

Tinubu Restore Constitutional Democracy to Rivers State

Winners and Losers



President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has formally lifted the six-month State of Emergency imposed on Rivers State, directing Governor Siminalayi Fubara, Deputy Governor Ngozi Odu, and members of the State House of Assembly to resume duties with effect from September 18, 2025. President Tinubu had declared the emergency in March after a bitter political rift between the governor and the Assembly plunged the state into paralysis. The crisis split lawmakers, stalled the passage of budgets, and, according to the President, left Rivers without a functioning government. He invoked Section 305 of the Constitution to suspend the elected officials for six months, a decision that was strongly criticized by the Nigerian Bar Association and several civil society groups, who argued that the President lacked constitutional powers to suspend elected officers. Announcing the end of the emergency, President Tinubu admitted the proclamation was controversial but maintained that it was necessary to avert anarchy and protect vital oil assets. He thanked the National Assembly for backing his declaration and commended Rivers citizens for their resilience throughout the period. From the intelligence available to me, there is now a new spirit of understanding and readiness for reconciliation in Rivers State, the President said. It therefore gives me great pleasure to declare that the emergency shall end with effect from midnight today. "With this decision, Governor Fubara, his deputy, and Speaker Martins Amaewhule will resume their offices immediately. Tinubu urged both arms of government in Rivers to prioritize peace and governance, reminding leaders nationwide that democracy can only thrive in an atmosphere of order.

Below is a full text of the President's Speech. 'My Fellow countrymen and, in particular, the good people of Rivers State. I am happy to address you today on the state of emergency declaration in Rivers State. You will recall that on 18th March, 2025, I proclaimed a state of emergency in the state. In my proclamation address, I highlighted the reasons for the declaration. The summary of it for context is that there was a total paralysis of governance in Rivers State, which had led to the Governor of Rivers State and the House of Assembly being unable to work together. Critical economic assets of the State, including oil pipelines, were being vandalized. The State House of Assembly was crisis-ridden, such that members of the House were divided into two groups. Four members worked with the Governor, while 27 members opposed the Governor. The latter group supported the Speaker. As a result, the Governor could not present any Appropriation Bill to the House, to enable him to access funds to run Rivers State's affairs. That serious constitutional impasse brought governance in the State to a standstill. Even the Supreme Court, in one of its judgments in a series of cases filed by the Executive and the Legislative arms of Rivers State against each other, held that there was no government in Rivers State. My intervention and that of other well-meaning Nigerians to resolve the conflict proved abortive as both sides stuck rigidly to their positions to the detriment of peace and development of the State. It therefore became painfully inevitable that to arrest the drift towards anarchy in Rivers State, I was obligated to invoke the powers conferred on me by Section 305 of the 1999 Constitution, as amended, to proclaim the state of emergency.

The Offices of the Governor, Deputy Governor, and elected members of the State House of Assembly were suspended for six months in the first instance. The six months expire today, September 17th, 2025. I thank the National Assembly, which, after critically evaluating the justification for the proclamation, took steps immediately, as required by the Constitution, to approve the declaration in the interest of peace and order in Rivers State. I also thank our traditional rulers and the good people of Rivers State for their support from the date of the declaration of the state of emergency until now. I am not unaware that there were a few voices of dissent against the proclamation, which led to their instituting over 40 cases in the courts in Abuja, Port Harcourt, and Yenagoa, to invalidate the declaration.

That is the way it should be in a democratic setting. Some cases are still pending in the courts as of today. But what needs to be said is that the power to declare a state of emergency is an inbuilt constitutional tool to address situations of actual or threatened breakdown of public order and public safety, which require extraordinary measures to return the State to peace, order and security. Considered objectively, we had reached that situation of total breakdown of public order and public safety in Rivers State, as shown in the judgment of the Supreme

Court on the disputes between the Executive and the Legislative arm of Rivers State. It would have been a colossal failure on my part as President not to have made that proclamation.

