as a shining example of professionalism, dedication and strategic excellence in safeguarding the nation's maritime domain.

Its unwavering commitment to operational readiness in the amphibious environment and its strong inter-agency collaborations have continued to strengthen the security architecture and enhance law enforcement efforts across Nigeria.

The EFCC is proud to share in this collaborative spirit, especially its joint operations with the Nigerian Navy have consistently yielded positive outcomes in the fight against economic and financial crimes vis-a -vis extractive industry fraud and other maritime-related offences.

Together, we have demonstrated that synergy between security and law enforcement agencies is indispensable for the peace, stability and economic growth of Nigeria.

As Cradle Magazine chronicles the achievements and successes of the Base in the year under review, we commend the officers and ratings for their dedication, resilience, and sacrifices in service to the nation.

May the Nigerian Navy Ship BEECROFT continue to excel in operational performance and foster even stronger partnerships for a safer and more prosperous Nigeria.

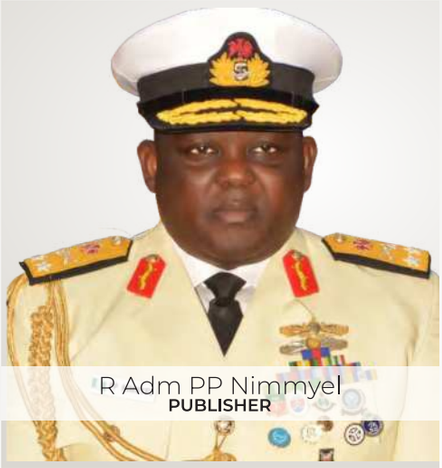
On behalf of the Executive Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, Mr. Ola Olukoyede, we congratulate you on yet another milestone publication.

MR. OLA OLUKOYEDE
**EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN**
ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CRIMES COMMISSION

## GOODWILL MESSAGE

The Managing Director, Management and entire staff of Atlantic Shrimpers Limited heartily wish the Commander, officers and men of Nigerian Navy Ship BEECROFT fair winds and fruitful sailing on their voyage in securing the Nigerian Maritime domain towards the economic prosperity of the country.
Onward Together!

Atlantic Shrimpers Limited
Kirikiri Lighter Terminal Phase 1
Apapa, Lagos



R Adm PP Nimmyel
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**MEMBER**

# EDITOR-IN-CHIEF'S FOREWORD

It is with great pride and a deep sense of responsibility that I welcome our esteemed readers to the 2025 edition of the NNS BEECROFT Cradle Magazine. This year's theme, "Securing the Maritime Environment: Partnership, Presence and Preparedness," resonates not only with the strategic posture of the Nigerian Navy but also with the enduring legacy of NNS BEECROFT as the vanguard of maritime security within Nigeria's western littoral.

The Nigerian Navy today stands at the confluence of opportunity and challenge. Our maritime environment continues to present dynamic threats from sea robbery, smuggling, and drug trafficking to cyber intrusions and environmental degradation. Yet, within these challenges lie opportunities to strengthen collaboration, deepen partnerships, and build resilience across our maritime domain. This edition of Cradle Magazine deliberately reflects that reality.

Our Special Features provide authoritative insights, including an exclusive interview with the Commander NNS BEECROFT, Commodore PP Nimmyel, as well as an appraisal of his first 6 months in Office. A lecture delivered by the Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice Admiral EI Ogalla, anchors the Navy's vision of aligning maritime security with national development, while other articles by seasoned officers and civilian experts emphasise why partnership, presence, and preparedness are non-negotiable in safeguarding our blue economy. In the Maritime Security and Naval Operations section, readers will encounter thought-provoking contributions on cybersecurity, intelligence, sea power, and heritage preservation. From exploring the role of the Navy in Nigeria's economic revival to advocating for a helicopter rescue swimmers' programme, these articles underscore the Navy's multidimensional approach to security and safety at sea.

CAPTAIN
I UDOESSIEN

The Leadership, Discipline, and Professional Development segment reaffirms timeless naval values. Articles on emotional intelligence, discipline, manpower development, and courage in service remind us that leadership in uniform is as much about character as it is about competence. Closely linked is our Health, Wellness & Lifestyle section, which prioritises the holistic well-being of personnel—addressing diet, fitness, PTSD awareness, and the mental strength that sustains operational effectiveness. Equally compelling are contributions in Social Issues and Morality, which cast light on societal challenges such as drug abuse, family abandonment, social vices, and the influence of social media on military life – matters that touch the Navy because they touch the nation. In parallel, our Technology, Logistics, and Policy articles offer forward-looking perspectives on fleet sustainability, communication systems, public relations, and the evolving impact of government reforms on naval operations.

The History & Heritage section situates the present in the continuum of tradition, recalling the establishment of NNS BEECROFT, the role of the CBM, and the cultural weight of music in military regimentation. In our Creative and Inspirational Corner, readers will be inspired by poetry, tributes, and reflections that remind us that behind every uniform beats the heart of service, sacrifice, and national pride. Finally, our Photo Gallery chronicles the year's activities in vivid detail—from operational highlights and courtesy visits to social events and ceremonial parades—capturing the spirit of unity and dynamism that defines NNS BEECROFT.

As Editor-in-Chief, I am profoundly grateful to the Publisher and Commander, the editorial board, the contributing authors, the photographers, and all those who lent their expertise and creativity to this edition. Most importantly, I commend the officers, ratings, and civilian staff of NNS BEECROFT, whose commitment ensures that the Navy continues to stand as a bulwark of maritime security. May this edition of Cradle Magazine not only inform and inspire but also reaffirm our shared responsibility to protect Nigeria's maritime environment through partnership, presence, and preparedness.

Fair Winds and Happy Reading!

## CREDITS

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Opinions expressed in the Cradle Magazine are those of the writers and not necessarily that of the Nigerian Navy or theFederal Government of Nigeria.

the beecroft cradle

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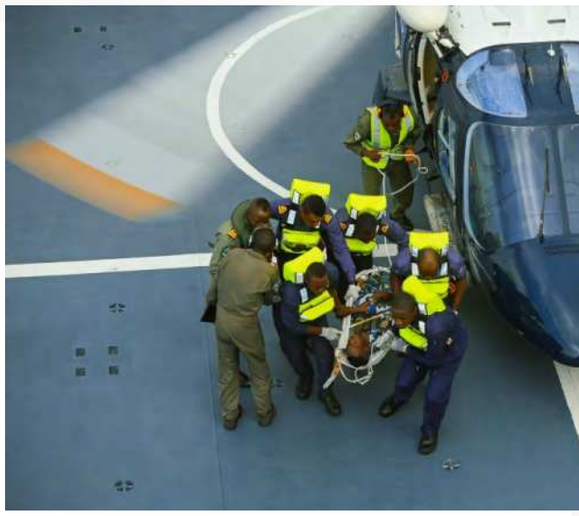

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# INTERVIEW WITH **THE COMMANDER**

In this exclusive interview, the Commander of the Nigerian Navy Ship BEECROFT, **Commodore Paul Ponfa Nimmyel**, shared insights into his leadership and command philosophy, strategic goals based on development, personnel and morale, community relations and partnerships, and vision and legacy.

**Sir, we request that you introduce yourself to our esteemed readers.**

Thank you very much, Editor-in-Chief and the editorial team, for our gallant magazine. Once again, welcome to NNS BEECROFT. My name is Commodore Paul Ponfa Nimmyel, the 63rd Commander of the Pioneer Base of the Nigerian Navy, NNS BEECROFT.

**Sir, can you share your journey to becoming the Commander of NNS BEECROFT, and what moments stand out most in your naval career so far?**

My journey to get here... Well, having been born into the Navy. My dad was in the Nigerian Navy. He retired as a Naval Warrant Officer. I grew up in the Barracks, so I took a liking to what the Navy is. I attended Navy Nursery School, Navy Primary School, and Navy Secondary School. I went to the Nigerian Defence Academy and officially joined the Navy in 1991. I graduated in 1996 as a seaman officer, specializing in the above-water warfare department, following in the steps of my dad.

It's been a worthwhile endeavor. I started by taking part in peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations in Liberia during the ECOMOG incursion to pacify the rebels. From there, I went to Sierra Leone to continue with the same operation. After that, we came back home and were launched into the Niger Delta crisis, where we had to pacify non-state actors who picked up arms against the country. Thereafter, I was deployed to the North East to pacify another set of non-state actors troubling the country. So basically, I have been in operations all my life in the Navy.

I have served in almost all the commands — NAVTRAC, Western Naval Command, Eastern Naval Command, and Central Naval Command. I have served in all the commands in the Navy apart from the Logistics Command.

So my journey, like every seaman officer, I have been through the ranks. I have done my courses, served onboard, served ashore, been a CO onboard ship, been an Operations Commander in the North East, and been a Chief Instructor in the prestigious "Gee School" back then, now called the Nigerian Navy School of Armament Technology, Kachia.

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By the special grace of God, the CNS deemed it fit to appoint me in January this year as Commander of this prestigious Base, NNS BEECROFT, and I resumed on the 6th of February 2025, when I took over the reins of command. For a seaman officer, it is the dream of every seaman officer to be able to command a Type A Base, and I thank God that I am privileged to be ranked among the very few who have had the opportunity to do that.

**What has been your guiding leadership philosophy throughout your years of service?**

Humanity! Humanity is my religion. Humanity is my guiding principle, not just in the Navy, but in life generally. Because I feel that if we care about the person to our left or right, if we pour into people and they, in turn, pour into others, society and the system will generally be a better place. For want of a better quote, if I may, I will reference the Christian Bible and the commandments. For me, the most important is the one that says: love thy neighbour as thyself. Everything in this life comes from that. If you love your neighbour as yourself, you will not steal. If you love your neighbour as yourself, you will not put them in harm's way. Everybody will care for everyone. To a large extent, that is my principle in life.

**What have been your most rewarding achievements since assuming command at NNS BEECROFT?**

Like I said, I took over in February this year, and from February till now, the Base has seen some modest achievements. We have been able to commission a 36-man heads, not just for the Base, but for the Fleet and everyone in these premises.

One of the things I noticed when I took over command — even before then, when I was the CAO at Headquarters, Western Naval Command — was that the Base did not have enough heads within the premises. One of my dreams then was that if I were ever made commander of this Base, I would make sure to tackle that problem. I thank God for His mercy that today it has been solved.

Also, the issue of power: the Base had just one generator, and we ran diesel back and forth. If that generator breaks down, the Base would be in darkness. So I set out to solarize the Base. The plan is to solarize the Base up to 350 KVA. For now, we have started with 50, and more will be added, so that the whole Base — even up to the Fleet Commander's office, FOC's office, and the Base Flat — will be solarized. This will cut down our reliance on diesel or generators, and also reduce the high cost of electricity bills.

Closely related to that, we looked at the issue of accommodation. It is only proper for us to have all our men quartered in one place for quick deployment. We are an Operations Base; if we need to muster in a hurry and go to help in whatever situation we are called upon, it is expedient for the men to stay in a particular place. So we took the bold step of doing the groundbreaking ceremony for a 50-room transit accommodation, which will commence, by the grace of God, at the end of this month. My prayer is to accomplish that before my time here as commander is over.

There are also other projects we are looking at, such as the renovation of the Detention Quarters. But for me, my greatest achievement, the one I am most proud of, is that, to a large extent, I have a happy ship. The welfare of my officers, my men, and even the civilian staff is being

looked after. Everyone is treated the same and equal, and I think that transcends down the line. The Base, I can say for free, is in good condition. We can only hope to improve from here onwards.

**Did you encounter any challenges during your first six months in office?**

Oh, yes! Every command comes with its attendant challenges, and NNS BEECROFT is no different. We have some challenges — from logistics, personnel, platforms and funding. But then, from the little that we have, we have been able to achieve a lot, and we are pushing to tackle these challenges, particularly the issue of POL, for both operations and for running the ship.

On the issue of personnel, we made a requisition to CND to give us more men because, as it is, we have to get temporary hands from the Fleet, Headquarters, and units in the Lagos area. This is not in isolation — other bases are also looking for these resources. To a large extent, however, we are thinking outside the box and tackling these challenges as they come.

**Sir, how did you address those challenges?**

Well! Like I earlier posited, when you are given a command, some sacrifices are required. The whole idea is for you to be able to project the Navy wherever you are and the best you can. This has taken some personal sacrifice on my part and from the people I would like to call friends of the Base, who have supported us over the years by making modest donations or contributions in terms of what we need.

I will give an example: the Solarisation Project. The MD of the Rural Electrification Agency, a government MDA, is a close friend. I sat with him, invited him to the Base, and he looked around and asked how he could help. I pointed out the idea of solarisation of the Base, to help us at least reduce the cost of buying POL products and our electricity bill, and he obliged. That is what you are seeing today. So my thanks and kudos go to him and other friends who contributed immensely to putting logistics together for us to build the 36-man heads.

Those same people are also assisting me in putting up the 50-man ratings' transit accommodation we talked about, among other projects. When we have mess functions, they come around to help, and from the meager resources we have been able to save, I think the Base is stretching along quite well.

**Sir, have you introduced any new technologies, training programs, or policies within this period?**

Yes! In line with the CNS directive on technology for surveillance and access control to the Base, we have developed the Base defense plan. CCTV cameras have been installed where needed to control access to the Base and deter potential intruders. All these have now been checked.

We are also considering providing thermal cameras that can cover the area from here to Takwabay. These cameras would enable us to see the channel more closely on our own and augment the Falcon Eye system.

Regarding training, the drill shed built by my predecessor is being upgraded. We are ensuring that every hand that comes into this Base for escort duties or any deployment is adequately trained in weapons handling before being deployed outside the Base.

Also, like every other Base, the Base has a dearth of drivers. So we are closely engaging the Federal Road Safety Corps to run a three-month program for our personnel — to teach them how to drive, and for those who already know, to renew their driving skills. At the end of the day, everybody will get a driver's license. Instead of flashing Service ID cards when stopped or asked for a driver's license, we should do the proper thing. Starting from myself, we are all going to get driver's licenses so that if I drive any vehicle and am asked for a license or permit, I will be able to tender it.

In the area of patrols, the Department of Fisheries has delivered lectures here on how to conduct such patrols, the types of vessels to look out for, the fishing nets used, arrests to be made, and so on. Many other agencies have also collaborated with us — NDLEA, Customs, among others—to train our personnel so that we can also aid them in carrying out their work.

Ours is to arrest and hand over to the appropriate agencies.

So, regarding training, I do not think we are doing badly. And on technology, too, we will keep improving. There is a current directive from Headquarters for Bases to procure drones, which will also help in surveillance.

**Sir, NNS BEECROFT plays a vital role in anti-piracy and anti-smuggling operations. How do you balance operational tempo with the welfare and morale of personnel?**

Commander: Thank you very much. The Base is basically set up for such operations, to aid government and law enforcement agencies — NDLEA, EFCC, NIS, NCS, NSCDC and NPF — in carrying out anti-piracy and anti-smuggling roles. For me, I ensure that the personnel we deploy for such operations are, first and foremost, adequately trained, properly kitted, and their logistics, in whatever form, are taken care of.

If they are deployed outside the Base, their welfare is paramount. If they are on static deployments in locations, they must turn out properly at all times because they are the eyes of the ship. Their allowances are promptly paid, and if they have medical challenges, these must be quickly addressed. To a large extent, since I took over, I do not think I have had any complaints from any location. Instead, I believe they are giving the Base kudos for providing all these things.

We also go out of our way to ensure that our men are as comfortable as possible wherever they are deployed. If there is a challenge with the companies or

> my greatest achievement, the one I am most proud of, is that, to a large extent, I have a happy ship. The welfare of my officers, my men, and even the civilian staff is being looked after. Everyone is treated the same and equally, and I think that transcends down the line.

locations where they are deployed, we quickly address it and do not allow it to linger. Nobody will go and rubbish or mess up my men. There is an agreement signed, and we make sure that it is adhered to — else, we leave the location altogether.

So, to a large extent, crime rates in Lagos are very low because of our patrols and the modest arrests we have made over the few months I have been here. We are sustaining that effort and will not rest on our oars because Lagos is the country's economic capital. We will not allow saboteurs or troublemakers to take over our waterways.

**How do you approach mentorship and talent development among junior officers and ratings?**

For me, the revival of the divisional system has brought the issue of mentorship to the fore. I take it very seriously because that is how we were trained, and the duty is now on us to pass on that training, because it breeds cohesion in every ship. If the divisional system is up and running properly, the commander has little or no worries because he knows that he is in touch with his men through it.

Furthermore, we introduced suggestion boxes to be placed around the Base, so that we can get feedback from ratings or officers who cannot see the commander to lay specific complaints — even after going through the proper channel of communication — when their challenges have not been tackled. I will tell you that the feedback has been quite encouraging, and we are addressing it.

Even for the civilian staff, I had durbar with them. They raised many concerns, and I can tell you that almost all have been addressed. I have provided uniforms to them and opened up the sickbay to them and their immediate

families, to be attended to the same way personnel are attended to. I do not want to discriminate because we are all in the same workplace; everybody is under the Base. To a large extent, that has helped. For me, I hope that my officers will look at me as a mirror, emulate most of these things I have done, and pass them down the line so that the Base becomes a better place for everybody.

I have always strived and prayed to God to give me a happy ship whenever I take over command. And I think my ship is quite happy. We are not there yet, but we are making a positive impact on everybody's life — from the civilians, to the ratings, and the officers. For as many welfare issues as we have, the Base has tried to assist as much as possible. Even for some of our officers who gave birth, the Base reached out to them. For some of the civilian staff whose children were sick, the Base also took it upon itself to assist. Gestures like that go a long way.

In terms of feeding, I can say our feeding is one of the best in the Lagos area, and we are improving on it every day. In terms of kitting, we are trying our best. So I think we are not doing badly.

**Sir, what steps have you taken to improve morale and welfare among the personnel?**

I think this question is closely related to the last one. They say if you do not beat your drum, others will beat it for you. In the short while since I have been here, I have understood that the most important component of every unit is the people, not the machines, not the weapons, but the people who will drive the boats, use the arms, cut our lawns, give us food to eat, administer drugs, and keep sentry. Those are the most important components of every Base.

And like I said, starting from the civilians, I have three sets of workers in the Base: officers, ratings, and civilian staff. I hold durbar from time to time with all of them to get firsthand knowledge. Sometimes leadership can be lonely. Sitting in your office, it is whatever the XO, BOO, or BAO comes to tell you that you often rely on. But there is also the need to hear from the people directly. That way, you feel that you are in touch with your personnel.

So, I conduct a durbar periodically. I had a very good one with the civilian staff, during which many things were brought to the fore. And like I said, those issues have been taken care of as we speak. Take a walk around the Base, and you will see most of them now in official coveralls, wearing the same set of clog shoes, and working under improved conditions.

In terms of welfare, I have opened up the sickbay to

them and their immediate families, the same way the NHIS covers us and our immediate families. I have also reviewed their allowances to improve on what most of them earn because things are tough. Once in a while, I reach out to everybody and share logistic items — whatever is given to the personnel, I ensure the civilians also get their share. This has contributed to creating a happy ship for the officers and the men.

The suggestion box is always there. If you go around and interview any personnel within this Base, I do not think what they will tell you will be far-fetched from what I am saying. To a large extent, everybody is quite happy with the Base and its leadership, and I thank everyone for their cooperation. Also, we support the messes as well — our mess activities are back and the Fleet is quite happy with how the messes are being run. So, I think another opportunity to engage and gather has presented itself.

**Cradle Magazine: NNS BEECROFT interfaces closely with civilian communities. What efforts have you made to strengthen civil-military cooperation in Lagos?**

Yes! Since I came, we have had one medical Rhapsody at Ikorodu, to be precise, and we are planning on having two more before the year runs out — one in Ifelogu community. The other one, the XO will decide the venue.

From operational triumphs to infrastructural growth, Commodore Paul Nimmyel's first six months as Commander, NNS BEECROFT, paint a portrait of focused leadership grounded in action. By aligning security strategy with sustainable development and welfare, he has set a new benchmark for operational excellence.

The other aspect we are looking at is sporting activities. I also think – if I have the time and God provides – to have a cultural event in the Base, possibly on October 1st. We will have a cultural meet in the Base, where we will divide the Base into regions. Each region will have a tent on the parade ground — South East, South South, and so on — with cultural dancers from the community to make it a worthwhile event.

Those are the things we do. Our doors are open to the civil populace. Recently, we took part in the Apapa clean-up under the Marine Bridge, because the idea from the Lagos State Government is to ensure that the space under the bridge is turned into a good park, like the one in Oshodi, and to put a garden there to make the place habitable. Also, we supported the civilian populace during the local government elections, and Apapa Local Government was judged to be the most peaceful during the election. There was no fracas whatsoever. Apapa Local Government generally was the most peaceful because our men, with the support of other agencies — the Army, Civil Defence, and DSS — conducted themselves properly, and we were able to achieve that.

So, our doors are open. If there is any opportunity to engage with the civil populace for enhanced development, the Base is always willing to assist.

**Can you speak on some of the partnerships you have fostered with other security agencies and stakeholders?**

Oh, yes! We visited the Honorable Commissioner of Environment, and the outcome of that visit was the clean-up that we saw. We have also made a requisition to the Honorable Commissioner to help three of our Bases — NNS BEECROFT, Mobile Road Barracks, and Tamando Barracks — with industrial boreholes and sewage reticulation systems, because those Barracks have large populations. So, we need those facilities to ensure these three locations remain healthy. I am proud to say that the State Government is looking into it and assisting the Base.

Also, with Customs and Immigration, for example, we had a simulation exercise during their seminar, where 30 Immigration officials from 30 different African countries converged at the Lagoon Bar. We showcased how we collaborate with Immigration in terms of rescuing stowaways onboard vessels. It was a well-simulated exercise, which is also an outstanding achievement of the Base.

So, where there are opportunities for us to partner with other stakeholders, the Navy does not shy away from them. I also know that Lagos State Government is organizing a boat regatta, and the Base will be called upon to assist and ensure the regatta is safe and hitch-free. So, the Base is pulling its weight.

**Sir, how do you see NNS BEECROFT's role evolving in the broader maritime security architecture of Lagos and Nigeria?**

The economic space of Lagos is expanding. I can tell you

that the largest water park in Africa is being built in Badagry as we speak. When it is completed, NNS BEECROFT, through FOB BADAGRY, will be tasked to provide adequate security for the enhanced economic development of that part of Lagos State. Also, the Lagos Free Port has started operations. FOB LEKKI has been tasked, in addition to protecting the Dangote Refinery, to secure the Free Port as one of the key installations under its watch. NPA is expanding and considering building a new port in addition to what they currently operate. NIMASA plans to clear all wrecks and waterways in Lagos and Ogun State. Ogun State, on its own, is building a deep-sea port. So, it is a lot. The Navy will have much to do in the near future, and the Base will play a significant role in securing all these facilities and ensuring that economic activities thrive for national development.

**Sir, as your time in command progresses, what legacy would you like to leave behind at NNS BEECROFT?**

Well, for me, I want to be remembered as a commander who touched the lives of everyone in the Base — officers, men, and civilian staff — through the modest achievements I intend to accomplish before my tenure as commander is over. My goal is to provide services that will benefit all of us, not just a part of the Base or a section of the personnel. Like I said, my watchword, my legacy, or my vision is humanity. Once you have that at the back of your mind, you will definitely touch lives. I think, at this point in our careers, humanity is needed in many places. People are going through a lot, and we are not in isolation. So, by pursuing such legacies, I want to be remembered as a commander who changed the lives of others.

**Sir, what message would you like to share with the officers, men, and civilian staff of NNS BEECROFT through the 2025 edition of Cradle Magazine?**

I want to say to the officers, men, and civilian staff of NNS BEECROFT to please continue to give me their support and prayers. Together, we will build a viable Base that will be the envy of the Navy and the Armed Forces. Contribute positively in your own little way to improve the fortunes of the Base by doing the right thing. All you need to do is just that — do the right thing — and the Base will be better, and all of us will share in the glory. Thank you very much.

# OPERATIONAL GAINS AND INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL MARK

## COMMODORE NIMMYEL'S FIRST SIX MONTHS AT NNS BEECROFT

**Evelyn Usman**

When Commodore Paul Ponfa Nimmyel assumed command of the Nigerian Navy Ship (NNS) BEECROFT in February 2025, few could have predicted the pace and depth of transformation that would unfold under his watch. In just six months, the Base has recorded impressive operational successes, infrastructural renewal, and strategic projects that speak to the Commander's vision and align with the Chief of the Naval Staff's vision and mission.

From foiling smuggling syndicates and intercepting illicit drugs to investing in renewable energy and boosting personnel welfare, Commodore Nimmyel's tenure has been marked by a blend of proactive security operations and sustainable development initiatives that have re-energised the Base and its personnel.

**Breaking the Backbone of Smuggling and Vandalism**

One of the hallmarks of the six months under review has been NNS BEECROFT's relentless clampdown on maritime crimes and smuggling activities. In his very first six months, Commodore Nimmyel made it clear that the Base would not tolerate criminal activities in its Area of Operation. This was evident in a daring February operation in which the Base foiled an attempt by vandals to siphon petroleum products into 408 drums aboard a wooden boat heading towards the Benin Republic.

Acting on real-time intelligence from the Falcon Eye Alignment system, the Base's Quick Response Team

(QRT) intercepted the boat at Lagos anchorage, arrested seven suspects, and seized three pumping machines along with eight Yamaha outboard engines.
On the same day (11 February 2025), two other suspects were arrested around Topo, Badagry, while trying to assist smugglers at sea. Their intercepted phone conversations confirmed their complicity, and they were handed over to the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) for further investigation.

In another significant seizure in March 2025, the Base intercepted 28 bags of cannabis sativa weighing over 756kg around Long Jetty, Ibeche Beach, forcing the suspects to flee into the creeks. Commodore Nimmyel attributed the success to "the unwavering commitment

In another significant seizure in March 2025, the Base intercepted 28 bags of cannabis sativa weighing over 756 kg around Long Jetty, Ibeche Beach, forcing the suspects to flee into the creeks.

of NNS BEECROFT to rid the maritime environment of crimes and ensure economic activities thrive."

**Intercepting Contraband and Protecting National Revenue**

April 2025 brought yet another feat as the Maritime Component of Operation AWATSE, led by Commodore Nimmyel, intercepted 1,306 bags of smuggled parboiled rice in Majidun, Ikorodu West. He explained that the operation began when vehicles suspected of being involved in smuggling activities attempted to evade a Navy checkpoint.

He explained, "This prompted a swift pursuit by the Operation AWATSE QRT in line with the Joint Task Force's Standard Operating Procedures. The operation was carried out with commendable professionalism and restraint. No casualties were recorded. The timely response of the QRT and the successful interception of the consignment demonstrate the Maritime Component's continued commitment to supporting statutory agencies in curbing smuggling activities within its area of operations", he stated.

The seized rice was officially handed over to the Nigeria Customs Service, Western Marine Command, Apapa, in accordance with the Harmonized Standard Procedures on Arrest, Detention, and Prosecution.

"Our continued commitment is to support statutory agencies in curbing smuggling activities within our Area of Operations," Commodore Nimmyel affirmed, underlining the Navy's dedication to protecting national revenue and curbing economic sabotage.

**Seizes Cannabis on Lagos Waters**

In July 2025, NNS BEECROFT thwarted the plans of a drug syndicate operating via the Lagos waterways. Acting on credible intelligence, the Base's response team recovered 1,575 kilogrammes of suspected cannabis sativa from two wooden boats at Tarkwa Bay and Elisha Beach. Though the suspects escaped upon sighting

naval personnel, the large consignment was handed over to the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) for further investigation.

Captain Idongesit Udoessien, who represented him, said, "These successful interceptions reflect our determination to clamp down on illicit maritime activities. " He vowed that the Base would not relent in protecting Nigeria's waterways.

**Pioneering Renewable Energy**

Beyond its operational victories, Commodore Nimmyel's administration has championed infrastructural development, prioritising sustainability and welfare. In May 2025, the Base commissioned its first 50 KVA solar facility, aimed at reducing diesel consumption and electricity costs while boosting operational efficiency. Delivered in partnership with the Rural Electrification Agency, the project marked a milestone as the first of its kind at NNS BEECROFT.

The Commander also disclosed plans to scale up to a 500 KVA solar system, eventually covering the entire Base and supporting future expansion. He explained, “Given the high cost of traditional energy, solarisation is the right path to ensure operational readiness and sustainability".

**Investing in Personnel Welfare**

Complementing the solar project, the Base commissioned a 36-man modern convenience facility featuring toilets, showers, and changing rooms for male and female personnel. This was followed by a groundbreaking ceremony for a 50-man transit accommodation for ratings, expected to be completed soon.

Speaking during the commissioning, Commodore Nimmyel noted that “These projects align with the Chief of the Naval Staff's vision of prioritising the welfare of officers and ratings,” adding that streetlights had also been installed from the Base's gate to Aremu Junction to enhance security and night-time visibility.

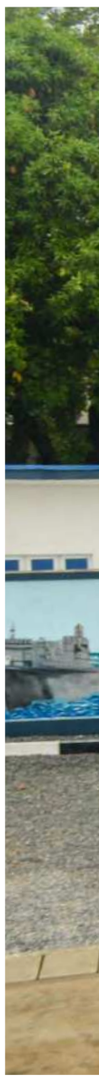
The Flag Officer Commanding Western Naval Command, Rear Admiral Michael Oamen, who commissioned the projects, lauded the Commander's initiatives. “Despite being in office for less than six months, Commodore Nimmyel's achievement is remarkable. These projects will boost morale and enhance our operational effectiveness,” he noted.

From operational triumphs to infrastructural growth, Commodore Paul Nimmyel’s first six months as Commander, NNS BEECROFT, paint a portrait of focused leadership grounded in action. By aligning security strategy with sustainable development and welfare, he has set a new benchmark for operational excellence.

**A Commander's Vision and Resolve**

From operational triumphs to infrastructural growth, Commodore Paul Nimmyel's first six months as Commander, NNS BEECROFT paint a portrait of focused leadership grounded in action. By aligning security strategy with sustainable development and welfare, he has set a new benchmark for operational excellence.

And as Nigeria's maritime domain continues to face threats from smugglers and traffickers, the Base under his watch remains resolute: crime has no safe harbour here.



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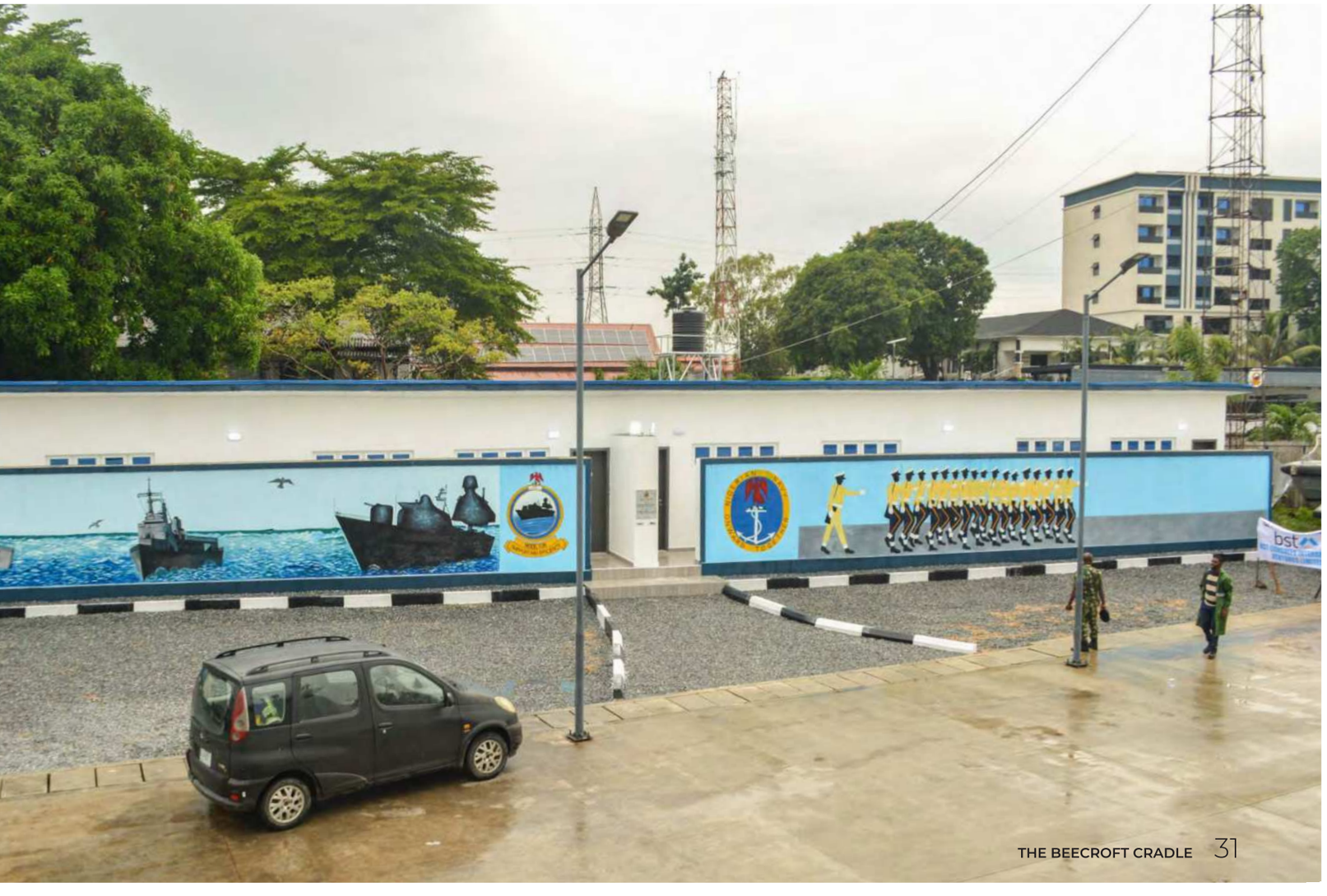

# LEVERAGING NIGERIAN NAVY MARITIME DOMAIN AWARENESS FOR ENHANCED NIGERIAN MARITIME SECURITY:
## NNS BEECROFT IN PERSPECTIVE

**Lt JE Peter**

The protection of a nation's maritime environment remains fundamental to its security, prosperity, and sovereignty. Nigeria, with an extensive coastline of about 850 kilometres and an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) covering approximately 84,0002nm, stands as a maritime nation whose future is inseparably tied to the sea. Over 90% of Nigeria's trade and energy exports transit through its maritime domain, with Lagos serving as the country's commercial nerve centre. Consequently, the security of these waters is not only vital to national development but also central to sustaining regional stability within the Gulf of Guinea (GoG). Maritime security, therefore, constitutes the strategies, systems, and operations designed to safeguard Nigeria's maritime environment against piracy, smuggling, illegal oil bunkering, and other transnational crimes. In response to these threats, the Nigerian Navy (NN) has placed Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) at the heart of its strategic approach.

MDA is defined as the effective understanding of all activities, entities, and developments in the maritime environment that could impact security, safety, economy, or the environment. It integrates data gathered from multiple sources, including radar, Automatic Identification System (AIS), electro-optical devices, satellite inputs, and inter-agency intelligence, to create a comprehensive operational picture. This enhances situational awareness and enables proactive security responses. Within the NN, MDA is powered by systems such as the Regional Maritime Awareness Capability (RMAC) and Falcon Eye (FE), supported by partnerships with national agencies and international stakeholders. NNS BEECROFT, based in Apapa, Lagos, epitomises how these capabilities translate into tangible operational success. Its Area of Operations (AOO), covering 154nm of coastline and 30,8002nm of sea space, represents 37% of Nigeria's maritime domain. This article examines the evolution of MDA in Nigeria, highlights the current capabilities, and showcases how NNS BEECROFT leverages them to enhance maritime security, thereby reinforcing Nigeria's national prosperity and regional leadership in the GoG.

## EVOLUTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF MDA IN THE NIGERIAN NAVY

The development of MDA in Nigeria reflects a deliberate progression shaped by the need to safeguard national maritime resources. The journey began in 2003 with the establishment of the Presidential Implementation Committee on Maritime Safety and Security (PICOMSS). PICOMSS coordinated maritime security efforts and introduced surveillance assets such as coastal radar stations, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and closed-circuit television (CCTV) systems. Although later dissolved, its legacy laid the foundation for the NN to consolidate its MDA architecture. This period highlighted the importance of proactive and technology-driven approaches to maritime security, demonstrating that inter-agency coordination and surveillance were essential to counter threats like piracy, smuggling, and oil theft in Nigeria's waters.

Building on this foundation, the NN launched the RMAC in 2008. RMAC integrated radar, sensors, and the Automatic Identification System (AIS) to monitor vessel movements within Nigeria's territorial waters, improving detection of illegal activities. For NNS BEECROFT, this marked a significant leap in situational awareness, particularly around Lagos harbour, where traffic density is highest. Enhanced monitoring supported interdictions against smuggling and oil theft, while consolidating the Navy's role in securing Nigeria's busiest maritime hub. The next milestone came in 2015 with the introduction of FE. This advanced system integrates over-the-horizon radars, electro-optical sensors, satellite-based AIS, and VHF communications, all linked to three Regional Control Centres (RCCs) in Lagos, Calabar, and Yenagoa, with a Main Control Centre (MCC) in Abuja. FE provides real-time visibility of Nigeria's coastline, enabling NNS BEECROFT to detect anomalies and deploy assets with precision.

The evolution from PICOMSS through RMAC to Falcon Eye illustrates the NN's steady institutionalisation of MDA as a core strategy for maritime security. NNS BEECROFT, positioned at Lagos harbour, has been the primary operational beneficiary, showcasing how layered surveillance systems enhance tactical operations. Importantly, Nigeria's progression mirrors global best practices. The United States' National MDA Strategy of 2005, the European Union's Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE), and Singapore's Information Fusion Centre (IFC) all demonstrate the importance of intelligence fusion and multinational collaboration. Nigeria's adoption of similar approaches reflects a commitment to align with international standards while tailoring solutions to GoG realities. By contextualising these global models into its operations, NNS BEECROFT stands out as a frontline implementer of modern maritime security in West Africa.

**CURRENT MDA CAPABILITIES: PRESENCE, PARTNERSHIPS, AND PREPAREDNESS PRESENCE**

Presence constitutes the most visible element of NNS BEECROFT's MDA capacity. Through the MDA centres, the Base enjoys near-real-time situational awareness of activities across its AOO. The Western Regional Control Centre provides BEECROFT direct access to live feeds

The evolution from PICOMSS through RMAC to Falcon Eye illustrates the NN's steady institutionalisation of MDA as a core strategy for maritime security. NNS BEECROFT, positioned at Lagos harbour, has been the primary operational beneficiary, showcasing how layered surveillance systems enhance tactical operations.

from coastal radars and electro-optical devices, enabling the identification of suspicious vessel behaviour, illicit cargo transfers, and unreported shipping movements. This technological presence has been instrumental in several operational successes, including the interception of a Local vessel laden with 300 drums of contraband in December 2024. The ability to monitor the Lagos Anchorage and harbour has also helped deter piracy and sea robbery, ensuring security for merchant shipping.

Beyond surveillance technology, physical presence is

reinforced by FE Fast Interceptor Boats (FIBs). Deep Blue Interceptor Boats (DBIBs), and Command centres. The FIBs, capable of speeds up to 45 knots, serve as tactical response assets that translate surveillance intelligence into rapid interdictions. Combined with gunboat patrols, these vessels ensure that NNS BEECROFT can quickly interdict maritime threats detected on MDA centres feeds. Command centres at BEECROFT and its Forward Operating Bases - BADAGRY, IGBOKODA, and LEKKI — provide coordination nodes, integrating sensor data with operational command. This combination of technological and physical presence ensures continuous dominance of the Lagos maritime space, strengthening deterrence against maritime crimes.

## PARTNERSHIPS

NNS BEECROFT's effectiveness is amplified by strategic partnerships at international, regional, and national levels. Internationally, its integration into the Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) and the Virtual Regional Maritime Traffic Centre (V-RMTC) provides access to global maritime intelligence. These partnerships broaden Nigeria's maritime picture and facilitate early warning of threats originating beyond its

The combination of doctrine, training, and continuous readiness ensures that personnel at the centres remains fully prepared to safeguard Nigeria's maritime interests at all times.

immediate waters. Regionally, Nigeria's leadership in the Yaoundé Code of Conduct and the Yaoundé Architecture Regional Information System (YARIS) ensures that NNS BEECROFT operates within a collaborative security framework. This coordination allows Nigeria and its GoG neighbours to share intelligence, align patrols, and deny criminals the ability to exploit jurisdictional boundaries.

At the national level, partnerships with the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) under the Deep Blue Project bring additional surveillance and enforcement capabilities. The

the RMAC Training School and FE Tactical Training Centre. This training ensures operators are proficient in interpreting complex sensor data, detecting anomalies, and directing tactical assets. Preparedness also extends to doctrine: the Suppression of Piracy and Other Maritime Offences (SPOMO) Act provides the legal framework for decisive action against offenders, ensuring that maritime crimes are not only detected but prosecuted effectively.

Additionally, the NN emphasises the cultivation of in-house expertise by developing local instructors capable of training operators on MDA systems. This creates a self-sustaining pipeline of knowledge and ensures continuity in operational readiness. Personnel are further exposed to tactical drills and simulation exercises that reinforce their ability to convert information into rapid interdictions. The combination of doctrine, training, and continuous readiness ensures that personnel at the centres remains fully prepared to safeguard Nigeria's maritime interests at all times.

