

Supreme Court Defence of Justice Agim at UNICAL,

“Panicky, Wishy-washy”

Human Rights Writes Association of Nigeria (HURIWA), has described the trending photographic evidence of the cosy sitting of Justice Emmanuel Agim and Nyesom Wike, the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) at the recent convocation ceremony of the University of Calabar as an unmitigated show of shame. **This was as HURIWA dismissed the attempt by the Supreme Court of Nigeria to defend the appearance of Justice Agim side-by-side Wike at the ceremony as “panicky, ground less and totally wishy-washy”.**

It noted that the FCT minister, is the main backer of the 27 members of the Rivers State House of Assembly who benefitted recently from a Supreme Court judgement prepared and read by Justice Emmanuel Agim. The rights group specifically said that Wike is the indisputable political godfather of the 27-members of the Rivers State House of Assembly who benefitted from an “incoherent” judgment of the Supreme Court stopping allocations to Rivers State administration under Governor Siminalayi Fubara.

According to HURIWA; “Seeing Justice Emmanuel Agim and Honourable minister of FCT Nyesom Wike sitting side by side in Calabar is inexcusable. Pictures don't lie. The best approach the nation's apex court would have adopted is



first and foremost suspend him, then issue a query to Justice Emmanuel Agim for putting up an appearance publicly at the anniversary event of the University of Calabar which raised loud suspicions of alleged affinity between the duo of Justice Emmanuel Agim and Honourable minister of FCT Mr. Nyesom Wike. “The photos and visuals captured in the media of mass communication have raised serious questions about the impartiality of the jurist in the matter involving the political warring parties in Rivers State whose case was resolved controversially by Justice Emmanuel Agim to the dissatisfaction of Governor Fubara, a judgment that opened the Pandora box for the illegal declaration of a State of Emergency in Rivers State. “It will take just more than mere public relations cum media stunt from the Supreme Court of Nigeria to convince Nigerians that there is no friendship between the duo or that Justice Agim doesn't have any relationship with one of Nigeria's most prolific political litigant Mr. Nyesom Wike, who is widely alleged to be constantly favoured by judges and justices in the nation's court system. “So, the Supreme Court of Nigeria should wake up and smell the coffee or pretend that gullible Nigerians have swallowed hook, line and sinker the shallow defensive press statement it recently issued to defend Justice Emmanuel Agim. These were contained in a statement by Comrade Emmanuel Onwubiko, National Coordinator of HURIWA in which he said that Nigerians would not have any of the tainted explanations coupled together by the information Director of the Supreme Court of Nigeria to try to clear the fog of suspicions that have swelled and swirled around the photographic evidence in which Justice Agim,

who gave a recent favourable judgment that benefitted the political family headed by Nyesom Wike was seen in highly cosy atmospherics as evidentially recorded through the lenses of photojournalists. The rights group explained that public perception matters so much and the only way to clear the doubts in the minds of Nigerians is to subject Justice Agim to internal ethics investigation by the National Judicial Council to determine if he breached any of the ethical codes governing judges and justices of Nigeria. HURIWA went down historical records to give a citation made by a legal luminary about the ethics of codes of conduct for judges thus: “Any social relationship that may give members of public an impression that he will not be impartial in deciding cases, should be avoided by a judge. Impartiality is a cardinal requirement; thus, a judge must show clearly that in respect to or in connection with proceedings in his court, he shall remain impartial. A judge is required to harbour no



prejudice, passion or personal feelings against any party while deliberating over cases submitted to him for adjudication. He is required to evaluate facts as presented to him by the parties in a balanced manner without any predilection. He must hold the balance of the scale of justice evenly it is as a result of this fundamental requirement of impartiality that it is often said justice must

not be only done but must manifestly and undoubtedly be seen to be done. See THE ADMIN & EXEC OF THE ESTATE OF ABACHA VS. EKE-SPIFF & ORS (2009) LPELR 3152 (SC)”.

HURIWA asserted that the public appearance of Justice Agim and political litigant Wike has allegedly violated this ethical code.

It further said; “It doesn't matter whether Justice Agim escorted Wike to the ceremony or that he too was an honoree, but what is in issue is that photo evidence showed that both Agim and Wike displayed a convincing show of friendship during that event”.

HURIWA noted that legal experts are of the opinion that: “A judge is therefore required to either disqualify himself or disclose on record, where he feels he is in doubt of his impartiality in a case he is handling. Therefore, where he discloses the reason why he feels he should not hear the case and the parties still want him to proceed with the case, none of them will rely on the said reason to impugn his decision”. HURIWA said what is in the perception of Nigerians about the likely friendship of the duo of Justice Agim and Wike has raised serious questions around the impartiality of Justice Agim's recent controversial verdict against Wike's political adversary: Rivers state governor, Siminalayi Fubara. HURIWA therefore canvassed for the immediate suspension of Justice Agim and the constitution of a panel of the NJC to critically examine the behaviours of Justice Agim at the convocation ceremony of the University of Calabar, adding that the findings of the probe panel should be made public.

