

# EASTWING

AVIATION



## GOVERNOR FUBARA

**Empowering  
Rivers youth in  
Aviation**

### STEP OUT OF THE ORDINARY

Unforgettable travel  
experiences in South-  
east Nigeria

### SOUTH EAST'S REIGN ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

The pageant champions  
taking the world by storm



## EASTWING AVIATION INSTITUTE TAKES FLIGHT

With Maiden Matriculation  
Ceremony







**EVENT OVERVIEW**  
Join us for an immersive training experience. 'Face of Eastwing Aviation,' designed to equip young minds with essential skills in hospitality management and customer care.

**TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS**  
Certificate in Hospitality management and customer care upon completion  
Expert guest speakers from the aviation industry  
Interactive session on:  
- Conflict resolution  
- Cultural diversity and sensitivity  
- Effective communication and teamwork  
- Aviation etiquette and protocol

**ELIGIBILITY**  
Ages 18-30  
With an interest in aviation, hospitality or customer service

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# Editor's Note

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As we proudly present the maiden edition of Eastwing Aviation Magazine, we acknowledge the tireless efforts of our team, whose dedication and passion have brought this vision to life.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the Chairman of Eastwing Aviation Institute, Dr. Christopher Edeh, whose foresight and leadership have been instrumental in shaping this publication.

Our journey has not been about merely creating a magazine; it has been about crafting a platform that showcases the best of the Southeast region. We have endeavored to produce a publication that not only highlights the region's tourism potential, hospitality management establishments, and cultural heritage but also provides a voice for the people, their stories, and their aspirations.

As we embark on this exciting venture, we recognize that the true measure of our success lies not in our own self-satisfaction, but in the feedback and acceptance of our readers. We invite you to join us on this journey, to share your thoughts, and to help shape the future of Eastwing Aviation Magazine.

Our mission is to create a publication that is not only informative but also inspiring, one that awakens self-awareness and fosters a deeper appreciation for the rich cultural tapestry of the Southeast. We aim to make Eastwing Aviation Magazine the vanguard of aviation, hospitality, and tourism in the region, providing a platform for creative expression, innovation, and progress.

Through our magazine, we hope to propel the Eastwing Youth Foundation's initiatives, providing the necessary reorientation to realign the citizens of the Southeast and foster a sense of community and shared purpose. Our focus is threefold: aviation, hospitality, and tourism, and we seek to explore the intricate relationships between these sectors, shedding light on the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

As we unveil Eastwing Aviation Magazine, we do so with the conviction that our publication will not only meet but exceed the expectations of our readers. We are committed to journalistic excellence, creativity, and innovation, and we look forward to receiving your feedback, suggestions, and contributions.

Together, let us embark on this exciting journey, reviving the lost glory of failed dreams, exploring new hopes, and creating a standard that is unrivaled and worldly accepted. Welcome to Eastwing Aviation Magazine!

**Mr. Christian  
Agadibe**



**DR. Christopher Edeh**  
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# Fubara's Vision Soars: Empowering Rivers Youths in Aviation



In a bold move to empower Rivers State youths and position the state as a hub for aviation training and expertise, Governor Siminalayi Fubara has launched a scholarship program at the Eastwing Aviation Institute. This initiative is a testament to the governor's commitment to human capital development, despite facing numerous challenges and threats from within his party.

The scholarship program, which offers full sponsorship to qualified Rivers State indigenes, is designed to equip youths with practical market-relevant skills in aviation engineering

According to Dr. Stanley Pepple, the coordinator of the project, "The Governor's decision to sponsor training in AW139 engineering was driven by strategic goals related to economic development, skill acquisition, and technological advancement of Rivers youths".

The program's focus on AW139 helicopter engineering is particularly significant, given the looming global shortage of skilled aviation professionals.

By investing in the training of Rivers youths, Governor Fubara is

ensuring that the state is prepared to meet the demands of the aviation industry, which is projected to grow significantly over the next two decades.

The selection process for the scholarship program was fair and transparent, with publications in the media requesting youths from Rivers State to send in their documents for assessment. Those who met the deadline were chosen, and the program has already begun to yield positive results.





