

Chants of Treason: No Water, No Electricity, No Food!

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A diplomat from the Group of Seven, G7, countries in March 2026, invited me to dinner in Abuja. The first thing he asked was how I was coping with water supply. The diplomatic mission, like some others, is suffering disruption of water supply. I explained that since I relocated to Abuja from Lagos a quarter of a century ago, I had dug a borehole for my water supply. Diplomats from industrialized countries complaining of constant water supply disruption is understandable for they do not experience this in their countries. But for the Nigerian people who may need to sit, squat or stand on the mandate of politicians, such complaint might border on treason.

On March 25, 2026, a certain 38-year-old Hamisu Abdullahi, a father of four and a 'common' carpenter, had the audacity to make such a complaint. His Excellency,

Governor Mohammed Umar Bago of Niger State was visiting the Emir of Suleja for Sallah festivities. Abdullahi chose this occasion to shout: “No water, no light”. He was promptly arrested. For his chants, the Nigeria Police Force, NPF, accused him of various crimes. These, according to the Niger State Police spokesperson, Wasiu Abiodun, include: “thuggery and attempting to disrupt government activities”. Abdullahi was detained at the State Criminal Investigation Department, SCID, in Minna for five days after which he was granted bail. Police is still investigating. Who knows whether the man was sponsored by enemies of government? In its reaction, the International Press Institute, IPI, Nigeria cautioned Governor Bago against actions that impede the fundamental right to free speech. But Governor Bago, the face of a new generation of political leaders, is not swayed by such accusations.

He has a Trumpian trait. He had on April 22, 2025, illegally shut down the Badeggi Radio. Also, he had detained a journalist without repercussions. To curb insecurity, he had ordered the arrest of men wearing dreadlocks, and the detention of anyone who seeks bail for suspected thugs. If Abdullahi were aware of the Bago proclivities, and still went on to complain about lack of water and electricity, then the charges against him should include attempted suicide. As for lack of electricity, it has become a high security matter because





President Bola Ahmed Tinubu had told Nigerians that if he does not fix the problem in his first term, Nigerians should not vote him for a second term. As it is, the presidential election is ten months away, and the power situation has simply grown worse. Ordinarily, this is what the police will call an open and close case. The facts speak for themselves. But where truth affects the President and Commander-in Chief of the Armed Forces, it must bend or be coloured. First, let me clarify: that the Tinubu administration has failed on the issue of electricity supply is a lived experience. Secondly, it is officially acknowledged by the government itself. The Minister of Power, Adebayo Adelabu, publicly acknowledged that on power supply, the administration is in a peculiar mess or as his grandfather, Adelabu Adegoke would have put it, is in “penkelemes”.

The Minister while apologising to Nigerians for the pains they are suffering due to the power mess, told us what we already know: “Businesses are being affected, schools have been affected, and industries have been affected.” But the apology is obviously not sincere. It is like a thief caught in the act and simply apologizing. In promising a turn-around, as usual, Adelabu lied: “We are working on it 24/7 to make sure that we go back to the trajectory of 2025, when Nigerians commended us for a good job well done.” It is blatant untruth that we Nigerians commended the Tinubu administration last year, or in any year, that it did a “good job” on electricity supply. How can we when the national grid keeps collapsing? But Adelabu was not done with promises that showed that in the past, he lied to Nigerians. For instance, he said: “Power generation will improve, transmission will improve, distribution will improve, and that 6,000 megawatts will be achieved before the end of this year (2026)”.

While here he says the goal of the Tinubu administration is to achieve 6,000 megawatts by the end of 2026, this same Minister had the year before claimed the government had achieved this goal. In his April 17, 2025 press statement, Adelabu had told Nigerians: “We have increased our generation to

6,003 megawatts, up by 1,700 megawatts in one and a half years since President Tinubu assumed office. It took Nigeria over 40 years to achieve an incremental 2,000 megawatts of average energy; we achieved this in less than two years.” So, did Minister Adelabu lie to Nigerians in 2025 or he is lying in March 2026? In 2024 as Nigerians across the country suffered serious power cuts, Adelabu looked us in the eye and lied that 40 percent of us were enjoying 20 hours of uninterrupted power supply daily. Also, he had played some trick on us by dividing the country into Bands A, B and C, increasing the tariff, and promising better power supply. Then he abolished his bands. For me, if a Minister has failed so spectacularly, has severely lied to the public and has been instrumental for the administration failing on a fundamental programme and promise, the least expected is for him to resign. But he stays in office obviously concocting new excuses which his aides will spread. When Minister Adelabu promises marked power supply improvement by the end of 2026, he is conscious of the fact that the presidential election is in January 2027. So, if the promise is not kept by December 2026, it may have no effect on the January 16, 2027 presidential election. But if Adelabu will not resign, and his hope of being on the 2027 gubernatorial ballot for Oyo State seems dashed which means he will not be required to resign in order to run elections, can't he be sacked and hopefully, a competent person found to replace him? I am tempted to add that despite the massive propaganda of the Tinubu administration, at least 35 million Nigerians are facing starvation. The 2025 Global Hunger Index states that the Giant of Africa ranks 115th out of 123 countries.

It reports that “33.8 percent of children under five are stunted, 11.6 percent are wasted, and 10.5 percent die before their fifth birthday.” However, I am going to refrain from adding 'No Food' to the chant. This may be termed cyberbullying or a treasonable chant. But I can remind the government that the Constitution makes it imperative for it to provide for the welfare and security of the Nigerian people. This is not too much to renew any hope upon.