**OPERATIONALISATION OF MDA AT NNS BEECROFT**

The operational dividends of MDA at NNS BEECROFT are evident in sustained successes across anti-smuggling, anti-piracy, anti-oil theft, and port security operations. In July 2025, the Base interdicted 45 jumbo bags of cannabis weighing 1,575 kilogrammes, which were handed over to the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA). Over the past year, it further intercepted over 850 bags of cannabis, 1820 bags of rice, and more than 350,000 litres of petroleum products on multiple occasions. These feats, enabled through the integration of MDA surveillance and tactical deployment of DBIBs and FIBs, highlight how MDA strengthens the fight against smuggling and illicit trade. Equally, patrols informed by MDA centres' inputs have significantly improved port and anchorage security. Lagos, which hosts Nigeria's busiest ports and serves as a regional shipping hub, recorded 3 foiled sea robbery attempts and 93 stowaway arrests between 2024 and August 2025. A notable case was in April 2025 when 16 stowaways were reported onboard MT VIRGO 1 heading to Portugal. The

Vessel was stopped with the help of Western Regional Control Centre.

NNS BEECROFT'S MDA operations have proven decisive in countering oil theft and illegal bunkering. Within the past year, the Base arrested over 31 vessels suspected of crude oil theft, 5 of which were confirmed and handed over to the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) for prosecution while others are undergoing investigations. This demonstrates the complete operational cycle of MDA which are detection through surveillance, interdiction by tactical assets, and enforcement via judicial processes. By systematically applying these capabilities across its AOO, NNS BEECROFT has ensured Nigeria's maritime resources are safeguarded while disrupting the criminal networks that

By policing 37% of Nigeria's maritime domain, including Lagos — the commercial hub of the nation — NNS BEECROFT ensures uninterrupted trade and energy flows within the designated AOO.

undermine economic stability. The Base therefore exemplifies how operationalised MDA translates into tangible maritime security dividends, protecting national assets and reinforcing Nigeria's position as a responsible maritime nation.

STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE OF MDA OPERATIONS

The strategic significance of MDA operations goes far beyond tactical interdictions, shaping Nigeria's economic security and regional stability. By policing 37% of Nigeria's maritime domain, including Lagos — the commercial hub of the nation — NNS BEECROFT ensures uninterrupted trade and energy flows within the designated AOO. Its operations safeguard vital assets such as the Lagos Port Complex, Dangote Refinery, and Atlas Cove pipelines, thereby supporting energy security and industrial growth. Safe sea lanes, lower maritime insurance premiums, sustain investor confidence have consolidate Nigeria's role as West Africa's leading shipping hub. At the same time, MDA integration into cooperative frameworks reinforces Nigeria's regional leadership. Alignment with the Yaoundé Code of Conduct, coupled with operational synergy with IFC-IOR

and V-RMTC, exemplifies the NN's commitment to multilateral collaboration. These engagements enhance collective maritime vigilance, ensuring that vessels transiting the GoG benefit from protection that contributes not only to Nigerian security but also to international shipping stability.

Beyond its direct security dividends, MDA operations are pivotal to Nigeria's economic transformation agenda. They directly reinforce the African Union's Blue Economy framework by protecting fisheries, marine tourism assets, offshore installations, and shipping corridors, unlocking a potential maritime wealth estimated at over 296 billion dollars. Furthermore, the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA) depends on secure sea lines of communication to facilitate intra-African trade, and Lagos, as the busiest port hub in West Africa, is central to this vision. NNS BEECROFT's ability to deter piracy, curtail smuggling activities, and secure Nigeria's maritime arteries ensures that the country remains a reliable gateway for regional commerce. Thus, the NN's maritime security posture extends well beyond defence imperatives, functioning as an enabler of national prosperity, trade integration, and regional stability. Through BEECROFT, Nigeria demonstrates that robust MDA capability is not only a strategic shield but also a cornerstone of economic development in the GoG.

**CONCLUSION**

The NN has institutionalised MDA as the cornerstone of its maritime security strategy, and NNS BEECROFT stands as its most visible and effective exemplar in the Western AOO. From the foundational initiatives of PICOMSS, through the development of RMAC, to the state-of-the-art FE system, MDA has steadily evolved into a layered framework of surveillance, intelligence integration, and operational enforcement. This transformation has enabled the NN to respond proactively to the full spectrum of maritime threats in Nigeria's waters. In Lagos, where national commerce and energy lifelines converge, NNS BEECROFT has consistently translated these capabilities into operational dividends through interdictions, patrols, and deterrence measures. These achievements affirm that MDA is not merely a technological investment but an operational doctrine central to Nigeria's sovereignty and prosperity.

NNS BEECROFT's impact further extends beyond tactical enforcement to strategic national and regional

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outcomes. By combining presence, partnerships, and preparedness, the Base has ensured continuous vigilance of her AOO using the MDA capabilities. Its role in safeguarding trade routes, protecting critical national infrastructure, and deterring organised crimes has directly enhanced national economic resilience. Regionally, MDA integration into the Yaoundé Code of Conduct and global maritime information-sharing systems underscores Nigeria's leadership within the GoG and its contribution to international shipping confidence. These efforts align with Nigeria's Blue Economy aspirations and the ACFTA by securing the maritime corridors essential for economic integration and sustainable growth. Ultimately, NNS BEECROFT exemplifies how leveraging MDA transforms maritime security from a defensive necessity into a strategic enabler of national development, regional stability, and global maritime safety. Therefore, the operational model it provides stands as both a benchmark for the NN and a strategic assurance for Nigeria's maritime future.

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# SECURING NIGERIA'S MARITIME ENVIRONMENT: THE **TRIAD** OF **PARTNERSHIP PRESENCE** AND **PREPAREDNESS**

**Hyacinth Nwafor**

Nigeria's wealth and trade lifelines are at sea – its Western Naval Command stretches along the Gulf of Guinea, safeguarding principal ports and pipelines. Lagos's Apapa and Tin-Can terminals and Nigeria's offshore oil fields make this maritime space economically vital. But the waters are under constant threat. Piracy and armed robbery are a concern, and rampant oil bunkering and illegal refineries in the Niger Delta fuel revenue loss and environmental destruction.

At the same time, Nigeria's maritime area is a conduit for transnational crime – from human and arms trafficking to unregulated fishing that damages stocks. In line with this, the Nigerian Navy has based its strategy on three principal pillars – Partnership, Presence, and Preparedness – each complementing the others. This section explores how those three Ps operate in conjunction to protect the nation's maritime space.

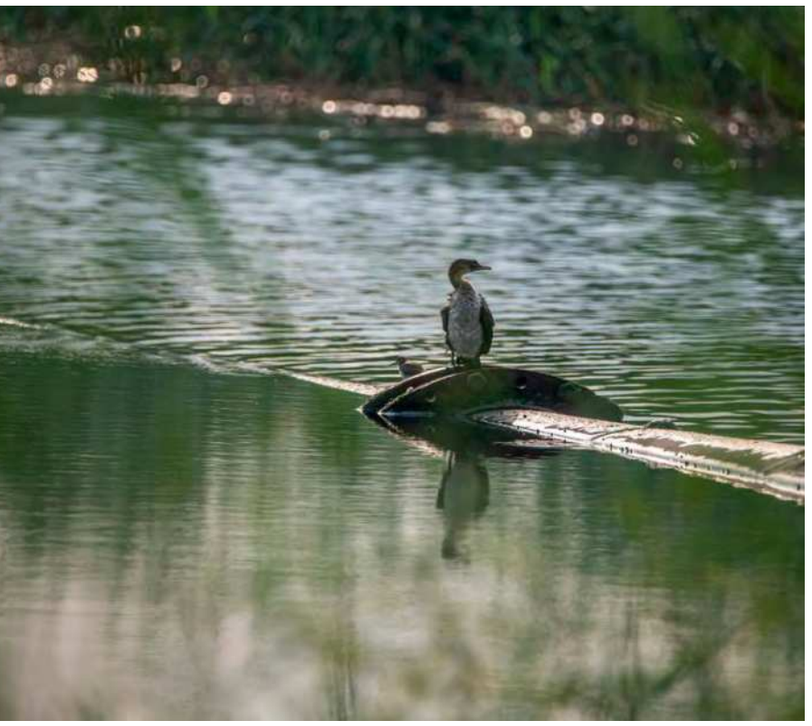
PARTNERSHIP: Working Together At Sea

No one Government or Service can police 200 nautical miles of EEZ by itself. It takes a whole-of-government and even multinational approach to Maritime Security in Nigeria. A good example is the Deep Blue Project – an

Partnership is not restricted within Nigeria's territorial confines. In the Gulf of Guinea region, Nigeria belongs to the Yaoundé Code of Conduct, a regional code that unites West and Central African states in the protection of the sea.

Integrated Security project costing $195 million and funded by NIMASA but led by the Navy. Deep Blue supplied Nigeria with command centers, radars and over 100 ships, aircraft, and drones meant for coastal patrol. As the then NIMASA Director-General Bashir Jamoh points out, such initiatives involve close coordination: the Navy handles kinetic operations, NIMASA handles non-kinetic operations... the two will have to go hand in hand if we need to be successful. In practice, this is achieved through Navy boarding teams working together with NIMASA inspectors, Customs, Nigerian Police Marine Unit, and even the Community Patrol. For instance, the Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP), which has the mandate of repatriating erstwhile militants, now works together with NIMASA to take Delta youths through blue-economy job opportunities, hence preventing them from becoming criminals. Intelligence sharing onshore has also been encouraged. The last month's exercise at Badagry involved Navy and Customs Troops teaching each other in lectures about "Optimizing Multi-Agency Cooperation". The exercise culminated in joint patrols of Lagos's backwaters, a demonstration of increased interoperability between the Navy and Customs in combating human trafficking and smuggling.

Local stakeholders themselves see the impact of such cooperation. Nigerian Chamber of Shipping's Dr. Emi Membere-Otaji (whose vessels operate off the Niger Delta) attests that with Deep Blue assets in the field, piracy off the offshore and robbery in the creeks have decreased considerably. Nigerian officials pride themselves with international bodies having acclaimed these concrete gains and called on Nigeria to maintain the tempo of initiative. At the heart of that is open co-operation: NIMASA's then Director General, Dr Jamoh, called for strong relationships between agencies, noting that in 2022 Nigeria was removed from the IMB piracy list, with no reported piracy incidents for over two years.



Partnership is not restricted within Nigeria's territorial confines. In the Gulf of Guinea region, Nigeria belongs to the Yaoundé Code of Conduct, a regional code that unites West and Central African states in the protection of the sea. The Yaoundé code aligns fleets for combined exercises, training, and information exchange against pirates and smugglers. Already, Nigerian ships have trained with several navies. For example, Exercise Crocodile Lift 2024 off Lagos was joined by the Nigerian Navy by the French Special Forces during amphibious assault and hostage-rescue training. We had French Navy platforms as well as Nigerian Navy ships, SBS, and helicopters, said Rear Admiral Shehu Gombe, and he underlined that this partnership enhances our preparedness to defend Nigeria's EEZ. Other partners are on board as well: in late 2024, a 20-man group of Nigerian SBS (Special Boat Service) marines finished a British-conducted VBSS (Visit-Board-Search-Seizure) course at Lagos. Joint Maritime Training Centre Commander Benjamin Francis complimented the cooperation, saying he was impressed by the professionalism of BMATT (UK commandos) and our participants, and Nigerians now train aboard partner ships during global exercises.

Domestically, the Navy also builds community relations during this partnership strategy. Naval medical outreach teams have seen hundreds of residents of the Niger Delta, and officers give away school supplies in riverine towns. They obtain trust and tips from coastal communities, sealing the feedback loop with intelligence units. In all, Nigerian officials and outside observers agree: securing the maritime environment takes effort. As Admiral Victor Dabess Choji (Deep Blue Commander) put it, the mere presence of patrol ships has achieved "the needed deterrence" for criminals, and all the agencies must "go hand in hand" so that it continues to be so.

PRESENCE: Guns and Lookout Posts at Sea

Security is more than a matter of good intentions – it is a matter of boots (and ships) on the ground. Nigeria has made a big bet on extended naval presence in its coastal waters. The Western Naval Command itself has Lagos and Benin's sea approaches, including Nigeria's most important ports. Its Headquarters, NNS BEECROFT in Apapa, is the Navy's oldest and largest shore base, described as the main Harbour Defence Group for the region. NNS BEECROFT is reinforced by three Forward Operating Bases in Igbokoda (Ondo State), Badagry and Lekki (Lagos State) to reduce reaction time into creeks and coastal lagoons. The strategy is simple: remain in a 24/7 patrol position. In fact, Rear Admiral Michael Gregory Oamen states that at any one time "at least one capital

Security is more than a matter of good intentions – it is a matter of boots (and ships) on the ground. Nigeria has made a big bet on extended naval presence in its coastal waters.

ship...is at sea to demonstrate presence and for patrols". This could be a frigate or offshore patrol vessel, along with coastal speedboats and helicopters based out of BEECROFT and the Ojo Naval Air Station. Their mission set is across the board – from escorting convoyed cargo traffic to guarding offshore platforms and pipelines – and they train at it all from search-and-rescue to interdiction.

Nigeria's leadership often shows this unshakeable presence at ceremonies with high-level events. As an example, Flag Officer Commanding, Western Naval Command, Rear Admiral Michael Gregory Oamen and the NNS BEECROFT Commander, Commodore Paul Nimmyel has highlighted the ways that new investment at NNS BEECROFT serves missions directly. In May 2025, a 50kVA solar power station was commissioned at Apapa, specifically to save on fuel costs and extend communications and sensors. The goal is to "enhance operational effectiveness" and improve morale among sailors, it also produces the benefit of providing patrols with more reliable power and the capability to spend more time on the sea without resupply. These Base improvements – from new barracks to better medical facilities – free the Fleet to focus on operations.

This permanent presence is already yielding returns. In the past two years alone, the Navy's tireless anti-bunkering operation (Operation Delta Sanity) has had the seizure of 76 vessels and 242 suspects involved in crude oil theft. Almost 1,000 illegal refineries were shut down in the

The Navy has commissioned new offshore patrol vessels (e.g. NNS SHERE, FARO) and three Agusta Westland AW109 helicopter gunships. Special units – like the new Navy Marines and Special Boat Service (comparable to the Army's Delta Force) – are being created.

process. Commodore Augustine Adams-Aliu estimates that strategic oil pipelines (like Trans-Niger and Escravos) now enjoy 98–100% security thanks to these patrols. The payoff is clear: volumes of processed crude on those tracks have grown, and national output has surged by tens of thousands of barrels a day since the end of 2024. Even more starkly, Nigeria's coastline itself has seen no piracy lately: as one Navy official remark, Nigeria "has remained absent from the global piracy list, with no reported piracy incidents in its waters for over two years". That is, persistent naval presence has secured Nigerian waters as the safest in the Gulf of Guinea.

The fleet itself is expanding. The Navy has commissioned new offshore patrol vessels (e.g. NNS SHERE, FARO) and three Agusta Westland AW109 helicopter gunships. Special units – like the new Navy Marines and Special Boat Service (comparable to the Army's Delta Force) – are being created. As significant, the Navy is patrolling every nook of the coast. In the past year, NNS SOROH'S crewmen interdicted scores of illegal refineries and oil

centers in Bayelsa and Rivers States – for every such interdiction, fast attack boats chased out barges and gunmen from the creeks. Today, with ships steaming and radar scanning, Nigeria's sea lanes are being progressively cleared of menace. As this Naval Intelligence Chief described it, this mix of platforms and patrols has "drastically lowered sea robbery" and protected the whole pipeline system.

**PREPAREDNESS: Training and Technology**

Training and technology transform presence into power. Nigeria has been at the forefront of acquiring and deploying new capabilities. For example, the Falcon Eye Surveillance System now covers the whole 200 nm EEZ. At the briefing for the Navy's 69th Anniversary, Rear Admiral Ibrahim Dewu described how Falcon Eye's web of radars and cameras offers "real-time surveillance coverage" throughout the EEZ. This 24/7 coastal radar system works continuously in a single command center, round-the-clock, to scan for suspicious vessels and initiate patrols. Dewu credits it with Nigeria's zero-piracy rating: our ability to have 24/7 monitoring of sea lanes has cut cases of piracy, illegal bunkering, and crude oil theft by leaps and bounds, he said. In reality, Falcon Eye has proven to earn its keep in the case of Operation Delta Sanity II: several smugglers and thieves have been arrested in 2024–25 as a direct consequence of the system's lead. The network is also now being rolled out to other Gulf of Guinea states as Nigeria helps to lead a new Combined Maritime Task Force. As Dewu puts it, Falcon Eye is becoming a technological backbone for regional cooperation against transnational maritime crime.

Nigeria's love of new technology extends overseas. In January 2024, Vice Admiral Ikechukwu Emmanuel Ogalla, Chief of Naval Staff, commissioned a squadron of 12 British-built sea drones (UAVs). Vice Admiral Ogalla said that in today's security environment, adopting advanced technologies becomes a necessity for boosting our national security. These drone aircraft – capable of surveillance and communications re-transmission –

provide Nigerian vessels with eyes many miles beyond the horizon. They can track pirate skiffs or suspicious trawlers and activate surface units to intercept. Vice Admiral Ogalla had no doubt that the new UAVs will enhance our naval reconnaissance for the development of strategic capabilities.

No less important is the human element. Nigerian sailors and marines are developing their skills with intense training partnerships. For example, at the end of 2024, the Navy sent 20 Special Boat Service marines to a UK-run VBSS (Visit-Board-Search-Seizure) course in Lagos. British instructors instructed them in close-quarters boarding, firearms, and small boat handling. Training Centre Commander Benjamin Audu Francis praised the cooperation: Nigerians "maximized the learning experience" he said, and they have already begun implementing those skills in operations, even boarding foreign ships during cooperative exercises. Regional exercises also serve as a source of adjunct training. Navy Divers and SBS units in Crocodile Lift made amphibious attacks and hostage releases with drill together with the French Army's amphibious specialists. These drills ensure that Nigerian forces can respond immediately to any scenario, and have the confidence to act, knowing they train as hard as their adversaries.

Onshore, the pace of readiness-building is high as well. The photo below shows Nigerian SBS marines after completing a joint training session with UK commandos at the Joint Maritime Training Centre. For several weeks they perfected their boarding and firing skills in live and close quarter conditions. British Captain Tom Pycock noted that while his men were training, they (the Nigerian troops) also learned a lot from each other, bearing testimony to the two-way benefit of such courses. We still pray that the cooperation is continued, Commander Francis added at the passing-out ceremony. Behind the scenes, Nigeria is also building new schools and commands – a Marine Training Command of specialization, a Naval Special Operations Command, and a Maritime Operations Centre at Takwa Bay – to institutionalize the same. Mainly, as one article on the Navy in the media reports, the total effect of more bases, ships and training has put the Nigerian Navy in its "highest state of operational readiness" and made it the third-largest Navy in Africa.

Together, these elements of readiness – state-of-the-art surveillance, UAVs, highly skilled crews and state-of-the-art facilities – make alertness functional. In just the past two years, hundreds of troops have trained in VBSS, counter-terror, and humanitarian response, often with international partners. At sea, every member of the crew, from captain to cook, has heard the CNS's vision of an expert, well-manned force. As Commodore Adams-Aliu observed, the pudding has been proved: Nigeria's Gulf waters are quite calm, allowing trade to resume normal course rather than risky deviations.

**CONCLUSION: An Unfinished Voyage**

The story of Nigeria's Maritime Security is one of joined-up action: no single strategy can succeed without the other two. Alliances have provided resources and talent; persistent Naval presence has enforced the laws; and preparedness has provided the equipment and approach to be successful. Collectively, they offer a self-sustaining "triad" to control the sea. The achievements up till now are remarkable – from reported declines in piracy and oil robbery, to pipelines running at full throttle and Nigerian ships now sailing shoulder-to-shoulder alongside foreign fleets. But the threat remains, and it is ongoing. Gulf of Guinea crime appears and disappears, and threats such as illegal fishing and smuggling adapt to countermeasures. Nigeria will need to keep its guard up and work with others. As one review concluded of activity during the time, the recent concrete achievements against oil theft and infrastructure investments indicate an enduring commitment to protecting Nigeria's critical maritime space and bringing the Navy into a truly effective regional presence. The task now is to maintain that momentum: to leverage every partnership, maintain every patrol, and train every sailor so that this Triad of Partnership, Presence, and Preparedness endures as Nigeria's most formidable defense at sea.

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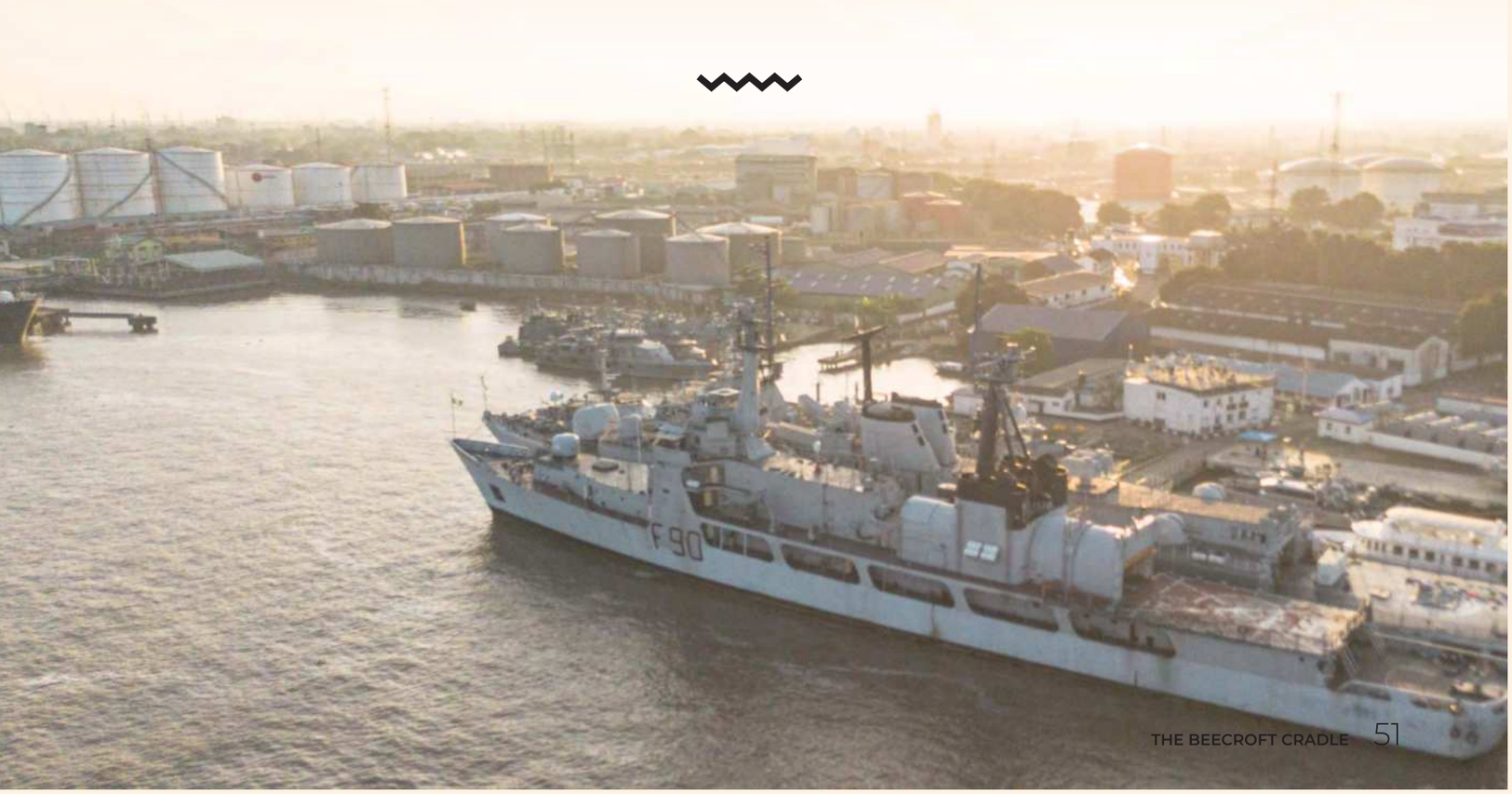

2025 ARMED FORCES REMEMBRANCE DAY CHURCH SERVICE
12 JAN 25

## 2025 ARMED FORCES REMEMBRANCE DAY JUMA'AT PRAYER

12 JAN 25

## 2025 ARMED FORCES REMEMBRANCE DAY PARADE

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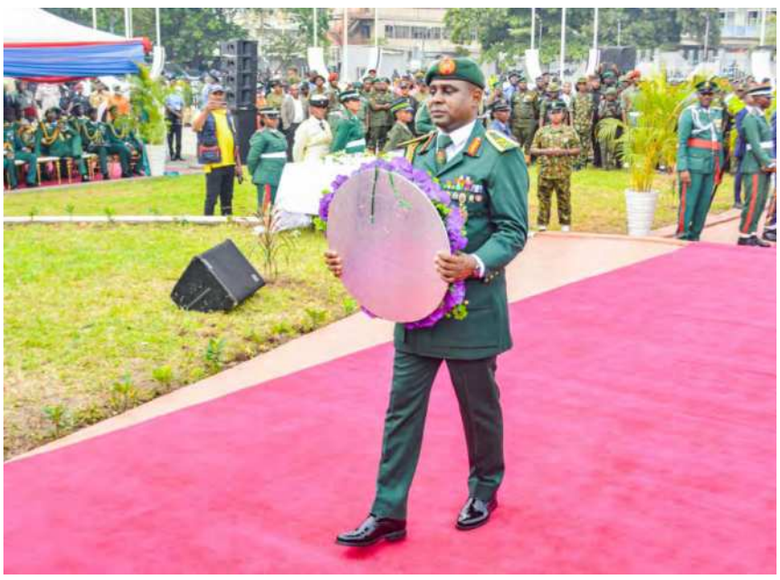


COMMANDER'S TOUR OF THE BASE
4 FEB 25

## HANDING AND TAKING OVER CEREMONY
6 FEB 25

NNS BEECROFT

NNS BEECROF

COMMANDER

## MEDIA PARLEY

13 FEB 25

HANDING AND TAKING OVER OF 9 SUSPECTS AND CANNABIS SATIVA TO NDLEA & NSCDC

12 FEB 25

## ARMS DRILL

17 FEB 25

VISIT OF DIRECTOR OF SPORT TO NNS BEECROFT

17 FEB 25

# SECURING NIGERIAN MARITIME ENVIRONMENT THROUGH PARTNERSHIP: CHALLENGES & WAY FORWARD

CAPTAIN A USMAN

The ultimate desire of nations is to ensure that their interests, core values and survival are not threatened. Nevertheless, the security landscape of many nations is increasingly marred by disruptive actions and criminal activities of non-state actors. This undermines the peace, prosperity and stability of those nations. The sea serves as a vantage ground for these disruptive and criminal activities due to its economic value.

These criminal activities in the maritime environment include Crude Oil Theft (COT), smuggling, sea robbery and piracy among others. As a result of this, many littoral nations seek to develop a cohesive maritime framework to checkmate these security threats. A component of the framework is the security of the maritime environment by combined forces through partnership in response to these criminal activities.

Accordingly, the concept of Maritime Environment Security (MES) refers to the measures and strategies implemented to protect vessels, ports and maritime infrastructure from threats. It encompasses a range of activities aimed at safeguarding maritime assets, ensuring the safety and security of trade routes and preventing illicit activities at sea. It requires collaboration between governments, international organizations and maritime industry stakeholders to address challenges and vulnerabilities in the maritime domain. MES promotes secure navigation, commerce and environmental protection in waterways around the world. Therefore, MES necessitates the need for sustainable protection and safeguarding of the maritime assets in collaboration with many forces across borders and sectors through a variety of partnerships on a larger scale. This is to combine with Naval Forces for constant and sustainable presence at sea with adequate preparedness to tackle challenges that could stand in the way for nations particularly Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) such as Nigeria.

In Nigeria, the economic activities in the maritime environment over the years have been undermined by incidents of criminal activities. These criminal activities include poaching, COT, piracy and kidnapping amongst others. The prevalence of these criminal activities has adversely affected National Security. In order to curtail these criminal activities, the Nigerian Navy has made concerted efforts through various means to combat maritime crimes. These efforts involve enhanced

surveillance, intelligence gathering, local and international collaboration and operational strategies to protect Nigerian maritime environment for sustainable and prosperous economy, ensuring the security of Nigeria's maritime environment, protecting its economic interests and promoting regional maritime security. This underscores the Chief of the Naval Staff's commitment in line with his set Vision. This article seeks to highlight the maritime environment security efforts of the Base in securing maritime environment within the Base Area of Operations in support of the NNS BEECROFT. The write-up shall cover overview of the maritime environment in Ondo State, the maritime security architecture, partnership and preparedness with other maritime stakeholders, as well as the underlining issues and challenges. The write up will be limited to activities of the Forward Operating Base IGBOKODA (FOBI) within the Western Naval Command Area of Responsibilities.

MARITIME SECURITY ARCHITECTURE - ROLES OF THE NN AND COLLABORATION WITH RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS

Constitutionally, the Nigerian Navy is mandated to secure Nigeria's territorial waters up to the limits of the Exclusive Economic Zone to combat maritime crimes such as piracy, crude oil theft and illegal bunkering, as well other economy sabotage including Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IUUF) amongst others. Accordingly, the Forward Operating Base IGBOKODA is strategically positioned to perform this role for the Nigerian Navy in Ondo State. This role is equally being conducted alongside other functions by regulating

In order to curtail these criminal activities, the Nigerian Navy has made concerted efforts through various means to combat maritime crimes. These efforts involve enhanced surveillance, intelligence gathering, local and international collaboration and operational strategies to protect the Nigerian maritime environment for a sustainable and prosperous economy, ensuring the security of Nigeria's maritime environment, protecting its economic interests and promoting regional maritime security.

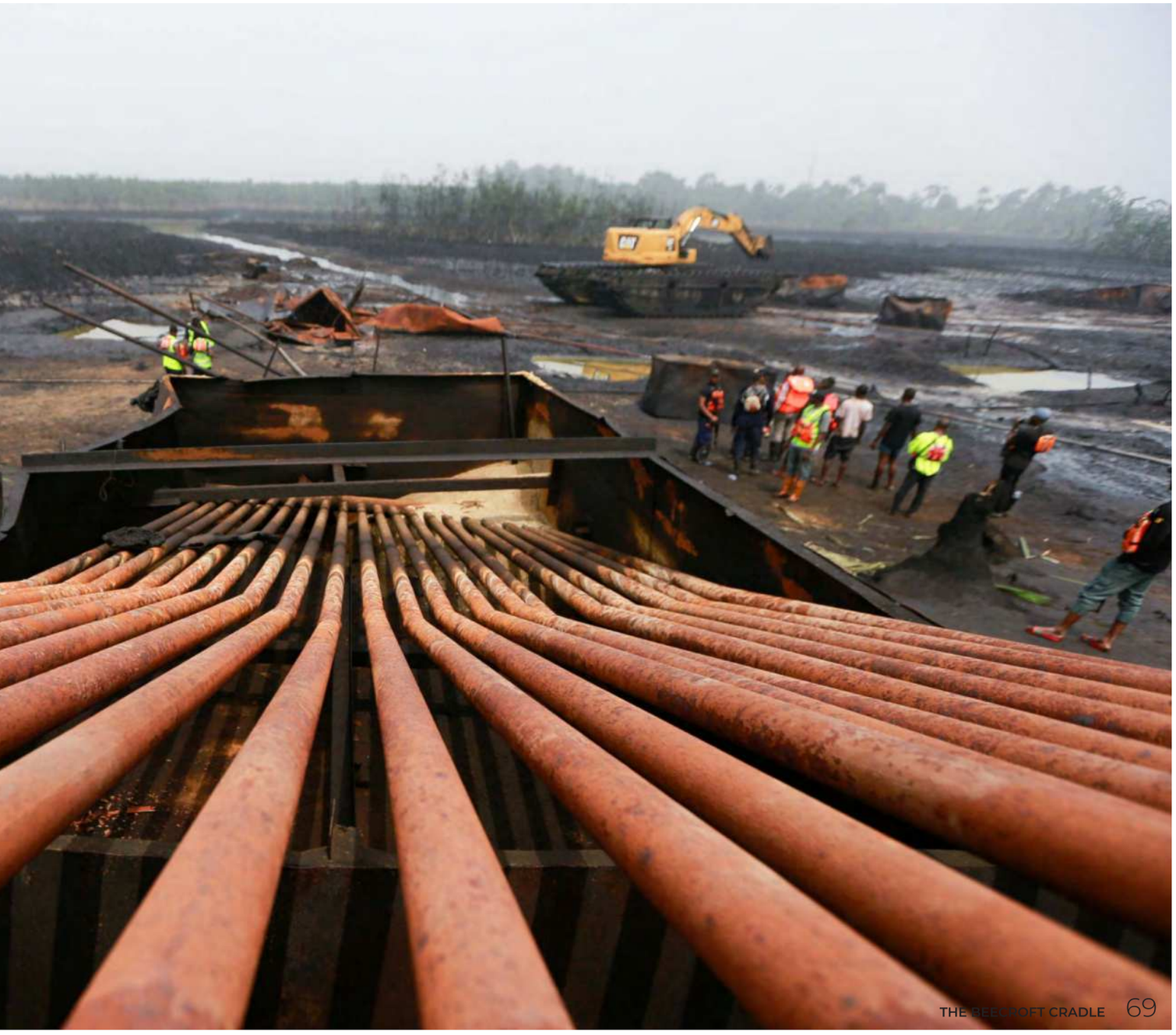
The NN operates one of the most effective Maritime Domain Awareness capabilities using Falcon-Eye as well as the RMAC. These facilities are fitted with long-range, high-precision Over the Horizon (OTH) radar systems that cover the entire coast of West Africa up to the limit of the nation's Exclusive Economic Zone.

agencies such as NIMASA, NPA, the NCS and NIS among others, encompassing various initiatives aimed at ensuring the safety and security of Ondo State's maritime domain. These roles are structured to cater for a holistic security of the riverine areas of Ondo State, to enable a peaceful atmosphere for maritime trades to thrive. Some of these key initiatives include:

Maritime Air Surveillance. The Nigerian Navy (NN) through its Air Arm conducts regular maritime air surveillance across the waters of Western Naval Command using helicopters from the Naval Air Base. Such surveillance patrols serve as deterrence against criminal activities and exploitation that could undermine the Country's maritime potentials. In this process, a

coordinated approach is employed between the Naval Air Base and the Base where detailed reports on suspicious objects or movements spotted by the helicopters are transmitted to the Base for immediate intervention. Accordingly, ships and boats attached to the Base are promptly deployed to intercept the reported vessel or location, which helps to ensure safety and security for legitimate maritime activities. This helps to preserve the maritime potentials of the State and the Country at large.

Maritime Surface Patrols. The Base conducts regular maritime surface patrols across the waters and channels to ensure the safe passage of vessels and cargo ships through the state's coastal areas, preventing crimes such as piracy and sea robbery. The Base achieves this mission through collaboration with the Nigerian Navy ships,



boats as well as numerous Naval Security Outposts within own AOO. These operations also serve to prevent economic sabotage including Crude Oil Theft (COT), pipeline vandalism as well as Illegal Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IUUF) which could undermine the maritime potentials of the State and the Country. Such operations are also often responses to the air surveillance reports that usually results into a hot-pursuit or a Search and Rescue mission. The operations are mostly intelligence driven, through the utilization of the Nigerian Navy's Maritime Domain Awareness capabilities that monitors the entire waters along the coastline.

Maritime Domain Awareness. The NN operates one of the most effective Maritime Domain Awareness capabilities using Falcon-Eye as well as the RMAC. These facilities are fitted with long range high precision Over the Horizon (OTH) radar systems that cover the entire coasts of West Africa up to the limit of the nation's Exclusive Economic Zone. The main control stations of these systems are domiciled at the Naval Headquarters as well as the Command headquarters for effective monitoring and check purposes. The Maritime Domain Awareness systems therefore overseas the entire waters, and analyses every vessel or object on the surface for the safety and security of shipping as well as against economic crimes and sabotage. The reports from the surveillance are often turned into actionable intelligence and transmitted to the Base for Gunboats to be dispatched on many occasions for immediate interception and enforcement. The Base has recorded successes in terms of arrest through actionable intelligence from FALCON-EYE and RMAC.

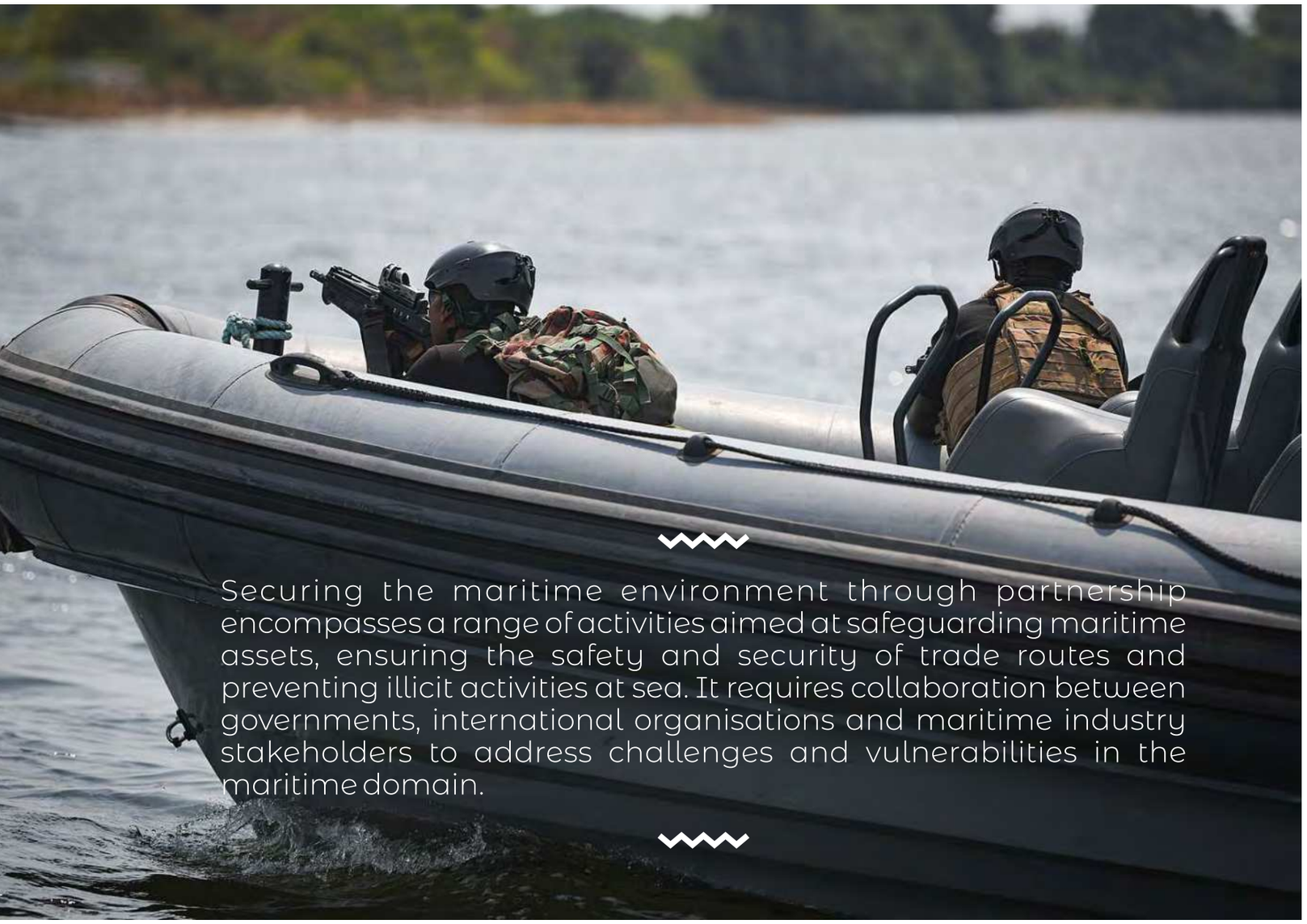
Choke-points Regime. The Nigerian Navy through the Bases, have various Naval Security Stations (NNS) deployed onboard Houseboats at strategic locations that are largely considered as Chokepoints with significant access view to major creeks, channels and estuaries, in support of the anti-Crude Oil Theft and illegal bunkering efforts. The various NSS are equally equipped with patrol boats to enable interception and arrest of maritime criminals. Such arrangements are therefore helping to facilitate systemic monitoring and rapid response to potential threats that could undermine security of the State and the Country.

Protection of Fixed Offshore Oil Assets/Vessels. The NN also maintains active security presence onboard most of the Country's offshore based oil and gas platforms as well as transit vessels, for their safety and security. Such operations are conducted in collaborations with management of the respective International Oil Companies or the local operators. Also, the Base deploys its personnel onboard private vessels contracted to provide security on the oil and gas assets at sea, on an initiative of the NHQ through a Memorandum of Understanding. Such initiatives have increased the security coverage of maritime based assets and vessels.

CHALLENGES OF FOB IGBOKODA

The Base is faced with several challenges militating against its operations and effective policing of her AOO. These challenges include Inter Agency Collaboration and Time on Tasks. However, Efforts have been made to address some of these challenges.