As a stakeholder in democratic governance, I believe that the need for a harmonious existence and relationship between the executive and the legislature is key to a successful government, whether at the state or national level. The people who voted us into power expect to reap the fruits of democracy. However, that expectation will remain unrealizable in an atmosphere of violence, anarchy, and insecurity borne by misguided political activism and Machiavellian manipulations among the stakeholders. I am happy today that, from the intelligence available to me, there is a groundswell of a new spirit of understanding, a robust readiness, and potent enthusiasm on the part of all the stakeholders in Rivers State for an immediate return to democratic governance. This is undoubtedly a welcome development for me and a remarkable achievement for us. I therefore do not see why the state of emergency should exist a day longer than the six months I had pronounced at the beginning of it. It therefore gives me great pleasure to declare that the emergency in Rivers State of Nigeria shall end with effect from midnight today.

The Governor, His Excellency Siminalayi Fubara, the deputy governor, Her Excellency Ngozi Nma Odu, and members of the Rivers State House of Assembly and the speaker, Martins Amaewhule, will resume work in their offices from 18 September 2025. I take this opportunity to remind the Governors and the Houses of Assembly of all the States of our country to continue to appreciate that it is only in an atmosphere of peace, order, and good government that we can deliver the dividends of democracy to our people. I implore all of you to let this realization drive your actions at all times. I thank you all. Long live the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

The announcement has elicited a wide spectrum of reactions on social media, reflecting the deep political passions in Rivers State and beyond. While some welcomed the decision, others criticized the move as belated and symbolic of broader political mismanagement. However, many Nigerians expressed frustration over the six-month disruption. @Opeyemtech commented, "The conclusion of the highly contentious state of emergency in Rivers State marks a positive development. However, the Supreme Court has let the nation down with its actions and inactions concerning the PDP governors' challenge to this emergency rule." Others highlighted the perceived injustices during the period. @eteobong_edem1 said, "The political atmosphere in Rivers State has been highly polluted by the powers that be and the law couldn't do anything to stop the impunity." Likewise, @marythesa lamented, "It's just sad that this state of emergency was very unnecessary and quite unfortunate because the president just succeeded in taking Rivers State six years backwards! All because he wants to

please one man!” Concerns about precedent and legal implications were also raised. @Prince82947891 warned, “The suspension of the Governor was illegal, and the precedent has been set. A president will one day suspend a Governor of Lagos State, and a voice vote will be used by the Senate to approve it. God is watching us all.” @Abbah_Esq added, “An elected Governor has been treated like a mere appointee; he has been 'disciplined' and now has to live with the fear of either getting his act together or facing the same punishment again.” Some reactions reflected anger at perceived mismanagement and unaccountability during the emergency. @mrbrightgil wrote, “Tax collector is satisfied,” while @shako_glasses demanded, “The admin should declare what he met and what was spent in the state coffers. That's accountability.” @leo_nzeribe criticized, “If only the fed govt knows how backwards they've sent Rivers State to. The sole administrator should be brought to books. There

its declaration as an egregious act of federal overreach and a direct assault on Nigeria's democratic principles. In a statement signed by the National Secretary of CUPP, Chief Peter Ameh 'The suspension of the elected governor, deputy governor, and the Rivers State House of Assembly for six months over a political dispute was an unconstitutional power grab that never should have occurred. CUPP firmly believes that democracy thrives on the will of the people and the independence of institutions, not through arbitrary suspensions or presidential proclamations. President Bola Tinubu's invocation of a state of emergency on March 18, 2025, citing a feud between Governor Siminalayi Fubara and Minister Nyesom Wike, alongside isolated incidents of pipeline vandalism, failed to meet the constitutional requirements under Section 305 of the 1999 Constitution. This action, executed without the request of elected state officials, undermined the mandate of Rivers State voters



was no single work done for six months.” Others saw the development as a sign of political theatrics and social media manipulation. @Web3Fada noted, “This thing don turn content. If not, why is everything suddenly online?” Despite the mixed reactions, some voices expressed relief and hope. @brenokwaraji tweeted, “Thank you @GovWike for approving the return of democracy to the state of Rivers. You have indeed proven that you are in charge.” Similarly, @AusuEmmanuel said, “Rivers State is too precious to Mr. president, I understand that.” As the state prepares to resume normal democratic operations, Nigerians remain divided over the implications of the six-month suspension.

