

Nollywood can drive President Tinubu's 1m tech jobs

... Frankwhite

The plans of the President Bola Ahmed Tinubu led federal government to generate 1m tech jobs has elicited reactions from various sectors of the Nigerian economy, most hinging on the possibilities of this projection owing to the present lethargic nature of the Nigerian economy. One of the foremost respondents on the issue is a top Nigerian journalist and Film producer, Nzeh Frankwhite, who doubles as the convener of the Nollywood Technology & Security Summit, while serving as the National Publicity Secretary of Nollywood's premier guild of The Association of Movie Producers, in Nigeria (AMP). In his submission, he identified the fact that it's not enough to make such projections but to make conscious efforts at actualizing such lofty dreams without merely paying lip service to the intentions, while suggesting that the Nigeria Film industry can drive the process of actualizing that dream of the present government.



treating the issue of health of members with levity, no, not at all. I know that all the major guilds have one health insurance scheme or the other, the Association of Movie Producers (AMP) Nigeria where I serve as National Publicity Secretary have a functional health insurance scheme and we create a lot of awareness about it to members so that they can key into these schemes for their own good, likewise the AGN, DGN, etc.

The movie makers are in the eyes of the public that is why the things that happen to them are given extra attention as if it's an extraordinary occurrence, no. I give you another instance, look at the marital issues

of Yul Edochie and the way it has been over emphasized, meanwhile there are medical doctors, lawyers, pastors, teachers, etc with worse marital cases without anybody screaming blue murder. It's just what comes with the job, you may wish to term it occupational hazard

In his words, " The idea of creating 1million tech jobs is a very beautiful one if the intentions of government are genuine, this cannot be public sector driven, but rather, the private sectors are the ones that can create these jobs with the support of government. But it is not enough to advance these lofty projections, rather Government should make conscious efforts to actualize them, with every sincerity of purpose. "If govt is sincere about this plan, the Nigerian Film industry can drive the process while other sectors of the economy will follow up. During the 2022 edition of the Nollywood Technology and Security Summit held in Abuja, stakeholders were of a consensus opinion that the entire value chain of a film project are technologically driven, and that is the truth. There is a whole lot of technological revolution going on in the film industry, starting from pre- production up to distribution, they are all tech oriented and any practitioner that is not up to speed with that will sooner than later be left behind

I give you a major instance, the distribution of films has moved away from the analogue era of DVD/CDs to VODs, Video Streaming, etc the age where the DVD/CD marketers were kings are gone, if only government can look into these sector with some level of investment, I assure you a huge number of high tech jobs will emerge and the whole industry, it's practitioners and Nigeria as a nation will benefit from this".

On why he thinks the industry has recorded series of deaths in recent times and what his organisation is doing about it? he said

" I think when people talk about the number of deaths in the movie industry, it is overtly exaggerated, and I say this because if you calculate the number of deaths recorded in the country this year and calculate percentage of movie people among them, you will agree with me, the only difference is that our people are public figures hence their deaths are always a subject of public discussions, that is it. Having said that, it is not to say that our guilds and associations that run the industry are

On some of his forthcoming projects, he said " I have two film projects that will be released before the end of the year, one is NDIDI, an Owerri dialect indigenous language movie, which has gotten some nominations at some film festivals within and outside Nigeria, like the Lagos International Film Festival, The Abuja International Film Festival, the Toronto International Nollywood Film Festival, among others, it featured the likes of Angela Philips, Obi Okoli, Sydney Diala, late Bruno Iwuoha, Vincent Oporum, among others. The second film is 'Saving Raymond' which is expected to be in the cinemas any moment from now and its featuring Kanayo O Kanayo, IK Ogbonna, Okon Lagos, Funky Mallam, Belinda Effah, etc. Negotiations are at advanced stages for its cinematic debut before the end of the year, finally, my event Nollywood Technology & Security Summit and Friends of Nollywood Awards will return by early November, after a successful maiden edition in November last year, so you can see that I have my hands full from now till the end of the year".

On how government can support the Industry, he opined

"Every responsible govt should take the industry seriously, film is a tool for propaganda, film is a tool for national orientation, film is a tool for image laundering and Public relation, so neglecting the film industry is not in the interest of any govt, I expect the govt to make conscious investment in the industry using the prevailing operating structures to avoid falling into dubious hands because our existing structures are accountable to stakeholders in the industry and can never divert what is meant for them

Government can fund local and international training of practitioners, make available a film funds for producers to tap into for their movies, govt should be interested in the kind of stories film makers are telling about our country, our society, because it has a lot of influence on the youth and international perception of who we are, it is important that govt is interested but unfortunately, the last president did not care about the industry but that is not the best, I think president Bola Tinubu should approach govt's relationship with the movie industry differently", he concluded.