Inter-Agency Rivalry. The prevalence of inter-agency rivalry and its implication of the State security have caused a crippling effect on the fight against illegalities and insecurity in the State. Some security agencies are seen to be superior to other agencies and this often results to numerous clashes and in effect, reluctance to share information which usually lead to delayed communication, misinterpretations and untimely breakdown in collaborative effort and therefore hinder the success of operations in securing maritime environment. Thus, there is the need for an improved inter-agency collaboration among all security agencies vital to the security of the maritime environment within



Securing the maritime environment through partnership encompasses a range of activities aimed at safeguarding maritime assets, ensuring the safety and security of trade routes and preventing illicit activities at sea. It requires collaboration between governments, international organisations and maritime industry stakeholders to address challenges and vulnerabilities in the maritime domain.

the Base AOO.

Time on Task. The Base is currently operating from a temporary site which is about 20 nautical miles from the State coastline. It is the longest in the entire country stretching 180 km. This vast coastline constitutes some of the nation's offshore oil and gas assets that require adequate and robust security presence. The Base in its efforts to safeguarding these assets, established Naval Security Outposts at various key points and vulnerable points to checkmate criminal activities and curb all forms of illegalities. However, considering vast expanse of the coastline, the Base is sometimes faced with timely intervention to some emergency responses and maritime crimes. This has created gaps in some identified areas for criminal activities to thrive. Efforts to establish more Naval Security Outposts at these identified gaps were recently approved by the appropriate authority but yet to come to reality. Thus, there is the need for the Base to be empowered for the establishment of the additional outposts for adequate protection of the maritime environment within the Base AOO.

CONCLUSION

Securing Maritime Environment through Partnership encompasses a range of activities aimed at safeguarding maritime assets, ensuring the safety and security of trade routes and preventing illicit activities at sea. It requires collaboration between governments, international organizations and maritime industry stakeholders to address challenges and vulnerabilities in the maritime domain. The NN has made concerted efforts through various means to combat maritime crimes. These efforts involve enhanced surveillance, intelligence gathering, local and international collaborations as well as operational strategies to protect Nigerian maritime environment. FOB IGBOKODA was established in 2005 to enhance the NN policing roles and serves as a force multiplier within the WNC AOR. The Base has been operating from a temporary site at IGBOKODA since its inception as the permanent site remains under construction. Since establishment, the Base has significantly achieved her mandate of curtailing COT and other maritime crimes. However, the activities of FOB IGBOKODA are being hampered by challenges such as Inter Agency Collaboration and Time on Tasks amongst others.

# SECURING THE NIGERIAN MARITIME ENVIRONMENT: PARTNERSHIP PREPAREDNESS & PRESENCE FOR ENHANCED NIGERIAN NAVY OPERATIONS

Cdr S Yakubu

Securing a nation's Maritime Environment (ME) requires improving synergy amongst all Maritime Stakeholders (MS) for security and economic prosperity. The versatility of the ME and its multiple uses, such as a means of transportation and deposit of natural resources, makes it susceptible to multiple threats. Nigeria, as a littoral nation, boasts of several agencies to govern the various sectors of its ME. The Nigerian maritime environment is a critical component of the country's economy, with a significant portion of national revenue generated from maritime trade. However, the maritime domain faces numerous security challenges, including piracy, oil theft, and other forms of maritime crimes.

To address these challenges, the Nigerian Navy, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, must adopt a comprehensive approach that emphasises partnership, preparedness, and presence.

The purpose of this paper is to suggest ways of enhancing NN operations through optimisation of MC between the NN and other MS. This paper will cover the key importance of partnerships, preparedness and presence and the benefits of enhanced maritime security. The paper will also discuss challenges hindering MC between NN and other MS, as well as offer ways to optimise MC for enhanced NN operations. The paper shall be limited to activities of the Forward Operating Base (FOB) BADAGRY in its cooperation with MS.

## AIM

The aim of this paper is to highlight ways the NN can enhance its operations through partnership with a view to making recommendations.

## OVERVIEW OF FOB BADAGRY AND OTHER MS IN LAGOS AREA

The overview of FOB BADAGRY and other MS in the Badagry area considered the history, roles, organisation and operational activities of FOB BADAGRY, 15 FER NA, 243 BN, 653 NAF Base, the Nigerian Customs Service (NCS) and the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC). Others are the Department of State Service (DSS), Nigerian Police Force (NPF) and National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA).

FOB BADAGRY

FOB BADAGRY was established in 2009 as part of measures to reduce the reaction time of NNS BEECROFT towards curbing maritime crimes around the Nigerian border with the Republic of Benin. The Base's Area of Operations (AOO) covers the maritime and land areas from the Seme border at Long 020 41.5' E to the T-Junction at Long 0030 03' E. Over time, the Base's AOO has witnessed various maritime crimes ranging from smuggling of rice, drugs and Petroleum Motor Spirit (PMS) to other products that negatively affect Nigeria's economy. The Base deploys personnel at strategic locations in order to curb the myriad of maritime crimes in its AOO. Some locations hosting the Base's deployments include Tongeji Island, PICOMSS, Market Outpost, Barrier Island, Epeme and T-Junction, among others. The Base is headed by the CO of the rank of Navy Captain and reports directly to the Commander, BEECROFT. He is assisted by an XO, who is responsible for the administration of the men.

FOB BADAGRY carries out both land and maritime patrols to combat smuggling and enhance overall security within its AOO. The Base also conducts snap checks at known flashpoints, transit corridors, and hotspots, particularly depots often linked with smuggling activities.

FOB BADAGRY carries out both land and maritime patrols to combat smuggling and enhance overall security within its AOO. The Base also conducts snap checks at known flashpoints, transit corridors, and hotspots, particularly depots often linked with smuggling activities. These efforts have proven effective, with a notable reduction in smuggling incidents across the AOO. The sustained presence and robust capability of the Base have led to several seizures, reinforcing deterrence in the AOO. As a result, smuggling rates have dropped drastically with an attendant positive impact on enforcement status within the AOO. Notably, the Base seized about 84,720 litres of PMS and 3,303 bags of rice from January to August 2025. These seizures have been handled in accordance with extant regulations, including the handing over of contraband to relevant prosecuting agencies. This exemplifies the Base's commitment towards fostering synergy and collaboration with other security agencies in the overall effort at combating crimes within its AOO. Hence, MC is reflected in the FOB BADAGRY's relationship with other maritime law enforcement agencies, including the NCS, NSCDC, DSS, and NPF, amongst others.

### PARTNERSHIP/COOPERATIVE EFFORTS OF FOB BADAGRY WITH OTHER MARITIME STAKEHOLDERS IN IMPROVING NN OPERATIONS

FOB BADAGRY has made several efforts at collaborating with MS within its AOO. These efforts were in the areas of capacity building, intelligence sharing and conduct of internal security operations. These shall be discussed subsequently.

## CAPACITY BUILDING

FOB BADAGRY collaborates with MS within Lagos state in the area of capacity building. This collaboration involves the conduct of joint training, workshops and simulation exercises, aimed at improving operational efficiency and inter-agency coordination. For instance, in April 2023, FOB BADAGRY hosted a joint maritime security workshop attended by 45 personnel from the NPF, DSS, and NSCDC. Similarly, a counter-insurgency simulation exercise involving 70 operatives from multiple agencies was conducted in July 2023 at the Badagry River Terminal. Furthermore, over 30 NN personnel from FOB BADAGRY and NOP Tungeji participated in a joint intelligence fusion training organised by the DSS in September 2023. These efforts have significantly improved the skill sets and operational readiness of participating agencies.

The impact of these capacity-building efforts is evident in the improved efficiency of joint security operations. According to the NN 2023 Operational Assessment, joint patrols with trained personnel recorded a 35 per cent faster response time to security threats along the Niger-Benue confluence. Similarly, NSCDC also reported a 38 per cent improvement in inter-agency communication efficiency. Furthermore, the Lagos State Police Command noted a 20 per cent increase in successful joint interventions between August and Nov 23. Despite these efforts, there has been a steady decline in its sustenance. For instance, CO FOB BADAGRY alludes that despite all efforts by the Base on joint training, there was low turnout on some of the joint training conducted. Similarly, the OC marine also stated that there has not been any form of joint training between his unit and FOB BADAGRY. This could undermine the MC, thereby undermining FOB BADAGRY's operations in the state.

## CONDUCT OF INTERNAL SECURITY OPERATIONS

FOB BADAGRY conducts joint internal security operations with other MS within its AOO aimed at flushing out criminal elements across the state. A notable joint internal security initiative is the DHQ-led OP AWATSE, composed of the NN and NA as the maritime and land components, respectively. Under the initiative, FOB BADAGRY conducts joint raids with the land component, operatives of the DSS and personnel of the NPF in coastal communities. The joint raids are aimed at combating the activities of arms smugglers along the Badagry Rivers and the Porto Novo Rivers and their hideouts within coastal communities. The Base also conducts clearance operations in other identified areas under OP AWATSE.

The achievements of FOB BADAGRY through its cooperation with other security agencies underscore the need for MC in addressing security challenges. The Base also engaged in MC during a search and rescue operation. These engagements have enabled access to the expertise of other security agencies in reducing the burden of the provisions of logistics on the Base. It also promotes mutual respect amongst personnel of these agencies. Accordingly, the MC of FOB BADAGRY, with other security agencies and maritime stakeholders within its AOO, could be sustained.

INTELLIGENCE SHARING

Intelligence sharing has been vital to the success of MC within FOB BADAGRY's AOO. MC ensures that intelligence is shared amongst security agencies and the

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Intelligence sharing with the state government agencies promotes the legitimacy of security operations and encourages the support of the state government. Intelligence-driven operations for FOB BADAGRY could result in targeted operations, thereby conserving the limited resources available to the Base. FOB BADAGRY could therefore sustain intelligence-driven operations in collaboration with other security agencies in the attainment of its objectives.

### CHALLENGES HINDERING OPTIMIZATION OF MC BETWEEN FOB BADAGRY AND OTHER MS

There are challenges hindering the MC between FOB BADAGRY and other MS. Some of these challenges include inadequate joint training exercises, inadequate intelligence sharing and multi-agency rivalry. These are discussed subsequently.

### INADEQUATE JOINT TRAINING AND EXERCISES

Inadequate joint training and exercises are a major challenge limiting effective multi-agency cooperation between FOB BADAGRY and other security agencies in Lagos State. This is because of a lack of regular and structured inter-agency drills. Lagos State, given its strategic location as a gateway between eastern and southern Nigeria and its proximity to key inland waterways, faces threats such as smuggling, illegal arms trafficking, and riverine piracy. Joint training programmes are supposed to be conducted periodically between FOB BADAGRY and the other MS. However, these joint exercises are rarely conducted. Even when such training is carried out, it is often conducted on an ad hoc basis or in response to specific crises. This lack of routine integration undermines situational awareness and leads to duplicated efforts.

Inadequate joint training exercises have resulted in operational inefficiencies. In another instance, a joint patrol in March 2023 failed to prevent illegal arms transfer due to poor communication and unclear roles. These examples show that inadequate joint training weakens the operational effectiveness of FOB BADAGRY and hampers national security efforts in the region. Thus, inadequate joint training and exercises between FOB BADAGRY and other MS in Lagos State could hamper NN operations in Lagos State.

## INADEQUATE INTELLIGENCE SHARING

Inadequate intelligence sharing is another critical challenge affecting multi-agency cooperation between FOB BADAGRY and other security agencies in Lagos State. Intelligence forms the bedrock of successful military and security operations, particularly in an environment like Lagos, where threats such as kidnapping and arms trafficking are prevalent along inland waterways. Without timely and accurate intelligence sharing, agencies operate in silos, resulting in fragmented efforts. Ideally, intelligence is meant to be collated, analysed and disseminated seamlessly among FOB BADAGRY and other relevant agencies. Such collaboration would enhance situational awareness, reduce duplication of efforts, and improve the success of joint missions. However, there is poor inter-agency communication, hoarding of critical information and bureaucratic delays. These issues significantly hamper proactive response and coordination in the field.

The refusal of most stakeholders to share intelligence has negatively impacted FOB BADAGRY's operations. For instance, in August 2022, the lack of actionable intelligence contributed to the failure of a planned joint raid on a suspected arms depot in Lagos. These cases illustrate how inadequate intelligence sharing undermines mission success and fosters inter-agency

distrust. Thus, inadequate intelligence sharing between FOB BADAGRY and other MS in Badagry has hampered NN operations in Lagos State.

## MULTI-AGENCY RIVALRY

Multi-agency rivalry is a major challenge undermining effective MC between FOB BADAGRY and other security agencies in Lagos State. This rivalry often stems from issues of overlapping mandates, competition for recognition and lack of mutual trust. Security agencies operating within the same environment are expected to function collaboratively, leveraging their distinct capabilities to tackle shared threats without bias. However, operational friction persists, with agencies often prioritising their individual mandates over collective national security goals. This rivalry manifests in duplication of efforts, withholding of critical intelligence and lack of coordination in joint operations.

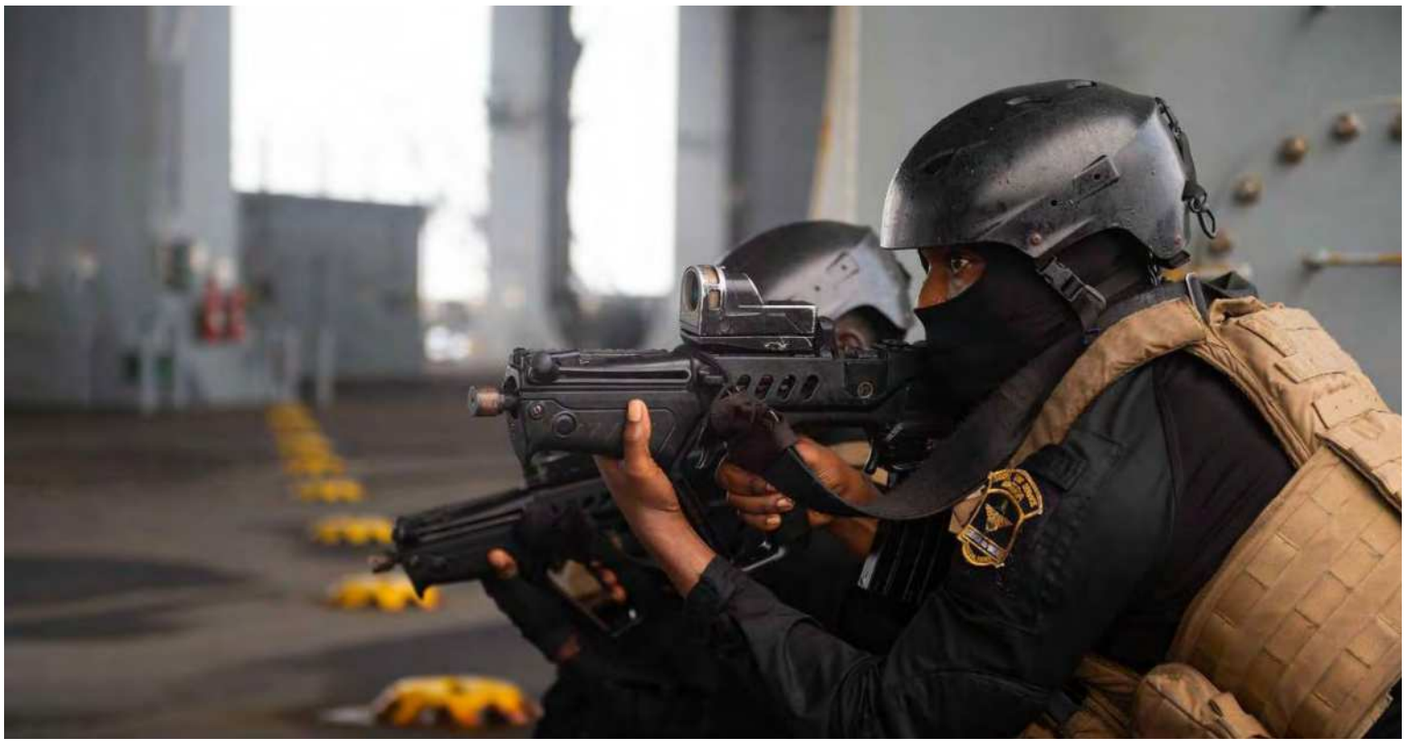
## WAYS OF ENHANCING MC BETWEEN FOB BADAGRY AND OTHER MS FOR ENHANCED NN OPERATIONS

There are numerous ways of optimising MC between FOB BADAGRY and other MS in the Lagos area. These include the development of a Joint Multi-agency Training Curriculum (JMTC), the establishment of a Joint Intelligence Coordination Centre (JICC) and the creation of a Multi-Agency Liaison Committee (MLC).

## DEVELOPMENT OF JMTC

The development of a JMTC is a viable way forward for addressing the challenge of inadequate joint training between FOB BADAGRY and other security agencies in Lagos State. The objective of this initiative is to enhance operational synergy and build mutual trust among the agencies involved in maritime and inland security. Joint training would also foster understanding of roles, doctrines and standard operating procedures, thereby improving coordination during operations. To achieve this, a standardised curriculum should be designed to include scenario-based exercises, intelligence-sharing protocols and communication drills tailored to the operational realities of Lagos State. Regular joint simulations involving FOB BADAGRY and other relevant MS would be conducted to deepen inter-agency familiarity and improve response to security threats in the states.

The actualisation of this initiative would require the establishment of a joint training framework under the



coordination of FOB BADAGRY or a designated inter-agency coordination committee. Resources such as training facilities, instructors, logistics and evaluation tools would be pooled from participating agencies. FOB BADAGRY's BOO would be tasked to liaise with the other MS in developing and implementing the curriculum. Additionally, a monitoring and evaluation mechanism would be instituted to assess the effectiveness of the training and recommend areas for improvement. This initiative, when implemented, would enhance NN operations in Lagos State.

### ESTABLISHMENT OF A JICC

The establishment of a JICC would address the challenge of inadequate intelligence sharing between FOB BADAGRY and other security agencies in Lagos State. The objective of this initiative is to enhance FOB BADAGRY's operations through timely, accurate, and coordinated intelligence flow among all security stakeholders operating in the state. The JICC would serve as a central hub for intelligence collection, analysis and dissemination, ensuring that relevant information is accessible to all agencies involved in securing the maritime and riverine environment. To achieve this, protocols for real-time data sharing, joint threat assessments and integrated response planning would be developed and institutionalised. The Centre would also promote trust, reduce duplication of efforts and enhance the operational readiness of FOB BADAGRY in responding to inland waterway threats.

Establishing the JICC would involve a collaborative framework driven by the intelligence cells of FOB BADAGRY and MS in the state. Key requirements include the provision of a secure facility within Lagos State, equipped with communication infrastructure, surveillance feeds, analytical tools and trained intelligence personnel from all participating agencies. FOB BADAGRY would provide maritime-specific intelligence officers, while the coordination of inter-agency contributions would be handled by a joint steering committee, comprising IO from the participating agencies. Regular joint briefings and updates would also be conducted to sustain intelligence flow and foster mutual trust across agencies. The implementation of this initiative would greatly enhance NN operations in Lagos State.

### CREATION OF MLC

The creation of MLC would address the challenge of rivalry between FOB BADAGRY and other security agencies in Lagos State. The objective is to create a neutral platform for regular dialogue, conflict resolution, and joint decision-making to reduce friction and overlapping mandates. The committee would be composed of appointed liaison officers from FOB BADAGRY and other MS. The Committee would meet regularly to discuss shared security concerns, coordinate operations and review incidents of friction with the aim of preventing future occurrences.

A designated coordination office for the Committee would be created within the FOB BADAGRY command to host meetings and facilitate communication. Liaison officers would be trained in joint operational planning and inter-agency communication. The responsibility for implementation would lie with the Commanding Officer of FOB BADAGRY, since he is the lead maritime security agency in Badagry. Through these efforts, the MAL Committee would improve synergy and reduce rivalry,

ultimately enhancing NN operations in Badagry and Lagos State in general.

## CONCLUSION

The maritime security landscape in Badagry is defined by a constellation of stakeholders operating under distinct yet complementary mandates. These include FOB BADAGRY, 15 FER NA, 243 BN, 653 NAF Base and NCS, NSCDC. Others are DSS, NPF, and NIWA, each contributing to the surveillance, intelligence, enforcement and regulatory functions of the maritime domain. FOB BADAGRY serves as the lead naval formation with operational authority over inland waterways in Badagry, while other agencies provide essential support through internal security, infrastructure protection, intelligence, and civil regulation. The diverse composition of these agencies highlights the complexity of securing Nigeria's inland maritime environment and underscores the necessity for a coherent multi-agency framework.

The effectiveness of MC was evident in several operations coordinated by FOB BADAGRY. Notable efforts include joint training exercises, shared intelligence operations and synchronised raids during OP AWATSE, which collectively enhanced maritime security in the region. These collaborative efforts have contributed to measurable improvements in response times and operational success, thereby demonstrating the operational advantage of MC when it is sustained and institutionalised.

Despite these achievements, the cooperation among stakeholders is constrained by several persistent challenges. Inadequate joint training limits understanding of roles and hinders coordinated field execution. Additionally, weak intelligence sharing, often resulting from poor communication channels and bureaucratic delays, has allowed criminal elements to exploit response gaps. Multi-agency rivalry further compounds these issues, with agencies exhibiting reluctance to collaborate due to competition, overlapping mandates, and mutual distrust. These tensions have manifested in failed operations, like the December 2022 clash between DSS and FOB BADAGRY units and the July 2022 collapse of a joint checkpoint due to leadership disputes.

To address these challenges and strengthen NN operations, the paper proposes the development of three key frameworks. These include the development of JMTC to institutionalise regular inter-agency drills, the establishment of a JICC to ensure timely and unified information flow, and the establishment of MLC to foster dialogue and resolve operational friction. The success of these interventions depends on committed leadership from FOB BADAGRY as the coordinating agency, supported by structured communication, shared resources, and trust-building among all stakeholders. If properly implemented, these measures would transform ad hoc collaboration into a robust system of proactive and unified maritime security operations.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that FOB BADAGRY should:

a. Liaise with other MS in FOB BADAGRY to facilitate the development of a JMTC.
b. Liaise with other MS in Badagry to facilitate the establishment of JICC.
c. Liaise with other MS in Badagry to facilitate the creation of MLC.

# THE ROLE OF **INTELLIGENCE** IN **ENSURING MARITIME SECURITY** IN **LAGOS STATE**

**Lt Cdr OR Onyoku**

Securing a nation's Maritime Environment (ME) requires improving synergy amongst all Maritime Stakeholders (MS) for security and economic prosperity. The versatility of the ME and its multiple uses, such as means of transportation and deposit of natural resources, makes it susceptible to multiple threats. Nigeria, as a littoral nation, boasts of several agencies to govern the various sectors of its ME. The Nigerian maritime environment is a critical component of the country's economy, with a significant portion of national revenue generated from maritime trade. However, the maritime domain faces numerous security challenges, including piracy, oil theft, and other forms of maritime crimes. To address these challenges, the Nigerian Navy, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, must adopt a comprehensive approach that emphasizes partnership, preparedness, and presence.

Maritime security remains a cornerstone of Nigeria's national security and economic stability, particularly in Lagos State, which hosts the nation's busiest ports and strategic waterways. The Nigerian Navy, through NNS BEECROFT, has significantly advanced maritime safety and deterrence capabilities through proactive intelligence-driven operations.

Intelligence plays a critical role in shaping naval strategy and execution in the dynamic and complex maritime environment around Lagos. From early warning systems to target-specific operations, actionable intelligence has empowered NNS BEECROFT to consistently anticipate threats, intercept criminal elements and enforce Nigeria's maritime laws.

Over the past year, NNS BEECROFT through its INT CELL, has recorded several notable successes which include:

a. Seizure of Illicit Drugs: In collaboration with sister security agencies, the Base intercepted large consignments of cannabis sativa, preventing them from entering the domestic narcotics trade. These seizures underscore the capacity of the Nigerian Navy to combat maritime threats through joint intelligence coordination.

b. Arrest of Stowaways: NNS BEECROFT operatives, acting on actionable intelligence, apprehended dozens of stowaways after illegally boarding merchant vessels bound for foreign waters. These actions not only protected vessel integrity and Nigeria's image but also curtailed potential security risks posed by unauthorized individuals on high-sea voyages.

c. Constant Patrols: Through regular and intelligence-backed patrol operations, both ashore and afloat, the Base has consistently deterred Sea robbery, oil theft, and other maritime crimes within Lagos waters. These patrols have been essential in maintaining Nigeria's reputation as a secure maritime hub.

These achievements have been made possible through a robust synergy between the Base INT CELL and inter-agency collaborations. Furthermore, the investment in human intelligence and maritime domain awareness capabilities has significantly enhanced response times and operational outcomes.

As threats evolve, NNS BEECROFT remains committed to leveraging intelligence to stay ahead of criminal elements. The Base continues to serve as a model for how timely, accurate, and actionable intelligence can safeguard national maritime assets, ensure safe passage for merchant vessels, and maintain public confidence in maritime security governance.

# NIGERIA'S ECONOMIC REVIVAL: THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF SEA POWER

Capt UA Sidi

Since the ratification of the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494, when the oceans of the world were divided into two, between Portugal and Spain, the sea, or use of the sea, became a most significant factor in determining the strength, influence and prosperity of nations. With great warships, superior tactics and first-rate commanders who were able to wield their fleets with ruthless efficiency, these European powers sailed their ships around the world and projected their influence upon faraway lands, even the ones hitherto undiscovered.

This era gave the world legendary sailors and Admirals such as Christopher Columbus, who first discovered the New World and Vasco da Gama. Like Columbus, da Gama had also made important discoveries; he was the first to figure out the sea route to India.

> In today's modern world, globalisation and all its facets are enabled based on a new paradigm of cooperative naval endeavour between nations or alliances. Thus, nations aspiring to remain relevant economically and otherwise must develop a collaborative rather than competitive approach to Sea Power.

According to maritimists, or maritime theorists, the maritime exploits of Spain and Portugal fetched them unfettered access to wealth and paved the way for global imperialism. Decades later, a small island nation in Western Europe would later come to finesse this approach. Maritimists are not surprised that Britain could reach out and sustain a reign of dominion into the interiors of Africa, Asia, Australia, the Middle East and even the Americas. The mysterious key to Britain's ability to conquer and maintain a firm grip over its colonies is not so mysterious; it is nothing other than the ability to exert influence at sea or from the sea, otherwise known as Sea Power. In today's modern world, globalisation and all its facets are enabled based on a new paradigm of cooperative naval endeavour between nations or alliances. Thus, nations aspiring to remain relevant economically and otherwise must develop a collaborative rather than competitive approach to Sea Power.

## THE ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS OF SEAPOWER

It is generally agreed that Sea Power is made up of 2 major constituents: the mercantile and military aspects. This has been described as the intimate relationship between naval power and economic prosperity. The degree of a nation's ability to exert influence at sea is based on its maritime resources, including maritime trade and naval strength. These factors ultimately translate to maritime supremacy. History is replete with many examples in this regard. In its heyday, Rome imported about 150,000 tonnes of grains every year, and 85 per cent of this came by sea. For this reason, protecting Rome's capacity to exploit the sea became a major requirement. Similarly, at the end of the seventeenth century, France built a formidable naval fleet which it could not maintain due to limited maritime resources. At that time, Britain had a reasonably good and well-maintained fleet. This was possible because of Britain's immense sea resources, which must be protected to guarantee its economic prosperity. Therefore, it could be discerned that for a nation to exert and maintain Sea Power, its naval strength must, as a matter of necessity, correspond to the magnitude of its maritime resources.

Strategically located in the Gulf of Guinea, with an extended coast of 420nm and endowed with abundant hydrocarbon deposits of about 50.4 billion barrels of proven reserves, Nigeria has all the reasons and enablers to be a major naval power on the African continent.

waters has wider implications for its economy, and global trade and security in general. This became apparent in the last quarter of 2015 when Nigeria began to witness a period of negative growth or recession. This was caused, among other things, by a drop in the global price of crude oil and a reduction in crude oil production due to the activities of pipeline vandals. This situation led to reduced foreign earnings, which almost threw the country into economic uncertainties, with the ordinary citizen bearing the brunt. Similarly, other occurrences in the maritime domain, such as piracy Illegal Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IUU), arms trafficking and sea robbery, have also negatively impacted Nigeria's economy. The huge resources Nigeria loses yearly, about 23 million dollars to IUU and 2 billion dollars to piracy, if saved and injected into the economy, would, over time, significantly improve the life of the average Nigerian.

## A HOLISTIC ECONOMIC REVIVAL PLAN

In responding to the issue of economic recession, the Federal Government launched an Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) 2017–2020; the plan focuses mainly on diversification of the economy and job creation. The plan estimates an average annual growth of 8.5 percent in

manufacturing. This is expected to lead to a projected growth in the manufacturing sector from - 5.8 percent in 2016 to 10.6 percent by 2020. Viewing the plan with a microscopic lens, it can be seen that it is land-centric; its main features cover improvement in land transportation (railway and road), industrialisation, tackling food insecurity and the encouragement of foreign direct investment. It is very apparent that, oil and gas aside, no aspect of the maritime economy was captured in the plan. This huge oversight only goes to reiterate the long-held belief that 'Sea Blindness' or the lack of awareness about the potentialities in the maritime domain, is a key problem among Nigerians. This is very worrisome considering that the maritime environment contributes over 90 per cent to the nation's GDP. For Nigeria to have a sustainable economy, there is an urgent need to explore the possibilities in the maritime environment or the diversification offered by an economy dependent on Sea Power. While it is not expected that Nigeria would shift its attention entirely to the maritime environment, it is suggested that, based on the preceding arguments, economic diversification would not be attainable when the enormous contributions of Sea Power to an ailing economy like Nigeria's are downplayed.

Contributions of Sea Power to Nigeria's economic recovery would be in 2 broad perspectives: the mercantile aspect, which includes shipping and all its related activities such as shipbuilding, port facilities, docking facilities, and marine logistics, and the naval aspect. It is sad to note that Nigeria exports a large amount of crude oil and imports over 100 million tonnes of general cargo, yet no single Nigerian ship is engaged in this lucrative endeavour. As of now, Nigeria stands as the only oil-producing nation without a national shipping fleet. In a similar vein, statistics from the Nigerian Ports Authority reveal that between 2009 and 2010, Nigeria's tonnage had gone from 82 million tonnes to over 190 million tonnes, with an estimated freight payment rising from 4.1 billion dollars to 9 billion dollars annually, but with no participation of Nigerians, thus no benefit to the Nigerian economy. If backed by extant regulations and requisite investments, the contributions of shipping to Nigeria's GDP would be phenomenal. That is notwithstanding the huge benefits to be accrued if the potential of other sub-sectors of the blue economy, such as fisheries, aquaculture, hydrographic and oceanographic services, and maritime tourism, are unlocked. Undoubtedly, this would lead to wealth creation and a reduction in poverty and unemployment, thereby producing succour and national tranquillity.

## UNLOCKING NIGERIA'S MARITIME POTENTIALS

Unlocking the maritime potentials of Nigeria requires an effective and workable plan, which must be pursued with vigour and dogged determination backed by a strong political will. For now, 'Sea Blindness' as stated earlier, is a major hindrance to this realisation. This means that major maritime stakeholders must come together to proffer a lasting solution to this problem. The NN, being the focal organ of government charged with the protection of Nigeria's economic interests at sea, could spearhead a campaign against 'Sea Blindness'. In furtherance of this, the NN could liaise with other stakeholders for the formulation of a viable National Maritime Policy; mercantile and naval strategies could then be derived from the policy. A Blue Economy Plan could also be derived to complement the existing ERGP 2017–2020. With these, Nigeria would have an all-comprehensive plan capable of ensuring sustainable economic growth and self-reliance.

The naval aspect of Sea Power is to safeguard and protect the country's maritime economic interests. Without a virile combat naval posture, Nigeria's economic growth from the maritime domain would be but a pipedream. This is because miscreants, pirates and other non-state actors are always on the lookout for new opportunities to perpetrate crimes. Deterrence and the ability to project maritime power from a purpose-driven and capable naval force are therefore necessary. A naval strategy

derived from a National Maritime Strategy, could outline strategic objectives and means through which this could be achieved. It is to be noted that the NN has always had naval strategies formulated within its operational context, such as the Trident Strategy, which was expanded to become the Total Spectrum Maritime Strategy. Given that these strategies were exclusively formulated in-house within the NN and without the backing and support of a national policy, it only means that they would largely remain unimplementable. Over time, these strategies have, to a reasonable degree, come to serve an academic purpose by providing references for research in naval affairs. This anomaly can be corrected if a National Maritime Policy is promulgated. The complete setting of Sea Power in a national strategic context is illustrated below.

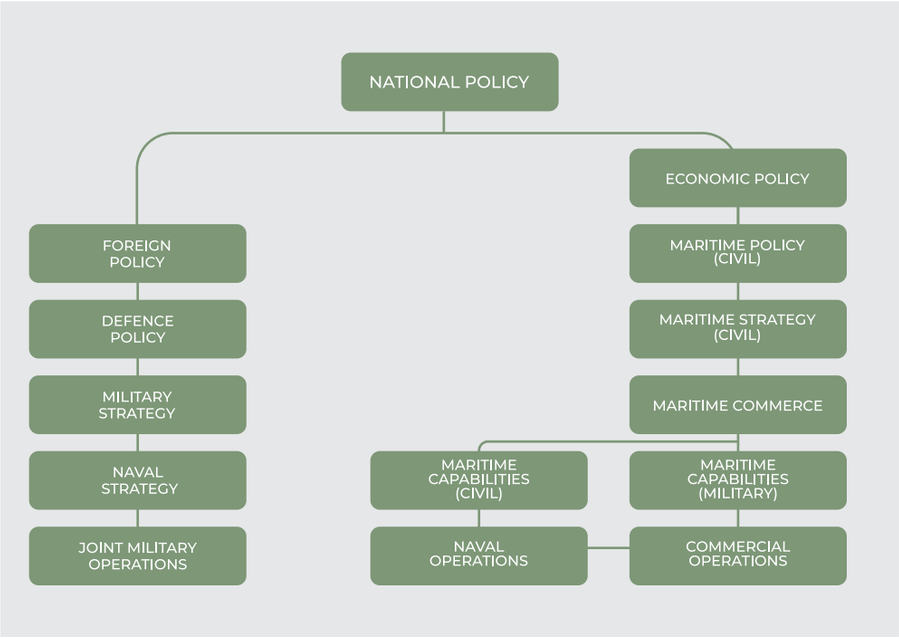



FIG 1. SEA POWER SETTING

## A POSTMODERN NAVY FOR NIGERIA

Following global naval trends, the naval strategy could be implemented to provide Nigeria a postmodern navy with a collaborative approach to maritime defence and security. The essence is not to develop a large competitive navy like that of Spain and Portugal of the 15th century, the maintenance of which in the long run would be unsustainable, but to develop a naval power capable of ensuring the protection of the nation's maritime interests and territorial defence in conjunction with other sub-regional or regional naval forces. This navy should be knowledge-driven and empowered to adopt network-centric and Littoral Warfare concepts which have proven to be effective in the conduct of contemporary naval operations. For matters of sustainability and self-reliance, funding for the development of the naval aspect of Sea Power should come from the proceeds gained from contributions of the maritime industry (shipping, ports, freight, and fishing) to the GDP. It is important to state that considerable strides have been made, particularly by the NN, towards naval development, especially through local shipbuilding efforts. Two Seaward Defence Boats, NNS ANDONI and NNS KARADUWA, were built in the Naval Dockyard in Lagos by local engineers and shipbuilders, most of them naval personnel. Although this is highly commendable, it is just inadequate considering that the project was largely financed from NN coffers against other competing demands. Shipbuilding is capital intensive; hence, the need for federal government intervention, which could at least start with the formulation of a national maritime policy pillared on self-reliance, wealth creation and sustainable economic growth.

This essay started by showering encomiums on some great admirals of the past; for the purpose of narrative integrity, it would end with George Bernard Shaw's postulation on admirals: Men go into the navy, thinking they will enjoy it. They do enjoy it for about a year; at least the stupid ones do, riding back and forth dully on ships.

**The naval aspect of Sea Power is to safeguard and protect the country's maritime economic interests. Without a virile combat naval posture, Nigeria's economic growth from the maritime domain would be but a pipedream.**

The bright ones find that they don't like it in half a year, but there is always the thought of a pension if only they stay in ...Gradually, they become crazy, crazier and crazier. Only the Navy has no way of distinguishing between the sane and insane. Only about five percent of the Navy have the sea in their veins; they are the ones who become captains. Thereafter, they are segregated on their bridges. If they are not mad before this, they go mad then. And the maddest of them all become admirals.

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# BRIDGING THE GAP IN SEARCH & RESCUE:

## WHY THE NIGERIAN NAVY NEEDS TO ESTABLISH HELICOPTER RESCUE SWIMMERS PROGRAM

In the early hours of a rainy day in 2022, a passenger boat capsized off the coast of Calabar. Despite the swift response of nearby fishermen and local rescue teams, several lives were lost—many of them children and women. I remember reading the incident report and asking myself, "What if we had a rescue swimmer in the air, dropped within minutes into the water? How many could have survived?"

A similar situation happened in July 2025 at FOB ESCRAVOS, where an Epenal Gunboat conveying 15 persons capsized, killing 6 of them and leaving 3 missing. These preventable tragic events expose a critical gap in the maritime response capabilities of the Nigerian Navy (NN).

As an NN Diver, I have been trained to search the depths, recover bodies and conduct underwater operations. But there's always a sinking feeling when you're deployed late, or your reach is limited by surface assets alone. The harsh reality is that lives are being lost at sea not for lack of effort, but for limited capability. It is time we face this gap squarely and address it. The NN urgently needs to establish a Helicopter Rescue Swimmer (HRS) Program. This lifesaving necessity will extend the reach of the NN's Search and Rescue (SAR) team, improve response time and give victims a real chance at survival.

Lt OS Alabi

As a NN Diver, I have been trained to search the depths, recover bodies and conduct underwater operations. But there's always a sinking feeling when you're deployed late, or your reach is limited by surface assets alone.

Nigeria's Maritime Realities: A Risk-Ridden Domain

Nigeria has over 853 km of coastline, bordered by one of the busiest and most volatile marine environments in the world—the Gulf of Guinea. With bustling ports in Lagos, Warri, Calabar and Port Harcourt, our waters witness thousands of vessel movements yearly. According to the International Maritime Bureau (IMB), the Gulf of Guinea accounted for 95% of all maritime kidnappings in 2020. While piracy has since declined due to increased naval patrols, the region remains hazardous due to oil rig operations, illegal bunkering and human trafficking. Other hazards include overloaded fishing and ferry boats, unpredictable weather patterns and rising sea levels. The Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) recorded over 200 maritime safety incidents in 2023 alone. Many of these incidents include vessel collisions, groundings or capsizing. Most of these events occurred before rescue services could arrive—especially in deep or stormy waters. Also in 2024 Nigeria witnessed a total of 231 fatalities, according to Ships and Ports.com. These alarming numbers and patterns underscore the urgent need for a dedicated Helicopter Rescue Swimmer Program that can deliver rapid aerial intervention in critical moments and drastically improve survival outcomes at sea.

The harsh reality is that lives are being lost at sea not for lack of effort, but for limited capability. It is time we face this gap squarely and address it. The NN urgently needs to establish a Helicopter Rescue Swimmer (HRS) Program. This lifesaving necessity will extend the reach of the NN's Search and Rescue (SAR) team, improve response time and give victims a real chance at survival.

**The Missing Link in Our Search and Rescue Chain**

The NN has made admirable strides in maritime security: acquisition of offshore patrol vessels, establishment of Regional Maritime Awareness Centres (RMAC), and participation in multinational exercises. However, our SAR capabilities remain largely surface-bound. Currently, we rely heavily on patrol boats, civilian fishing vessels and dive teams deployed from shore bases. These methods, while functional, are too slow and often ineffective in high-seas emergencies, especially when response time is a matter of life or death.

**Who is a Helicopter Rescue Swimmer?**

A helicopter rescue swimmer is a specially trained individual capable of being deployed from a helicopter into rough seas to rescue distressed persons, stabilize them and hoist them back to safety. Navies worldwide such as the U.S. Navy, Coast Guard and South African National Defence Force employ the effective use of HRS in their waters. HRS personnel are trained in advanced water survival, medical first response, open-sea swimming in dangerous

The NN has made admirable strides in maritime security: acquisition of offshore patrol vessels, establishment of Regional Maritime Awareness Centres (RMAC), and participation in multinational exercises.

conditions, Hoisting and winch coordination, night and all-weather operations.

**Why the Nigerian Navy Needs Helicopter Rescue Swimmers**

As a regional power, establishing an HRS team for the NN will primarily increase presence, reach and speed during SAR operations. These effects will in turn produce the following advantages for the NN.

1. Save Lives: In cold or turbulent water, the human body can begin to shut down in minutes. A helicopter can reach the scene faster than any boat, and a swimmer can make direct contact with the victim immediately.
2. Oil and Gas Infrastructure: Nigeria has hundreds of offshore platforms and FPSOs. Accidents here are high-risk. Having rescue swimmers on standby could mean the difference between losing a worker and saving one.
3. Disaster Response: With increased coastal flooding, helicopter-based SAR operations are critical in urban rescues (e.g., Bayelsa, Rivers). Rescue swimmers can access submerged vehicles or buildings that boats can't reach.
4. Military and Civilian Synergy: Beyond combat and enforcement, the Nigerian Navy's humanitarian role is expanding. Rescue swimmers would amplify our effectiveness in civilian maritime incidents—earning public trust and saving lives.
5. Peacekeeping and International Cooperation: Having HRS units aligns us with global SAR standards, enhancing Nigeria's contribution to ECOWAS and UN missions.