Electricity Crisis: HURIWA Slams Power Minister Over Failures, Calls for Overhaul

The Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) has strongly criticized the Minister of Power, Chief Adebayo Adelabu, over what it described as incompetence, failed leadership, and unnecessary foreign trips while the country grapples with a worsening electricity crisis. In a statement issued recently, HURIWA expressed disappointment that despite President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's campaign promise to improve electricity supply, the situation has continued to deteriorate. The rights group highlighted the frequent collapse of the national grid, erratic power supply, and increasing electricity tariffs that have negatively impacted businesses and the economy. "Reports indicate that Nigeria's national grid experienced at least 12 collapses in 2024, with another recorded in March 2025. These failures have led to widespread power outages across the country, with little explanation from the Ministry of Power beyond references to gas shortages, vandalism, or system disturbances. The recurring collapses have exacerbated economic hardships, leaving millions of citizens and businesses struggling to cope with unreliable power supply," HURIWA frowned. Citing data from the Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN), HURIWA noted that the national grid has collapsed at least 141 times in the past decade, with 46 recorded between 2017 and 2024. In 2023 alone, the grid failed more than 10 times, plunging millions of Nigerians into darkness. The group recalled that in September 2023, the national grid collapsed twice in one week, while another failure in February 2024 left major cities such as Lagos and Abuja without electricity for days.

HURIWA criticized power sector officials for treating these failures as routine occurrences instead of taking decisive corrective measures. It compared Nigeria's situation to developed nations, where even a single power failure prompts swift government intervention. The group referenced the United Kingdom's 2019 power outage, which led to an immediate response, contrasting it with Nigeria's lack of urgency in addressing persistent blackouts. According to the group, while developed countries invest heavily in maintaining and upgrading their power infrastructure, Nigeria continues to rely on outdated and poorly managed facilities that are prone to frequent breakdowns. The association also condemned Minister Adelabu's frequent international travels, questioning their impact on resolving Nigeria's power issues. Investigations reveal that since assuming office, the minister has travelled to countries including Barbados, Tanzania, Japan, and the United States, as well as meeting with the Egyptian Ambassador to Nigeria. However, HURIWA argued that these trips have not translated into tangible improvements in electricity supply. The group insisted that rather than embarking on foreign trips, the minister should focus on implementing policies that would address the fundamental issues plaguing the power sector, such as poor infrastructure, inadequate funding, and lack of transparency.



HURIWA emphasized the severe consequences of unreliable electricity on businesses, stating that high costs of alternative power sources have forced many to shut down. It noted that hospitals have also struggled to provide critical medical services due to power outages, further endangering lives. The group stressed that industries that rely heavily on electricity, such as manufacturing and technology, have been forced to either downsize operations or relocate to other countries with stable power supply, leading to job losses and economic decline. The rights group accused the minister of prioritizing personal luxury over national duty and urged President Tinubu to immediately restructure the power ministry. It called for the replacement of the current leadership with competent professionals and the implementation of accountability measures

to ensure improved performance. HURIWA also urged the government to introduce policies that would encourage private sector participation in power generation and distribution, as seen in other countries with more efficient electricity systems.

HURIWA further demanded a full audit of the funds allocated to the power sector under the Tinubu administration, questioning why billions of naira budgeted for electricity projects have not translated into improved supply. It also called on the National Assembly to summon Minister Adelabu for questioning over the persistent failures in the sector. The group emphasized that Nigerians deserve to know how public funds allocated for electricity infrastructure have been spent and whether

there has been any mismanagement or diversion of resources.

The group warned that if urgent action is not taken, it would mobilize citizens for mass protests to demand accountability from the government. It stressed that Nigerians deserve better and that the ongoing electricity crisis must be addressed without further delays. HURIWA called on civil society organizations, labour unions, and business communities to join in demanding immediate reforms in the power sector, stating that electricity is a fundamental necessity for national development and economic prosperity. The rights group insisted that if the government fails to take meaningful steps towards resolving the crisis, Nigerians should not hesitate to take to the streets in peaceful demonstrations to demand their right to a stable and reliable power supply. With the worsening power situation, HURIWA's demands reflect the frustrations of millions of Nigerians who have endured decades of failed promises and ineffective reforms. Whether the government will heed these calls for change remains to be seen, but the group maintains that urgent and decisive action is needed to prevent further economic deterioration and hardship for citizens.