Meanwhile in response to the lifting of the state of Emergency in Rivers State, the Coalition of United Political Parties (CUPP) welcomes the termination of the state of emergency in Rivers State but strongly condemns

and set a dangerous precedent for the erosion of state autonomy in Nigeria's federation. We demand immediate transparency from the Presidency. The legal memo justifying this emergency, the financial costs incurred, and a comprehensive review of the rights violated during this period must be published without delay. Nigerians deserve clarity to restore trust in our governance system. CUPP questions the justice of this episode. The six months stripped from Governor Fubara's tenure and the state assembly's operations cannot be reclaimed, representing a clear violation of constitutional provisions on elected terms. By assuming unchecked authority, President Tinubu has acted as a “Proclaimer General,” threatening the democratic balance of our federation.

'We are profoundly disappointed by the Supreme Court's refusal to hear the case brought by PDP governors challenging the emergency. This failure to uphold

constitutional authority allowed an illegal act to persist, exposing the Court's complicity in prioritizing political interests over the rule of law. Such hypocrisy weakens the judiciary's credibility and endangers Nigeria's democratic foundation. CUPP calls on all Nigerians—political parties, civil society, and citizens—to reject this dangerous precedent and defend our democracy. The will of the people, expressed through free and fair elections, must remain sacrosanct. History will judge this episode as either a fleeting misstep or the beginning of a slide toward authoritarianism. We urge the government to recommit to constitutional governance and ensure such overreach is never repeated.

Also a Chieftain of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Tonye Cole, has stated that Siminalayi Fubara will return to office with no powers as his suspension as Governor of Rivers State is lifted. Speaking on Channels Television's The Morning Brief on Wednesday, Cole said Fubara would not be able to take decisions independently as governor. Cole, who was the APC governorship candidate in the 2023 election, noted that Rivers, a key state in Nigeria, now has a governor whose authority is limited. "We cannot be in a situation where we have an elected governor of a state, like Rivers State, which is a very critical state not just for the people of Rivers but Nigeria as a whole, and what you then see is that you have an elected governor that has zero powers. I don't think it portends well at all," Cole said. "It's extremely difficult, and I think the governor will be finding himself in a very difficult situation."

First of all, the way politics has played out in Nigeria, almost every situation is that a governor, in leaving office, looks for somebody who he believes can continue whatever agenda they had moving forward. "But time and time again, we find out that where the new governor or whoever has come in as governor is left alone to run his administration, then things progress. "However, when such doesn't happen...almost always we have ended up in this whole godfather-godson fight, and it's never been good for democracy. "Everywhere that fight has occurred, the people have tended to suffer a lot more. My prayer is that as we come back, because we don't know what we're going to see starting from tomorrow, the one thing that we are sure about is that the governor is not in a position to make any decisions," he added. Cole advised Fubara to seek an understanding with the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike, so that he can make some decisions as governor despite the circumstances. "What I would do if I were him would be

to now sit down with the honourable minister and appeal for some leeway to allow certain decisions to be taken by me as governor, and the details of that peace agreement, so I cannot tell the extent or the limits of the powers that he has now."

The Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike, has praised President Bola Ahmed Tinubu for restoring democratic governance in Rivers State following the lifting of the emergency rule earlier imposed on the state. Wike, in a statement issued in Abuja by his Senior Special Assistant on Public Communications and Social Media, Lere Olayinka, said Tinubu's decisive action once again proves his commitment to peace and the sustenance of democracy in Nigeria. According to him, the president's intervention was timely and effectively saved Rivers State from further political tension. The former two-term governor of Rivers

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State also applauded the people of the state for their faith in Tinubu's leadership and for their continued support of his drive to return the country to the path of growth and stability. Calling on stakeholders in Rivers to work together in the overall interest of the state, Wike stressed the need for unity and cooperation. He also warned against the activities of "fifth columnists" and troublemakers who, he said, seek to benefit from crises. "From Rivers State going forward, the only news that will emanate will be that of peace, progress, and development," the minister said.