**A Phased Path to Implementation**
Building an HRS program is possible if we start with a clear, scalable plan:

**Phase 1: Selection and Training** Begin by identifying candidates from among Navy Divers and Special Boat Service personnel. Collaborate with partners such as the U.S. Coast Guard or South African Navy to conduct overseas training.

**Phase 2: Optimization of SAR Helicopters**
We do not need to start big. A few platforms, like the AW139 and AW109SP helicopters, can be modified for hoist operations. Some of the helicopters are already equipped with hoists necessary for these rescue missions; however, other equipment is needed for immediate medical attention onboard the helicopter, such as oxygen and a trauma kit, a defibrillator, a vital monitor, hypothermia gear, and stretchers. Additionally, these role considerations may be emphasised during subsequent purchases of NN platforms.

**Phase 3: Establishment of SAR Detachments**
Deploy small SAR units to key coastal commands (e.g., Western Naval Command, Eastern Naval Command and Central Naval Command). This detachment would be operationally under the Special Operations Command but administratively under the coastal commands.

**Phase 4: Integrate with Civil Agencies**
Collaborate with NIMASA, NEMA, and local emergency response units to respond to civilian and military incidents alike.

**Conclusion: A Call to Save Lives**
Nigeria has the talent. We have the coastline. We have the need. All we need to do is to close this glaring capability gap. Every time we pull out a lifeless body, we should wonder what could've been done differently.

Establishing a Helicopter Rescue Swimmer Program is not just a luxury—it is a strategic, humanitarian and moral necessity. Our Navy must evolve beyond patrols and deterrence. We must be ready to save lives from the sky.

# PRESERVING NIGERIA'S MARITIME HERITAGE: THE CASE FOR ESTABLISHING A NIGERIAN NAVY MUSEUM AT TARKWA BAY

**R Adm PP Nimmyel**

Navies worldwide have recognised the importance of preserving their heritage and historical artefacts as tools for education, public engagement and national pride. A notable example is the US Navy, which established the Naval Museum in Washington, DC. This institution meticulously preserves the history of the US Navy, showcasing its role in key military campaigns and its evolution over the centuries.

Preserving the history of NN platforms that are no longer in active service is crucial for maintaining a connection to the Navy's heritage and inspiring future generations. These vessels symbolise the evolution of the NN into a regional maritime power.

The museum has become a repository of naval heritage, a place where the public can engage with history, and where the Navy can reflect on its journey and achievements. Drawing inspiration from this success, establishing a similar institution in Nigeria could offer substantial benefits.

The Nigerian Navy (NN), established in 1956, has evolved from a modest fleet inherited from the Royal Navy to a formidable maritime force in West Africa. Over the years, the NN has acquired a wide range of platforms, including ships, helicopters and other vessels, which have played crucial roles in safeguarding Nigeria's territorial waters. Among these, NNS ARADU, a MEKO 360-class frigate

commissioned in 1982, stands out as a symbol of Nigeria's naval prowess and ambition. Once one of the most advanced warships in Africa – NNS ARADU – along with other classes of ships like LSTs and FPBs contributed significantly to the NN's success in operations, such as anti-piracy, search and rescue as well as maritime interdiction. These vessels were also instrumental in peace support operations in Sierra Leone and Liberia, where they played key roles in restoring stability in the region.

Furthermore, NN platforms have participated in international flag-showing missions, representing Nigeria at major anniversaries and events in countries like the UK, Brazil and Australia. These efforts showcased Nigeria's maritime strength and the nation's commitment to fostering international cooperation and diplomacy. However, as time has passed, many of these vessels, including NNS ARADU, have become non-operational due to age and obsolescence. Despite this, the legacy of these platforms remain deeply significant and worth preserving.

The purpose of this paper is to explore methods of preserving Nigeria's maritime heritage through the establishment of a NN museum at Tarkwa Bay. Therefore, the paper will focus on preserving the legacy of NN platforms, the potential benefits of a NN museum to the nation, and steps for achieving the vision of a NN museum.

**AIM**

The aim of the paper is to proffer ways of preserving Nigeria's maritime heritage through the establishment of a NN museum at Tarkwa Bay with a view to making recommendations.

**PRESERVING THE LEGACY OF NIGERIAN NAVY PLATFORMS**

Preserving the history of NN platforms that are no longer in active service is crucial for maintaining a connection to the Navy's heritage and inspiring future generations. These vessels symbolize the evolution of the NN into a regional maritime power. A clear instance is the relocation of NNS JEBBA to NNBTS Onne, where it now stands as a monument. This move underscores the Navy's dedication to honouring its legacy and ensuring that future personnel understand the significance of the platforms that have served the nation. To further safeguard this rich heritage, it is proposed that NNS ARADU be relocated to Tarkwa Bay to serve as the centrepiece of the NN museum. NNS ARADU, having distinguished itself in service to the nation, would provide a tangible link to the Navy's history, offering visitors the opportunity to explore the ship and learn about its role in various naval operations.

Tarkwa Bay, a popular tourist destination with beach resort amenities, is an ideal location for the museum. Its accessibility to tourists makes it a strategically significant site. Developing accommodations in the area would further enhance the site's appeal, offering lodging for tourists to fully immerse themselves in the museum experience. Moreover, the museum would

serve as a source of national pride, highlighting the Navy's role in Nigeria's history and its ongoing relevance to the country's security. It would provide a platform for the Navy to engage with the public, fostering a sense of connection and understanding between the military and civilians. By hosting educational programs, workshops and naval-themed events, the museum would contribute to a deeper public understanding of maritime security and naval operations. This relocation would ensure that this iconic platform continues to inspire long after its active service has concluded.

**POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF A NIGERIAN NAVY MUSEUM TO THE NATION**

The establishment of a NN museum would bring numerous benefits to the nation. This would provide a space to preserve and honour the Navy's history, fostering a sense of continuity and tradition within the service. It would also serve as a training resource, where naval personnel can learn from the past and draw inspiration for future operations. The museum would be a valuable cultural and historical institution, contributing to the country's tourism industry. In turn, this would attract visitors both domestically and internationally, generating revenue and enhancing Nigeria's image as a nation with a rich maritime heritage. Hence, the museum would serve as a venue for events, exhibitions and educational programs, further promoting its societal impact.

The collaborations with other museums, both within Nigeria and internationally, could lead to joint exhibitions, research initiatives and exchange programs, expanding the museum's global reach. The development of accommodations around Tarkwa Bay would also contribute to the local economy, creating jobs and supporting businesses in the area. Additionally, lodging facilities around the museum site at Tarkwa Bay would cater to a wide range of visitors, providing additional revenue streams and enriching the overall visitor experience.

ACHIEVING THE VISION OF A NIGERIAN NAVY MUSEUM

To achieve the vision of establishing a NN museum, several steps could be considered. Firstly, a detailed proposal and feasibility study could be conducted, outlining the scope and location of NNS ARADU at Tarkwa Bay. A key feature of the museum would be the preservation of the vessel including the placement and reconfiguration towards making it accessible to visitors as part of the museum's exhibition. Following this, securing funding through a combination of government support and corporate sponsorships would be essential. Partnership with the National Commission of Museums

and Monuments could provide valuable expertise and support in developing the museum. Additionally, the NN could launch a public awareness campaign to garner support and interest in the project.

Once established, the museum would need to be managed and maintained by a dedicated team, including naval historians, curators and educators. The NN could also consider rotating exhibits and hosting special events to keep the museum dynamic and engaging for visitors. Collaborating with stakeholders, including veterans' associations, local communities and educational institutions, would be crucial in building broad support for the museum. Thus, the museum would serve as a centre for educational programs, whereby veterans and naval personnel could conduct guided tours, sharing firsthand experiences and insights into life onboard a Man of War.

## CONCLUSION

The paper emphasized the importance of preserving Nigeria's maritime heritage through the establishment of a Nigerian Navy (NN) museum at Tarkwa Bay. It highlighted how navies worldwide, such as the US Navy, have successfully used museums to preserve their histories, serving as tools for education, public engagement and national pride. The evolution of the NN, from its inception to its current status, was discussed, with particular emphasis on the significance of NNS ARADU.

To realize the vision of a NN museum, the relocation of NNS ARADU to Tarkwa Bay was proposed, allowing it to serve as the museum's centrepiece and preserving its legacy in the Navy's history. Additionally, the development of accommodations and tourist infrastructure around Tarkwa Bay was suggested to enhance the museum's appeal, boost tourism and contribute to the local economy. Collaboration with the National Commission of Museums and Monuments, as well as international institutions, was also advocated to gain expertise, support and expand the museum's reach through joint exhibitions and research. Moreover, launching public awareness and funding campaigns was identified as crucial to securing the necessary resources and support for the project.

Overall, establishing a NN museum at Tarkwa Bay, supported by these deliberate steps, would be a significant move towards preserving Nigeria's rich maritime history while also providing broad cultural, educational and economic benefits to the nation.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the NN should:

a. Relocate NNS ARADU to Tarkwa Bay as a centrepiece for the NN Museum.
b. Develop tourist infrastructure, including accommodations for the Museum at Tarkwa Bay.
c. Collaborate with institutions, especially the National Commission of Museums and Monuments, as well as other museums globally to establish the Museum at Tarkwa Bay.
d. Create public awareness for funding and other forms of support for establishing the NN Museum at Tarkwa Bay.

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# DIGNITY BEYOND THE HORIZON: BURIAL OPERATIONS OF NIGERIAN NAVY SHIP BEECROFT

**Slt JT Edward**

At the heart of Lagos' bustling Apapa district lies Nigerian Navy Ship (NNS) BEECROFT, one of the Nigerian Navy's most strategic and active Operations Base. Known primarily for its maritime surveillance, coastal defence and internal security operations, NNS BEECROFT also shoulders a deeply humane and sacred responsibility – the burial and final honours of naval personnel and veterans who have crossed the bar.

The solemn duty, although not always visible to public eye, underscores the Nigerian Navy's unwavering commitment to honoring the service and sacrifice of its fallen heroes. Burial operations at NNS BEECROFT are more than ceremonial rituals – they are symbolic acts of respect, continuity, tradition and unity. Through every folded flag, echoing bugle and synchronized salute, the Nigerian Navy reminds its members, the bereaved and the nation at large: No sailor is forgotten.

Burial Operations: A Tradition of Honor

The Nigerian Navy, like other Armed Forces around the world, adheres to a strict tradition of military funeral protocols. These ceremonies not only honour the life and service of the deceased but also provide a structured and

From the moment naval personnel passes away – whether in service or post-retirement – a detailed and coordinated response is set in motion. The BBO is activated and tasked with managing all logistics: liaising with the family, coordinating with higher naval authorities, securing venues, mobilizing the Burial party and ensuring compliance with military standards.

Stages of Burial Operations
at NNS BEECROFT
Burial operations at NNS BEECROFT follow a structured sequence:

1. Notification and Preliminary Coordination: Upon the notification of death for both serving and post-retirement personnel, a burial signal is generated by Naval Headquarters mandating NNS BEECROFT to conduct military burial for personnel within its Area of Operation. The Commander NNS BEECROFT tasks the BBO and activates the Burial protocol.
2. Family Engagement and Support: NNS BEECROFT

places high priority on family sensitivity. The BBO is assigned to the family of the deceased to guide them through the process. From confirming the burial arrangements to assisting in obtaining necessary

From the moment naval personnel pass away – whether in service or post-retirement – a detailed and coordinated response is set in motion. The BBO is activated and tasked with managing all logistics: liaising with the family, coordinating with higher naval authorities, securing venues, mobilising the burial party and ensuring compliance with military standards.

Every burial conducted under the watch of NNS BEECROFT is a chapter in a larger story – the story of sacrifice, duty and national service. It is a message to every sailor: that their service will be acknowledged, their life will be celebrated, and their final journey will not be a forgotten one.

party made up of seven firers.

- The Last Post is sounded by a bugler, followed by a moment of complete silence.
- The folded flag is presented to the next of kin by the representative of the Chief of the Naval Staff.
- A citation or personal eulogy from the unit is read.

**Ceremonial Precision, Emotional Weight**

For those involved in burial operations, every step is a matter of precision and pride, but also emotional gravity. The Burial drill movement, flag folding technique and weapon handling is handled by the Base Gunnery Department to ensure that the ceremonies are flawless. Chaplains and Imams offer spiritual solace, while medical personnel stand by to assist families overwhelmed by grief.

**Commitment and Legacy of Honor**

The Commander NNS BEECROFT has maintained a reputation for discipline, empathy and professionalism in burial operations of the Base. The Base continues to refine its procedures, invest hours in burial parade training and maintain readiness for funeral operations as the Base could be called upon in short notice.

Every burial conducted under the watch of NNS BEECROFT is a chapter in a larger story – the story of sacrifice, duty and national service. It is a message to every sailor: that their service will be acknowledged, their life will be celebrated, and their final journey will not be a forgotten one.

In the words of a chaplain attached to the Base, "we lay them to rest with honour, because they stood for us with courage."

**Conclusion**

The burial operations of NNS BEECROFT stand as a profound reflection of what it means to serve – not just in life, but also in how the institution treats its own in death. In the meticulous organization of military funerals, in the careful folding of the national flag, in the solemn echoes of the Last Post and in the comforting presence of fellow sailors beside grieving families, lies the Navy's creed: Onward Together.

These ceremonies symbolize a bridge between past and present, a moment where rank, position and duty transcend earthly matters and are met with the same deep respect that the uniform commands. The importance of burial operations goes beyond naval protocol. It is about nation-building, tradition-keeping and sustaining morale. It is about assuring every member of the navy that their life – and death – will be marked by a system that values them; not just a system that values them, and not just as personnel, but as patriots. It is a final act of loyalty from the Navy to its own – a promise kept.

As the sun sets on each life lived in service, NNS BEECROFT stands steadfast at attention – saluting, remembering and carrying forward the torch of honour. In the quiet dignity of these ceremonies lies a powerful message: that Service to the Nation is eternal, and so is the respect it commands.

## COMMANDER'S VISIT TO COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, LAGOS STATE

11 MAR 25

COMMANDER'S VISIT TO DSS DIRECTOR, LAGOS STATE

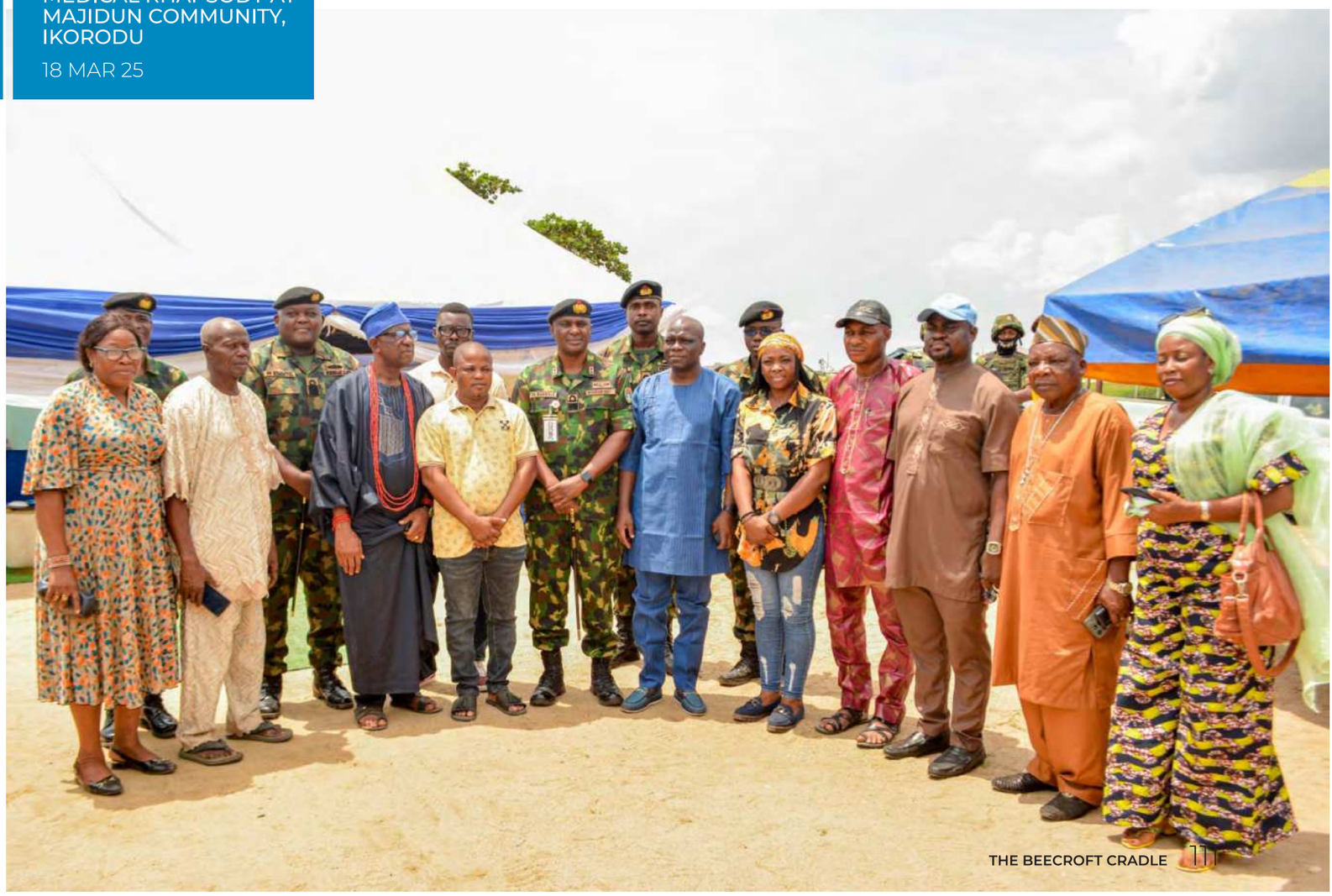
11 MAR 25

INAUGURATION OF THE EDITORIAL BOARD COMMITTEE

12 MAR 25

## MEDICAL RHAPSODY AT MAJIDUN COMMUNITY, IKORODU

18 MAR 25



AMBULANCE

## COMMANDER'S VISIT TO DIRECTOR, NIGERIAN PORTS AUTHORITY

18 MAR 25

MEETING AND LUNCH WITH MARITIME STAKEHOLDERS
20 MAR 25

## COMMANDER'S VISIT TO NDLEA DEPUTY COMMANDER GENERAL OF NARCOTICS

23 MAR 25

HAND OVER OF RICE TO CUSTOMS

25 MAR 25

HAND-OVER OF
1,306 BAGS OF
RICE TO CUSTOMS
16 APRIL 25

# ENHANCING MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT AT THE REGIONAL MARITIME AWARENESS CAPABILITY TRAINING SCHOOL APAPA

**Cdr EE Omokhodion**

In 2007, the Nigerian Navy (NN) began a strategic partnership with the United States Government under the Africa Partnership Station (APS) initiative, aimed at bolstering maritime security across the Gulf of Guinea (GoG). One of the significant outcomes of this collaboration was the establishment of a pilot Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) facility in Lagos in 2008.

Following the adoption of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct (YCoC) and the development of ECOWAS Zone E MDA infrastructure, stakeholders agreed in 2011 on the need for a dedicated regional training centre. Nigeria was chosen to host this centre in recognition of its early successes in MDA capacity building. Subsequently, a bilateral agreement between the Nigerian and United States Governments led to the formal commissioning of the Regional Maritime Awareness Capability Training School (RMACTS) in March 2019. This brief provides an overview of the school's history, structure, manpower development initiatives, training activities, key achievements, and current challenges.

## AIM

The aim of this brief is to highlight manpower development efforts and capacity-building initiatives at the RMACTS.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF RMAC TRAINING SCHOOL

In pursuit of manpower development for RMAC operations, interim training commenced in 2012 at the Communication and Information Technology School, NNS QUORRA. Between 2012 and 2017, more than 500 personnel—comprising Nigerian Navy officers, NIMASA staff, NLNG security, and officers from ECOWAS Zone E nations such as Togo and the Republic of Benin—received training. This early success reinforced Nigeria's leadership role in regional MDA training,

The Intermediate RMAC training is an 8-week course for personnel who have completed the Basic training and accrued at least one month of watchkeeping experience.

eventually leading to the formal establishment of the RMACTS in 2019, which now serves as a central hub for RMAC personnel development in West Africa.

**MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES**

Manpower development is central to enhancing the Nigerian Navy's strategic and operational capacity. The Directorate of Maritime Domain Awareness (DMDA) spearheads initiatives to ensure personnel are skilled in the operation and maintenance of sophisticated MDA systems. Key components include:

a. Technical Training and Capacity Building. The DMDA organises specialised training in system operation, threat identification, tower climbing, and both corrective and preventive maintenance. These trainings are delivered through Nigerian Navy MDA training schools, which are the RMACTS and the Falcon Eye Tactical Training Centre (FETTC), in partnership with foreign naval allies and organisations.
b. Strategic Partnerships and International Collaboration. Through cooperation with the US, UK, and Israel, NN personnel have received advanced MDA training abroad. These partnerships enhance interoperability and exposure to global best practices.
c. Development of Indigenous Expertise. The DMDA invests in nurturing subject matter experts (SMEs) in vessel surveillance technique/maritime intelligence and data analytics, reducing complete dependence on foreign technical support and promoting local content.

**ORGANIZATION OF RMAC TRAINING SCHOOL**

RMACTS is structured into two major divisions:
a. Academic Section. Headed by the Chief Instructor, this section handles curriculum delivery and

academic supervision.

b. Administrative Section. Provides logistical and institutional support.

The Commandant oversees both arms and reports directly to the Director of MDA at Naval Headquarters.

## TRAINING PROGRAMMES

RMACTS offers four core training courses:

a. Basic RMAC Course. The basic RMAC training is a 4-week course for officers and ratings who meet entry requirements. Graduates receive an Officer of the Watch (OOW) Certificate or Bridge Watch Certificate. Both categories of graduates have to work under supervision.

b. Intermediate RMAC Course The Intermediate RMAC training is an 8-week course for personnel who have completed the Basic training and accrued at least one month of watchkeeping experience. Graduates are qualified to operate independently—officers may serve as Centre 2ICs, while ratings are eligible to keep independent watch.

c. Train-the-Trainer Course. The Train – the trainer is also an 8-week course, designed for personnel with at least 18 months of operational experience after intermediate training. Graduates are qualified to serve as OICs (Officers) or Watch Supervisors (Ratings).

d. Instructors' Basic Training. The instructors' basic training course is a 2-week course for intermediate-level graduates and above designed to equip them with instructional techniques required for teaching within the school.

## SPECIALIZED TRAINING CLASSES

Training is further delivered across three specialised streams:

a. Maintenance Class. The maintenance class focuses on the maintenance (corrective) and servicing of RMAC equipment and sensors.

b. Operators Class. The operator's class trains personnel in the use of RMAC systems for intelligence generation and maritime surveillance.

c. Climber/Rigger Class. The Climbers class equips personnel with the skills to safely climb towers, perform preventive maintenance, and install/remove/dismantle sensors from a tower.

Nigeria was selected to host the regional centre in recognition of its notable achievements in MDA capacity building. At inception, the Nigerian Navy (NN) received support from US RMAC trainers. Prior to the school's establishment, the NN had independently trained approximately 345 personnel. Since its establishment, the RMACTS has conducted about 14 in-house training sessions, benefiting approximately 332 personnel between 2019 and the present. A summary of these trainings is outlined below:

| Serial | Postion | Number Trained | Remarks |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | B | C | D |
| 1. | Officer in Charge | 50 | |
| 2. | Second in Command (2ic) | 33 | |
| 3. | System Manager | 28 | |
| 4. | Watch Supervisors | 50 | |
| 5. | watch Operator | 171 | |
| | Total | 332 | |

| Serial | cOURSE | Number Trained | Remarks |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | B | C | D |
| 1. | Basic | 332 | |
| 2. | Intermediate | 327 | |
| 3. | (STC AWAARENESS) | 223 | STC |
| 4. | RMAC/MDA Awareness training for maritime stakeholder | 29 | NIMASA |

## ACHIEVEMENTS

The school has recorded notable achievements since its commissioning, including:

a. Training Delivery. A total of 332 personnel have been trained since the facility became operational. This includes NN personnel and NIMASA regional maritime rescue coordination personnel.

b. Development of Training Aids. The school has created indigenous instructional aids locally, which have improved knowledge retention.

c. Manual and Curriculum Review. Training manuals and curricula have been updated to reflect current RMAC operational requirements in line with best global practices.

d. Maintenance Support. The school provides remote training to OICs facing technical challenges and recently supported the reactivation of downed centres. It also maintains a dedicated maintenance team that offers technical assistance across RMAC centres nationwide.

Since its establishment, the RMACTS has conducted about 14 in-house training sessions, benefiting approximately 332 personnel between 2019 and the present.

**CHALLENGES**

Despite its progress, the RMAC Training School continues to face several operational constraints:

a. Inadequate Utility Vehicle. As a regional training facility responsible for servicing GoG partner nations and local NN centres, the lack of a utility vehicle hinders student transport, logistics, and maintenance missions. A utility bus will be needed.
b. Lack of Student Accommodation. The school relies on NNS QUORRA for accommodation. During peak training cycles at NNS QUORRA, securing lodging for RMAC trainees becomes difficult. Dedicated accommodation for Under-Training Officers (UTOs) is essential.
c. Need for Solar Power. The school depends on PHCN, a 100KVA generator, and an inverter. Solar panels are required to supplement power and reduce dependence on fuel-powered generators.
d. Specialist Training for Instructors. To enhance instructional quality, RMAC instructors need specialist certification. Discussions have begun with CISCO Nigeria and Dell Nigeria to support instructor training, equipment repairs, and local sourcing of spare parts.

**CONCLUSION**

The RMACTS has evolved from an ad hoc training solution into a strategic institution that builds the Nigerian Navy's MDA capability. By producing personnel capable of managing RMAC operations, the school supports the Navy's broader objective of ensuring maritime security in Nigeria and the GoG. Sustained investment in manpower development, technology, and inter-agency collaboration is essential to safeguard national and regional waters. The success of naval operations will remain closely linked to the strength and depth of training received at institutions like RMACTS.

# EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE & THE SIX STYLES OF LEADERSHIP:

## CRAFTING EFFECTIVE COMMAND IN THE NIGERIAN NAVY

**Lt Cdr OA Salauddeen**

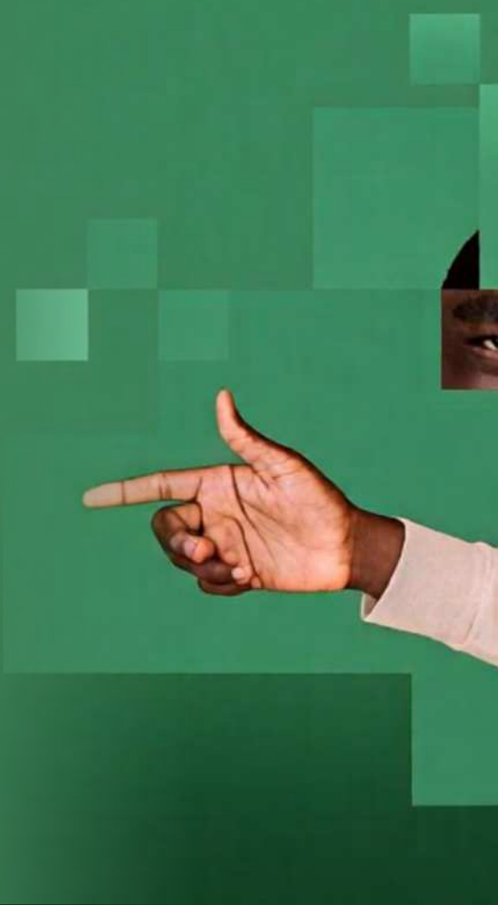
In the evolving dynamics of military leadership, technical expertise and tactical precision alone are no longer sufficient. A modern naval leader must also demonstrate emotional intelligence, which is an essential quality that underpins sound judgement, cohesive teamwork, and mission success. Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the capacity to recognise, understand and manage one's own emotions while effectively navigating the emotions of others.

Leadership in today's Nigerian Navy (NN) is not defined solely by rank, authority, or years of service. It is increasingly measured by how well an officer or a rating can understand and manage people through their motivations, fears, morale, and teamwork. This human-centered approach is where EI plays a central role. In an age of asymmetric threats, joint operations and complex maritime security challenges, EI is no longer a "nice-to-have" but a mission-critical.

What Is EI?

EI, popularized by psychologist Daniel Goleman refers to the ability to recognize and manage one's emotions and those of others. He identifies five key components of EI which are highlighted below:

a. Self-awareness – Knowing your own emotions, triggers, and values.
b. Self-regulation – Managing emotions in healthy ways, controlling impulses, and staying calm under stress.
c. Motivation – Being driven to achieve for the sake of excellence and service.
d. Empathy – Understanding others' emotions and responding appropriately.
e. Social Skills – Building relationships, managing conflict and inspiring others.



In naval settings, from the bridge of a ship to an amphibious operation EI helps leaders build trust, foster morale and enhance operational performance. Considering the following 2 sceneries:

a. Consider a Commanding Officer (CO) of a patrol vessel deployed in anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Guinea. The success of the mission hinges not only on tactical execution but also on maintaining crew morale over long weeks at sea. A CO who notices rising fatigue, acknowledges crew frustrations and finds creative ways to motivate the team demonstrates high EI and likely commands greater loyalty and effectiveness.
b. Similarly, at a shore establishment like the Naval Doctrine Command or NAVTRAC, instructors with EI and strong communication skills can better guide young officers through demanding training cycles, helping to shape the future leadership of the NN.

**THE SIX LEADERSHIP STYLES: A FLEXIBLE ARSENAL**

Goleman's research further identifies six distinct leadership styles based on EI. Each is effective in different scenarios and the best leaders know how and when to switch between them, exploring these styles with following examples:

The Coercive Style – Do what I tell you.

When to use: During crises, combat scenarios, or when quick action is vital.

Example: A senior officer giving strict orders during a hostile boarding operation or an emergency flood response aboard a ship.

Risk: Overuse can lead to fear, resentment, and low morale.

**The Authoritative Style – Come with me.**

When to use: To set a new vision, align the team or lead through change.

Example: A Fleet Commander rallying units to embrace the CNS Strategic Directive for improved maritime operations.

Benefit: Builds clarity and enthusiasm for long-term goals.

**The Affiliative Style – People come first.**

When to use: To heal rifts or motivate in stressful periods.

Example: A Base Commander spending time with ratings after a high-stress deployment, emphasizing camaraderie and welfare.

Impact: Creates harmony and emotional bonds but may overlook poor performance if used excessively.

**The Democratic Style – What do you think?**

When to use: To build consensus or draw on team expertise.

Example: A Planning Officer at Naval Headquarters involving subordinate officers in crafting a new training doctrine for r i verine operations.

**Strength: Encourages innovation and buy-in.**

e. The Pacesetting Style – Do as I do, now.

When to use: When the team is highly competent and motivated.

Example: A technical officer on a maintenance team who sets high standards by personally mastering new shipboard systems.
Warning: May cause burnout if not balanced with support and feedback.

**The Coaching Style – Try this.**

When to use: To develop individuals' long-term strengths.

Example: A senior officer mentoring junior lieutenants during their first command assignments, offering guidance, feedback, and encouragement.

Outcome: Builds capability and loyalty, though it takes time and patience.

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND NAVAL CULTURE

The Nigerian Navy is a hierarchical organization by design. However, the best naval units operate more like well-coordinated families than rigid bureaucracies. A leader with EI knows how to uphold standards without crushing morale, enforce discipline without instilling fear and reward performance without favoritism.

Imagine a Divisional Officer at a naval base who takes the time to understand why a rating's pe rformance has declined, only to find out about a family crisis. Rather than reacting with anger or punishment, the officer engages compassionately, offers support, and develops a recovery plan. This blend of empathy and accountability is what EI looks like in uniform.

As the Nigerian Navy modernizes its platforms, expands its regional footprint, and engages in complex joint operations, emotionally intelligent leadership will be indispensable. From seamen to admirals, those who lead with both their minds and hearts will be the ones who inspire excellence, loyalty, and mission success.

In the words of Sun Tzu, “A leader leads by example, not by force.” In today's Navy, that example must include EI because the toughest battles are not always fought at sea, but within the hearts and minds of those we lead.

# DISCIPLINE THROUGH DUE PROCESS:

## THE ROLE OF THE COURT MARTIAL IN UPHOLDING MORALE

**Lt JJ Dauda**

Discipline is the cornerstone of every effective military organisation, which distinguishes the Armed Forces from civilian society. The Armed Forces' obedience to lawful orders, cohesion in operations, and shared sense of responsibility are non-negotiable. In the Nigerian Navy, discipline is not merely an aspiration; it is a command imperative that ensures operational effectiveness, institutional integrity, and national security.

The Nigerian Navy, in ensuring that its standards are in line with international best practices, highly discourages the arbitrary enforcement of discipline, which resonates in the spirit of the naval justice system – all trials must conform with the established legal framework that guarantees due process and fairness for all service personnel. The court martial, a judicial body established under the Armed Forces Act, plays this pivotal role in upholding justice, accountability, and discipline.

**Discipline: A Military Context**

Discipline as the bedrock of the military goes beyond punishment; it embodies adherence to orders, codes of conduct, and the unrelenting pursuit of excellence in service. It also encompasses respect for hierarchy (chain of command), self-restraint, moral courage, and professional competence. The Nigerian Navy's Code of Conduct and Standing Orders articulate the behavioural expectations for all naval personnel.

However, it is difficult for discipline to thrive where enforcement is inconsistent or legally flawed. As such, arbitrary actions, misuse of discretionary powers, or disregard for legal procedure can erode morale and create an atmosphere of fear and injustice. This could negatively impact morale and cohesion. Hence, the legal system within the Navy—anchored on the Armed Forces Act—ensures that discipline is administered within the guarded framework of legal certainty and judicial

fairness. Much akin to all other aspects of the military service, it is not left to whims and chance but exercised in accordance with laid-down principles of natural justice and fairness.

### Legal Foundation of the Court Martial System

The Armed Forces Act (Cap A20, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004) provides the constitutional and legal framework for the establishment and operation of courts martial in the Nigerian Armed Forces. The court martial is empowered to try erring personnel for military (service) offences contained under the AFA, ranging from insubordination, theft, and absence without leave (AWOL) to more serious crimes like mutiny and sabotage, etc., and civil offences contained in any other act enacted by the National Assembly.

There are two primary types of courts-martial in the Nigerian Navy:

1. General Court Martial (GCM): Convened for serious offences and composed of a minimum of five members, including a president and a judge advocate.
2. Special Court Martial (SCM): Used for less serious offences and composed of three members.

Each court is required to observe principles of natural justice and procedural fairness. These include the right to be informed of the charge, the right to counsel, the right to call witnesses, and the right to a fair hearing.

### Due Process in Military Justice

Due process is the legal requirement that the state must respect all legal rights owed to a person. In the context of military justice, this means ensuring that an accused service member is treated fairly, that proceedings are transparent, and that verdicts are grounded on evidence and legal reasoning.

In practice, due process includes:- Proper investigation and documentation of offences.- Timely notification of charges.- Access to legal representation.- Open and impartial trial by court martial.- Availability of appellate review.

By adhering to these standards, the court-martial system not only protects the rights of the accused personnel but also affirms the fairness of the process and legitimacy of its outcomes. This is particularly important in a command-driven institution like the Navy, where unlawful punishment is capable of impacting negatively on trust and morale, which could undermine the tenets of discipline and loyalty. Thus, where justice is properly wielded and dispensed, it could greatly reinforce trust and discipline and improve morale, which are crucial elements in achieving cohesion and a motivated fighting force.

### The Court Martial as a Tool for Maintaining Naval Integrity and Morale

The Nigerian Navy's commitment to integrity is reflected in how it holds its personnel accountable through lawful means. The court-martial process provides a platform where allegations of misconduct are examined thoroughly, and verdicts are reached without fear or favour.

Where a serviceperson is alleged to have committed an offence, the Commanding Officer is to investigate the allegation and confirm not only that an offence has been committed but also that it was committed by the accused personnel. Thereafter, a court martial is convened where it is established that the matter could not be dispensed by administrative procedure or summary trial. Thus, the prosecution at trial impartially presents its case, being guided by solid investigation and witness testimony, and prosecutes the matter to its logical conclusion. Importantly, the accused is afforded all constitutional rights and facilities in defence of its case. Additionally, a trial follows due process from charge framing to judgement. The message always stands clear: the Navy does not tolerate indiscipline, but it will ensure the standards of discipline and competence are lawfully maintained.

It is pertinent for commanders to note that trials have a ripple effect. They reassure the wider force that misconduct will be punished, but only within the bounds of justice. They also reinforce the public's trust in the Navy as a disciplined, professional, and accountable institution.

### The Judge Advocate – Custodian of Legal Integrity at Trial

The Judge Advocate plays a vital role in the court martial process. As a legal advisor to the court, the judge advocate ensures that proceedings adhere to constitutional safeguards, the rules of evidence and procedure, and substantive law. They guide the president and members on matters of law.The presence of an effective judge advocate has often been the difference between a valid conviction and a retrial. Their independence and professionalism safeguard the integrity of military justice and affirm the Navy's commitment to the rule of law.

### Post-Trial Review and Appeals

The conclusion of a court martial does not end the legal process. Post-trial review is a critical phase where the reviewing authority examines the legality, fairness, and appropriateness of the court's decision. The findings and sentence of a court martial are subject to confirmation by the higher reviewing authority.

Additionally, the accused has the right to appeal to the Court of Appeal, which provides further judicial oversight. This layered review structure ensures that the court martial does not become an instrument of oppression but remains a tool of justice.

### Modern Challenges and Reform Opportunities

Despite its strengths and the novel establishment of standing courts martial in major naval commands, the court martial system in the Nigerian Navy still faces challenges such as logistical constraints and limited awareness of legal rights among personnel.To address these issues, the following reforms are suggested:- Improved funding for legal support services.- Enhanced legal education for officers and ratings.- Increased digitisation of trial records and case management.

## CONCLUSION

Discipline through due process is not a contradiction; it is a necessity. The court martial system, when properly implemented, reinforces the very core values that the Nigerian Navy stands for—professionalism, integrity and teamwork. It assures every sailor that justice will be done and that while the Navy demands the highest standards of conduct, it also guarantees the fairest system of accountability.

As we sail into increasingly complex security challenges, the credibility of our internal justice mechanisms will determine how well we maintain discipline. A coherent grasp of the mechanism of military justice – court martial by a commanding officer – and its impartial deployment could reinforce the attainable standards of military discipline within the service. The court martial remains one of the military's most potent tools in ensuring that discipline is administered with both firmness and fairness—upholding not just the letter of the law, but the spirit of the Navy.

# COURAGE IN SERVICE

**Lt UH Nnadozie**

The difference between success and failure in any situation most often comes down to the ability of key individuals to move the needle at the critical moment. This requires courage in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds. Courage is often imagined as bold, dramatic acts in moments of crisis. However, in the realm of service, such as in the military, healthcare, education, emergency response, or community support, courage often takes a quieter form.

Courage in military service is often associated with acts of valor under fire, running into danger to protect their comrades. Courage is found in the daily decision to show up, to care, and to act with integrity especially even when the cost is high.

In the field, courage manifests in many forms. There is the physical courage required in soldiers to move forward under fire or run into danger to extract the wounded. There is also emotional and moral courage, which arguably is harder to imbibe. This is the courage to lead under pressure, to make life-altering decisions, to hold fast to one's values in complex and morally ambiguous situations. This form of courage also entails standing by your orders even when things go wrong, standing on what is right in defense of your subordinate. Also, accepting responsibility not just for success, but for setbacks, showing true leadership through accountability and integrity.

This article will be focused on moral courage which sadly is often overshadowed by the more visible and celebrated acts of physical bravery. While physical courage earns medals and recognition, moral courage frequently operates in silence, uncelebrated and sometimes even punished. It is the kind of courage that requires a deep sense of personal conviction, the willingness to risk one's career or even relationships in defense of what is right. Moral courage compels a leader to speak the truth when silence is more convenient, to protect the rights and dignity of others even when doing so invites criticism or consequences. In military service, it may mean questioning unethical orders, advocating for the welfare of subordinates, or reporting misconduct despite the risks to one's career. Unlike the fleeting glory of physical bravery, moral courage is the bedrock of trust, respect, and honor in any organization.

## MORAL COURAGE IN MILITARY LEADERSHIP

Moral courage is indispensable in leadership, especially in high-stakes environments like the military. Military leaders are often confronted with situations that test their principles and moral resolve. There are times when doing what is right may conflict with what is popular, convenient or expected. A morally courageous military leader sets the standard by making ethical choices, even when those choices are difficult. They do not shift blame or seek scapegoats in times of failure. Instead, they take ownership of their decisions, defend the truth, and protect their subordinates.

Such leadership fosters trust, not just between commanders and their subordinates, but across the entire chain of command. Troops are more willing to follow leaders who demonstrate unwavering integrity and fairness, knowing that these leaders will stand with them in both success and adversity. Moral courage, therefore, becomes a critical force multiplier and also reinforces discipline, builds cohesion, and inspires loyalty.

CHALLENGES TO MORAL COURAGE

Exercising moral courage is rarely easy and often involves going against the norm. Standing up to a superior officer for what is right, resisting group thinking, or exposing uncomfortable truths. The personal and professional risks of exhibiting moral courage could include; isolation, career setbacks or reputational damage. In some cases, individuals who speak out are labeled as disloyal or disruptive, even when their concerns are valid and necessary for institutional improvement.