*AW139 HELICOPTER*

“

**The program's focus on AW139 helicopter engineering is particularly significant, given the looming global shortage of skilled aviation professionals.**

”

As Governor Fubara noted, "Equipping youths in practical market-relevant skills would foster self-reliance and spiral into economic growth for our people". This vision is already being realized, with the first batch of scholars poised to make a significant impact in the aviation sector.

The partnership between the Rivers State government and Eastwing Aviation Institute is a key component of the program's success. As Dr. Pepple explained, "Amongst other ATOs that sent in their interest to partner with the Government, East Wing was selected. The government had gone through his records and products that have passed through his institution, and we were satisfied".

As Governor Fubara continues to face challenges and threats from within his party, his commitment to empowering Rivers State youths remains unwavering. His

vision for a prosperous and sustainable future for the people of Rivers State is already being realized, and his legacy will undoubtedly be shaped by his tireless efforts to promote human capital development and technological innovation.

In the words of Dr. Pepple, "The Governor is concerned about youths in Rivers State. His initiative ensures the availability of skilled professionals to meet industry needs, foster economic growth for families where these youths come from, position Rivers State as the leader in aviation development, and finally mitigate the looming shortage of pilots and engineers".

As the Rivers State government continues to invest in the training and development of its youths, the future of the state's aviation sector looks brighter than ever. With Governor Fubara at the helm, the state is poised to become a hub for aviation training and expertise, and a model for human capital development and technological innovation.



***HIS EXCELLENCY  
SIR SIMINALAYI FUBARA, GSSRS  
GOVERNOR, RIVERS STATE***

# Train a child in school TODAY



## ABOUT US

Eastwing Youth Foundation (EYF) is a nonprofit organization that gives hope to young Nigerians who are less privileged and provides opportunities for building legacies through human development.

## OUR MISSION

To support talented and hardworking youths who aspire to be in the field of aviation but cannot afford the capital intensiveness of the sector. We do this through the provision of scholarships, special training sessions, and skill acquisition programs.

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# A Dream Takes Flight: Eastwing Aviation Institute's Maiden Matriculation Ceremony



founder and chairman, Dr Christopher Edeh. As the first to spearhead an aviation institute in Southeast Nigeria, Dr Edeh is on a mission to close the region's gap in aviation development. His guiding principle, *Aku rue uno* ("Charity begins at home"), encapsulates his dedication to empowering the local community and fostering growth from within.



**A**midst the jubilant radiant students and distinguished faculty members at Eastwing Aviation Institute's inaugural matriculation ceremony, the atmosphere was charged with pride and optimism.

For Mrs Chinagorom Ben Nwodo, the mother of one of the matriculants, the occasion marked the fulfilment of a long-held dream.

"We almost gave up hope of finding a reputable aviation school in the Southeast,"



she shared. "But discovering Eastwing Aviation Institute changed everything. We're thrilled that our son can pursue his passion close to home, where we can ensure his wellbeing and provide the support he needs."

The establishment of Eastwing Aviation Institute is a reflection of the visionary leadership of it's

The matriculation ceremony was a significant milestone in the institute's journey. With a team of esteemed professors and lecturers, students are set to receive a world-class education in aviation. Addressing the gathering, Dr Edeh assured students of the institute's commitment to excellence, drawing from his vast experience and education in the United Kingdom and beyond. His words were met with enthusiasm and a sense of anticipation for what lies ahead.



For the matriculating students, this moment signified the beginning of a journey laden with potential. They carry not only their own aspirations but also the hopes of their families, communities, and the entire region. Eastwing Aviation Institute is more than just an academic institution; it is a beacon of progress, poised to cultivate the next generation of skilled professionals and bridge the Southeast's aviation gap.

In Mrs Nwodo's words: "This is a clarion call to leaders everywhere to support institutions like Eastwing. They are instrumental in shaping the future of our region and our nation."

As the ceremony concluded, the pride and sense of achievement were unmistakable. Eastwing Aviation Institute's maiden matriculation represents a new chapter in aviation education for the Southeast. With its steadfast dedication to excellence, innovation, and community advancement, the institute is set to soar, inspiring a new generation of leaders and changemakers to take flight.