Nigeria's Fourth Republic has been littered with dramatic showdowns between elected governors and the political godfathers who helped usher them into office. These tussles have often shaped the trajectory of state politics, determining whether a governor could stand on his own feet or remain a puppet in Government House. However, none appears as disempowering as the current fate of Governor Siminalayi Fubara of Rivers State. One of the earliest and most notorious clashes came in 2003 when Governor Chris Ngige squared off against his godfather, Chris Uba, in Anambra State. Uba, who claimed to have single-handedly sponsored Ngige's election, expected absolute loyalty. When Ngige resisted, Uba's loyalists went as far as abducting the sitting governor in a brazen act that shook Nigerian democracy. Chris Uba had before Ngige helped to stop Governor Chinwoke Mbadiniju from seeking reelection. Just before then, Senator Ali Modu Sheriff was able to stop Governor Mala Kachallah from seeking re-election on the platform of his former party, All Nigeria Peoples Party, ANPP in Borno State.

Incidentally, Kachallah and Mbadiniju through the reported patronage of then Governor Bola Tinubu sought

re-election on the platform of the Alliance for Democracy, AD but they both lost. In Lagos, Bola Tinubu's dominance over the political structure became evident in 2019 when Governor Akinwunmi Ambode, despite holding office, could not secure a second term after falling out with Tinubu's powerful machine. The lesson was clear for Governor Ambode: in Lagos, political survival depended on alignment with the godfather's camp. In Anambra again, Peter Obi's tenure from 2006 to 2010 was marked by resistance against entrenched financiers and political patrons who sought to dictate appointments and contracts. Unlike Ngige, Obi weathered the storms, going to court and relying on his reputation for integrity to carve out independence. These episodes all highlight governors who either fought back, compromised, or negotiated their way through godfather interference. But what makes Fubara's case unique is the degree of surrender. Instead of pushing back, he has reportedly conceded major levers of power—control of the assembly, appointments, and even political prosecutions—to his estranged benefactor, Nyesom Wike. As Fubara resumes in Port Harcourt after emergency rule, the irony is glaring: the people may welcome back their governor, but what they are really getting is a political prisoner in Government House—the most toothless and insecure governor in Nigeria's history.

It is on record that the All Progressives Congress (APC) won 20 local government areas in the council polls conducted recently in Rivers State; while Fubara's Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) won only three. Speaking to Daily Trust on the issue, Professor Kamilu Fage of Bayero University, Kano, said: "The wings of Fubara have been clipped and even if he does not decamp to the APC, he will be a toothless bulldog when the election comes." "From the angle of the ruling party, they



have achieved their aim in Rivers State because they have redirected the politics of the state, taken over the State Assembly and the majority of the local governments.” He added that while the APC arrowheads in Rivers may have achieved their aim, the process was riddled with illegality which could undermine democracy and potentially spark another crisis.

A professor of Political Science at Ignatius Ajuru University, Port Harcourt, Prof. Kenneth Nweke, in a chat with Daily Trust, said most of the structures of governance had been taken away from Fubara. “For me, there is so much uncertainty as to whether the powers of the governor as it were before the emergency rule will remain. “It is clear to even the blind that what was the major problem was the structure, and the structure has been put in place by his godfather, the FCT Minister, and probably, that could have been part of the agreement or the understanding that led to the end of emergency rule in the first instance. “Given that scenario, probably what may

learnt his lessons and must now recognize the political weight of those who urged him to fight his godfather.

Dr Mohammed Alada, a political scientist at the University of Ilorin, said the emergency rule had partly achieved its aim since the intention was to stabilize Rivers and provide an opportunity to broker peace between the governor and his godfather. He, however, said that the governor would be resuming as an orphan, with neither the House of Assembly nor the local governments under his control. According to him, the only way forward for Fubara is to forge alliances with legislators and council chairmen if he plays his cards well. He advised Fubara to be wary of off ending “those who have invested heavily and are looking to recoup.” A political analyst, Aminu Yakudima, also said Fubara cannot function like before in view of the fact that he has no structure. “He (Fubara) came to power, but did not work effectively with his predecessor. Now, he cannot run his activities including

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have played out would have been so much understanding around the issue of structure, local government councils have been put in place through a local government election that went on, and then a number of boards, almost all the boards were dissolved, and then now reconstituted. “So, one would not expect the energy, the zeal to deliver as it was before the emergency rule. Now, ordinarily, but given the nature of Fubara that we know, if there is any sense left for him at all, in terms of utilizing the resources of Rivers State, any part that remains for him to utilize for the development of the state, I am quite sure that he will do everything within his powers to make that get to where it would get to,” he said.