There are also the internal challenges to moral courage. Some of these internal challenges include; doubts, fear of reprisal and the weight of potential consequences can paralyze even those with strong convictions. This is why moral courage must be cultivated and reinforced at all levels through training, mentorship, and a culture that values ethical decision making as much as tactical or strategic success.

## CULTIVATING MORAL COURAGE

Moral courage can be developed and strengthened through deliberate practice like any other virtue. Here are a few key ways to nurture it:

a. Self-Reflection. Self-reflection entails regularly examination of your values and beliefs. Knowing what you stand for and why.
b. Practice Empathy. Empathy enables you to understand the perspectives of others. Moral courage often involves standing up for those who cannot speak for themselves.
c. Take Small Steps. Small steps could begin with speaking up in situations where you feel safe, then gradually take on more challenging stands.
d. Find Support. Surround yourself with a support system of people who share your values and will encourage you to stay true to your principles.
e. Accept Discomfort. Growth and courage require a willingness to endure discomfort and uncertainty.

## CONCLUSION

In the profession of arms, courage will always be essential. But while physical courage may win the day, it is moral courage that shapes the future. Moral courage is the quiet strength behind every just cause, every ethical decision, and every honest word spoken in adversity. It is not the absence of fear but the determination to do what is right despite it. In a world that often rewards conformity and silence, moral courage is a radical act of integrity. Moral courage is not marked by medals or parades. It is often quiet, invisible, and deeply personal yet it is the foundation of honorable service and principled leadership. In the military, where decisions can carry life-and-death consequences, moral courage ensures that actions are grounded in integrity and accountability. It gives voice to truth, safeguards dignity, and upholds the values that define the profession of arms. In a world where ethical lines are increasingly blurred, moral courage in service is not just a virtue it is a necessity.

## WINNING-IN AND OUT OF OFFICERS

4 APRIL 25

COMMANDER'S VISIT TO HYDRO ONE, APAPA

8 APRIL 25

RMAC
GRADUATION
CEREMONY
11 APRIL 25

COMMANDER'S VISIT TO LAGOS STATE SECURITY TRUST FUND

9 APRIL 25

# HEALTHY DIETS: AN UNDERMINED FACTOR IN GENERAL WELLBEING

**Surg Capt**
**UI Okeke**

There is an adage that says, "You are what you eat." This is true in all ramifications, especially in an environment that is very demanding like the Nigerian Navy, where duty calls at both day and night.

One vital factor that often gets overlooked is healthy diet. We prioritize training, fitness, and mental resilience, yet neglect the fuel that powers it all – the food we choose. This article aims to shed more light on the power of healthy eating and its profound impact on our overall wellbeing.

The foods and drinks that we consume have an underestimated influence on our energy levels, illness resistance, and both physical and cognitive capacities. Without a healthy diet, we face heightened risks of fatigue, distraction, pathogens, and slower healing. Imagine a ship fueled with bad bunker, struggling to navigate through rough waters. That is what happens when we nourish our bodies with unhealthy choices. Maintaining a healthy diet is crucial for our personnel as it helps mitigate risks such as fatigue, distraction, susceptibility to pathogens, and slower healing. When our diet consists mostly of processed foods, sugary drinks and unhealthy fats, it becomes an enemy that drains our stamina, mental clarity and overall resilience.

The impacts of making the wrong diet choices are extensive. Fatigue and reduced alertness cloud our judgment, putting mission effectiveness in jeopardy. We become more vulnerable to injuries due to compromised health and a weakened immune system. Chronic illnesses like obesity, heart disease and diabetes become looming threats that affect wellbeing while burdening our healthcare system

Understanding the fundamentals of a healthy diet is knowledge for every personnel. Diets rich in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean proteins and healthy fats, provide sources of energy. A rounded and nutritious diet also strengthens the personnel

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response, enhances cognitive function, improves mental health and accelerates cellular repair – all vital factors when facing combat injuries. Ensuring hydration with water and electrolyte sources also contributes to better circulation and neurological function. A balanced diet provides the full spectrum of essential macro and micronutrients required for the body and mind to function optimally, including healthy carbohydrates like brown rice, yam and plantain for energy, lean protein like fish, chicken and eggs for tissue building and repair, beneficial fats like avocado and palm oil for hormone and cell regulation, vitamins and minerals found abundantly in greens, oranges and tomatoes for enzymatic reactions and electrolyte balance, fiber from oats, beans and vegetables for digestive health, and adequate hydration for cellular homeostasis.

Emphasizing wholesome Nigerian foods like Eba, Jollof Rice, stews, soups, roasted fish and meat, beans, nuts, seeds, fruits and green leafy vegetables supplies this nutritional diversity that fuels optimal wellbeing.

Consuming a nutritious, well-rounded diet of these foods serves as a vital pillar supporting health, while reducing risks of chronic disease - enabling peak performance physically and mentally in demanding environments like military settings.

Embarking on a journey towards a diet does not require drastic transformations. Small steps that are sustainable can make a difference. Planning meals and snacks ahead ensures we always have healthy options readily available. Choosing grains over processed alternatives provides energy along, with essential nutrients. It is important to prioritize the consumption of fruits and vegetables as they provide us with vitamins, minerals and fiber that contribute to our health. Additionally, it is beneficial to read food labels and be aware of what we're consuming in order to make the right choices about what goes into our bodies. Opting for foods that are lower in added sugar, sodium and unhealthy fats can further support the wellbeing of both our bodies and minds. It is, therefore, imperative that the importance of healthy diets be elevated in the consciousness of the naval community. Through education and accessible healthy eating options, we can foster an environment where making nutritious choices becomes second nature, supporting the well-being of our personnel and, by extension, the operational readiness of the Nigerian Navy.

In conclusion, while the hustle of daily life often leads to dietary shortcuts, we must not underestimate the power of a healthy diet. It is a vital, yet often neglected aspect of our well-being, one that deserves more attention and respect, particularly in the disciplined forces where the stakes are high, and the margins for error are low. Let us embrace the full spectrum of benefits that come from mindful eating and recognize that every meal is an opportunity to nourish not just our bodies but our minds and spirits as well.

# IMPORTANCE OF REGULAR EXERCISE



By SLt Joseph

Regular exercise is crucial for maintaining overall health and well-being. Here are some key benefits:

**Physical Health Benefits**

**Boosts Heart Health:** Regular exercise strengthens the heart, lowers blood pressure, and reduces the risk of heart disease and stroke. Aerobic exercises like walking, running, cycling, or swimming can improve cardiovascular health by up to 30%.

**Strengthens Muscles and Bones:** Weight-bearing exercises like weightlifting, squats, and lunges help maintain strong muscles and bones, reducing the risk of osteoporosis and fractures.

**Improves Weight Management:** Exercise burns calories, builds muscle, and boosts metabolism, helping with weight loss and maintenance.

**Enhances Immune System Function:** Regular physical activity strengthens the immune system, making the body more resilient to infections and diseases.

Mental Health Benefits

**Reduces Stress and Anxiety:** Exercise lowers cortisol levels, relaxes muscles, and promotes the release of endorphins, which help reduce stress and improve overall well-being.

**Improves Mood:** Regular physical activity boosts endorphin levels, promoting feelings of happiness and relaxation, and can reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety.

**Enhances Cognitive Function:** Exercise improves brain function, memory, and concentration, reducing the risk of cognitive decline.

**Additional Benefits**

**Improves Sleep Quality:** Regular exercise regulates sleep patterns, making it easier to fall asleep and stay asleep longer.

**Increases Energy Levels:** Physical activity enhances blood circulation, delivering oxygen and nutrients to the body's tissues, making you feel more energetic throughout the day.

**Promotes Longevity:** Studies show that regular exercise can reduce the risk of premature death, increase life expectancy, and improve overall quality of life.

# STEEL BODY STEEL MIND:

## BOXING AS A MENTAL WEAPON IN UNIFORM

**Sub-Lt H.D. Wakili**

**There's something about boxing that speaks directly to the soul of a serviceman. Maybe it's the discipline. Maybe it's the grit. Or maybe it's the fact that when the bell rings, it's just you, your training, and your will to survive—no excuses, no shortcuts. In many ways, life in the Navy is no different.**

Boxing, often called "the sweet science," is more than just throwing punches. It's about timing, strategy, endurance, and above all, mental strength. The same qualities that define a good boxer—focus, resilience under pressure, and the ability to adapt quickly—are the very traits that define a good sailor.

At NNS BEECROFT, we understand the importance of physical fitness, but we're also beginning to see the deeper values that sports like boxing bring to the table. In the ring, your ego is tested. You learn to respect your opponent—not because he's stronger, but because he forces you to become better. That humility translates into leadership, patience, and respect in the chain of command.

Boxing also teaches you to stay calm in chaos. When punches are flying, panic is your enemy. The same principle applies in naval operations—when the situation heats up, staying composed is half the victory. Every sailor who's stood watch during a critical moment knows that feeling.

There's also the beauty of accountability in boxing. You can't blame the weather, the gear, or your opponent's lucky jab. It's just you. You either trained enough—or you didn't. And that honesty is refreshing in a world full of distractions and shortcuts.

Here at BEECROFT, our growing interest in boxing isn't just about competition. It's about building warriors with character, men and women who can take a hit and keep moving forward—both in and out of uniform. When officers and ratings lace up gloves together; rank disappears. It becomes a test of will, a silent language of respect and challenge.

As we look to strengthen the physical and mental fitness of our personnel, let's give boxing the spotlight it deserves. Not because it looks good in a gym, but because it forges something deeper—a fighting spirit that no storm can shake.

In the end, whether you're standing in the ring or manning your post at sea, the principles are the same: protect yourself, trust your training, stay alert, and never back down.

# BENEATH THE UNIFORM: UNDERSTANDING POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER IN THE MILITARY

**Lt MK Olaoye**

Military service demands extraordinary courage, discipline, and endurance. Yet beneath the hardened exteriors of service members lies a silent burden many carry long after their missions end—Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). PTSD is a psychological condition triggered by exposure to life-threatening or traumatic events.

For military personnel, such events often occur in combat zones, during counter-terrorism operations, or even while responding to humanitarian crises. The effects are not just mental; PTSD influences operational readiness, social interactions, and long-term well-being. Unseen and often unspoken, it erodes confidence, disrupts sleep, and makes reintegration into normal life an ongoing struggle.

Among all branches, naval personnel face a unique form of psychological stress. Long sea deployments, isolation from family, exposure to piracy or maritime terrorism, and constant operational tempo compound the risks. The enclosed environment of ships—where danger, responsibility, and monotony coexist—can intensify mental strain. Yet, PTSD in the Navy remains poorly understood, underdiagnosed, and often stigmatised. This article explores the nature of PTSD in the military, highlights its particular relevance to naval service, and recommends strategies to support mental resilience in seagoing personnel.

## PTSD: A SILENT WOUND OF MILITARY SERVICE

PTSD is characterised by flashbacks, intrusive thoughts, emotional numbness, hyper-vigilance, and difficulty sleeping or concentrating. These symptoms can manifest weeks, months, or even years after the triggering event. In combat situations, witnessing death, surviving ambushes, or sustaining injury can traumatisethe brain's stress processing system. For many, the brain never “resets.” The body remains in a fight-or-flight state long after the danger has passed. This leads to exaggerated startle responses, avoidance behaviours, and irritability.

Statistics indicate that 10–20% of military veterans globally experience PTSD. In countries actively involved in regional or international conflicts, the number is often higher. Yet, stigma within the armed forces discourages affected personnel from seeking help. Mental illness is

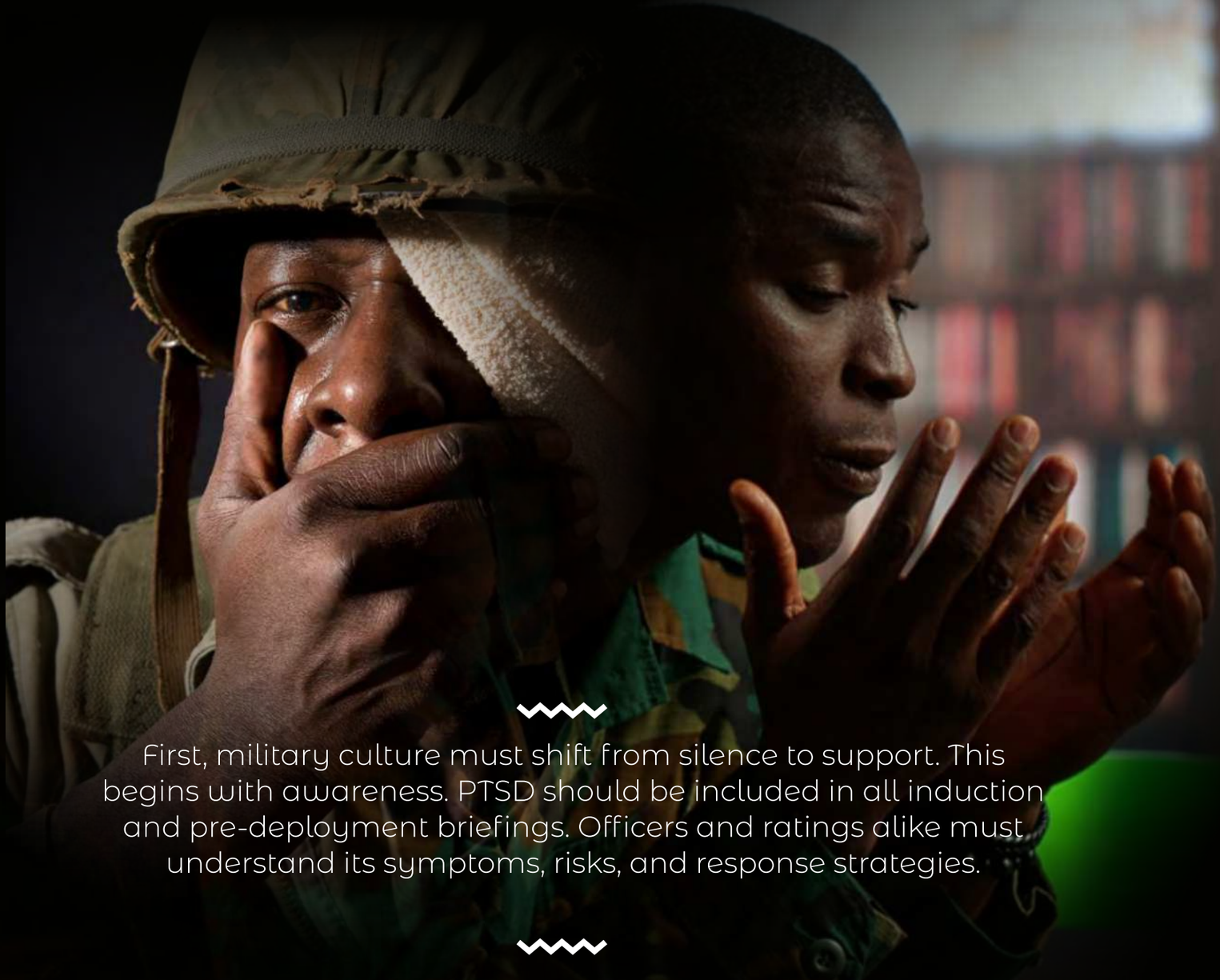
Statistics indicate that 10–20% of military veterans globally experience PTSD. In countries actively involved in regional or international conflicts, the number is often higher.

often perceived as a sign of weakness—contrary to the warrior ethos. This leads to underreporting, delayed treatment, and in some cases, tragic outcomes like substance abuse or suicide. Militaries worldwide are beginning to acknowledge PTSD as a legitimate operational and human issue—but much remains to be done.

**UNIQUE STRESSORS FACED BY NAVAL PERSONNEL**

Naval operations are physically and psychologically demanding. Sailors and officers endure long periods away from home, extended watch-keeping routines, and high-stress scenarios like anti-piracy missions or disaster response. The constant motion of ships, the confined living quarters, and the high stakes of damage control or combat readiness create a background of continuous stress. Events such as man-overboard situations, near-collisions, and onboard accidents can leave lasting psychological scars.

Moreover, naval personnel often experience delayed trauma. Unlike ground troops who may rotate frequently, sailors can remain isolated at sea for weeks. The stress



First, military culture must shift from silence to support. This begins with awareness. PTSD should be included in all induction and pre-deployment briefings. Officers and ratings alike must understand its symptoms, risks, and response strategies.

accumulates silently. When trauma occurs, the lack of immediate support or decompression opportunities worsens its impact. For instance, a naval boarding party encountering violence at sea might return to ship and resume duty within hours—without counselling or downtime. These conditions make PTSDnot just possible, but probable, for sailors exposed to repeated operational strain.

**PTSD CASES IN NAVAL CONTEXT: PATTERNS AND EXAMPLES**

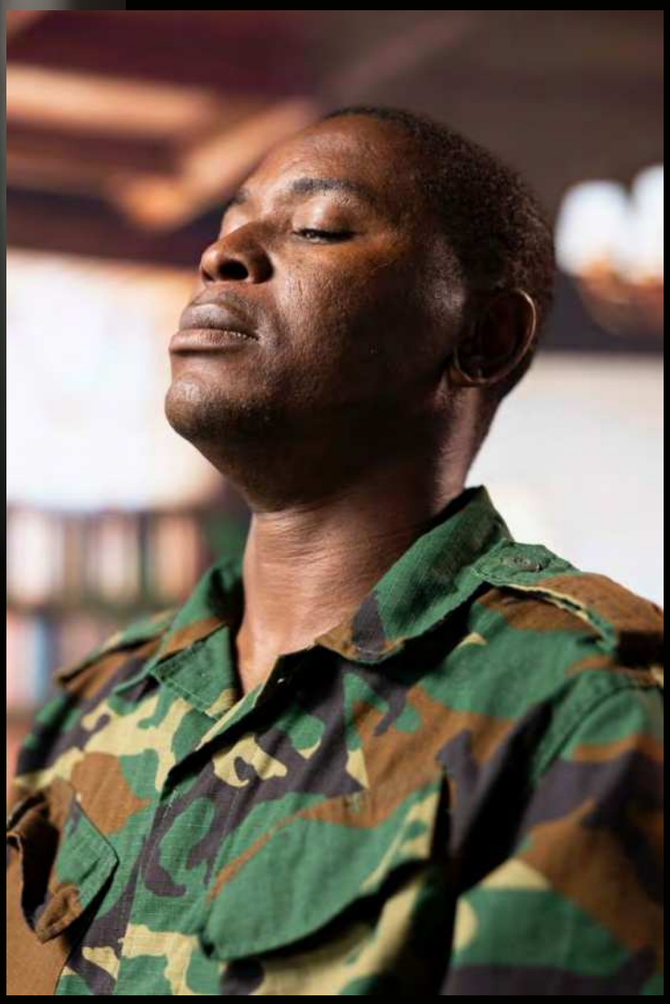
In navies worldwide, PTSD among ship crews often follows certain patterns. Younger personnel are more vulnerable, especially when deployed on high-threat missions without psychological preparedness. Symptoms typically begin subtly: loss of motivation, anxiety during drills, or avoidance of certain duties. Left untreated, these evolve into more severe behaviours—anger outbursts, insubordination, or substance dependence. Many sufferers mask their condition until a crisis forces intervention.

Anecdotal reports from Gulf of Guinea patrols, anti-piracy missions in the Indian Ocean, and humanitarian evacuations in disaster zones reveal common stress triggers. A junior rating who witnessed a drowning during a man-overboard drill may begin reliving the event in nightmares. An officer whose boarding team was ambushed during an illegal bunkering interception might avoid future taskings. Without structured debriefing or therapy, these individuals remain operationally impaired and emotionally vulnerable.

**OPERATIONAL EXPERIENCE**

In 2024, I served onboard a Nigerian Navy ship conducting coastal surveillance off Bonny. During a boarding operation to inspect a suspicious vessel, the team encountered unexpected resistance. Though the situation was contained, one seaman witnessed a violent altercation and sustained minor injuries. Over the next two weeks, he began showing signs of withdrawal—avoiding duty, losing appetite, and becoming irritable during drills. He reported nightmares and chest tightness but insisted he was “fine.”

After a confidential discussion, it became clear he was replaying the incident mentally. With the XO'sapproval, he was referred for psychological



evaluation and given rest. His condition was identified as early-onset PTSD. Intervention helped prevent escalation. This experience reinforced the importance of recognising early warning signs and creating safe reporting environments. PTSD does not only affect the individual—it also weakens the team's cohesion, morale, and overall mission effectiveness.

**WAY FORWARD AND STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS**

First, military culture must shift from silence to support. This begins with awareness. PTSD should be included in all induction and pre-deployment briefings. Officers and ratings alike must understand its symptoms, risks, and response strategies. Navy medical units should be equipped with mental health specialists trained in trauma care. Ship captains must be empowered to initiate psychological assessments without delay and without stigma. Leadership should reinforce that seeking help is a sign of responsibility, not weakness.

Secondly, institutional support must be formalised. The Navy should create a Mental Health Unit within its medical directorate, with clear doctrine, screening procedures, and referral pathways. Routine psychological assessments should follow high-risk operations, such as anti-piracy boardings or SAR missions with fatalities. Collaboration with civilian psychiatric institutions and NGOs will also provide deeper therapeutic options. Peer support programs, where trained personnel serve as first-line listeners, have proven effective in several navies and should be replicated in the NN. The long-term health of our sailors depends on treating the mind as vigilantly as we treat the body.

**CONCLUSION**

PTSD is not a weakness—it is a wound. Like physical injuries, it requires recognition, treatment, and compassion. The modern Navy must evolve to meet the psychological demands of its operations. As missions grow more complex, and threats more unconventional, mental resilience becomes critical to success. PTSD, if ignored, can hollow out the strength of our forces from within. If addressed early and professionally, it can be managed and overcome.

The Nigerian Navy has the opportunity to lead by example in West Africa by institutionalising mental health care. By breaking the silence, investing in psychological support, and redefining resilience, we can protect our most valuable asset—our people. The sea is unforgiving, but so is silence. Our sailors deserve not just medals and missions, but also understanding, healing, and hope.

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# SILENT KILLERS & EVERYDAY POISONS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

**WOSN Okamgba O**

In today's fast-paced world, we are constantly bombarded with advertisements promoting quick fixes for energy, beauty, and health. However, beneath the surface of these enticing ads, many everyday products can be detrimental to our health.

From caffeine-laden energy drinks to harmful chemicals in cookware, it is essential to be mindful of what we consume and use. Here's a breakdown of some common "silent killers" and what you should know about them.

**Stimulants: Energy Drinks and Coffee**

While it's common to reach for a cup of coffee or an energy drink to get through the day, both beverages contain caffeine—a powerful stimulant that can negatively impact your health. Caffeine increases heart rate, raises blood pressure, and can disrupt the heart's natural rhythm, potentially leading to long-term cardiovascular issues.

In addition to caffeine, energy drinks often contain high levels of sugar and other stimulants like guarana, taurine, and L-carnitine. These additives cause a sudden spike in energy, followed by a quick "crash" as blood sugar levels drop. This crash may result in fatigue, irritability, and an increased risk of metabolic problems. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the combination of high caffeine and other stimulants in energy drinks can lead to increased heart rate and blood pressure. Both of these are risk factors for heart disease.

Think of it like upgrading a 1.5 kVA generator to run like a 5 kVA unit using the same engine—the added strain shortens its lifespan. In the same way, consistently pushing your body with stimulant-laden drinks will wear it down over time.

Health risk: Intake of stimulants predisposes you to:

- Hypertension (high blood pressure)
- Heart disease
- Arrhythmias (irregular heart rhythms)
- Anxiety
- Sleep disturbances

Tips: Opt for healthier alternatives like herbal teas, water, or natural juices to hydrate and energize your body without the adverse effects of caffeine and sugar.

**Fluoride:**

Interestingly, fluoride is a key ingredient in rat poison. This same fluoride is commonly found in toothpaste, drinking water, milk, and drugs. This is a gradual means of poisoning

In addition to caffeine, energy drinks often contain high levels of sugar and other stimulants like guarana, taurine, and L-carnitine. These additives cause a sudden spike in energy, followed by a quick "crash" as blood sugar levels drop.

that produces adverse effects on health. A statement by Dr Dean Burke former chief chemist at the U.S. National Cancer institute, states "in point of fact, fluoride causes more human cancer death and causes it faster than any other chemical".

According to Thomas W. Clarkson in Handbook of Pesticide Toxicology, fluoride is toxic to all forms of life. It has been used as an insecticide, rodenticide, and herbicide and as a fungicide for preservation of timber.

Health risks: Studies have shown that fluoride contribute to cancer, particularly bone cancer. It disrupts hormonal levels by promoting low estrogen and testosterone leading to infertility. It also leads to dental fluorosis (a condition that damages teeth).

Tips: It's best to go for fluoride free toothpaste and to always check product label and ingredients to avoid those that contain fluoride.

**Teflon: Non-Stick Cookware**

Teflon-coated cookware, including pots, pans, and air fryers, has become a staple in many kitchens due to its ease of use and non-stick properties. However, the chemicals used in Teflon—specifically polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) pose significant health risks. This chemical can remain in the bloodstream for years, potentially contributing to long-term health issues.

Health risk: Polytetrafluoroethylene has been linked to:
Chronic kidney disease
Liver damage
Thyroid disorders
Low birth weight
Infertility
Cancers

Tips: Choose healthier cookware alternatives such as cast-iron pots, stainless steel and ceramic which are durable and non-toxic.

**Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) Foods**

GMOs, or genetically modified organisms, have become increasingly prevalent in the food industry. While they are engineered to resist pests or improve crop yield, it has long-term health effects.

Health risks: GMOs are linked to:
Cancers
Hypertension (high blood pressure)
Other chronic diseases

Common GMOs: Some of the most common GMO foods include corn and all corn derived products (such as cornflakes, custard, etc), soybeans, and all seedless fruits.

Tips: Choose organic produce when possible, as it is less likely to contain GMOs or harmful pesticides. Pay attention to product labels to avoid GMOs. Also, its best to avoid the common GMOs.

**Pharmaceutical Drugs: A Double-Edged Sword**

While medications can provide relief from pain and illness, all drugs come with side effects - some mild, others severe and even worse than the sickness.

All drugs, including painkillers like paracetamol (acetaminophen), anti-inflammatory drugs, and even common antibiotics, have side effects that can cause long-term damage to the liver, kidneys, and other organs. Some medications may also contribute to the development of other health issues such as ulcers, gastrointestinal problems, or increased risk of infections.

For example, before reaching for paracetamol for a headache, ask yourself:

- Is the headache due to stress or lack of rest?
- Am I sleeping too close to electronic devices or Wi-Fi sources?

If yes, consider natural remedies such as proper rest, hydration, stress management or reducing screen time and keep your devices at least 6 feet away from you while sleeping before resorting to medication. Preventive care, including a balanced diet and exercise, can help reduce reliance on pharmaceuticals and only take medication when necessary.

**Final Thoughts: The Importance of Preventive Care**

In a world filled with harmful substances and quick fixes, it's crucial to take a proactive approach to wellness. While it's impossible to avoid all risks, making informed choices about what we eat, drink, and use in our daily lives can significantly improve our health.

- Focus on prevention: Instead of relying on medications to address symptoms, prioritize preventive measures such as proper nutrition especially inculcating daily intake of organic fruits and vegetables to boost immunity, increase intake of water, regular exercise, stress management, and adequate sleep.

- Be mindful of your environment: Reducing exposure to harmful chemicals in food, water, and household products can reduce your risk of developing serious health conditions over time.

# BUILDING A FIT FORCE:

## ENHANCING EFFICIENCY THROUGH HEALTH, HABIT & PARTNERSHIP

**Capt I Udoessien**

Operational readiness in any naval force begins with the personal readiness of its people. As we seek to secure our maritime environment through partnership, presence, and preparedness, the physical and mental fitness of NN personnel must remain a top priority. Victory at sea is not solely about firepower or fleet size, it is about human endurance, stamina, coordination, and mental acuity. These depend on the overall well-being of our personnel.

With NN's adoption of the Weight Control Policy (NNO 02/19) and fitness benchmarks reflected in annual performance evaluations, maintaining combat-ready personnel is not optional—it is a strategic necessity. This article offers contemporary, evidence-based advice on fitness, nutrition, sleep,

Tools such as body composition scales and digital fitness

monitors now allow units to track individual metrics. However, the key remains discipline: a blend of controlled caloric intake and consistent exercise. Units must regularly monitor BMI and encourage healthy competition to maintain physical standards.

NUTRITION: FUELING THE NAVAL ENGINE

5. Nutrition is not about denial; it's about balance. As maritime professionals, personnel need consistent energy derived not from sugar highs, but from nutrient-dense, calorie-conscious meals. Food planning, mindful eating, portion control, and healthy fats such as omega-3s, are vital. Excess trans fats, late-night meals, and binge-eating must be consciously avoided.

Meal prepping and leveraging calorie-tracking apps can help personnel meet their dietary goals while on base or deployment. Units may also consider employing registered nutritionists, especially in training commands and establishments, to promote optimal feeding standards.

## EXERCISE: TRAINING FOR THE UNEXPECTED

High-Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) and resistance workouts improve both muscle mass and metabolic rate, increasing endurance during operations. Unlike traditional cardio, HIIT workouts simulate real-world, high-demand scenarios—perfectly aligned with the unpredictable nature of naval tasks.

Structured group PT sessions and inter-unit fitness competitions can boost camaraderie and motivation. The focus must be on sustainable fitness culture, not just quarterly tests. Fitness, after all, is not seasonal; it is strategic.

## SLEEP AND RECOVERY: THE INVISIBLE FORCE MULTIPLIER

Sleep is not a luxury—it's a biological necessity. Unfortunately, operational demands often lead to chronic sleep deprivation, affecting alertness, judgment, reaction time, and morale.

Sleep disorders such as insomnia, sleep apnea, and narcolepsy should be diagnosed and treated early. Units can partner with medical professionals to hold regular seminars and introduce “sleep hygiene” protocols in duty rosters.

A well-rested sailor is more alert, less prone to injury, and better prepared for any task—whether on watch, on deck, or in the field.

## MENTAL HEALTH AND STRESS MANAGEMENT: RESILIENCE IS READINESS

The stress of military life is real. While short bursts of stress can improve performance, chronic stress is corrosive—damaging the heart, immune system, and cognition.

Daily mindfulness practices, guided meditations, regular exercise, and meaningful peer support systems can buffer personnel against long-term stress impacts. A stressed force cannot stay focused at sea or collaborate with international partners effectively. Where necessary, referral to behavioral health experts should be normalized and not stigmatized. A healthy and lively messes for all personnel cadre in units is highly encouraged to build the necessary resilience for mental health and stress management.

## LIFESTYLE & LONGEVITY: THE NAVAL WAY

With Nigeria's current life expectancy under 60 years, the disciplined lifestyle of NN personnel should ideally place them far above this statistic. Sadly, lifestyle-related deaths have become more common among service members.

Personnel must avoid excessive alcohol consumption, smoking, sedentarism, drug abuse, and poor dietary habits. Instead, regular movement, religious or health-based fasting, community engagement, and strong family/work relationships enhance both lifespan and service value. Healthy living should be as instinctive to naval personnel as standing watch.

## CONCLUSION: FIT FOR PURPOSE, READY FOR TOMORROW

The security of Nigeria's maritime domain hinges not only on advanced platforms and foreign partnerships but also on the physical and mental readiness of every single officer and rating. A fit force is a force multiplier. Our ability to remain present, to partner effectively, and to respond swiftly depends on the daily health choices we make—what we eat, how we train, how we sleep, and how we handle pressure.

Commanders and unit heads must institutionalize a health-first culture through education, incentivization, and medical partnerships. The sea is unforgiving—and only the prepared will prevail. Let us, therefore, secure the maritime environment by first securing our bodies, minds, and habits.

RAID ON CRIMINALS AND DRUG DEALERS' HIDEOUT

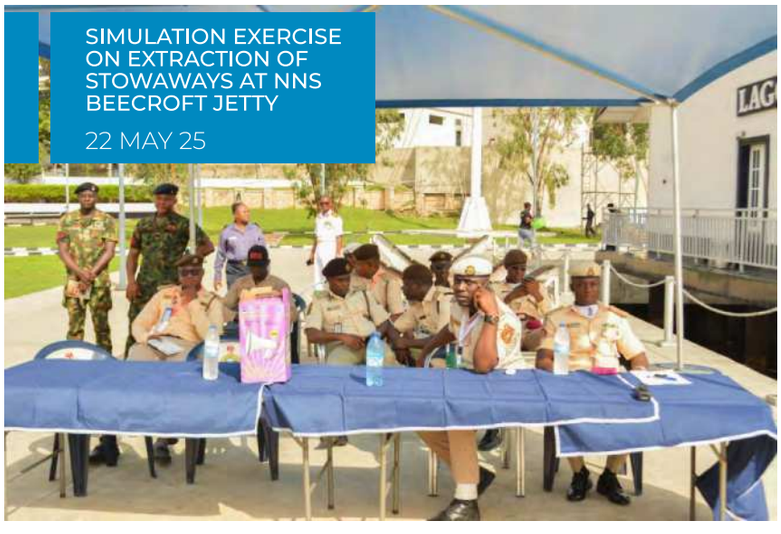
5 MAY 25

## VISIT TO LAGOS STATE COMMISSIONER FOR ENVIRONMENT

17 MAY 25

COMMANDER'S COURTESY VISIT TO CHAIRMAN, APAPA LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL

21 MAY 25



SIMULATION EXERCISE ON EXTRACTION OF STOWAWAYS AT NNS BEECROFT JETTY

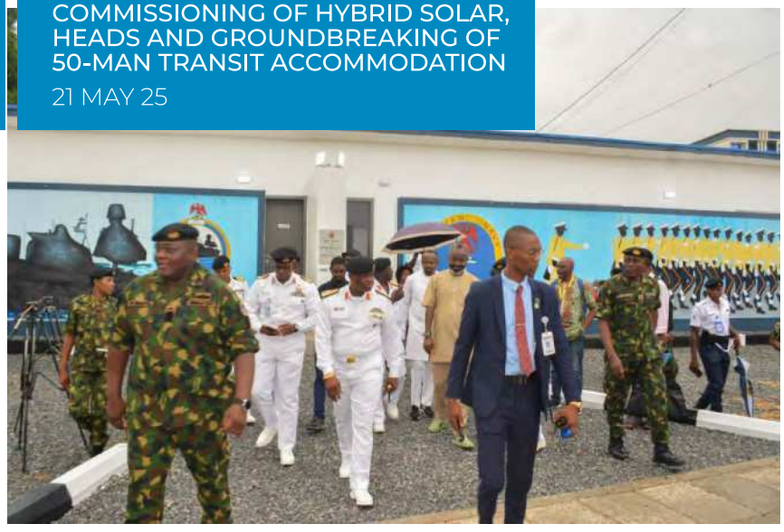
22 MAY 25

WESTERN NAVAL COMMAND
OFFICERS' MESS
LAGOON BAR

WESTERN NAVAL COMMAND
OFFICERS' MESS
LAGOON BAR

## COMMISSIONING OF HYBRID SOLAR, HEADS AND GROUNDBREAKING OF 50-MAN TRANSIT ACCOMMODATION

21 MAY 25



# THE ABUSE OF DRUGS AMONG YOUTHS IN NIGERIA

**Cdr EE Omokhodion**

It is a commonly held belief that the youth are the backbone of any nation's future, the drivers of innovation, and the architects of national development. Hence, governments, communities, and families invest heavily in the education, empowerment, and protection of the youth. However, when these young individuals are neglected or subjected to socio-economic pressures, they may become vulnerable to various social vices

One of the most alarming issues affecting Nigerian youth today is drug abuse. The increasing trend of substance misuse among young Nigerians not only threatens their health and future but also has dire consequences for the nation's stability and development.

2. A drug refers to any chemical substance that affects the body's structure or function. While drugs can be used for medicinal purposes, the term drug abuse refers to the improper or harmful use of these substances for non-medical purposes. The World Health Organization (WHO) prefers terms such as harmful use or hazardous use to capture the gravity of the situation. In Nigeria, both hard drugs (like cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine) and prescription drugs (such as codeine and tramadol) are commonly abused. Many youths also indulge in inhalants like glue, petrol fumes, and paint thinners, as well as locally brewed alcohol. The misuse of these substances leads to both physical and psychological dependence, often with destructive consequences. This brief shall therefore cover the commonly abused substance amongst Nigerian youths, effects of Drug Abuse and Causes of Drugs Abuse amongst Nigerian youths. It will also consider prevention and consequences to family, health and control

**While drugs can be used for medicinal purposes, the term 'drug abuse' refers to the improper or harmful use of these substances for non-medical purposes. The World Health Organization (WHO) prefers terms such as 'harmful use' or 'hazardous use' to capture the gravity of the situation.**

measures.

**AIM**

The aim of this brief is to highlight the abuse of drugs among Nigerian youths.

**COMMONLY ABUSED DRUGS AMONG NIGERIAN YOUTHS**

Some commonly abused drugs among Nigerian youths are:

a. Alcohol – Easily accessible and socially accepted, various forms like "ogogoro," "kai kai," and "burukutu" are commonly consumed.
b. Codeine-based cough syrups – Despite regulatory controls, these are often obtained illegally and consumed to induce a trance-like state.
c. Cannabis (Indian Hemp) – Cultivated in several parts of the country and smoked for its mind-altering effects.
d. Methamphetamine (Crystal Meth) – Increasingly produced in clandestine labs, especially in cities like Lagos.
e. Cocaine & Heroin – Though more expensive, these drugs are gaining popularity among urban youth.
f. Inhalants – Petrol, glue, and even gutter water are used by street youth due to their accessibility and immediate intoxicating effects.
g. Nicotine & Tobacco – Despite awareness campaigns, many youths still pick up smoking at an early age.

**EFFECTS OF DRUG ABUSE**

Drugs have several effects which will be highlighted in the subsequent paragraphs:

**Physical Health Effects**

- Damage to vital organs such as the liver, kidneys, and brain.
- Increased vulnerability to infectious diseases like HIV/AIDS and hepatitis due to needle sharing.
- Respiratory illnesses, cardiovascular problems, and in extreme cases, overdose leading to death.

**Mental Health Effects**

- Depression, anxiety, and psychosis.
- Impaired cognitive functions, poor memory, and decision-making.
- Increased risk of suicidal thoughts and behavior.

**Academic and Social Effects**

- Declining performance and school dropout.
- Disruptive behaviors such as truancy, cultism, and violence.
- Alienation from family and society, leading to a cycle of poverty and criminality.

**Economic and National Consequences**

- Increased healthcare and rehabilitation costs.
- Rise in crime rates and national insecurity.
- Loss of a productive segment of the population, thereby weakening the nation's workforce.

## CAUSES OF DRUG ABUSE AMONG NIGERIAN YOUTHS

Several factors have been observed to contribute to drug abuse as follows:

a. Peer Pressure – Youths often indulge in drugs to fit into social groups or gain acceptance.
b. Curiosity and Experimentation – Adolescents are naturally curious and may try drugs just to experience the "high."
c. Lack of Parental Supervision – Busy or absent parents leave children exposed to harmful influences.
d. Socio-Economic Factors – Poverty, unemployment, and lack of opportunities push many into drug use as a form of escape.
e. Emotional and Psychological Stress – Depression, frustration, and trauma drive youths to seek solace in substances.
f. Media and Advertisement – Glamorized portrayals of drug and alcohol use influence impressionable minds.
g. Easy Availability – Despite legal restrictions, drugs are widely available in kiosks, markets, and on the streets.

## CONSEQUENCES TO THE FAMILY AND SOCIETY

The ripple effects of youth drug abuse are devastating. Families experience emotional and financial strain, sometimes leading to breakdown in relationships. In schools and communities, drug abuse contributes to increased violence, criminal activity, and the spread of disease. At a national level, drug abuse undermines development by draining human capital and fueling insecurity.

## PREVENTION AND CONTROL MEASURES

Addressing drug abuse among Nigerian youth requires a multi-sectoral approach involving families, schools, religious institutions, communities, and the government.

Family-Level Interventions

- Strong parental involvement and supervision.
- Open communication, moral guidance, and emotional support.
- Regular family discussions and shared activities to strengthen bonds.
- Early education on the dangers of drug abuse.

School-Based Programs

- Curriculum inclusion of drug education and life skills.
- Guidance and counselling units to support vulnerable students.
- Regular seminars and workshops on substance abuse.
- Enforcement of strict anti-drug policies within institutions.

Community Engagement

- Awareness campaigns through media, town halls, and religious gatherings.
- Encouragement of youth involvement in sports, arts, and vocational programs.
- Establishment of rehabilitation centers and support

groups.
- Community policing and vigilance against drug peddling and trafficking.

Government and Policy Interventions
- Strengthen the NDLEA and other regulatory agencies.
- Enforce laws against production, sale, and possession of illegal drugs.
- Provide job opportunities and skill acquisition programs for youth.
- Partner with international bodies to combat transnational drug trafficking.

**CONCLUSION**

Drug abuse among youths in Nigeria is a ticking time bomb. It robs the nation of its future leaders and fuels the cycle of poverty, violence, and underdevelopment. The fight against this menace cannot be won by one sector alone; it demands collective responsibility. Parents must be vigilant, educators must be proactive, communities must be engaged, and the government must be decisive. The Nigerian youth must also be empowered to see themselves as change agents, not victims. With sustained efforts, it is possible to reverse the trend and build a healthier, safer, and more prosperous Nigeria.

The ripple effects of youth drug abuse are devastating. Families experience emotional and financial strain, sometimes leading to breakdowns in relationships. In schools and communities, drug abuse contributes to increased violence, criminal activity, and the spread of disease. At a national level, drug abuse undermines development by draining human capital and increasing insecurity.