## South-Eastern Nigeria's Untapped Tourism Opportunities:

*A Path to Economic Prosperity*

In recent years, countries around the world have been waking up to the reality that tourism can be a powerful engine for economic growth. South-Eastern Nigeria stands at a pivotal moment, rich with potential that could reshape its economic future. The region is blessed with stunning natural beauty, vibrant cultural heritage, and evolving infrastructure, which makes it a prime candidate for tourism development, with Enugu State taking the lead. In recent years, countries around the world have been waking up to the reality that tourism can be a powerful engine for economic growth. South-Eastern Nigeria stands at a pivotal moment, rich with potential that could reshape its economic future. The region is blessed with stunning natural beauty, vibrant cultural heritage, and evolving infrastructure, which makes it a prime candidate for tourism development, with Enugu State taking the lead.

### *Natural Wonders*

South-Eastern Nigeria is home to a variety of natural wonders that could easily compete with some of the world's best tourist spots. Just in Enugu State, you can find breathtaking sights like Awhum Waterfall, Ezimo Waterfall, and the striking Miliken Hill. Moreover, the Mgbo Pine Forest adds another layer to the area's eco-tourism appeal. For those intrigued by history, the Nsude Pyramid and the Lejja iron smelting site offer fascinating archaeological attractions that can draw in researchers and history buffs.



“

**"What good is a tourism asset if no one knows it's there?"**

”

### *Building Up Infrastructure for Tourism*

The region is undergoing significant improvements in tourism infrastructure. Under the guidance of Governor Peter Mbah, Enugu State is making strides with exciting projects aimed at elevating visitor experiences. These include upgrading the Presidential Hotel, revitalizing the International Conference Centre, and developing a new five-star hotel. The existing domestic airport and hospitality facilities provide a solid foundation for attracting both local and international tourists.

## ***Economic Potential: A Wealth of Opportunities***

The economic benefits of enhancing South-Eastern Nigeria's tourism sector could be enormous. Tourism experts have pointed out that nations with far fewer natural attractions have managed to build thriving tourism industries. With the right efforts, the region could potentially welcome 4-6 million tourists each year, especially considering Nigeria's vast population and the large number of Nigerians who travel abroad for leisure.



## ***Overcoming Challenges***

However, several obstacles must be navigated to unlock this potential:

1. **Infrastructure Needs:** While some basic infrastructure exists, there is still a pressing need for improvements in road access and the maintenance of facilities, especially around popular tourist destinations.

2. **Effective Marketing:** A clear marketing strategy is crucial to bring the region's attractions into the spotlight. As tourism expert Ebele Amamchukwu pointed out, "What good is a tourism asset if no one knows it's there?"

3. **Community Involvement:** For tourism to thrive, local communities must be actively engaged in the development process. This involves creating programs aimed at skill development and supporting local businesses so that residents can directly benefit from tourism growth.

## ***Focus on Sustainable Practices***

Moving forward, it's vital to prioritize sustainable tourism methods. This includes:

- Establishing eco-friendly infrastructure
- Preserving cultural sites
- Involving local communities in the tourism journey
- Creating conservation initiatives to safeguard natural resources

## ***Collaborative Economic Growth***

Tourism growth in South-Eastern Nigeria won't just impact one state; successful development can uplift the entire region. Proximity to bustling commercial centers such as Aba, Owerri, and Onitsha opens up avenues for creating integrated tourism circuits, thereby boosting economic activities across the area.

## ***Looking Ahead***

The future looks bright for the tourism sector in South-Eastern Nigeria. With dedicated execution of development strategies, smart marketing, and grassroots involvement, this region has all it takes to emerge as a vibrant tourism hotspot. It could generate substantial revenue from tourist spending, create jobs, invigorate local businesses, and diversify the economy.

Realizing this vision demands ongoing commitment from government partners, private investors, and the community. By working together, South-Eastern Nigeria can turn its wealth of natural and cultural heritage into significant economic advantages, offering visitors unforgettable experiences while fostering sustainable growth for local residents.





**EASTWING**  
YOUTH FOUNDATION

P R E S E N T S :



# FACE OF EASTWING ACADEMIC MERIT COMPETITION

TAGLINE: EMPOWERING YOUTH, ENHANCING SERVICE AND SOARING TO EXCELLENCE

**COMING SOON**

## EVENT OVERVIEW

Join us for an immersive training experience, "Face of Eastwing Aviation," designed to equip young minds with essential skills in hospitality management and customer care

## TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS

Certificate in Hospitality management and customer care upon completion

Expert guest speakers from the aviation industry

Interactive session on

- Conflict resolution
- Cultural diversity and sensitivity
- Effective communication and teamwork
- Aviation etiquette and protocol

## ELIGIBILITY

Age: 18 - 30

With an interest in aviation, hospitality or customer service

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# Wings of Excellence: The Top 10 Igbo Personalities Shaping Aviation



01.