The national president of the Nigeria Political Science Association, Professor Hassan Saliu, said Fubara's governorship had been compromised. “Some of the actions taken during the emergency rule are things other governors would ordinarily raise questions about. He has

re-election because he has no structure. Fubara lacks the structure to stand on his own. So, he is in a tight corner. “The structure he used was that of Nyesom Wike. Unfortunately, he parted ways with Wike and he has seen the consequences. He has paid the price. So, Fubara needs to go back to the drawing board and see how he can settle things with his predecessor. Otherwise, he is going for his final term as governor of Rivers State.”

Dr Asimiyu Olalekan Murana of the Department of Political Science Summit University, Offa, Kwara State, described Fubara's reinstatement as a lifeline and a leash. “On one hand, he regained his office and survived the threat of impeachment. On the other hand, his political autonomy is severely curtailed. The agreement's no-re-election clause effectively turns him into a lame-duck governor just halfway into his first term. For Fubara personally, this curtails his ability to consolidate power, diminishes his bargaining strength within the PDP, and

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reaffirms public trust in institutions. Yet, it also exposes the fragility of Nigerian democracy when elite bargains, rather than the people's will, determine political outcomes,” he said.

A professor of Governance, Identity Politics, and Development Communication at the University of Jos, Prof. Ezekiel Adeyi, said despite having Wike's loyalists surrounding the government, it ultimately depends on Fubara to decide whether he has the power to act or his hands are tied

He said: “In a situation like this, there must be some meetings and horse trading with the presidency. It is left for Fubara to



prematurely ends the trajectory of a political career that could have extended beyond 2027.

“For the People's Democratic Party (PDP), the crisis has been no less damaging. Rivers State has long been one of its strongest bastions, contributing immensely to its national relevance. By acquiescing to a deal that undermined its sitting governor while legitimizing defectors, the PDP has weakened its grip over one of its most strategic strongholds. With Fubara barred from re-election, the party faces uncertainty over succession, further compounding its dwindling fortunes at the national level. “The reinstatement of Governor Fubara is therefore both an opportunity and a warning. It presents a chance to restore democratic governance in Rivers and

determine who he is. Is he coming back with bold orientation or that discussion they had with the president? Is he coming back to just keep quiet or as a full-time governor? These are the questions to determine whether he is boxed to the corner or his hands are tied. “You can die with the devil in politics and you succeed. You can live together with a lion and you succeed. For him to succeed, he should understand those he will work with. Again, he must have a blueprint on how he can manoeuvre the House of Assembly and other supporting the party. “The best way to address issues like this is through good governance by implementing policies that benefit citizens. Pay civil servants their salaries promptly, ensure roads are repaired and maintained, provide adequate security across the state. If he does these things, the

masses will support him even if his hands are tied. So, we cannot definitively say his hands are free or tied. He should stand bold, depend on the constitution, use the media effectively and be friendly with his enemies. At the end of the day, he will progress,” Adeyi said. Another political analyst, Jackson Lekan Ojo, said Fubara has nothing to worry about because he “is still the governor of Rivers State. He still controls the resources of the state. That is the principal thing. Any other arrangement was illegal”.