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# FAMILY ABANDONMENT IN THE NIGERIAN NAVY BARRACKS

Lt Cdr Benson

Family abandonment in Nigeria is a serious social issue with multifaceted causes and severe consequences for the society. Family abandonment refers to the physical or emotional desertion of family members, often leading to feelings of rejection, low self-esteem, and trauma.

It also means one of the parents leaving or neglecting his responsibilities towards his family leading to significant emotional and practical consequences. This is what we see in our barracks. Family abandonment has profound and lasting effects on individuals, families, and society, necessitating a comprehensive understanding and approach to address this complex issue. This presentation will explore the root causes of family abandonment in the Nigerian Navy Barracks, its impact on those affected and potential solutions.

**AIM**

This article aims to explore the complex issue of family abandonment, examining its causes, consequences, and potential solutions, with a specific focus on the Nigerian Navy Barracks. The presentation seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of this social problem and inform strategies for mitigating its impact on individuals, families, and the society at large.

**SCOPE:**

his article will cover the following:

- Causes of family abandonment
- Consequences of family abandonment
- Potential solutions
- Conclusion
- Recommendations

**CAUSES OF FAMILY ABANDONMENT**

Some of the causes of family abandonment are:

a. Infidelity: Infidelity refers to the action of being unfaithful to a partner or spouse.

b. Poverty and Economic Hardship: Poverty and lack of economic opportunities can force families into difficult situations, leading to the abandonment of children or other family members.

c. Cultural and Societal Factors: Certain cultural practices, such as the preference for male children or the stigma surrounding barren women, can contribute to abandonment.

d. Domestic Violence: Physical abuse, can lead to individuals seeking refuge by abandoning their homes and families.

e. Appointment, Draft and longtime Operations: Personnel may be appointed or drafted out to a unit that is very far from where their spouses and children are staying. Also, they may be deployed for an operation that will last for a long period of time. These cause separation and family abandonment.
f. Lack of Sexual Satisfaction in Marriage: Lack of sexual satisfaction in marriage contributes to family abandonment. It creates a cycle of unmet needs, emotional distance and resentment, ultimately leading to a breakdown in the marital relationship and a desire to seek fulfillment elsewhere.

**CONSEQUENCES OF FAMILY ABANDONMENT**

The consequences of family abandonment are:

a. Psychological Trauma: Children who experience abandonment may suffer from emotional distress, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
b. Social and Behavioral Problems: Abandoned individuals may struggle with social interactions, exhibit behavioral problems, and experience difficulties in forming healthy relationships.
c. Educational Disadvantage: Abandoned children may face challenges in accessing education due to lack of support, financial constraints, or emotional difficulties.
d. Increased Risk of Poverty and Vulnerability: Individuals who are abandoned may be more susceptible to poverty, homelessness, and exploitation.

**POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS**

The possible solutions to address family abandonment are:

a. Strengthening Social Welfare Programs: Expanding access to social welfare programs, such as loans, distribution of food items and job training, would help alleviate poverty and reduce the risk of abandonment.
b. Creating Awareness and Education: Creating awareness about the importance of family support, responsible parenting, and the rights of children could help prevent abandonment.
c. Enforcing Child Protection Laws: Strict enforcement of child protection laws and the establishment of child protection agencies can help safeguard abandoned children and hold perpetrators accountable.
d. Community Support and Empowerment: Strengthening community support systems, providing counseling services, and empowering vulnerable individuals can create a more supportive environment.
e. Counseling and Therapy: Providing access to professional counseling and therapy services can help individuals cope with the emotional and psychological consequences of abandonment.
f. Mother Base Concept: The introduction of the mother base concept which involves a five-year posting cycle allowing personnel to remain with their families for a long period of time will help reduce family abandonment.
g. Sexual Satisfaction in Marriage: Sexual relationship in marriage is sacred and a gift from God to be consummated in marriage. (Song of Sol 1:2).

**CONCLUSION**

Family abandonment is a complex issue with far-reaching consequences. By addressing the root causes, promoting awareness, and implementing effective solutions, it is possible to mitigate the impact of abandonment in our barracks.

# ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE ON UNITY & TOGETHERNESS OF NIGERIAN NAVY PERSONNEL IN FULFILLMENT OF THEIR CONSTITUTIONAL ROLE

Cdr BA Shittu Ph.D

In the name of Allah the Most Gracious the Most Merciful. All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all mankind, Jinn and all that exist. May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad, (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) the Chief of all messengers, his family companions and all the righteous ones till the Day of Judgment.

The Nigerian navy (NN) is a unique service like other arms of the Armed Forces. Its personnel come from various socio-cultural and religious backgrounds. Accordingly, the moral, spiritual and the unity of NN personnel is paramount for better efficiency and dedication to work. Considering the slogan of the NN

It is recommended to supplicate for Muslims and those who are not Muslims in order to be guided and protected by Allah. The essence of unity is to bring together people from all walks of life and make them bond through love and respect.

– Onward Together, and its core values – Professionalism, Integrity and Team Work; this article is titled: Unity and Togetherness of NN Personnel in Islamic perspective, for the personnel to effectively fulfil their constitutional roles. This includes fostering a sense of shared purpose, mutual respect and cooperation, even amidst diversity. It is also aim to promote the sense of altruism, togetherness, love and care among the personnel of the NN. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

"O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women. And fear Allah, through whom you ask one another, and the wombs. Indeed Allah is ever watch over you, an Observer". Quite beautifully, this verse includes both Muslims and non-Muslims in

relation to maintaining brotherhood. It is recommended to supplicate for Muslim and those who are not Muslims in order to be guided and protected by Allah. The essence of unity, is to bring together people from all walks of life and make them bond through love and respect. The Prophet Muhammad said: *"Verily, the believers are like a structure, each part strengthening the other," and the Prophet clasped his fingers together." [Bukhari]*

This hadith highlights the importance of supporting one another during times of need willingly and sincerely. It also involves expressing a sense of joy and pleasure when helping one another, seeing it as an honour to be able to fulfill someone else's need. This strengthens bonds between people. Even if you were to help someone less fortunate, in a completely different country, though you may not know the beneficiary in person, they will naturally have some sort of love for you and make du'a ''prayer'' for you for the peace you have brought into their life. Attaining unity is therefore, not restricted. Also, just by viewing the believers as bricks that come together to build a structure, allows us to understand and visualize that so much good can come out of just supporting one another and being aware of each other's conditions.

Unity is key, through creating bonds that involves effort from every individual, just how Allah mentions in the Qur'an, *"And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided. And remember the favour of Allah upon you - when you were enemies and He brought your hearts together and you became, by His favour, brothers." [3:103]*

Our Prophet was a true inspiration in living the above verse. Being in a leadership position, he faced immense criticism to the point that he was pelted with stones, drenched in dirt and dust, and even his life was put in danger many times. Yet, our Prophet (saw) showed nothing but kindness and respect back to his enemies. He used kindness to change the world and create legacies that continue to live with us today. It was his kindness that made one of his worst enemies, 'Umar ibn al-Khatta may Allah be pleased with him, to be one of his closest friends, a khalifa and one of the ten promised paradise. Such is the power of kindness, in which unity can be achieved and love can be spread far and wide.

Unity is also through giving out charity according to the Prophet, peace be upon him. "The parable of the believers in their affection, mercy, and compassion for each other is that of a body. When any limb aches, the whole body reacts with sleeplessness and fever." [Bukhari]

The love that a Muslim harbors in his heart should be so sincere that it makes him give towards those in difficulty. He feels the ache of another person and he reacts in the kindest of ways. This brings forth affection, mercy and compassion naturally towards others. It is vital we spread love to unite in goodness. It is in this difficult period that Allah has commanded us to help those who are in desperate need. It is in these times where we can unite to uplift others and bring good to the world. Through unity, we can make a huge difference and good change.

Through unity, a lot can be achieved. Unity brings people together, creating love, harmony and generosity between them. As believers, we can use unity as a platform to spread kindness to others, as well as an opportunity for our spiritual growth to become closer to Allah. Using the power of Unity to change our lives, Islam calls for what unite us as a nation not division and Allah Says:

a. O mankind, indeed we have created you from male and female and made you people and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.

b. O mankind, indeed the promise of Allah is truth, so let not the worldly life delude you and be not deceived about Allah by the Deceiver.

There is so much we can gain just by uniting in good. Our Prophet was a man of unity. He ensured that he spread love and kindness wherever he went, and just through these actions, he attracted millions of people to join the religion of Islam. The power of unity is so vast, that just by coming together, we can change lives. We can uplift those who are feeling down and we can create a sense of belonging to those vulnerable and those who feel alone. Here are some ways in how we can attain unity to better ourselves and improve our interactions with others. So, let's reflect on the virtues of unity, allowing us to spread sincere kindness to our family, friends and humanity in this world we inhabit. One of the ways in which you can do this, is by donating to Human Appeal's excellent projects that work towards improving livelihoods, and helping to save vulnerable people as well as those living in poverty. May Allah (SWT) allow us to unite in goodness, love and generosity. May Allah allow us to help those in desperate need. May He maintain love in the bonds we have within our kinship and brotherhood, may He bless our nation Nigeria.

# SOCIAL VICES AFFECTING THE NIGERIAN NAVY

Lt Cdr AC Imeogu

The Nigerian Navy, like any other military organization, operates under a strict code of conduct and discipline to maintain order, professionalism, and effectiveness. Social vices can impact the organization due to violation of the Navy Code of Conduct. Social vices are any actions exhibited either by omission or commission on negligence which contravenes the cultural values and established codes of conduct of a particular community or in a given situation or location.

Social vices can be perceived as bad habits, evil behaviours or unhealthy negative activities practiced by people, but which are frowned at by the society because they are detrimental to progress and development. They are abhorred by the Service and the society in general because they are not normal and are the opposite of known societal norms. This is the reason they are referred to as anti-social, unhealthy or deviant behaviours.

The list of social vices is virtually endless, encompassing a wide range of destructive behaviors such as drug addiction, smoking, cultism and examination malpractice. Others includes acts like indecent dressing,

Social vices remain a major concern within the Nigerian Navy today. This troubling reality has unfortunately contributed to numerous security challenges currently confronting the Service

vandalism, internet fraud (commonly known as "Yahoo Yahoo"), prostitution, gambling, and various forms of sexual immorality. Social vices are very common predominantly among young people even though adult males and females do engage in it too. Most of these vices plague the society and mitigate development. Personnel found to be complicit in any form of misconduct are promptly arrested and prosecuted to serve as a deterrent to others. Social vices remain a major concern within the Nigerian Navy today. This troubling reality has unfortunately contributed to numerous security challenges currently confronting the Service

## EXAMPLES OF SOCIAL VICES AFFECTING THE NIGERIAN NAVY

Drug/Substance Abuse: Drug/Substance abuse can compromise the Navy's readiness and performance. Drug abuse is the continued misuse of drugs. It is an illness that is considered by a destructive outline of consuming a substance that leads to noteworthy problems or suffering. Drug addiction has negative consequence to personnel, the Service and to the society at large. Globally, the use has reached all-time high to the point of addiction. In addition to psychological, physical, and social damage, addiction drugs may lead to criminal consequences. Substances mostly abused include Cocaine, alcohol, methaqualone, barbiturates, cannabis, and some substituted amphetamines.

Insubordination: Insubordination poses a serious threat to the integrity of the chain of command and the overall discipline within the organization. It occurs when personnel willfully disobey or disregard lawful orders from their superiors, thereby undermining authority and eroding the foundation of military structure. In a highly structured institution like the Nigerian Navy, where operational effectiveness relies heavily on strict adherence to command hierarchy, insubordination can lead to confusion, reduced morale, and operational

Indiscipline: Indiscipline can lead to a breakdown in order, cohesion, and operational effectiveness within the organization. When personnel fail to adhere to established rules, regulations, and codes of conduct, it creates an environment of disorder and unpredictability. In a structured and mission-driven institution like the Nigerian Navy, indiscipline not only undermines teamwork and morale but also jeopardizes the success of operations and the safety of personnel. It can manifest in various forms such as absenteeism, negligence of duty, insubordination, or misconduct—and each has the potential to erode the professionalism and reputation of the Service.

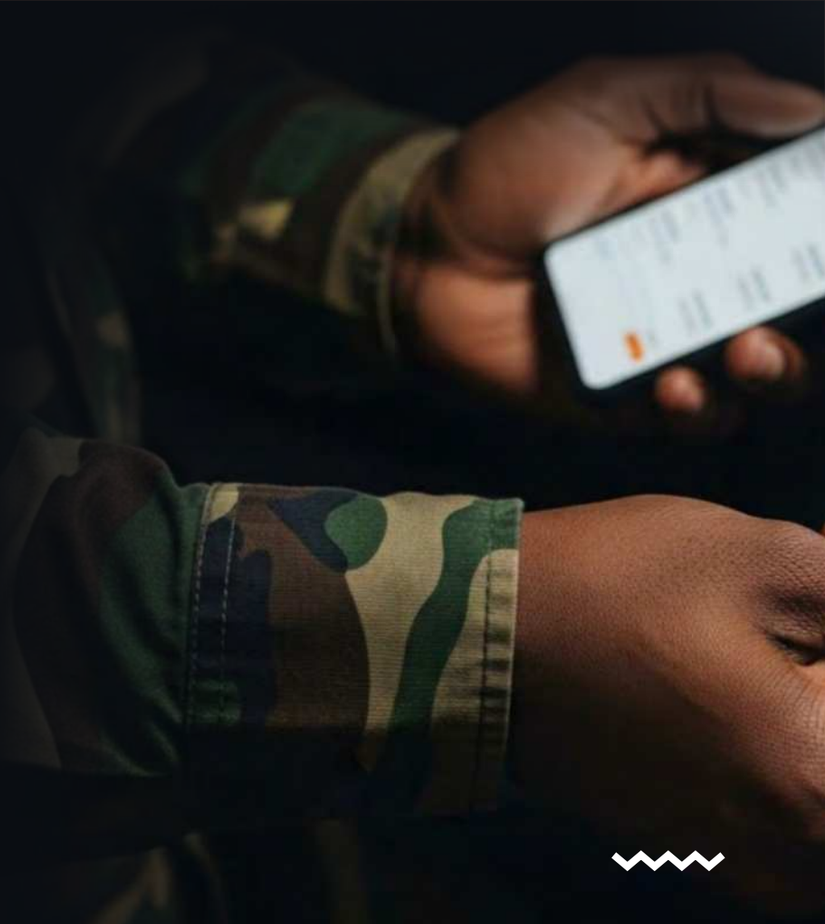
Extortion: Extortion by naval personnel poses a serious threat to the integrity, reputation, and public trust in the Nigerian Navy. When individuals in uniform exploit their position of authority to demand money or favors from civilians or subordinates, it reflects a gross abuse of power and a violation of the Navy's core values. Such unethical behavior not only damages the image of the Service but also strains its relationship with the public—whose support and cooperation are critical to national security operations. Extortion breeds resentment, fear, and mistrust, ultimately weakening civil-military relations and undermining the Navy's credibility.

Fraud: Fraud within the Nigerian Navy is a grave concern that can significantly damage the Service's reputation and undermine its institutional credibility. Fraudulent activities—such as falsification of records, misappropriation of funds, procurement irregularities, or manipulation of official processes—not only represent a breach of trust, but also divert resources meant for operational readiness and personnel welfare. When such acts go unchecked, they erode public confidence, weaken internal morale, and compromise the Navy's ability to fulfill its constitutional responsibilities. As a symbol of national pride and discipline, the Nigerian Navy must uphold the highest standards of transparency and accountability.

## NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF SOCIAL VICES

Loss of Public Trust: Social vices such as extortion, fraud, indiscipline, and insubordination can significantly erode public trust and confidence in the Nigerian Navy. As an institution charged with safeguarding the nation's maritime interests and maintaining internal security; the Navy relies heavily on the cooperation, respect, and support of the civilian population. When personnel engage in unethical or criminal behavior, it tarnishes the image of the entire Service and creates a perception of corruption, lawlessness, or inefficiency. This not only weakens civil-military relations but also makes it more difficult for the Navy to carry out its duties effectively.

Compromised Effectiveness: These vices disrupt the chain of command, weaken discipline, lower morale, and foster an environment of distrust and inefficiency. When personnel are more focused on personal gain or engage in unethical behavior, operational readiness suffers, and critical missions may be delayed, poorly executed, or even jeopardized. Additionally, the misuse of resources through corrupt practices undermines logistics, training, and overall strategic capability. In an institution where precision, loyalty, and accountability are paramount, the presence of social vices directly threatens national security and maritime stability.



When personnel are more focused on personal gain or engage in unethical behaviour, operational readiness suffers, and critical missions may be delayed, poorly executed, or even jeopardised.

Damage to Reputation: The Navy is not only a symbol of national strength and security, but also a representation of professionalism, discipline, and integrity. When personnel engage in unethical or criminal behavior, it reflects poorly on the entire organization, leading to negative public perception, loss of respect, and diminished trust from both civilians and partner institutions. A tarnished reputation can hinder cooperation with local communities, reduce support from stakeholders, and even affect international collaborations and peacekeeping engagements

## METHODS OF ADDRESSING THE SOCIAL VICES IN THE NIGERIAN NAVY

Training and Education: Providing regular training and education on discipline, ethics, and human rights can help prevent social vices. The involvement of guidance counsellors as answer to social vices is deemed necessary. Through guidance and counselling, personnel are

assisted to be disciplined and become able to deal with challenges and realities they face.

Accountability: Holding personnel accountable for their actions can help maintain discipline and prevent corruption.

Welfare Support: Providing support for personnel's welfare, including mental health and substance abuse treatment, can help mitigate social vices.

CONCLUSION

The Navy takes seriously acts that contravene its code of conduct, and so officers and ratings should be good ambassadors by not involving themselves in complicity. By addressing these issues, the Nigerian Navy can maintain its professionalism and effectiveness in serving the nation.

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# CHILD PSYCHOLOGY: UNDERSTANDING CHILD DEVELOPMENT THEORIES & THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS

Cdr TN Owolabi

Understanding child development theories is crucial not only for educators in nursery and primary education, but for parents because children in these categories are in their formative years. These theories provide insights into how children learn, grow, and develop, enabling teachers and parents alike to design effective instructional and appropriate communication strategies.

This article explores key child development theories and their implications for teachers and parents of pupils in nursery and primary schools.

## THEORIES OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT

There is not a single universally agreed upon number of child's development theories. However, several prominent theories have significantly shaped our understanding of how children grow and learn. In this article, three of these theories will be briefly examined in the subsequent paragraphs.

a. Piaget's Cognitive Development Theory: Cognitive development in children refers to the growth of their thinking, problem-solving and memory skills. It encompasses how children perceive, understand and interact with the world around them. This development is a progressive process. Jean Piaget's theory emphasizes the role of active learning and hands-on experiences in children's cognitive development. Teachers can apply this theory by providing opportunities for exploration and discovery. Parents can be involved by interacting with the children especially in the area of language learning which involves the development of communication skills and the ability to understand and use language.

b. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory: The proponent of this theory, Lev Vygotsky, believed that learning is fundamentally a social activity. Children learn by interacting with others. In addition, he opined that culture provides the tool of intellectual adaptation that children use to make sense of the world and develop their cognitive theory. He further highlights the significance of social interactions and language in children's learning. Teachers can foster collaborative learning environments to support students while parents teach them languages and expose them to different culture early in life. In essence, socio cultural theory suggest that children don't develop in a vacuum but rather through active participation in their social and cultural word, guided by more knowledgeable individuals e.g teachers and parents, who are equipped with the tools of their culture.

c. Erikson's Psychosocial Theory: This theory is primarily associated with Erik Erikson's. According to him human development is driven by the interaction between psychological needs and social experiences across eight stages of life. The theory outlines

the importance of social and emotional development in children. Teachers can create a supportive and nurturing environment that promotes self-esteem and confidence. Parents on the other hand can focus on building a strong foundation of self-esteem encouraging efforts, praising accomplishment and providing opportunities for independent and growth in children as early as possible.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS

Child development theories offer valuable insights for both teachers and parent guiding then in understanding children learning behavior and overall development. By understanding these theories, educators can create age-appropriate learning environment and tailor their teaching methods to individual needs, while parents can better support their children's social, emotional and cognitive growth. In essence, child development theories provide a framework for understanding children growth and development, enabling teachers and parents to create optimal learning and nurturing environment that supports children in reaching their full potential.

## CONCLUSION

Understanding child development theories is essential for educators and parents of children in nursery and primary education. By applying these theories, teachers can design effective instructional strategies that cater to children's diverse needs by encouraging active learning, monitoring their progress and promote children's cognitive, social, and emotional development. Parents on the other hand can create a nurturing environment, fostering positive relationship and focusing on building their self-esteem. By staying informed about child development theories and best practices, educators can provide high-quality education that supports children's long-term success.

## HANDING OVER OF CANNABIS SATIVA TO NDLEA

13 JUN 25

## DIALOGUE WITH RATINGS
13 JUN 25

## FATHER'S DAY CELEBRATION

27 JUN 25

# HAPPY HOUR

27 JUN 25

# APPLICATION OF SATELLITE COMMUNICATION IN THE NIGERIAN NAVY

Lt S Agang

The existence of navies around the countries of the world has long being characterized by communication ranging from the smallest unit to the apex of the navy's organization. This has indeed served as a major link by which orders, instructions and guidelines are issued and executed. Hence, communication has been proven to be a great tool necessary to achieve a successful battle.

This is visibly true from the greatest of the world's navies to Africa and indeed to our dear nation's navy; the Nigerian Navy (NN). Hence, the NN Communication and Information Technology (CIT) department which is the communicator of the NN adopted the popular quote that says "if you ain't got communication, you ain't got nothing".

As Information and Technology continued to develop the world at large, communication was not left out. It moved from the ancient methods of use of gongs, town criers, cave paintings and carrier pigeons to modern method of telecommunications, internet and satellite communication (SATCOM). Satellite can be defined as an artificial body placed in the orbit round the earth for communication. Also, Communication can be defined as the act of imparting or exchanging information by speaking, writing or through other medium. It mostly borders on sending and receiving information from one person to another. On the same note, SATCOM can be understood to imply the use of satellite to establish or enhance communication. The satellite that plays this role is known as Communication Satellite.

The **NN** Communication and Information Technology (CIT) department, which is the communicator of the NN, adopted the popular quote that says, "If you haven't got communication, you haven't got anything."

As the communication need of the NN continued to increase, it becomes imperative for the System to swing into more universal method of tackling these problems. Some of the measures were geared into the use of SATCOM services to achieve results. This article shall now discuss ways in which SATCOM services could be engaged and optimized in the NN. The paper shall cover Overview of SATCOM and Application of SATCOM in the NN.

**AIM**

The aim of this paper is to highlight areas in which Satellite Communication can be applied in the Nigerian Navy.

**OVERVIEW OF SATCOM**

It is earlier stated that a satellite is an artificial object which has been intentionally placed into orbit. In other words, any object that revolves around a larger object in space is called a Satellite. Additionally, the very purpose of placing a satellite in the orbit forms the various types of satellite we have today. This includes Communication Satellite, Navigation Satellite and Weather Satellite etc. It is worthy to note that there is difference between Communication Satellite and Satellite communication, as the former implies to be a noun while the latter is a verb. Satellite Communication involves the use of artificial satellites to provide communication links between various points on Earth.

Some of the types of communication services that satellites provide include telecommunications, broadcasting, and data communications to mention but a few. Satellite communication as an electronic communication package is primarily aimed at

initiating or assisting communication through the space. It has made a major contribution to the pattern of international communication. Some of the advantages of Satellite communication include:

a. Through satellite transmission, coverage over geographical area is quite large mainly for sparsely populated areas.
b. It provides high bandwidth.
c. Wireless and mobile communication applications can be easily established by satellite communication independent of location.
d. It is used in wide variety of applications such as global mobile communication, private business networks, long distance telephone transmission, weather forecasting, radio/TV signal broadcasting.
e. It is cheaper over long distances.
f. The laying and maintenance is easy and cheap.
g. During critical condition, each Earth Station may be removed relatively quickly from a location and reinstalled somewhere else.
h. Ground station sites are easy to install and maintain.

**APPLICATION OF SATCOM IN THE NN**

Navies around the world have lunged immensely into usage of satellite to combat insurgency, tackle contemporary challenges and optimize the efficiency of its communication. To this regard, several military satellites have been launched into the space to aid the military exercise full command and control of their services. The United States military has so far launched 123 military satellites, Russia has 74, Peoples Rep of China has 68, France and Israel has 8 each. Others includes; India, UK and Germany with 7 each. In Africa, Algeria has 1 military satellite in the space. It is pertinent to state that if Nigerian military will launch a military satellite into the space, it will improve the communication performance of the NN.

With a holistic look at the various communication challenges bedeviling the NN, it is proper to outline the several areas in which Satellite communication could be used to improve the efficiency of the NN. The NN could apply and optimize SATCOM services for the following:

a. Monitoring boarders using UAVs and other SATCOM platforms.
b. Installation of long range Internet Protocol (IP) Cameras to view more than 10km ahead during convoy movements.
c. Conduct of search and rescue Operations in Internal Security (IS).
d. Conduct of intelligence gathering during IS.
e. Pipeline monitoring.
f. Installation of Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT)

> Satellite communication as an offshoot of satellite services has long evolved and proven to be the best type of communication to cover the entire globe cheaply. The numerous advantages and applications of these services have been adjudged to be vehemently important to the military, particularly the NN.

in all the commands, establishments and units in the NN.

g. Enhance barracks security with IP cameras.
h. Establish platforms for video conferencing within commands and their respective units.
i. Installation of satellite trackers in all navy vehicles for easy tracking.
j. Conduct of reconnaissance, weather tracking, communication, navigation etc.

**CONCLUSION**

Satellite communication as an offshoot of satellite services has long evolved and proven to be the best type of communication to cover the entire globe cheaply. The numerous advantages and applications of these services have been adjudged to be vehemently important to the military, particularly the NN. It was deduced that satellite communication services, could be utilized to achieve maximum success in the military operations of today.

Furthermore, this paper discussed the general knowledge of SATCOM and itemized projected areas that it could be used to actualize the vision of the CNS. Which is "A highly motivated professional naval force capable of shaping the security outcomes within Nigeria's maritime domain and littorals including land-based engagements in fulfillment of Nigeria's national interest" Vice Adm El Ogalla.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that ASA should:

a. Install satellite trackers on NN vehicles.
b. Install VSAT in all commands, establishments and units in the NN.

# TECHNICAL CAPACITY BUILDING FOR ENHANCED FLEET SUSTAINABILITY:

## AN APPRAISAL OF MTU TRAINING IN THE NIGERIAN NAVY

**Cdr IG Essor**

The functional availability of a Fleet depends on the state of the ships' machinery and equipment as well as the professional capacity to operate and maintain them. The effective and efficient maintenance of ships' machinery is paramount for the sustainability of the fleet. Essentially, the First Line and some aspects of Second Line maintenance are primarily handled by technical personnel with basic engineering knowledge and a considerable level of experience. However, more complex and advance maintenance are conducted by specialists or the Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs).

The conduct of such maintenance tasks requires advanced knowledge, special tools and detailed documentations obtained through necessary training programmes. On requests, these are made available to customers and organizations through specialist training to build technical capacity for advance level maintenance.

Technical capacity building is the process of developing and strengthening technical skills, abilities, processes and resources generated and sustained over time within an organization. (UN, 2025). Obtaining and maintaining these qualities for ships maintenance ensure optimum machinery performance for enhanced fleet sustainability. Fleet sustainability refers to the practice of managing and operating a fleet in an environmentally responsible and economically viable manner, with the goal of minimizing the negative environmental impact of fleet operations. (Panik, 2023). In order to reduce the impact of operational defects and facilitate cost effective

In order to reduce the impact of operational defects and facilitate cost-effective maintenance, the NN has taken deliberate steps to provide specialist training to its technical personnel for the conduct of advanced-level maintenance. This is with a view to building technical capacity for fleet sustainability.

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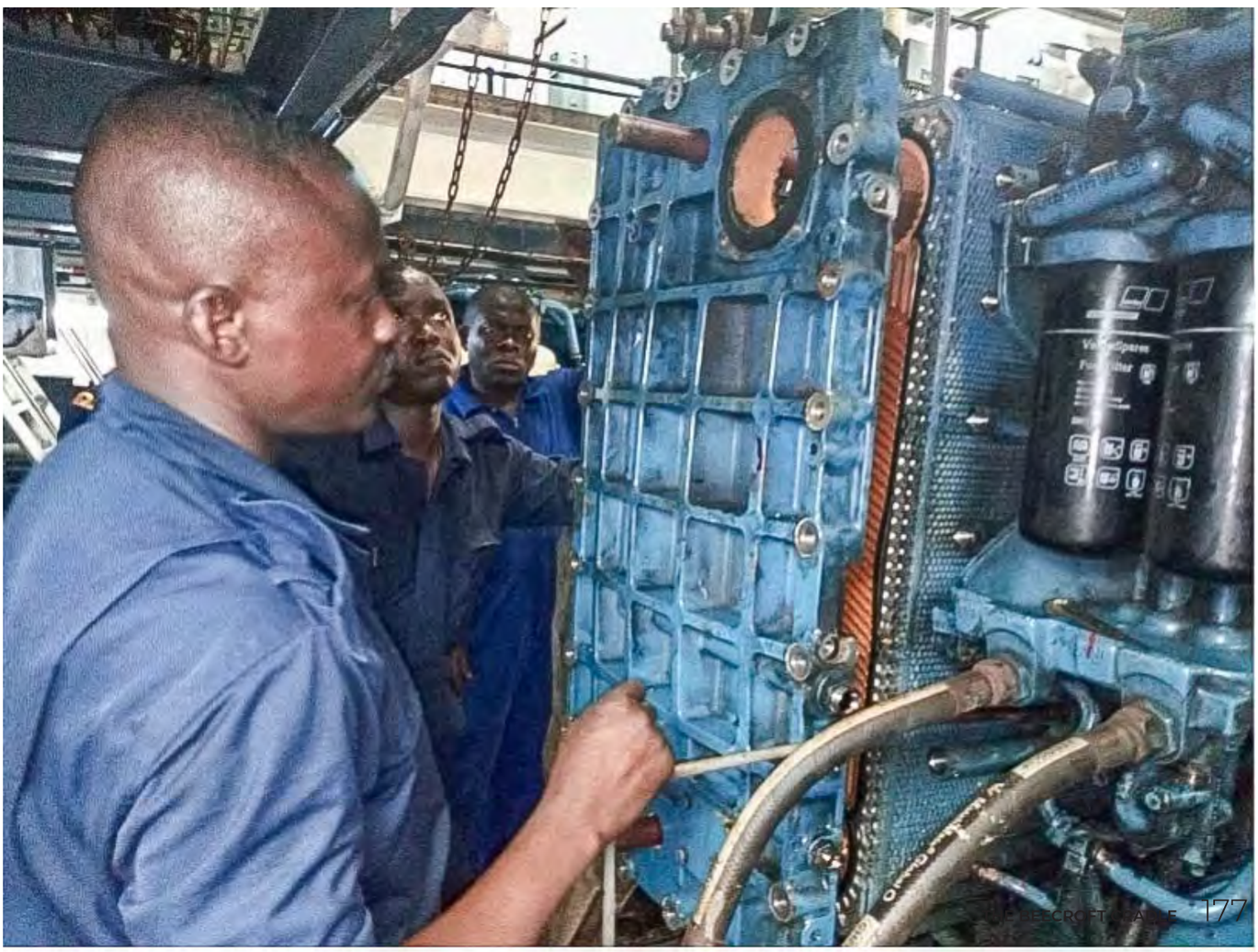
Over the years the NN has made efforts to provide opportunities to its personnel in the various levels of technical training. These trainings include the basic training for newly enlisted technical personnel and on-the-job training for personnel deployed to newly acquired vessels. Also, some personnel are availed opportunity to obtain higher academic qualifications in related fields and acquire specialist trainings for specific machinery. Some major machinery requiring specialist training include main propulsion engine, gearbox, generator, ship's gun and fire control system including some sensitive navigation equipment. These machinery are designed by multiple equipment manufacturers, hence they possess distinct operational and maintenance characteristics as well as spare parts requirements. Currently, the NN operates main propulsion engines and generators with OEMs such as Pratt & Withney, Fairbank Morse, HND, Kholer, Cummins, Caterpillar and MTU. Amongst these OEMs, MTU, being the most prevalent for main engines in the fleet has gained the most attention as considerable number of



personnel have undergone training for advance/specialist level maintenance.

## CONDUCT OF SPECIALIST TRAINING FOR NN TECHNICAL PERSONNEL

Specialist trainings are intended to build the NN's technical capacity in the conduct of major repairs such as overhauls and complex installations with little or no external support. In the past, specialist trainings were conducted both by the OEMs and through third parties both within and outside the Country. Amongst the trainings were the QL1 and 2 MTU training conducted in 2008 and 2016 in Singapore and India respectively. Others are the ZF Gearbox Training in Germany and Fairbank Morse Training in US, both conducted in 2017. The NN also conducted series of Caterpillar trainings and workshops in Nigeria through MANTRAC Nigeria Limited. However, the desired outcome of these specialist trainings were apparently not fulfilled as the personnel were limited in their abilities to carry out the anticipated repairs such as engines overhauls as well as providing necessary professional input in complex situations. These setbacks were traced to inadequate training owing to the lower level training packages inadvertently agreed upon during negotiations as well as the absence of special tools for the jobs.

The offer of higher level training, proper administration of specially trained personnel with the necessary maintenance facility could improve the performance of specially trained technical personnel. The availability of special tools and functional deployment of the specialists create the avenue for effective conduct of maintenance activities. Considering the aforementioned inadequate training programmes and the undesired outcomes, the NN took special interest in subsequent specialist training particularly those conducted by the OEMs. Hence, special requests were subsequently made for higher level training with longer duration as well as provision of relevant special tools on completion of the training. The Service also took special interest in the administration of the trained personnel including their drafts and deployments as they were grouped and specifically deployed for maintenance purposes.

The most prevalent and apparently successful specialist training conducted for NN technical personnel in recent time is the MTU QL1 to QL4 mechanical and electrical

training which commenced in 2016. The training which held at the MTU Training Center Friedrichshafen Germany was conducted in batches, between 2016 and 2019 with a total of 6 officers and 33 ratings trained during the period. In 2024, additional 3 officers and 5 ratings were trained at the MTU Facility in Germany. This made a total of 47 NN personnel trained on the repairs and maintenance of MTU engines. It is pertinent to state that these personnel were trained on QL1 – QL4 mechanical and ECU7/4 electronics maintenance. Some of the personnel were further trained as instructors to facilitate indigenous training of other technical personnel. To localize the training, the NN MTU Training Center was established in 2018, at NIT Sapele. The Center was certified by the OEM to conduct training up to levels QL1 and QL2 mechanical. Additionally, the CNS approved the strategic deployment of trained MTU personnel to FSGs, FSUs and capital ships installed with MTU engines, as well as to the MTU Training Center Sapele as instructors. This was to ensure efficient repairs of MTU engines across commands as well as training of personnel at the established Center,

In addition to training the MTU Training Center also acts as a support base to the MTU Maintenance Team as it is equipped with special tools which are leased to the Team for various maintenance activities across commands. It is pertinent to state that the NN currently has no established workshop or designated facility for maintenance of MTU engines. The special tools required for advance level maintenance and repairs such as QL3 – QL4 are inadequate. Hence, the Team is unable to complete some necessary maintenance tasks onboard NN ships. This constitutes challenge to the Maintenance Team as it requires a designated facility, adequate tools and equipment to conduct maintenance. Commendably, the NN is in the process of procuring complete sets of QL1 – QL3 special tools. Among the special tools are equipment with fragile and sensitive components which require a dedicated facility for installation and storage. Such facility would provide the necessary environment for the Team to conduct pending maintenance tasks currently required by most NN ships with MTU engines. Accordingly, the NN could consider the establishment of a specialized unit having the necessary workshops and equipped with special tools, dedicated to the conduct of advanced and specialist level repairs and maintenance. This would support the NN's stride for technical capacity building and as well enhance fleet sustainability.

## MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES BY THE NIGERIAN NAVY MTU TRAINED PERSONNEL

The NN presently has in its inventory about 50 platforms installed with MTU systems. The MTU Maintenance Team has been able to conduct various levels of repairs and maintenance onboard the ships and boats as well as on-the-job training for technical personnel deployed for the maintenance of the vessels. The Team conducts major diagnosis and repairs which were previously carried out by MTU technicians from either Germany or South Africa at longer duration and huge financial expense to the Service. The repair activities carried out by own personnel saved the NN prolonged equipment downtime and high maintenance costs ranging from €20,000 to €50,000 depending on the nature of the job and its duration. For instance, the 5000 running hours maintenance of NNS CEENTENARY and NNS UNITY, comprising the installation and programming of injectors as well as overhaul of heat exchangers amongst other tasks conducted in 2019, was the first major maintenance carried out by the Team. This saved the NN about €51,000 and was done within the shortest possible time.

For instance, the 5000 running hours of maintenance of NNS CENTENARY and NNS UNITY, comprising the installation and programming of injectors as well as the overhaul of heat exchangers amongst other tasks conducted in 2019, was the first major maintenance carried out by the team. This saved the NN about €51,000 and was done within the shortest possible time.

The most recent overhaul of NNS CENTENARY's Port Engine which required the attention of MTU service technicians from Germany, was successfully carried out by own MTU Maintenance Team. Furthermore, the reactivation and commissioning of NNS CALABAR's main engines of which NN MTU Team was supported by the technicians from MTU South Africa, saved the NN about €26,000. This was because the job estimated for 9 days was reduced to 4 days owing to the pre-installation of the control systems by own MTU specialists before the arrival of MTU South Africa technicians. The activities of the MTU Maintenance Team are not limited to these major tasks,

but largely comprise the identification and rectification of other challenges onboard ships within the fleet.

The achievements of the MTU Maintenance Team could be affected by the observed attrition rate of trained personnel due to retirement and discharge as well as some cases of desertion. It is noteworthy to mention that among the 47 MTU trained personnel, an officer and 3 ratings duly retired and discharged from the Service respectively. Additionally, 3 ratings unfortunately deserted from the Service few years after completion of training in Germany. This reduced the total number of in-service MTU trained personnel to 40 indicating a shortfall of 7. Furthermore, the fleet sustainability is affected by limited technical capacity for maintaining machineries designed by other OEMs such as Caterpillar which is the most prevalent generator OEM in the NN. Hence, the NN could replicate the efforts made on MTU training in the training of personnel for the maintenance of Caterpillar systems as well as other major OEMs in the Fleet. This would improve NN's technical capacity building for enhanced fleet sustainability.

Acknowledging the benefits of having a specialized set of technical personnel capable of conducting extensive repairs on ships' machinery, it is undesirable to the NN for these specialists to leave barely few years after obtaining such training and skills at the financial expense of the Service. This could understandably discourage further training of NN technical personnel in such specialized field despite dire need for maintenance of the increasing number of vessels in the fleet. Therefore, the NN could ensure stringent selection process during consideration for specialist trainings and include signing of bonds stipulating compulsory number of post-training service years for NN specially trained personnel irrespective of the course duration. These measures would ensure that the personnel serve for a considerable number of years before leaving the Service. The NN could further sustain the morale of the specially trained personnel, by recognizing their commitment and job efficiency through some form of incentives such as allowances. This would spur more dedication and commitment from the personnel for enhanced specialized technical services in the fleet. It would further consolidate NN's efforts at technical capacity building for enhanced fleet sustainability.

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## CONCLUSION

The NN has made frantic efforts towards technical capacity building for the enhancement of its fleet sustainability. This was majorly focused on the training of

technical personnel on the maintenance of ships machinery and equipment. Other than the basic training obtained by these personnel, the NN went further to embark on specialized training which include the MTU engine maintenance courses. Amongst several OEMs of machinery in NN's inventory, MTU is adjudged to have offered the most successful training in recent time. The trained personnel have severally conducted advance maintenance activities in the fleet as it relates to MTU engines. Despite the achievements of MTU trained personnel, some gaps were noted to have undermined maintenance for fleet sustainability in the NN. This is due to the lack of capacity to carryout similar maintenance on machinery of other OEMs in the fleet such as Caterpillar. This inhibits the performance of such machineries as the technical personnel are limited in their maintenance capability. Also, maintenance activities by the MTU Team are being hampered by inadequate special tools and workshop facility as well as the attrition rate of trained personnel due to retirements and desertions.

In view of the above, the NN could replicate the efforts made on MTU training in the training of personnel for the maintenance of Caterpillar systems as well as other major OEMs in the Fleet. It could also expedite action on the procurement of the QL1-3 special tools for the maintenance of MTU engines as well as establish a dedicated workshop facility for specialized maintenance. NN could further ensure signing of bonds stipulating compulsory number of post-training service years irrespective of the course duration. These measures would ensure that the trained personnel serve for a considerable number of years before leaving the Service. Additionally, the NN could sustain the morale of specially trained personnel, as well as recognize their commitment and job efficiency through some form of incentives such as allowances. This would spur more dedication and commitment from the personnel for enhanced specialized technical services in the fleet. It would further consolidate NN's efforts at technical capacity building for enhanced fleet sustainability.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is therefore recommended that the NN should:

a. Liaise with OEMs for the conduct of specialist training on Caterpillar engines and other major machinery onboard NN ships.
b. Establish a specialist maintenance unit with the necessary workshop facility for advance level maintenance.
c. Promulgate signing of bond with stipulated number of post-training service years for specially trained personnel irrespective of the course duration.
d. Consider incentives/allowances for specially trained technical personnel in the NN.