## CAPTAIN EVAREST NNAJI ODENGENE:

Is a trailblazer in Nigerian an entrepreneur and political figure. Originating from Enugu State, Nnaji's career spans diverse in-

dustries, from electronics trading to aviation. Aviation visionary and business leader Nnaji trained in the US, earning pilot licenses from the FAA and the NCAA. As the Managing Director/CEO of OAS Helicopters, he played an important role in oil and gas helicopter services in Nigeria. Through OAS Offshore Logistics Ltd, he further established his presence in offshore transport.

A passionate advocate for aviation development, Nnaji calls for greater investment in the sector, arguing that it is crucial for the economic development of the South East.

The aviation industry, while facing numerous challenges, has also experienced remarkable growth and transformation. This progress is due to resilient individuals who overcame significant obstacles and left a lasting impact. Their innovative ideas, technical expertise, and exceptional leadership have shaped the sector, ensuring its continued development. This list highlights leading figures from the South East region of Nigeria who have made significant contributions to the aviation sector, celebrating their achievements and recognising their influence.



### Political aspirations and advocacy

Beyond aviation, Nnaji has ventured into politics, advocating for regional economic transformation. He was a contender in the 2023 Enugu State gubernatorial race, emphasising infrastructural development and economic revitalisation. His political philosophy centres on using aviation as a vehicle for economic growth.

Though he was not elected governor, Nnaji remains a respected voice in political discourse, particularly regarding policies impacting business, transportation, and regional development.

### Philanthropy and social impact

Through the Odengene Foundation, Nnaji provides scholarships, supports orphans, and offers legal aid, reinforcing his commitment to social justice and community development.

02.

## CAPTAIN CHIMARA I. OKORO

Captain Chimara I. Okoro is a distinguished aviation professional, renowned for his extensive expertise and leadership. He serves as the Director of Flight Operations at United Nigeria Airlines (UNA), where he plays a pivotal role in overseeing the safety, efficiency and operational integrity of the airline's flights.

With a wealth of experience in aviation, Captain Okoro has established himself as a key figure in the field, ensuring that industry standards and best practices are upheld. Beyond his contributions to UNA, he is also associated with Chimera Aviation Limited, a UK-based company specialising in the manufacture of aircraft, spacecraft and related machinery.

A highly regarded expert in flight operations and management, Captain Chimara I. Okoro continues to make significant contributions to the advancement of aviation on both a national and international scale.

03.

## CAPTAIN EMMANUEL IHENACHO:

Captain Emmanuel Ihenacho is a retired Merchant Navy officer and former Minister of Interior (2010–2011). His expertise in safety and regulatory frameworks extends to aviation.

### Maritime interests

Captain Ihenacho holds master's degrees in shipping management and is a member of the Chartered Institute of Transport and the Nautical Institute. He is the Executive Chairman of Integrated Oil and Gas Ltd and Genesis Worldwide Shipping. As a former Minister of Interior, he contributed to regulatory frameworks in Nigeria, especially in shipping and transportation. As Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Shipping Companies Association, he praised the cabotage law but called for more consistent policy and financial support for the Nigerian shipping industry. He advocates for the blue economy and sustainable marine development. His maritime involvement has created jobs and promoted wealth generation.

### Leadership

As Minister of Interior, Ihenacho demanded action on unfinished prison projects and aimed to expedite trials of awaiting-trial inmates. He inaugurated the Nigeria Civil Defence College for Peace Disaster Management, Katsina.

### Business acumen

Ihenacho's expertise extends to Nigerian economic sectors, fostering the growth of the shipping industry. His leadership has developed initiatives strengthening Nigeria's position in the global maritime landscape. He is involved in policy

discussions regarding international maritime standards and Nigeria's aspirations to be part of the IMO Council.

04.

## CAPTAIN JOHN OKAKPU:

Captain John Okakpu is a respected aviation professional with over 30 years of experience. His career includes over 10,000 flight hours and roles as a pilot, flight instructor, and aviation safety expert. He is also a Certified Aviation Safety Inspector (CASI).