Reports had quoted sources as revealing that the truce was brokered with conditions, including that Fubara agreed not to seek re-election in 2027, accepted Wike's leadership and consented to allowing him to nominate candidates for all local government elections under the People's Democratic Party (PDP) across the state. The governor was also reported to have agreed that on his return, he would pay all outstanding allowances and entitlements of the 27 lawmakers loyal to Wike. The power struggle between Fubara and Wike started months into the former's administration. Wike, who reportedly claimed to have bought nomination forms for all PDP candidates for the 2023 general elections in Rivers, sought to retain the control of the structure. Fubara had attempted to assert himself as governor. The feud grounded governance in the state and led to an impeachment plot against the governor, spearheaded by a majority of lawmakers loyal to the former governor. He added that while the APC arrowheads in Rivers may have achieved their aim, the process was riddled with illegality which could undermine democracy and potentially spark another crisis. He is more likely to dance to the tune of that godfather unless he succumbs to pressure again and reignites conflict. “Fubara was not born as a governor but rose through the ranks of the civil service before becoming Rivers State Accountant General under Wike. He will continue to learn on the job and has already realized some mistakes he made. What cannot be denied is that he may have lost confidence in the early months of his tenure because of the experience he passed through. He, however, added that “There is the possibility of Fubara becoming his own man or remaining loyal to his godfather. So we wait and watch.” “The reinstatement of Governor Fubara is therefore both an opportunity and a warning. It presents a chance to restore democratic governance in Rivers and reaffirms public trust in institutions. Yet, it also exposes the fragility of Nigerian democracy when elite bargains, rather than the people's will, determine political outcomes,” he said.

Reacting to the development, the APC National Director of Publicity, Bala Ibrahim, told Daily Trust that there were lessons to learn from the Rivers emergency rule. He said: “It is left for the governor and the people of Rivers State to learn from the lessons. It is also for other states to learn how to play politics and how to have respect for the rule of law.” Ibrahim further said sanity had been restored in the state. “The purpose for which the state of emergency was declared has been achieved,” he said.

Former Vice President Atiku Abubakar has dismissed President Bola Tinubu's reinstatement of Governor Siminalayi Fubara as Rivers State governor, saying there is nothing to celebrate about the decision. Atiku, in a post on his X account on Wednesday, argued that Tinubu had no constitutional power to suspend a democratically elected governor in the first place, describing the entire process as an act of dictatorship. “Lifting the suspension of Governor Simi Fubara is nothing to cheer about. The suspension of the Rivers State Governor and the State House of Assembly was unconstitutional when it was done six months ago and is still illegal today. President Tinubu had no power to suspend a democratically elected governor and state lawmakers. The Rivers shenanigans only signpost the dictatorship of the Tinubu administration,” he wrote. President Tinubu had imposed a State of Emergency in Rivers State on March 18, 2025, citing fears of political violence following the protracted crisis between Governor Fubara and the Minister of the FCT, Nyesom Wike. The move saw Fubara suspended from office alongside the state House of Assembly and other democratic institutions. Tinubu on Wednesday announced the end of the six-month rule, saying there was no need for an extension as peace had returned and political actors had agreed to work together.

A senior lawyer, Ebun Adegboruwa, SAN, has called on President Bola Tinubu and the National Assembly to render to Nigerians a report of the activities of retired Admiral Ibok-Ete Ibas when he [Ibas] served as the Rivers State administrator for six months. Adegboruwa, who spoke on Channels Television's The Morning Brief, said that Rivers, being one of the richest states in Nigeria, has resources, and therefore, Ibas should explain how he managed the resources “Additionally, based on Section 305, those who have exercised oversight functions during the emergency period — the President, the Federal Executive Council, the National Assembly — should render a report to the people of Nigeria. “I mean Rivers is one of the richest states in Nigeria, there are resources there. Somebody acted for six months as a single individual. “What is his report? What did he do with the resources? What is the state of the handover? Those matters should become transparent to guide us. “How did he manage the resources of Rivers State? What were the decisions that he took? What did he leave behind? “Nigerians are entitled to know from the President, who was exercising oversight responsibility over the sole administrator from the National Assembly, in terms of accountability and transparency, how much was received within this period, and what it was used for,” the lawyer stated.

However, efforts to get the reaction of the PDP did not yield result as party officials, including its national publicity secretary, Debo Ologunagba, neither answered several calls nor replied to WhatsApp and text messages sent to their mobile telephone lines for their comments.



Statewide Broadcast

By His Excellency, Sir Siminalayi Fubara, GSSRS, On Friday, September 19, 2025

My dear good people of Rivers State

Recall that Rivers State was placed under a six-month emergency rule, declared by Mr. President, His Excellency President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, on the 18th of March, 2025, following the intense political crisis in our State.. It is without doubt that the last six months had been enormously challenging for our dear State under the emergency rule. As your Governor, I accepted to abide by the state of emergency declaration and chose to cooperate with Mr. President and the National Assembly, guided by my conviction that no sacrifice was too great to secure peace, stability, and progress of Rivers State. This was why I also resisted the pressure to challenge the constitutionality of the declaration of a state of emergency, the suspension of democratic institutions, and all other actions that we endured during this difficult period.