# PUBLIC RELATIONS: A USEFUL TOOL FOR THE MILITARY

SLT DA NWOMOKO ABINFO

The Military plays a critical role in maintaining national security and defending against external threats. However,the success of the military operation depends not only on military might but also on effective communication and public support. In other words, Public Relations play a strategic role in modern military operations influencing public perception, recruitment, operational security and even warfare tactics.

In today's fast-paced information environment, effective Public Relations enables the military to communicate its mission, share values andachievements, and engage diverse audiences including the public, government, stakeholders and international audience. By leveraging Public Relations effectively, the military can build trust, foster support, and achieve its objectives in a fast changing world.

**ROLES OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN THE MILITARY**

1. Communicate Strategy: Public Relations Professionals in the military develop and implement comprehensive communications strategies to convey messages to various audiences, including military personnel, their families, and the public by ensuring the accuracy and consistency of information. Effective communication is critical to the success of military operations, and Public Relations professionals play a vital role in achieving this goal.
2. International Communication: Effective internal communication is crucial for maintaining morale and keeping the military personnel informed about policies, news, and changes within the organization. Public Relations can facilitate communication through various channels, including newsletters, social media and internal channels by ensuring that military personnel are well informed.
3. Reputation Management: Public relations play a vital role in managing the military's image and reputation, addressing public concerns and promoting a positive understanding of military action and policies.
4. Influence Advocacy: Military Public Relations efforts often encompass Advocacy for veterans and military personnel, creatingawareness about issues affecting service personnel and their families and

> Military operations often involve sensitive information that cannot be publicly disclosed; striking a balance between transparency and necessary security can complicate communication efforts.

promoting beneficial programs that benefit them.

5. Educational Campaigns: Public Relations is involved in developing educational campaigns to educate the public about the military, its mission, values and the sacrifices made by military personnel and their families . This helps to encourage public support for the military and its personnel, recognize the contributions and sacrifices of military personnel, also foster a more informed and supportive citizenry.
6. Event Coordination Public Relations teams often coordinate events to engage with the community, showcase achievements and capabilities. Some of these events includes: open houses, memorials and celebrations to showcase the achievements and capabilities of the military. These events helps to give the public, a glimpse into military life and operations, foster a positive relationship between the military and the community.
7. Media Relations: Military Public Relation personnel play a key role in interacting with journalists and media outlets to facilitate coverage of military events, operations and achievements. They help shape the narrative and ensure accurate reporting. The military use various tools, including press releases, interviews and press conferences to keep the public informed about the military activities and operation.
8. Crisis Management: In situations of crisis such as combat operations, accidents, Public Relations teams are important for managing communication and mitigating negative impacts on the military's reputation. They provide timely updates and manage media relations to ensure accurate reporting and transparency to build trust and credibility.
9. Public Engagement: Public Relations efforts focus on engaging with the public, local communities and stakeholders to build understanding and support for military programs and missions; to achieve these goals, the military may conduct community outreach, develop educational programs and participate in local events.

**CHALLENGES OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN THE MILITARY**

Public Relations in the military faces unique set of challenges that stem from its distinct operational environment, hierarchical structures and the sensitive nature of military activities.
These challenges can include:

1. Balancing Transparency and Security: Military operations often involve sensitive information that

Public relations, through proactive media engagement, crisis communication and transparent storytelling, helps bridge the gap between the military and civilians, foster support and counter misinformation.

cannot be publicly disclosed, striking a balance between transparency and necessary security can complicate communication efforts.

2. Crisis Management: The military is often under scrutiny during crisis whether related to combat operations, accidents or public perception issues. Managing the narrative, while maintaining factual accuracy and timeliness can be a significant challenge.
3. Public Perception: The military faces intense scrutiny especially during conflicts. Public Relations must work to build a positive image and cultivate cultural trust among various stakeholders including the public and the media.
4. Diverse Audiences: The military communicates with a diverse range of Audiences, including service personnel, their families, veterans, government officials and the general public. Each audience has different information needs and perspectives, which can make it challenging to craft effective messaging that resonates with each group
5. Media Relations: Communicating with the media can be challenging due to the military's operational security requirements, to balance transparency with security needs; The military must carefully manage: Press access and story framing to ensure that sensitive information is not disclosed.
6. Rapid Information Spread: In this digital age, information can spread quickly through social media and to maintain a strong online presence and mitigate potential issues, the military must be prepared to monitor online activity. Also respond swiftly to rumors or negative narratives in a timely manner and provide accurate information to counter misinformation.
7. Internal Communication: Effective communication within the military ranks,can be challenging due to varied access to information, impact on morale and trust issues. These challenges can be addressed by implementing clear communication channels, to foster transparency while maintaining operational security and encourage feedback.
8. Cultural Sensitivity: The military operates in various cultural environments around the world. Public Relations efforts must consider cultural nuances and local sensitivity to effectively convey message and avoid misunderstanding.
9. Resource Constraints: Military Public Relations teams may have limited resources compared to their civilian counterparts making it essential to prioritize efforts and develop creative strategies to communicate effectively.
10. Retentive and Retention Challenges: Effective Public Relations plays a vital role in attracting and retaining personnel. However, recruitment efforts can be impacted by public perception and misconception about military service.

Addressing these challenges requires strategic planning, clear messaging and a proactive approach to communicate, ensuring that both operational integrity and public trust are maintained.

In a nutshell, Public Relations is an essential strategic asset for the Military, enabling it to maintain Public trust, manage its image and effectively communicate its mission, values and operations. Public Relations through proactive media engagement, crisis communication and transparent storytelling, helps bridge the gap between the military and civilians, foster support and counters misinformation. In an age where perception shapes reality, the Military's ability to inform and influence through ethical and professional Public Relations practices is not just useful - it is vital to mission success and democratic accountability.

# IMPLICATIONS OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA PUBLIC SECTOR REFORMS ON THE NIGERIAN NAVY

**Cdr AB Awolola**

Organizations are established to achieve goals and undertake core activities towards the discharge of their mandate. Attainment of these goals could be affected by various factors necessitating organizations to adopt changes through reforms. In developing countries such as Nigeria, the public sector organization is the machinery used by the state to execute plans, policies and programmes.

The Public Sector is also an indispensable instrument of change and development. The national recession in the economy has prompted the need for public administrators to develop innovative measures to keep the Public Sector relevant. This is aimed at sustaining the provision of essential service delivery to its citizens. In order to meet these expectations and operate within the present financial constraints the need for public administrators to embrace reforms became necessary.

The United Nations Economic and Social Council (2006) defines Public Sector Reforms as those deliberate changes to administrative structures and systems of public sector organizations. This is with the objective of making them efficient in actualizing set goals. Structural change may include shift in administrative hierarchy and focus on capacity building.

Since the 1970s various public sector reforms have been carried out by past administrations with the focus of increasing capacity to implement developmental programmes. The success of these reforms in repositioning and strengthening the public sector as a veritable instrument for national development has proven not to be effective as anticipated. This is particularly evident in the Nigerian Navy (NN) in the area of public financial management reforms. These policies in particular are measures designed to deregulate the financial system and transform its structures within an appropriate regulatory framework. This type of reform is a key performance indicator by the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) to influence national growth and development. Some of these financial reforms include the Integrated Personnel Payroll Information System (IPPIS) Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Cashless Policy and Treasury Single Account (TSA) policy amongst others. In 2019 the performance of these reforms was remarkable as it assisted the FGNto save N10 Trillion Naira. However, considering the peculiar nature of operations in the NN, these reforms have made accessibility to public funds cumbersome. Hence, the need to ensure timely access to funds to meet the demands of NN has become imperative. It is against this backdrop that this paper seeks to look at the implications of public sector reforms on the activities of the NN.

> The NN could request an exemption of its operations fund account from the TSA policy. The operations fund account could be given some reasonable leverage in this regard. Compliance with the full conditions of the TSA policy for this kind of fund account could negatively hamper NN operations.

The purpose of this article is to suggest ways of ameliorating on the FGN public sector reforms for the NN with a focus on TSA policy. It is assumed that the NN will receive all allocations from the FGN to adequately implement all suggestions this articlewould proffer. This

article is limited to TSA policy as a financial management reform adopted by the NN. This article will therefore cover an overview of the TSA policy. Thereafter, it will discuss theimplications and challenges of TSA on the NN and lastly proffer a way forward.

## AIM

The aim of this article is to discuss the implications of TSA policy as a FG financial management reform on the NN with a view to making recommendations.

## AN OVERVIEW OF TSA POLICY

The TSA is a unified structure of government bank accounts that gives a timely consolidated view of government cash position. The policy is a public accounting system under which all government revenue, receipts and income are collected into a single account. It facilitates effective budget execution, cash planning and effective management of public funds thereby minimizing cost of borrowing. This further improves the quality of fiscal information as well as reduces cases of financial misappropriation and corruption in Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDA) of government. In spite of these laudable attributes the TSA policycomes with some constraints which sometimes restrict effective activities of MDAs. Some of these hitches include inefficient disbursement of funds and cumbersome delay in release of funds. These issueshave affected the NN in attaining its desired goals. This is evident because defence funding in Nigeria is usually encapsulated in the annual budget estimates.

Before the introduction of the TSA policy, the FGN has made efforts to ensure that there is consistent and prompt release of fund allocations tothe NN. The objective was to ensure that the NN fulfils its operational mandate in terms of payment of its recurrent expenditure such as ration cash allowance (RCA). However, with the advent of the TSA policy, the release of funds has been susceptible to rigid administrative process. This has adversely affected the operational readiness of the NN to a great extent which has also hampered with its operational success. In view of the foregoing, the TSA policy has hindered the NN to an extent in fulfilling its constitutional mandate especially in the area of operations. This is as a result of the delay experienced with getting access to funds released toNN commands and units.

## IMPLICATIONS OF THE TSA POLICY TO NN

The TSA Policy supports the remittance of funds to the final provider of goods and servicesrather than to its direct beneficiaries. This implies that commands and units of the NN would be by-passed thereby serving as

> The enactment of an interbanking TSA policy would alleviate the constraints associated with poor disbursement of funds experienced by the centralised nature of the TSA. This is because the interbank clearing and settlement system would be used to sweep balances from the linked bank accounts back to the TSA.

information relaying channel. Consequently, funds would no longer be remitted directly to commands and their subsidiary units'accounts for their running cost and RCA. This provision goes contrary to the decentralized nature of the NN where commands and units are granted some level of financial autonomy. Additionally, full compliance to this provision would overwhelm NHQ with multitude of requests from commands and units which would need to be collated and vetted before request for payment order can be processed.

The TSA policy cuts across the capital, overhead, personnel cost and operations of the NN. In the area of capital cost, TSA policy does not have any severe implications that could hamper the execution of the NN capital expenditure budget. However, for overhead, personnel cost and operations full implementation of the policy would have adverse implications which could be detrimental to NN in the fulfillment of its obligation.Thus, the adoption of the TSA policy to NN would be inimical as it discourages financial autonomy accorded to commands and units. This is apparent when it comes to funds allocated for operations and recurrent expenditure.

## CHALLENGES OF TSA TO NN FINANCIAL MANAGENT

The implementation of the TSA has constituted various challenges to the NN. These challenges amongst others include rigid process of fund disbursement and delay in release of funds. These constraints are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

Rigid Process of Fund Disbursement.Funding of the NN is affected through the TSA Policy by the rigid process of funds disbursement. This is as a result of the fact that the policy ensures that remittance of funds gets only to the end providers of goods and services. This procedure gives room for NN commands and its units to be sidelined as they would serve as information component to the final beneficiaries. Hence funds would no longer be remitted directly to commands and units especially for RCA during operations. For instance since 2015 to 2022, commands and units go through rigorous administrative procedures in ensuring that funds disbursed to end providers of goods and servicesare timely expended for the purpose they were meant for. In furtherance to this, involving the NN in all areas of this policy would hamper with its operations which require timely implementation.Thus, the TSA policy affects funding of the NN through the rigid administrative process of fund disbursement. This is more evident in the area of operations.

Delay In Release of Funds.The centralized system of the TSA policy has an adverse effect on the NN through long delay in the release of funds. This is coupled with administrative bottlenecks which has made it cumbersome for prompt release of funds. This often results in the delays for the procurement of essential items andpayment of ration cash allowance to personnel. This issue of delay pushes commanders of formations and units to purchase consumables from suppliers on credit at exorbitant values. The delay in release of funds as a result of the TSA policy has consequences to the NN. It often leads to delay in the payment of overhead which makes it difficult for unit commanders to carry out unit level maintenance. For example since 2015 to date fund allocations for overhead to commands and units does not come timely. This to a large extent has negatively hampered with the general activities of commands and units especially in operations. In view of the foregoing, the TSA policy affects the prompt release of fund. This has resulted in the delay for commands and units to timely cater for its recurrent expenditure and operations need.

## WAY FORWARD

The advent of TSA Policy has constitutedsome challenges to the NN. Thus, ways that wouldcushion these challenges have been suggested to include inter banking TSA policy, maintenance of unique fund account for NN and exemption of NN operations fund account from TSA.

Inter Banking TSA Policy.The enactment of inter banking TSA policy would alleviate the constraints associated with rigid process of fund disbursement experienced by the TSA policy. This would support the NN to maintain a system of bank accounts with commercial banks which promotes flexibility and efficient funding of NN operations. It would further empower commands and

autonomy . The promulgation of inter banking TSA policy would facilitate the timely transfer of funds from TSA to concerned bank accounts. This is because the interbank clearing and settlement system would be used to sweep balances from the linked bank accounts back to the TSA. Therefore, the NN could request the FG to initiate inter banking TSApolicy. This would help lessen the rigid process of fund disbursement to the NN.

Maintenance of Unique Fund Account Forthe NN.Maintenance of a unique fund account for the NN would mitigate the challenges related with delay in the release of funds for the NN. The unique fund account could be opened at CBN which could be funded directly by the FG. The account could be financed by the FG by appropriating certain value from the NN annual estimate on quarterly basis. The account in this regard would be primarily for NN operations. The account would accord the NN timely accessibility to funds during emergencies to fund operations. This would alleviate the hitches posed by delay in release of funds needed for operations. In view of the foregoing, the NN could make a request to the FG to maintain a unique NN account as this would further ensure prompt release of funds for NN operations.

16.Exemption of NN Operations Fund Account from TSA Policy. The NN could request for exemption of its operations fund account from the TSA policy. The operations fund account could be given some reasonable leverage in this regard. Compliance to the full conditions of the TSA policy for this kind of fund account could hamper negatively on NN operations. This is in consideration of the sensitive and peculiar nature of operations in the NN. Hence, the NN could initiate the request for exemption through the Office of the Accountant General of the Federation (OAGF). This would have a positive impact in mitigating the constraints posed by TSA to the NN especially in its operations.

## CONCLUSION

Before the advent of the TSA policy, the FG has made concerted efforts to ensure that there is a timely and seamless release of allocations for NN. The objective was to ensure that the NN fulfils its operational mandate in terms of payment of its recurrent expenditure such as RCA. However, with the introduction of the TSA policy, the release of funds has been subjected to bureaucratic scrutiny that is associated with the policy. This has affected the operational readiness of the NN which could also affect its operational success. Notably, the TSA policy has hindered the NN to an extent in fulfilling its constitutional mandate especially in the area of operations. The rigid process of fund disbursement through TSA policy could negatively affect proper funding of NN. This is as a result of the fact that, the policy ensures that remittance of funds gets only to the end providers of goods and services. In addition, the centralized system of the TSA policy has an adverse effect on the NN through long delay in the release of funds. This has resulted in the delays for the procurement of essential items and payment of RCA to personnel.

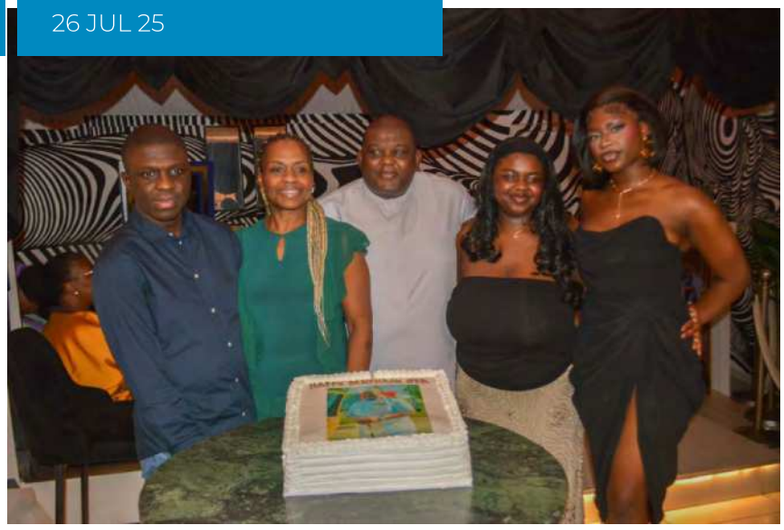
The enactment of inter banking TSA policy would alleviate the constraints associated with poor disbursement of funds experienced by the centralized nature of the TSA. This is because the interbank clearing and settlement system would be used to sweep balances from the linked bank accounts back to the TSA. Therefore, the NN could request the FG to initiate the inter-bank TSA policy with a centralized accounts structure. Additionally, maintenance of a unique fund account for the NN would mitigate the challenges related with delay in the release of funds for the NN. Therefore, the NN could initiate a request to the FG to maintain a unique NN account. This would further ensure prompt release of funds for NN operations. The NN could also request for exemption of its operations fund account from the TSA policy. This is in consideration of the sensitive and peculiar nature of operations in the NN. This would have an impact positive in mitigating the constraints posed by the TSA policy to NN.

## HANDING OVER OF 45 BAGS OF CANNABIS SATIVA TO NDLEA

17 JUL 25

# COMMANDER'S BIRTHDAY

26 JUL 25



EDITORIAL BOARD INTERVIEW WITH THE COMMANDER

29 JUL 25

## VISIT OF DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION TO NNS BEECROFT

12 AUG 25

## VISIT OF DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL TO NNS BEECROFT

12 AUG 25

## VISIT OF DG NPA TO NNS BEECROFT

13 AUG 25

# HISTORY & ROLES OF CBM

MWOGI Hassan MB

The Chief Boatswain's Mate (CBM), often referred to simply as the "Chief Bosun" or "Bosun," holds a position of immense historical significance and practical importance within naval forces worldwide, including the Royal Navy and the Nigerian Navy

This role is deeply rooted in the maritime traditions of centuries past, evolving from the earliest forms of organized seafaring to the complex operations of modern navies.

## HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF THE CHIEF BOATSWAIN'S MATE

The origins of the Boatswain can be traced back to the very beginnings of organized seafaring. The word "boatswain" itself is ancient, derived from Old English "batswegen," meaning "boat-swain" or "boat-servant." This suggests a long-standing role for an individual responsible for the physical handling and maintenance of a vessel.

## EARLY ROLES AND THE ROYAL NAVY

1. Ancient Seafaring: Even in ancient civilizations like the Egyptians, who engaged in extensive shipping, there would have been individuals responsible for the upkeep of the vessel, the rigging, and the handling of the ship's boats. While not formally named "boatswains," the function existed.
2. Medieval and Early Modern Period: In the Royal Navy's formative years, the Boatswain was one of the earliest established roles, predating many commissioned officer ranks. When the British Crown began hiring ships and formalizing its naval force, warrants were issued not just to ship owners but also to key personnel like the master and the boatswain, marking the origin of the "warrant officer" designation.
3. The "Standing Officer": The Boatswain was considered a "standing officer" of the ship, meaning they remained with the vessel even when it was laid up. This underscored their crucial role in the continuous maintenance and readiness of the ship.
4. Responsibilities on Sailing

**The origins of the Boatswain can be traced back to the very beginnings of organised seafaring. The word "boatswain" itself is ancient, derived from Old English "batswegen", meaning "boat-swain" or "boat-servant". This suggests a long-standing role for an individual responsible for the physical handling and maintenance of a vessel**

Ships: On sailing ships, the Boatswain was the master of all things related to the ship's "Seaman Department." Their responsibilities were extensive and included:

a. Rigging and Sails: Oversight of all rigging, cordage, and sails – their maintenance, repair, and proper handling during operations.
b. Anchors and Cables: Management of the ship's anchors, cables, and mooring lines.
c. Boats: Care and operation of all the ship's boats.
d. Deck and Hull: Supervision of the general maintenance of the ship's hull and upper deck, including tasks like chipping, painting, and cleaning.
e. Stores: Management of Seaman Stores, including paints, tools, and general maintenance supplies.
f. Discipline and Training (of junior ratings): While officers were ultimately responsible for overall discipline, the Boatswain and their mates played a significant role in enforcing order and training junior sailors in seamanship skills.

5. The Boatswain's Pipe: A distinctive symbol of the Boatswain's authority and a practical tool for communication, the boatswain's pipe (or whistle) was used to issue commands and signals to the crew, particularly during noisy operations like hoisting sails or heaving anchor.
6. Emergence of Mates: As ships grew larger and operations became more complex, the Boatswain needed assistance. This led to the creation of "Boatswain's Mates" (BMs) who worked directly under the Boatswain, assisting with all the aforementioned duties. They were the frontline supervisors and skilled practitioners of seamanship.

**THE "CHIEF" DESIGNATION AND MODERN EVOLUTION**

The concept of "Chief Petty Officer" as a distinct senior non-commissioned officer (NCO) rank emerged more formally in the late 19th and early 20th centuries across

various navies, including the Royal Navy. Before this, senior ratings might have held various "first-class" or "leading" designations. The creation of the Chief Petty Officer (CPO) rank elevated the status of these experienced and highly skilled individuals, recognizing their leadership, technical expertise, and crucial role as a bridge between the commissioned officers and the junior ratings.

The Chief Boatswain's Mate, therefore, became the most senior rating within the Seaman department, combining centuries of practical seamanship knowledge with the added responsibilities of a modern Chief Petty Officer.

**The Nigerian Navy's Context**

The Nigerian Navy, established formally in 1956, drew heavily on the traditions, structures, and training methodologies of the Royal Navy due to Nigeria's colonial history. As such, the rank structure and the roles within ratings, including that of the Boatswain's Mate and Chief Boatswain's Mate, were largely adopted from the Royal Navy model.

1. Adaptation of Royal Navy System: The Nigerian Navy inherited a system where experienced ratings were vital for the day-to-day running of ships and shore establishments. The CBM in the Nigerian Navy therefore, holds a similar esteemed position, serving as a pillar of experience, discipline, and practical knowledge.
2. Evolution in the Nigerian Context: While the core responsibilities remain similar, the Nigerian Navy's CBM operates within the specific operational environment of Nigeria, which includes maritime security operations, anti-piracy efforts, hydrographic surveys, and coastal patrols. Their skills are applied to the unique challenges and demands of the Nigerian maritime domain.

**CORE RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLES OF A CHIEF BOATSWAIN'S MATE**

The Chief Boatswain's Mate is a pivotal figure in any naval vessel or shore establishment. They are the epitome of the "professional sailor," combining practical expertise with significant leadership and supervisory responsibilities. Their role is multifaceted, encompassing seamanship, maintenance, training, discipline, and ceremonial duties.

Key Responsibilities and Roles (Common to both Royal Navy and Nigerian Navy)

Seamanship Expert and Practitioner

1. Ship Handling Support: Assisting the Bridge team during complex ship handling evolutions such as berthing, unberthing, anchoring, mooring, and towing operations. This includes directing the deck crew in the precise handling of lines, cables, and anchors.
2. Small Boat Operations: Expertly operating and maintaining all the ship's boats, including fast interceptor craft, rigid hull inflatable boats (RHIBs), and utility boats. This involves launching, recovery, navigation, and ensuring the readiness of these craft for various missions (e.g., boarding operations, search and rescue, personnel transfers).
3. Underway Replenishment (UNREP): Directing and supervising the crucial and often dangerous process of transferring fuel, provisions, and ammunition between ships while at sea. This involves setting up rigging, operating winches, and ensuring the safety of personnel.
4. Rigging and Deck Equipment: Overseeing the maintenance and operation of all deck machinery, including cranes, winches, davits, and other cargo handling equipment. They are responsible for ensuring all rigging is safe and fit for purpose.

Seaman Department Supervisor and Manager

1. Leadership of Seaman Division: The CBM is typically the senior enlisted leader of the ship's or establishment's Seaman department or division. They are responsible for the overall efficiency and readiness of their team.

2. Work Planning and Assignment: Under the direction of the Chief Officer (First Lieutenant), the CBM plans, schedules, and assigns daily work to the deck crew, ensuring tasks are completed efficiently and to high standards. This includes routine maintenance, specific operational requirements, and special evolutions.
3. Maintenance and Upkeep: Supervising the chipping, painting, cleaning, and general preservation of the ship's exterior surfaces, ensuring the vessel maintains its appearance and structural integrity. This extends to life-saving appliances and firefighting equipment on deck.
4. Stores Management: Managing the inventory, storage, and proper use of all seaman stores, including paints, cleaning supplies, cordage, and tools.

Trainer and Mentor

1. Skill Development: A crucial role is the training and mentorship of junior ratings (Ordinary Seamen, Able Seamen, and Leading Seamen). The CBM imparts invaluable practical knowledge in seamanship, navigation, and general shipboard duties.
2. Safety Training: Ensuring that all deck crew are proficient in safety procedures, particularly during high-risk operations like UNREP, anchoring, and boat handling. They conduct drills and training sessions for abandon ship, firefighting, and damage control.
3. Professional Development: Guiding junior personnel in their career progression, helping them understand naval regulations, and fostering a strong sense of discipline and professionalism.

Discipline and Morale:

1. Enforcing Standards: As a senior NCO, the CBM plays a vital role in maintaining discipline, upholding naval standards, and ensuring adherence to regulations among the junior ratings. They are often the first point of contact for issues regarding conduct and performance.
2. Bridge between Officers and Ratings: The CBM acts as a crucial link, conveying information and orders from the officers to the ratings, and conversely, representing the concerns and welfare of the ratings to the officer corps.
3. Foster Esprit de Corps: Through their leadership and example, CBMs significantly contribute to the morale, teamwork, and esprit de corps within the deck department and the ship's company as a whole.

Ceremonial Duties

1. Naval Traditions: The CBM is often responsible for the execution of naval ceremonies and traditions, such as piping the side for senior officers, raising and lowering flags, and preparing the ship for official visits or parades. They are the custodians of centuries of naval heritage.
2. Use of the Boatswain's Pipe: They are the primary users of the boatswain's pipe for official calls, salutes, and signaling during various shipboard routines.

Safety and Damage Control

1. Safety Officer (Deck): The CBM often serves as a key safety officer for all deck operations, identifying hazards, implementing safety protocols, and ensuring compliance with safety regulations.
2. Damage Control: Integral to the ship's damage control organization, the CBM and their team are vital in responding to emergencies like fires, floods, and other battle damage, often leading repair parties on deck.

In both the Royal Navy and the Nigerian Navy, the Chief Boatswain's Mate is not just a rank; it's a role embodying deep experience, practical wisdom, and unwavering dedication. They are the backbone of the deck department, ensuring that the ship is always ready for its mission and that junior sailors are trained and disciplined to uphold the highest standards of naval service. Their influence extends beyond their immediate department, shaping the overall efficiency, safety, and morale of the entire ship's company.

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# THE ROLE OF MUSIC IN MILITARY CUSTOM & REGIMENTATION

Lt EO Ajayi

Music is one of the fundamental areas that the military service could hardly do without. When you displace music in military, you equally displace activeness, adventure and professionalism. This is because music is a divinely instituted and ordained mystery or a phenomenon that has the ability and power to induce or inspire troops.

The Othman Empire in the 13th century BC, having known the role of music in military regiments, inculcated music to operate in harmony with the foot or allied soldiers. Historically, Othman was the first man to introduce military bands into regiments to provide well-balanced music. The earliest examples of military bands are thought to date back to the 13th century, hailing from the Ottoman Empire. Groups then formed in the armed forces across European nations which were inspired by those military bands. Originally the colonel of a regiment would hire a civilian musician to perform, until the mid-18th century when enlisted men took up the role of military band members. Traditionally, military bands would play music on the battlefield to boost the morale of the troops. Furthermore, drummers would summon men from their farms and land to call them to service. Military music also played a vital tactical role during battle, giving certain instructions to soldiers.

Indeed, this was the only way commanders could convey orders to their forces in the midst of battle.

**OVERVIEW OF MILITARY BAND IN NIGERIA**

Nigerian military bands follow the British Household Division format and are heavily influenced and aided by British military bands. Military bands in Nigeria share similar practices with the Nigerian Police Band, which was considered to be the pioneer military band formation in the country, being established in 1892. Being mostly composed of buglers at the time of its founding, the band was originally composed of British servicemen, rather than native Nigerians. Over the years, however, the Nigerian Armed Forces have taken enormous steps to indigenise military bands due to the overuse of American and British military music and the exposure of the military to Nigerian art. Some of these steps include the establishment of the Nigerian Army School of Music (NASM) and the creation of new military music. Nigerian military bands are today under the command of the Headquarters of the Nigerian Armed Forces in Abuja.

The Nigerian Army Band Corps (NABC), which provides official military records for the armed forces, is the most senior band in the Nigerian Army and in the armed forces. Other bands maintained by the Nigerian Armed Forces outside the NABC include the Nigerian Air Force Band, the Nigerian Navy Band, and the Nigerian Defence Academy Band. The Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps Band also serves as a paramilitary band. The Nigerian Navy Band was established in 1963, months prior to the country becoming a republic. The Air Force Band was the most recent military band established,

being founded in 1970. Enlisted musicians only joined a year later and did not have its first director of music until 1975. On 9 April 2019, the NAF graduated its first set of pipers from an air base in Abuja who would later comprise the newly formed NAF Pipe Band. A pipe section can also be found in the Guards Brigade. Steel

The Nigerian Army Band Corps (NABC), which provides official military records for the armed forces, is the most senior band in the Nigerian Army and in the armed forces. Other bands maintained by the Nigerian Armed Forces outside the NABC include the Nigerian Air Force Band, the Nigerian Navy Band, and the Nigerian Defence Academy Band. The Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps Band also serves as a paramilitary band.

pans were introduced in the late 70s, with the NABC beginning the process of manufacturing steel pans. This was the only steel band in the country until 2001. The Army School of Music in Ojo and the Navy School of Music in Ota both provide musical instruction as it pertains to incoming musicians. In September 2019, Ibok Ekwe Ibas, the Chief of the Nigerian Naval Staff, announced plans for the Navy Directorate of Music to partner with its foreign counterparts as well as the Music Society of Nigeria to improve its performances.

**SPECIFIC USE OF MUSIC IN REGIMENTATION**

The specific use of music in military regimentation is embedded in the military way of life and quest to conquer their objective. As far back as 2,500 years ago, during the reign of the Ottoman Empire in Istanbul, military bands became part of the support group of the regiment to communicate orders to soldiers in battle with the use of the bugle and drums to provide morale and enhanced music at special events and ceremonial military parades with instruments like the fife (pipe), drums, bugle, cymbals and some other traditional instruments. Music takes prominence in the following activities, such as when the national flag is hoisted and lowered and when the regimental and national colours are on parade or displayed. At the Quarter Guard, the bugler welcomes visiting VIPs and alerts the regiment of any incoming danger. The bugler and the band are always in ceremonies such as the Remembrance Day parade, the National Day parade, the State House presentation of credentials, the guard of honour for visiting heads of state, military burials, tattoos, weddings and other social activities. Most of the music played are compositions from traditional or folk tunes and popular tunes with the titles of songs known to the regiments predicting their experiences as a regiment, such as Dan Baba, Old Calabar, Iyani Wura, Academy Slow March and a host of others. Military bands can vary in function and duties based on their specific mission. Bands may perform for a variety of reasons, such as special events, military parades, military reviews, military tattoos, public relations, and troop entertainment. It may also play a role in boosting the esprit de corps or morale of the entire military, a particular service branch or a specific unit (usually regiment/brigade-sized at least).

Military bands play ceremonial and marching music, including the national anthems and patriotic songs. A concert band's repertoire includes original wind compositions, arrangements of orchestral compositions, light music, popular tunes and concert marches found in standard repertoire. Modern-day military musicians often perform a variety of other styles of music in different ensembles, from chamber music to rock and roll. Culturally, hunting calls are translated into unit regimental calls for use as timers or activity announcers and communicators. The bugle call wakes the regiment up every morning at first light (Reveille) and at sunset (Retreat), and the last bugle call at night is for all to go to sleep or rest. Whenever there is a court martial, the bugle is blown to remind soldiers that there is the law and there is punishment for all regiment law offenders. In battle, the

Regiment Band provides loud music to harass and overrun the enemies by regulating the tempo of music, thereby raising the morale of their own troops to conquer, the same way the band leads in regimental parades.

**Parade**:
An important aspect of music in military custom and regimentation worthy of mention is parade. Although military parades are an extension of drills, their importance cannot be overshadowed because they showcase the level of discipline, expertise and strength of the regiment or unit. Comparatively, therefore, parades are an extension of drills which are made more ceremonial by projecting the skill acquired on the drill square to the outside world. Because of the importance of military parades in the projection of our cohesiveness, discipline and regimentation, these important parades include:

**Reveille.**
Reveille is the first bugle call sounded in the early hours of the morning at 0600hrs. It signifies the commencement of the day's activities in the barracks. It involves turning out the Quarter Guard and hoisting of the National flag. A deliberate training of buglers so as to sustain this important tradition is required.

**Retreat.** Retreat is sounded at sunset to notify sentries to start challenging intruders until sunrise and to tell all troops to move back to their quarters or leave the centre of fighting. This involves the turning out of the Quarter Guard and the sounding of the bugle while the National Flag is being lowered. Similarly, all troops within earshot are expected to halt and face the direction of the flag, while officers and warrant officers in uniform are to salute.

**Tattoo.** Tattoo is an outdoor military custom that shows using the bugle at night to check men on a daily basis after the day's work. It's an aspect of regimentation, especially now that there appears to be some increase in the involvement of military personnel in crimes. This will go a long way in curtailing the activities of some bad eggs amongst the personnel.

**Ceremonial Parade.**
The military ceremonial parade is also another aspect of music in military custom and regimentation which projects the military's image. It is a source of inspiration. It inspires members of the military as well as those who watch it.
**Morale Boosting.** Music has the power to inspire and uplift troops during challenging times. Military marches and upbeat tunes can boost morale, helping soldiers overcome fatigue, fear, and adversity. Drumbeats, bugle calls, and uplifting melodies can create a sense of unity and determination among soldiers.

Military bands play ceremonial and marching music, including the national anthems and patriotic songs. A concert band's repertoire includes original wind compositions, arrangements of orchestral compositions, light music, popular tunes and concert marches found in standard repertoire.

**Other Parades.**
Other parades which involve the use of music are made manifest to sustain their consistency, discipline and regimentation, including Quarter Guards, Change of Guards and Guard of Honour (for visiting dignitaries).

**Social activities.**
Music can provide soldiers with a means of entertainment and relaxation during periods of downtime. Military bands often perform concerts or play informal tunes during leisure hours, helping soldiers unwind and bond.

**FACTORS MILITATING AGAINST MUSIC IN MILITARY CUSTOM AND REGIMENTATION**

The following have been observed to be factors militating against music in military custom and regimentation:

- Inadequate training and manpower.
- Non-adherence of relevant courses
- Inadequate funding of music department
- Poor care and maintenance of musical instrument

**MEASURES TO ENHANCE MUSIC IN MILITARY CUSTOM AND REGIMENTATION**

In order for music to continue its function and perfect role in military custom and regimentation, the following measures should be considered:

- Regular and continuous training. All band personnel should be trained regularly.
- Attendance of relevant courses
- Provision of adequate funding of the music department. Purchase of musical and more equipment in order to enhance personnel performance.
- Proper care and maintenance of musical instruments.

**CONCLUSION**

The military pattern of work, unlike many other professions, is a calling and a way of life. Most of the daily experience is shared among soldiers during Tattoo, a period of rest and relaxation after a hectic day featuring singing, dancing and other forms of entertainment. In all ceremonial and regimental parades, the bass drum beat determines the pace of the troops while other musical instruments play the accompanying parts to make the parade entertaining; the bugle taps dominate the regiment instructional orders with its loud volume of sound. From Reveille to Retreat, while salutation fanfares at arrival and departure indicate the arrival and departure of guest of honour at all regiment activity. Therefore, the role of music cannot be relegated to the background in military custom and regimentation.

## 85TH BIRTHDAY OF MRS DAME AIKHOMU

HEADS

## COMMANDER'S VISITS TO DANGOTE REFINERY, LEKKI -EPE

COMMANDER'S VISIT TO NAVAL OUTPOST TUNGEJI, IPOKIA, OGUN STATE

VISIT TO 9 BRIGADE HQ LAGOS

5 MAR 25

VISIT OF CNS ADVANCED INSPECTION TEAM 2025

## GRADUATION CEREMONY OF NACOLM

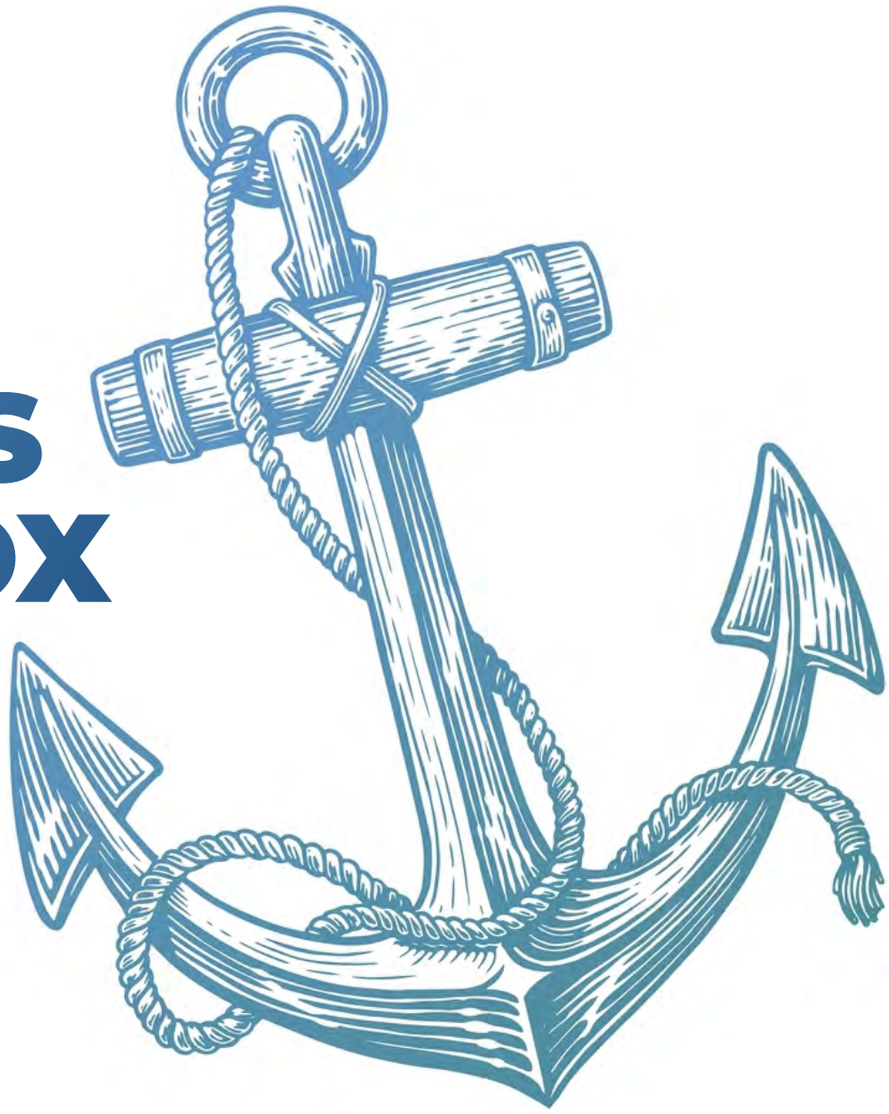
GRADUATION CEREMONY OF NIGERIAN NAVY PRIMARY SCHOOL, NAVY ROAD, APAPA

PRESENTATION OF AWARD TO THE COMMANDER BY JUNIOR RATES

SENT-FORTH FOR GOING OFFICERS AND WINNING-IN OF MESS MEMBERS

POLICE OFFICERS' WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION CONVENTION 2025

# THE SAILOR'S PARADOX



A sailor's life, a constant hum,
Round the clock, the duty comes.
Even off, a restless mind,
Always ready, left behind.

Limitless sacrifice, a silent toll,
Family's moments, a gaping hole.
The phone a tether, a constant ring,
A future promise, on broken wing.

The body aches, the spirit strains,
Still wheeled to work through sun and rains.
Expected greatness, though worn and frayed,
A debt of service, never paid.

To be indispensable, a heavy prize,
With phantom rewards before our eyes.
A tug-of-war, a weary fight,
To be excellent or fade to night.

"Yes, sir," a word that's quick to fly,
Excellence demanded, reaching high.
A constant move, a new address,
A nomad's life, in sheer duress.

For mothers, children, the endless sway,
New schools, new towns, a different way.
For married men, a single bed,
A life of waiting, left unsaid.

A life monotonous, if not aware,
A loss of self, a constant care.
Ten years minimum, a decade's span,
A longing for home, a different plan.

But in this forging, a leader's rise,
Teamwork's value, in your eyes.
Discipline, resilience, a steadfast grace,
Communication, finding its place.

New friends are found, a steady hand,
Making ends meet across the land.
Still, a deep ache, a yearning known,
To find a place to call your own.