In the course of the six-month period, Mr. President graciously brokered the peace process with all the parties successfully. Our Leader, His Excellency, Nyesom Ezenwo Wike, CON, all members of the Rivers State House of Assembly and I, as your Governor, have all accepted to bury the hatchet and embrace peace and reconciliation in the best interest of our dear Rivers State. We believe the political crisis is now behind us and that peace and stability have once again returned to Rivers State, though not without the hard lessons learnt from the emergency rule. The responsibility now rests squarely on us: the Government, the State House of Assembly, political leaders and stakeholders to put aside our differences, work for the common good, and advance the interests of our people above all else. We have a duty to ensure that the peace we have all embraced remains permanent in our dear Rivers State. On behalf of the

Government and the good people of Rivers State, I extend our heartfelt gratitude to Mr. President for his fatherly disposition and decisive interventions in resolving the political crisis and for graciously restoring full democratic governance to our State. Personally, I will never take Mr. President's kindness for granted, and for that, I hereby reaffirm my utmost loyalty and eternal gratitude. To those who have expressed genuine fears, frustrations, and uncertainty over the nature of the peace process, I assure you that your concerns are valid and understood. However, nothing has been irretrievably lost; there remains ample opportunity for necessary adjustments, continued reconciliation, and inclusiveness. We must all remember the saying... "the costliest peace is cheaper than the cheapest war". Accordingly, let us, therefore, embrace this moment as a fresh beginning. Let us work together with renewed hope and determination to build a stronger, more peaceful and prosperous Rivers State. I assure you that we will continuously work towards ensuring that we carry everyone along. Despite the turbulence, you are aware of the credible milestones our administration achieved in infrastructure, education, healthcare, and other key sectors over the last two years. Our immediate responsibility is to return to the path of governance and development by completing the projects which we started by ensuring none of them is starved of funds or neglected, thereby reviving our economy, protecting lives and property, and improving the wellbeing of all Rivers people. I commit to working harmoniously with the Rivers State House of Assembly to recover lost grounds and accelerate the social and economic advancement of our dear State.

I also renew my pledge to serve with the fear of God, humility and a high sense of duty. I wish to sincerely thank you, the resilient people of Rivers State, for your patience, courage, and peaceful conduct during the six months of emergency rule. I also extend appreciation to all stakeholders, religious leaders, traditional rulers, civil society groups, political actors, women groups, youths, concerned citizens at home and abroad, and well-wishers whose prayers and support sustained us through the challenging period. Above all, let us draw strength from our shared identity as Rivers people.

Our diversity is our greatest asset, and our unity the strongest guarantee of our future. We must rise above bitterness and division and channel our energies into rebuilding trust, fostering inclusiveness, and securing a peaceful and prosperous State for all. Once again, I thank and appreciate our Father, Mr President, His Excellency President Bola Ahmed Tinubu GCFR for his timely intervention and dedication to ensuring the restoration of peace and stability in our State. I also thank our Leader, His Excellency Nyesom Ezenwo Wike CON, the Honourable Minister of the Federal Capital Territory for committing to the prompt resolution of the political impasse in the State. I also wish to express my profound thanks to the President of the Senate His Excellency Senator Godswill Akpabio; the Speaker of the House of Representatives, His Excellency Dr. Abbas Tajudeen; and the distinguished members of the National Assembly for the role they all played in the resolution of the matter. I thank the Honourable Speaker and all members of the Rivers State House of Assembly, respected elders, stakeholders and all concerned citizens for working together to resolve our differences and ensuring peace and harmony in our State.. Finally, I call on all citizens of Rivers State, regardless of political, religious, or ethnic affiliation, to join hands in rebuilding our beloved State and securing a future of dignity and progress for everyone. In all, I give glory to the Almighty God. Thank you all. May God bless Rivers State and all its people. May God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