**WOSN**
**Okamgba O**

# SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE MILITARY:

## OPPORTUNITIES PERILS AND A SAFE MIDDLE PATH FOR THE NIGERIAN NAVY

**BY Lt Cdr I Mohammed**

Social media has transformed global communication, blurring lines between private lives and professional responsibilities. Its influence is widespread and immediate. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter (X), Instagram, and WhatsApp allow for real-time dissemination of information across continents, making them powerful tools for personal expression, diplomacy, and even warfare. In Nigeria, social media penetration has increased significantly, especially among youth and professionals. As with civilians, personnel of the Nigerian Navy (NN) have embraced these platforms for various purposes ranging from personal, educational, and operational.

While this digital connectivity presents unique opportunities for transparency, engagement, and morale-building, it also introduces significant risks to national security, operational secrecy, and personnel safety. Therefore, this article explores the dual nature of social media use within the NN. It assesses both the benefits and dangers and proposes a balanced approach for safe, secure, and strategic use by naval personnel and units.

### WHY THE NIGERIAN NAVY SHOULD USE SOCIAL MEDIA

In today's interconnected world, social media plays a pivotal role in shaping public perception, promoting institutional transparency, recruiting talent, and managing crises. For modern militaries, including the NN, leveraging these platforms is essential for visibility, accountability, and citizen engagement. As social media evolves, defense institutions across Europe, America, Asia, and Africa have embraced its power to foster trust, educate the public, and enhance internal communication. Accordingly, below are the reasons the NN could embrace strategic social media use:

a. Professional Military Engagement. Social media provides a unique platform for NN personnel to connect with global military professionals. Platforms like TikTok, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter (X), and professional forums enable the exchange of ideas, best practices, and innovations in maritime security and naval operations.

b. Enhancing Public Awareness and Civil-Military Relations. Social media allows the NN to showcase its contributions to national security, disaster response, humanitarian efforts, and maritime security. This visibility builds public trust and fosters a stronger civil-military bond. Therefore, it is suggested that NN could establish a centralised digital media unit, and a dedicated team should manage official accounts, monitor trends, develop content, and respond to emergencies or disinformation.

c. Countering Misinformation and Strategic Communication. In the age of misinformation and fake news, it is vital for the NN to maintain a credible online presence. By providing real-time, verified information, the NN can counter hostile narratives, protect its reputation, and promote national interests. Therefore, it is suggested that NN could develop a NN Social Media Policy with clear guidelines outlining acceptable content and conduct, operational security (OPSEC) provisions, crisis communication protocols and disciplinary actions for misuse.

d. Operational Transparency and Accountability. Global norms emphasise transparency in governance. Social media serves as a soft power tool for showcasing reforms, internal accountability, and rule of law in operations, aligning with democratic oversight and international human rights obligations.

e. Diplomatic and Regional Influence. By participating in regional campaigns (e.g., anti-piracy operations, ECOWAS missions, and joint exercises), the NN can use social media to strengthen maritime diplomacy, showcase leadership, and support Nigeria's foreign policy objectives.

f. Institutional Transparency and Trust. A managed social media presence can strengthen public trust. The Nigerian Navy can share operational milestones, humanitarian missions, training exercises, and naval diplomacy efforts, demonstrating professionalism and accountability in line with democratic values.

g. Family and Community Engagement. By sharing non-sensitive updates, graduations, or outreach events, social media allows families of sailors and officers to remain connected to the service of their loved ones. This strengthens the military-family bond and helps manage anxiety during deployments.

h. Real-Time Recognition of Excellence. Social media can amplify the achievements of personnel, complementing traditional forms of recognition such as medals and commendations. Rapid public acknowledgements of bravery, innovation, or service can boost morale across the force.

i. Rapid Lessons-Sharing and Doctrine Development. Social media platforms and military blogs can be

leveraged for quickly sharing insights from exercises, naval operations, and training outcomes. This democratises knowledge and supports the "train as you fight" ethos.

j. Supporting Modern Training and E-learning. As the Nigerian Navy integrates technology into training, social media can be a key tool for microlearning, simulation previews, and doctrine dissemination, especially in remote or deployed environments. However, for this vision to become reality, senior officers and unit commanders must lead by example in understanding both the power and pitfalls of digital presence.

k. Recruitment and Youth Engagement. With Nigeria's population being predominantly young and digitally active, social media is an effective channel for engaging youth and promoting naval careers. It allows the NN to humanise its image, attract qualified candidates, and highlight career opportunities.

l. Bridging the Generational Gap. A large portion of naval recruits are millennials and Gen Zs, who are digital natives. NN can leverage social media to communicate more effectively with younger personnel, improving morale and organisational alignment.

**THE PERILS OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE**

The strengths of social media openness, speed, and reach are also its vulnerabilities. NN personnel posting unchecked content on platforms can expose themselves, their units, and operations to unnecessary risk. Several global case studies, including Australia's Exercise Hamel, have revealed how personal and unit-level oversharing on platforms like Facebook and Instagram can lead to operational compromise. Similar issues are increasingly observed in Nigeria, particularly. However, without proper digital discipline, social media use can lead to reputational damage, national security breaches, and even operational failures. Accordingly, the following is a military-centric analysis of the perils of social media:

a. Operational Security (OPSEC) Breaches: Unintended disclosure of deployment locations, tactical movements, vessel positions and training exercises can be exploited by hostile elements (e.g., pirates, terrorists, cyber adversaries). For example, in 2007, insurgents in Iraq used geo-tagged photos posted by soldiers to target patrol routes, resulting in deadly ambushes. Consequently, the photos or status updates by NN personnel while onboard ships or in field deployments may unintentionally expose sensitive movements or mission timings. Therefore, there is a need to sustain awareness of the social media policy intermittently in order to educate the NN personnel on the danger of the social media policy violation.

b. National and Maritime Security Risks: Social media platforms have become battlegrounds for psychological operations (PSYOPS), terrorist propaganda, maritime piracy intelligence sharing and misinformation and disinformation against military efforts. For example, Boko Haram and ISWAP have used encrypted apps and social media to spread propaganda, recruit, and coordinate attacks. Accordingly, the NN, as guardians of Nigeria's maritime domain, can have careless online behaviour by naval personnel exploited to track patrol patterns, vessel activity, or operational vulnerabilities in the Gulf of Guinea. Therefore, there is a need to sensitise NN personnel on the danger of reckless use of social media in order to educate the NN personnel on the danger of the social media policy violation.

c. Cybersecurity Threats and Phishing: NN personnel can fall prey to social engineering attacks, identity theft, phishing scams and malware disguised as harmless links or files. For example, in 2019, U.S. Navy personnel were targeted by adversaries through fake Facebook profiles, resulting in security breaches. Therefore, NN personnel who click on suspicious links, engage with fake social media profiles, or use unsecured devices may compromise sensitive naval data or become victims of blackmail. Consequently, NN could be cautious and avoid clicking unknown or suspicious links in order to safeguard themselves against engineering attacks and identity theft. Accordingly, it is suggested that NN could ensure all personnel use two-factor authentication and avoid

unsecured networks.

d. Mental Health and Psychological Harm. Prolonged use of social media can lead to depression, anxiety, and stress; addiction and distraction during duty; and low self-esteem and suicidal ideation. It is pertinent to state that a 2019 JAMA Psychiatry study found social media use significantly correlated with mental health decline, particularly in young adults. Consequently, personnel on duty, onboard ships, or during long deployments may be more vulnerable to digital fatigue and emotional stress induced by negative social media interaction. Accordingly, it is suggested that NN could integrate social media risk training into basic training and officer courses.

e. Misinformation and Public Panic: Sharing unverified content, fake news, or distorted updates can incite public panic, damage national cohesion, and trigger media misinformation cycles among citizens. In Nigeria, false claims about military coups and attacks have trended on social media, prompting unnecessary alarm and government countermeasures. Therefore, NN personnel must avoid forwarding, liking, or commenting on unverified security-related news, especially involving defence institutions, in order to be safe from misinformation and disinformation. Accordingly, it is suggested that NN could develop a comprehensive NN Social Media Policy based on international best practices.

f. Threats of Social Media Misuse. The threats of social media misuse are as follows:

g. Revealing locations of ships, operations, or bases through geo-tagging

h. Posting classified or sensitive images/videos

iii. Slandering officers, colleagues, or national leadership.

vi. Participating in viral trends that demean the uniform.

v. Spreading fake news or conspiracy theories.

h. Institutional Implications. The misuse of social media by NN personnel could lead to:

i. Embarrassment of the service.

ii. Endangerment of lives.

iii. Breach of national security.

iv. Violation of internal military laws.

## A SAFE MIDDLE PATH: RESPONSIBLE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE NIGERIAN NAVY

The digital era has redefined communication. For the NN, an elite maritime force tasked with safeguarding Nigeria's territorial waters, maintaining professionalism and operational integrity is paramount. As NN personnel increasingly engage on social media platforms, the institution faces recurring challenges, such as incessant violations of its social media policy by ratings, officers, and civilian staff. Accordingly, these violations range from the posting of sensitive materials and uniformed personnel participating in trending challenges to sharing politically charged or offensive content. Such actions compromise the Navy's image, mission confidentiality, and national security. Consequently, this article advocates for a balanced approach – not a ban, nor blind freedom, but a safe middle path that embraces responsible and regulated social media use. Therefore, below are the suggested rules for secure use of social media:

a. Lock Down Privacy Settings. Ensure personal social media accounts are restricted to known contacts. Public profiles should not reveal rank, posting, or unit affiliations.

b. Talk to Family & Friends. Families must be sensitised about tagging, posting images of uniforms, or disclosing sensitive deployments online.

c. Think Before You Share. Every photo or comment should be evaluated: Can this harm me, my unit, or my country?

d. Disable Geo-Tagging. Prevent automatic location updates on images and posts.

e. Avoid Linking Military Identity to Personal Pages. Unless on official accounts, do not mix naval rank/title with personal social media.

f. Use Official Handles for Naval Engagement. Only verified NN social media handles should be used for public-facing communication and crisis response.

g. Train Commanders to Develop "Essential Information" Protection Plans. Units must define what should not be posted online and hold regular sensitisation briefings.

## SOCIAL MEDIA AS AN INTELLIGENCE AND INFLUENCE TOOL

Social media has reshaped how conflicts are fought, peace is maintained, and maritime domains are monitored. From Twitter to Telegram, digital platforms now function as real-time intelligence networks and battlegrounds of influence. For the NN tasked with safeguarding Nigeria's maritime domain, countering piracy, and protecting offshore infrastructure, leveraging social media offers a critical edge in the information environment. The NN must evolve to exploit open-source intelligence (OSINT), monitor regional sentiment, combat misinformation, and project national maritime power strategically. Social media as an open-source intelligence tool can be grouped in the following:

a. Social Media as an Intelligence Tool. Social media platforms provide OSINT that supports strategic, operational, and tactical decision-making. Accordingly, the social media platforms provide OSINT by proving:

i. Geolocation tracking of vessels, movements, and illegal activities.
ii. Monitoring pirate activity in the Gulf of Guinea.
iii. Detecting smugglers and illegal bunkering networks via shared content. For example, in 2021, Nigerian authorities disrupted an illegal crude oil smuggling ring after videos surfaced on Facebook showing illicit activities near Bonny Island.
iv. Tracking conversations by extremist groups (e.g., ISWAP, Boko Haram affiliates).
v. Analysing narratives that fuel maritime insecurity or civilian hostility toward naval presence.
vi. Monitoring foreign state-sponsored influence campaigns targeting West Africa. The NATO STRATCOM Centre of Excellence documented how state actors use bots and trolls to manipulate public opinion in Africa, especially during elections or protests.
vii. Identifying real-time maritime emergencies (e.g., capsizing, piracy, oil spills).
viii. Public complaints on coastal insecurity and illegal fishing posted online.
ix. Monitoring hashtags related to defence and shipping in the region.

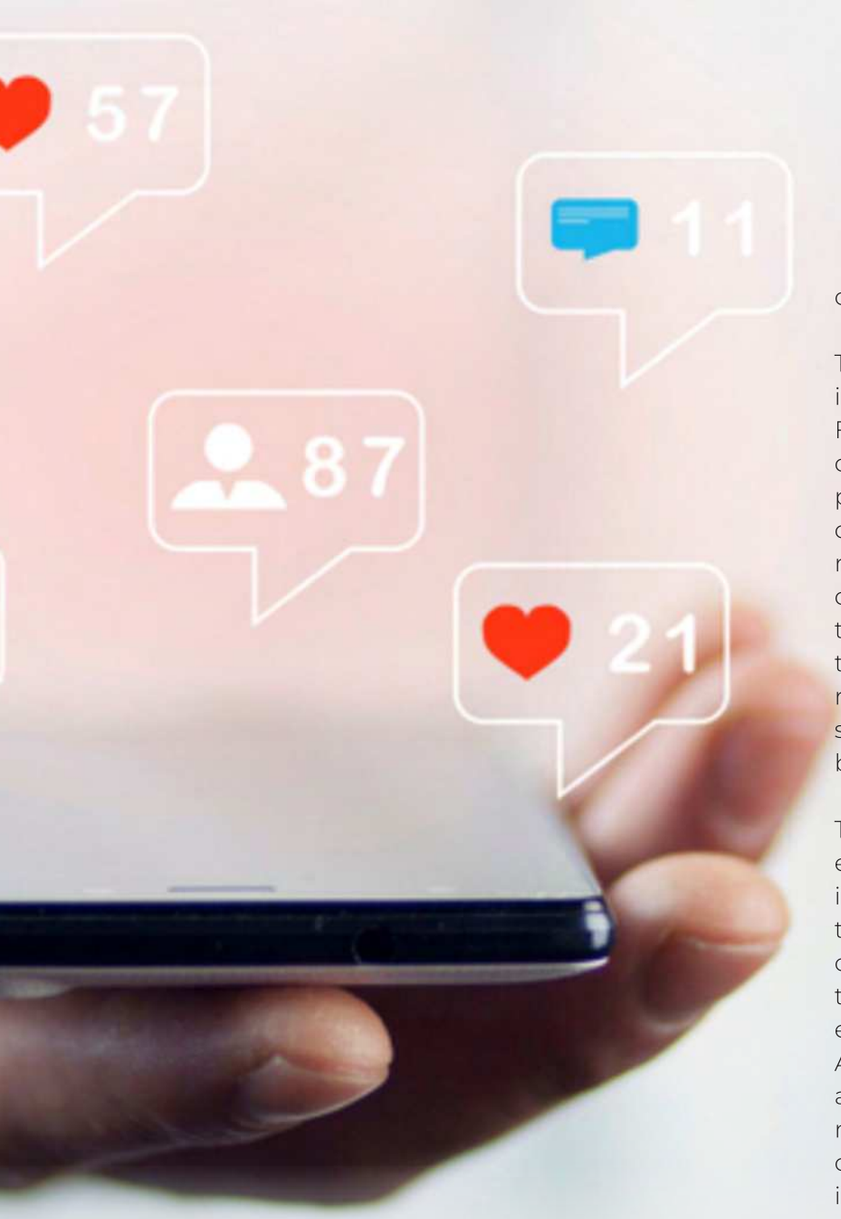
b. Social Media as an Influence Tool. Military influence on social media is a form of Strategic Communication (StratCom), including psychological operations (PSYOPS), public affairs, and civil-military cooperation. Accordingly, the NN shaped public perception through:

i. Promoting NN's role in nation-building, maritime safety, and disaster response.

ii. Reinforcing trust during anti-piracy operations or joint patrols.
iii. Discrediting misinformation from adversarial actors or civilian panic. For example, during Exercise OBANGAME EXPRESS, sharing real-time updates on platforms like Twitter built international confidence in NN's readiness and professionalism.
iv. Debunking fake reports that damage the NN's image (e.g., false accusations during port enforcement).
v. Correcting misrepresented videos or incidents.
vi. Engaging influencers or credible voices to amplify truth. For example, the Nigerian Army's Directorate of Defence Media Operations successfully debunked a viral fake video on military misconduct in 2022 using a coordinated digital campaign.

c. Psychological Operations (PSYOPS). Social media is a tool of influence which NN could leverage to:

i. Dissuading pirates, insurgents, and criminal gangs through displays of strength and reach.
ii. Shaping behaviour in maritime communities through awareness campaigns. For example,




messages in local languages on Facebook and WhatsApp groups to reduce youth recruitment into piracy.

## CONCLUSION

Social media is no longer optional; it is integral to modern life and warfare. The NN must not shy away from its use but must develop clear guidelines, training modules, and leadership by example to mitigate risks while exploiting its power. It is time for the Navy to evolve digitally, balancing openness with operational security, engagement with restraint, and connection with caution. A smart, educated approach to social media use can make the NN more resilient, relatable, and ready for the demands of the 21st-century maritime environment. Therefore, adopting social media is not merely about modernisation; it is about strategic relevance, trust-building, and institutional resilience. Therefore, NN, social media provides an unparalleled platform to project power, engage stakeholders, and strengthen national security narratives in the 21st century. With the right policies, training, and leadership commitment, the NN can harness social media as a force multiplier in communication, diplomacy, and public accountability.

The perils of social media are clear, justified, and increasingly complex in today's volatile digital ecosystem. For the NN and its personnel, vigilance, discipline, and digital responsibility are non-negotiable. A single careless post can cost lives, compromise national security, or bring disrepute to the service. Accordingly, each NN officer and rating is an ambassador of the Navy, and irresponsible digital behaviour reflects not just on the individual but on the institution as a whole. Therefore, officers must ensure their subordinates are educated and monitored regarding their digital footprint, and Commands are suggested to incorporate digital awareness into daily briefings.

The NN cannot afford to remain static in a dynamic digital environment. As custodians of Nigeria's maritime integrity, NN personnel must reflect discipline not only on the seas but also in cyberspace. Banning social media outright is impractical and counterproductive. Instead, the safe middle path of responsible, guided, and educated use is the only sustainable solution. Accordingly, by updating policies, educating personnel, and embracing smart monitoring, the NN can turn social media into a strategic asset rather than a liability. The NN could recognise the dual value of social media as both an intelligence-gathering asset and an influence weapon.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that NN should:

a. Establish a Digital Intelligence and Influence Cell (DIIC).
b. Train Digital Commanders (Equip officers with courses on cyber operations, OSINT, StratCom, and PSYOPS in the digital domain.)
c. Ensure all personnel use two-factor authentication and avoid unsecured networks.
d. Sustain social media policy awareness lectures for NN personnel.

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# COMMEMORATION OF THE ARMED FORCES CELEBRATION AND REMEMBRANCE DAY AS A NATIONAL HOLIDAY IN NIGERIA: A PILLAR FOR NATIONAL UNITY

**R Adm**
**PP Nimmyel**

In every nation's history, there lies a tapestry woven with the threads of sacrifice, courage and unwavering dedication of its Armed Forces. These intricately intertwined threads form the narrative of a nation's resilience, marking the chapters where the call of duty is louder than the sound of discord. For this reason, most governments designate a special day annually for their citizens to pay tribute and collectively express gratitude to the personnel of the Armed Forces in recognition of the sacrifices made in service to the nation.

Accordingly, this profound gesture has continued to motivate the Armed Forces of several countries, thereby promoting national unity.

In the United States, the tradition of honouring her Armed Forces manifests in the observance of Veterans Day, held annually on 11 November (US Department of Veterans Affairs, 2022). The significance of Veterans Day symbolises a collective acknowledgement of the sacrifices made by generations of service men and women. On this day, the nation pauses to reflect on the

valour and commitment of those who have donned the uniform, with ceremonies, parades and commemorative events held across the country. This has served as a unifying force, bringing together Americans from all walks of life to appreciate the personnel of the Armed Forces. Thus, the mutual reverence for United States Veterans Day transcends beyond political, social and cultural divides, thereby fostering a spirit of patriotism and national unity.

The Kenyan "Mashujaa Day" is celebrated annually on 20 October to honour the nation's heroes, including military personnel and civilians who have shown exceptional courage and dedication in different fields (Ministry of Defence – Kenya, 2023). The day features ceremonies, parades, and community events where all Kenyans from diverse backgrounds unite to honour the contributions of the Kenyan People's Defence Forces and other national heroes. This collective recognition of bravery and loyalty has boosted cohesion among the citizens of Kenya, encouraging a sense of duty and nationalism. Given this, Mashujaa Day as a national holiday in Kenya has fostered national unity in the country.

In Nigeria, the annual commemoration of Armed Forces Celebration and Remembrance Day takes place on 15 January and is preceded by a week-long series of comprehensive activities (Ministry of Defence, 2023). These include medical outreach programs, visits to the families of deceased personnel, Juma'at prayers, interdenominational church services, and nationwide wreath-laying ceremonies, among others. Pertinently, individuals wishing to honour the Armed Forces of Nigeria receive a red emblem adorned with the national flag and the year of commemoration before the celebration. Although the events are well-detailed, there is a lack of cognisance among certain segments of society. This could be attributed to the perception that

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The Armed Forces Celebration and Remembrance Day is a time for contemplation as it provides an opportunity for Nigerians to collectively express appreciation for the sacrifices made by the military.

the day is designated as a work-free day only for members of the Armed Forces rather than a national holiday for the entire nation. This distinction could contribute to a perceived divide between the military and civilian populace. Consequently, an absence of acknowledgement of the Armed Forces Celebration and Remembrance Day as a national holiday could inadvertently create a sense of exclusion, thereby undermining national unity in Nigeria.

The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to highlight the importance of Armed Forces Celebration and Remembrance Day as a national holiday towards improving national unity in Nigeria. The paper will cover an overview of the Armed Forces Celebration and Remembrance Day in Nigeria and the designation of the Armed Forces Celebration and Remembrance Day as a national day in Nigeria towards building national unity.

AIM

The aim of this paper is to discuss the significance of Armed Forces Celebration and Remembrance Day as a national holiday towards strengthening national unity in Nigeria with a view to making recommendations.

OVERVIEW OF THE ARMED FORCES CELEBRATION AND REMEMBRANCE DAY IN NIGERIA

The Armed Forces Celebration and Remembrance Day holds a special place in Nigeria's annual calendar, marked by reverence, reflection and recognition of the sacrifices made by its military personnel. The day was previously observed on 11 November to align with the Remembrance Day for World War II veterans in the British Commonwealth (Korieh, 2020). However, in 1970, after the Nigerian Civil War, it was moved to 15 January, marking the conclusion of the war to preserve national unity in the Country (Onuoha, 2013).

This solemn day is commemorated as a work-free day for the Nigerian Armed Forces. Accordingly, a ceremony is held at the cenotaph of the "unknown soldier," where Service chiefs, heads of security agencies, political leaders and various stakeholders converge to pay tribute to the courageous war veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice (Adeduyite, 2024). The cenotaph, a memorial found in every state, is a powerful symbol of remembrance and respect, especially for soldiers laid to rest on the battlefield. During the ceremony, wreaths, crafted into circular arrangements, are placed at the cenotaph as symbols of tribute to the soldiers. Additionally, white pigeons are released; symbolising peace and unity, while traditional gun salutes pay homage to the Unknown Soldier.

Before the festivities, the President of the Nation chooses a date to launch the Armed Forces emblem. Immediately after, the Nigerian Legion leads an emblem appeal campaign at the Federal and State levels (Agbakwuru, 2023). The introduction of the Armed Forces emblem adds a philanthropic dimension to the day. The Armed Forces emblem, an international symbol of remembrance, is worn with pride, and the campaign serves as a fundraiser to support the welfare of veterans and their dependents. This initiative underscores the nation's commitment to remember and actively contribute to the well-being of those who have served.

The Armed Forces Celebration and Remembrance Day is a time for contemplation as it provides an opportunity for Nigerians to collectively express appreciation for the sacrifices made by the military. Beyond the traditional ceremonies, the day could be designated as a national holiday to recognise the veterans who have served and continue to serve in defence of the nation's ideals. Thus, there is a need to consider designating the Armed Forces Celebration and Remembrance Day as a national holiday.

DESIGNATION OF THE ARMED FORCES CELEBRATION AND REMEMBRANCE DAY AS A NATIONAL DAY IN NIGERIA TOWARDS BUILDING NATIONAL UNITY

The designation of Armed Forces Remembrance Day as a national holiday in Nigeria is important to building national unity. This symbolic recognition would serve as a collective acknowledgement and tribute to the sacrifices made by the armed forces in safeguarding the nation's sovereignty. By elevating it to the status of a public holiday, the entire country would actively participate in honouring the bravery and dedication of military personnel, encouraging a united sense of appreciation and gratitude.

Declaring Armed Forces Remembrance Day as a

national public holiday would also connect citizens across diverse backgrounds, bridging regional, ethnic, and cultural boundaries, with a collective responsibility for upholding the nation's values. This shared observance would contribute to the cultivation of a national identity, reinforcing the idea that the Armed Forces are an integral part of the country's heritage.

Furthermore, the designation of a public holiday would provide a platform for inclusive and comprehensive commemorations. National events, ceremonies, and educational programs would be organised to disseminate the significance of the Armed Forces' contributions to a broader audience. This heightened awareness could strengthen the bond between the military and the civilian population, ensuring that the sacrifices made are etched into the nation's collective consciousness.

In essence, the Armed Forces Celebration and Remembrance Day as a national holiday would promote unity among citizens. This would emphasise the importance of a unified nation and the commitment to its well-being and security. Abroad, the citizens take pride in wearing the emblem in recognition and gratitude as the highest sacrifice a citizen commits to a nation. Thus, recognising Armed Forces Celebration and Remembrance Day as a national holiday would underscore the value of peace and the collective responsibility to preserve it. This, in turn, would serve as a catalyst for fostering patriotism, promoting national unity and giving recognition to our fallen men and women for paying the ultimate price to enhance our nationhood. Lastly, the families left behind will be assured of the gratitude of a nation.

CONCLUSION

The Armed Forces Celebration and Remembrance Day in Nigeria is a testament to the Armed Forces' sacrifice, courage and dedication. The annual commemoration, though initially observed on 11 November, found a new significance on 15 January, symbolising the end of the Nigerian Civil War, aimed at preserving national unity. Although the day is marked by several ceremonies, it is observed as a work-free day exclusively for the armed forces.

Accordingly, the paper identified the need to elevate the Armed Forces Celebration and Remembrance Day as a national holiday in Nigeria. Drawing inspiration from the traditions observed in the United States and Kenya, where similar commemorations have fostered national unity, it was necessary to emphasise the potential for collective acknowledgement and gratitude. Hence, declaring a national holiday would unite individuals from varied backgrounds, fortify national identity, and encourage inclusivity.

Furthermore, recognising Armed Forces Remembrance Day as a national holiday would promote comprehensive commemorations, enhance awareness of the military's contributions, and strengthen bonds between the military and civilians. This recognition would embed the armed forces' sacrifices into the nation's collective consciousness, fostering unity among citizens and emphasising the importance of upholding national values, patriotism and ensuring the country's well-being and security. Overall, this collective gesture would underscore the intrinsic value of peace and serve as a driving force for national unity in Nigeria.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Federal Government of Nigeria should:

a. Declare 15 January as a national holiday annually for the entire nation.
b. Encourage citizens to wear the Armed Forces Celebration and Remembrance Emblem during the period of the commemorations.
c. Enact a policy directed at educating the citizenry at all levels on the historical importance of the Armed Forces Celebration and Remembrance Day.
d. Ensure the provision of adequate support to veterans and the families of the fallen heroes.

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   - Development of software for logistics management
   - Development of maintenance management software for engineering systems

5. **GENERAL CONSULTANCY SERVICE**

## CONTACT US:

10th Floor, Ministry of Defence Building, 1-3 Moloney Street, Tafawa Balewa Square, Lagos +234 7045914435, +234 9045984765
neslmanagement@gmail.com, nesl@navy.mil.ng www.nesl.com.ng

FBT CORAL
ESTATE

# FBT CORAL ESTATE LIMITED

**FBT Coral Estate Limited** introduces
**"The Coral"** a mixed use estate situated on a 54.58 hectares land at Makoko waterfront close to Unilag waterfront and facing third mainland bridge axis, lagos.

## ESTATE FACILITIES

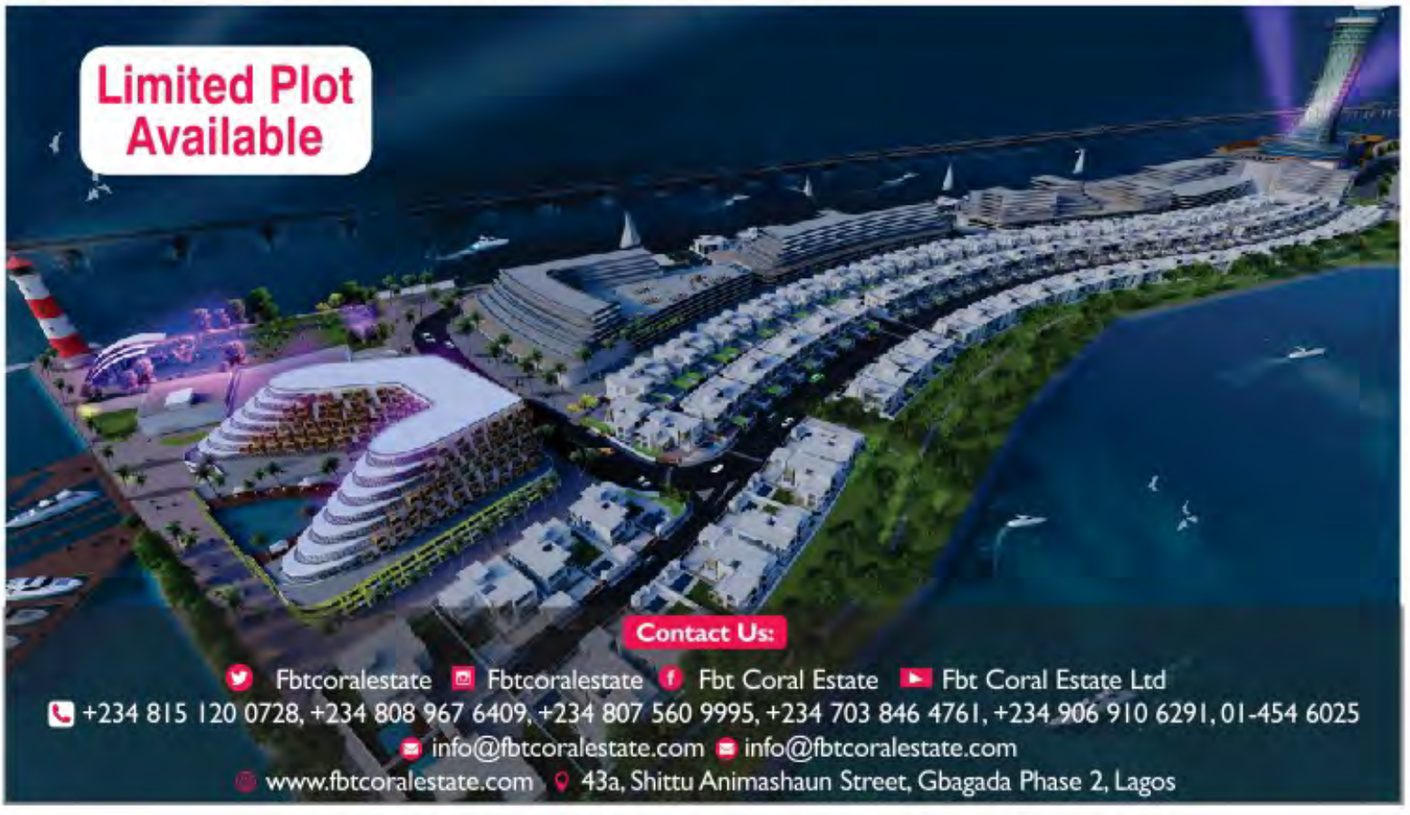
- School
- Fire Station
- Hospital
- Filling Station
- Offices
- Mall
- Sport Centre
- Multi-Level Car Parking ( MLCP)
- Business Hotel & Yatch Club
- Convention Centre & Banquet Hall
- Skills Development Centre & Gallery
- Civic Centre ( Indoor Sport & Recreational Club)

**N150 million for 1000 Sqm**

N75 million for 500 Sqm

ESTATE INFRASTRUCTURE

- Roads
- Uninterrupted Power Supply
- Central Sewage System
- Water System / Treatment Plants
- Underground Cable System
- Telecommunication / CCTV



# NIGERIAN NAVY MICROFINANCE BANK LTD

**Simplify your Banking Experience with NNMFBL**

## eBanking Platform

Our MobileApp

NNMFB APP Registration

Easily manage your finances, transfer funds, bills payment, and access loans all in one secure place

Get Started

**Our USSD Code**

***614*186#**

## LOAN PRODUCTS

- Safe Sail Loan (for Naval Personnel)
- Salary Advance Loan/Quick Cash (for Other military and salary earners)
- Asset Acquisition Loan
- Back To School Loan
- Business Expansion Loan
- LPO Financing Loan

## OUR DEPOSIT PRODUCTS

- Savings Account
- Current Account
- Salary Account
- Fixed Deposit Account
- Kiddies Account
- Target Savings Account

## OUR PATRONAGE

Paramilitary
Salary Earners
SMEs
Cooperate Organisation
Schools

**Connect with us online**

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info@nigerianavymfb.com
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**NB:** We offer competitive and negotiable interest rate for both Deposit and Loans Products

**LOCATE US AT**

Duplex 6, Shop 4 Garki Int'l Market Garki II, FCT Abuja.

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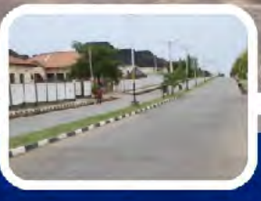
+234 (0)9138426989
+234 (0)8156120060
+234 (0)7063572386

# NAVAL BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION COMPANY LIMITED

Naval Building and Construction Company Limited is a subsidiary of Naval Holdings Limited that is fully equipped to provide top-notch services in construction industry and estate management.

Our esteemed expertise and experience over the years make us confident in our ability to deliver exceptional results to our clients.



**Areas of Core Competence**

- Design, Development and Management of housing estates.
- Building construction
- Road construction
- Borehole drilling and water reticulation
- Consultant Services

***For Inquiries Contact: 09021311681, 07047790533***

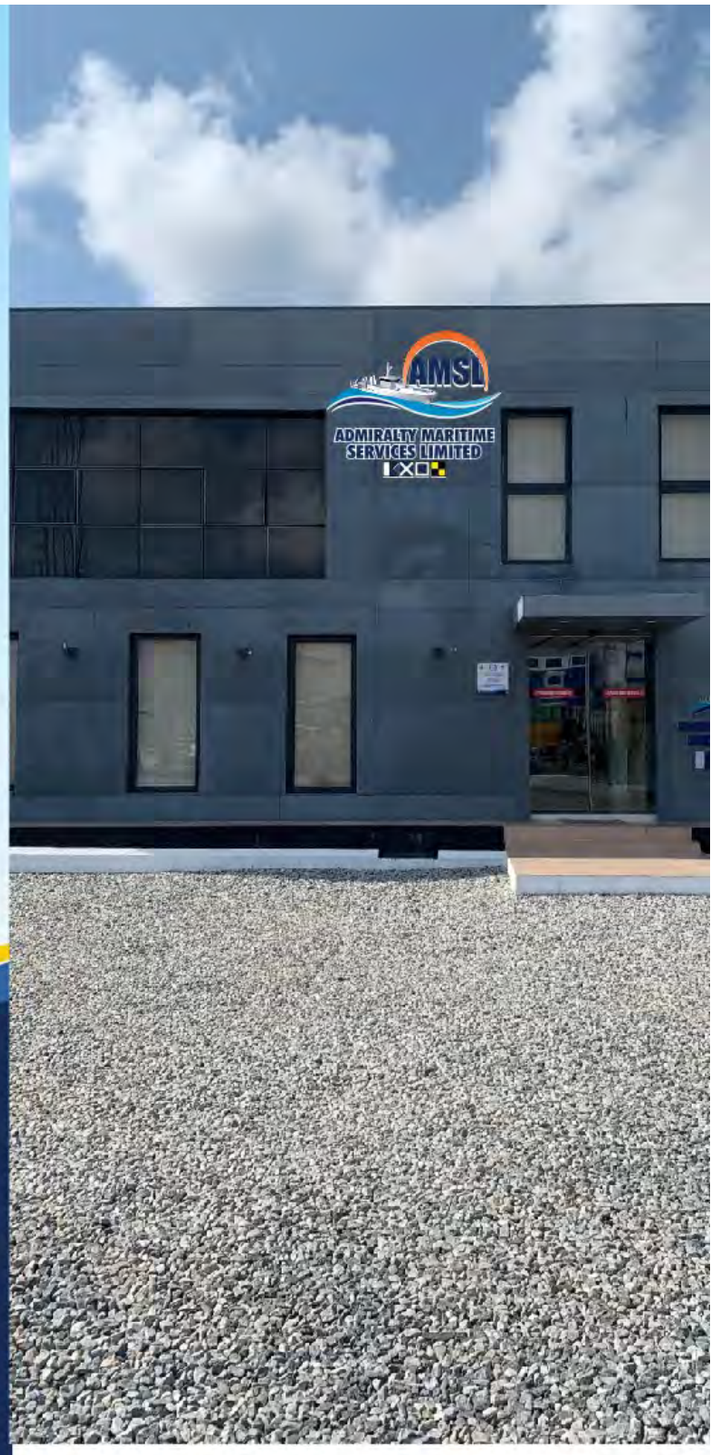
# ADMIRALTY MARITIME SERVICES LIMITED

## OUR VISION

TO BE A WORLD CLASS GEOSPATIAL AND MARITIME SERVICES PROVIDER.

## OUR MISSION

TO PROMOTE THE BLUE ECONOMY IN NIGERIA AND THE GULF OF GUINEA WITH BESPOKE GEOSPATIAL AND MARITIME SERVICES DRIVEN BY TECHNOLOGY AND KNOWHOW, SUSTAINABLE VALUE-ADDITION AS WELL AS ETHICAL AND MARKET-BASED MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHIES.




## MAIN SERVICES

MARITIME SECURITY ESCORT AND PASSENGER TRANSFER

MARITIME LOGISTICS SERVICES

HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY SERVICES

GEOPHYSICAL SERVICES

## OTHER SERVICES

FERRY SERVICES

BLUE ECONOMY INVESTMENT

RENEWABLE ENERGY SERVICES

MARITIME CONSULTANCY SERVICES

UPSTREAM OIL & GAS ACQUISITION

AQUA TOURISM AND AQUA CULTURE

**ABUJA OFFICE:**
1 Aso Clinic Road, Asokoro,
Federal Capital Territory - Abuja.

**LAGOS OFFICE:**
Wilmot Point, 28 Ahmadu Bello Way,
Victoria Island, Lagos.

**PH OFFICE:**
100 Reclamation Road, by Macgobar
Industries, PH Rivers State.

+234 (0) 806845125

info@amsl.ng

www.amsl.ng

...Navigating Nigeria's Blue Economy Aspirations to Reality and Beyond..

# NATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC AGENCY

...for Maritime Safety and National Prosperity

## Our Services

- MARITIME SAFETY INFORMATION
- ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION SURVEYS
- ENSURES INTERNATIONAL TREATY COMPLIANCE
- NATIONAL DEFENCE SURVEYS
- NATIONAL SURVEY COORDINATION
- DREDGING & LAND SURVEY SUPERVISION
- SURVEY REGULATION
- OFFICIAL NAUTICAL PUBLICATIONS
- DATA COLLECTION AND COMPILATION
- DATA DEPOSITORY
- UNDERTAKES GLOBAL STANDARDS LIAISON
- FACILITATES HYDROGRAPHIC CAREER PLANNING

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National Hydrographic Agency
2B, Osun Close, off Osun Crescent
Maitama, Abuja, Nigeria.

**Ocean Marine Solutions Ltd ( OMS )** is a pioneer private maritime security company in Nigeria that, **in partnership with the Nigerian Navy**, provides dedicated security for oil companies and shipping within Nigerian Waters. With a fleet of over 40 fit-for-purpose security vessels, OMS has been providing dedicated escorts and security for offshore oil production activities in Nigeria. Ocean Marine Solutions Limited is both **ISO 9001:2015** and **ISO 18788:2015** certified and operates round-the-clock Operations Centres with top-notch surveillance and communication systems for situational awareness and support of all our client's requirements.

## SERVICES

- Logistics Support for Dedicated Offshore Patrol & Escort services.
- Onshore/Offshore Crude Oil Pipeline Security & Maintenance Services.
- Maritime Crisis Management.
- Port Facility & Vessel Security Threats Assessment and Management.
- General Maritime Security Consultancy and Advisory Services.

## CONTACT

**Website:** www.ocean-ms.com
**Phone:** +234-8075490811
**Email:** info@ocean-ms.com

# NAVAL DOCKYARD LIMITED

***Hub of Naval Engineering***

## Our Services

- Ship Design and Building
- Construction of Barges
- Construction of Houseboats and Boats
- Hull Repairs
- Ship Machinery Repairs and Installation
- Docking of Vessels of up to 10,000 Tons
- Electrical/Electronic Repairs
- Grit Blasting
- Water Blasting
- Ultrasonic Thickness Testing
- Industrial Painting of Ships
- Rewinding of Marine/ Industrial Electric Motors
- Galvanizing Services
- Repair of Diesel Engines
- Repair of Pumps
- Repair of Air Compressors
- Repair of Gas Turbines
- Repair of Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Systems
- Repair of Cranes
- Repair of Forklifts
- Repair of Workshop Machines

***Contact Us @***


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