### Aviation interests

Captain Okakpu has contributed to accident investigations and regulatory frameworks with organisations like the NCAA and IATA. He has been vocal about industry issues, such as maintaining high safety standards, and has countered misinformation. For instance, he defended Arik Air's maintenance practices, emphasising that the airline adheres to international safety protocols.

His advocacy for safety measures and regulation continues to influence the Nigerian aviation sector.

05.

## PRINCE ENGR. ARTHUR EZE:

Prince Arthur Eze, born in 1948, is a Nigerian billionaire businessman, oil magnate, and philanthropist. He is the founder and chairman of Atlas Oronto Petroleum, one of Africa's largest privately held oil exploration companies.

### Aviation interests

Beyond oil and gas, Arthur Eze has a history in aviation. In 1992, he founded Triax Airlines, headquartered in Enugu State. The airline operated three commercial aircraft but ceased operations in 2000. Eze is an aviation enthusiast, owning a private jet and investing in aircraft management.

### Political and philanthropic influence

Arthur Eze is a significant figure in Nigerian politics, often referred to as a political godfather. His philanthropy

includes multi-million dollar donations to educational institutions, healthcare, and infrastructure projects. He contributed \$12 million to build St. Stephen Anglican Deanery and Youth Development Center and \$800,000 to build schools in South Sudan.

He was awarded the Officer of the Federal Republic (OFR) in 2011. Arthur Eze's impact spans multiple industries, with his influence in aviation, oil, and politics making him a key figure in Nigeria's economic landscape.

06.

## BARRISTER CHIKE OGEAH

Barrister Chike Ogeah is a legal expert specialising in aviation law. He graduated from the University of Lagos with degrees in Psychology and Law and was called to the Bar in 1990.

### Aviation interests

He has advised the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) on policies and regulations, including aircraft financing, leasing, and compliance. His advocacy for industry reforms has promoted safety, security, and economic growth. Recognised as Aviation Lawyer of the Year multiple times, Ogeah is also a Fellow of the Nigerian Institute of Management.

Barrister Chike Ogeah has significantly contributed to the development of Nigeria's aviation industry, advising key stakeholders, including the NCAA, on critical issues such as aircraft financing, leasing, and regulatory compliance. Ogeah's expertise in legal frameworks has been instrumental in shaping industry policies that promote safety, security, and growth. His commitment has earned him recognition as Aviation Lawyer of the Year on multiple occasions. He advocates for industry reforms, focusing on improving the legal environment for both local and international aviation operations.

Ogeah has also impacted aviation logistics, particularly through his involvement with the Skyway Aviation

Handling Company (SAHCO). Under his guidance, SAHCO has made significant strides in cargo and passenger services, contributing to the company's growth.

07.

## CAPTAIN CHINYERE KALU

Chinyere Kalu made history as Nigeria's first female commercial pilot, succeeding in a male-dominated field. Born in Akwete, Abia State, she was raised primarily by her mother.

Inspired by an aunt who travelled abroad, she initially aimed to become an air hostess but later pursued piloting. She attended Anglican Girls Grammar School, Lagos, and then the Nigerian College of Aviation Technology (NCAT), Zaria. After graduating as a private and commercial pilot, she earned her commercial pilot's licence in 1981. Kalu furthered her aviation studies in the UK and the US.

Her expertise led to her appointment as Rector and Chief Instructor of NCAT in 2011, a position she held until 2014. Under her leadership, NCAT continued to train highly skilled aviation professionals.

Kalu's contributions have been widely recognised. In 2006, she was awarded the Member of the Order of the Federal Republic (MFR). She also received the African International Achievers Merit Award (2007) and the Rare Gems Professional Achievements Award (2007). Her influence extended internationally, with her inclusion among Nigeria's 50 Greatest Women of Democratic Administration of Ghana (2012).

08.

## DR. OBIORA OKONKWO:

Dr. Obiora Okonkwo is a Nigerian entrepreneur, investor and political figure known for his leadership in aviation and advocacy for economic development. As Chairman and CEO of United Nigeria Airlines, he has expanded the airline's operations. His contributions extend beyond business,

as he actively participates in discussions on industry challenges, policy reforms, and economic strategies.

### Academic and professional background

Dr Okonkwo holds degrees in Economics, Political Science, and Business Administration from institutions in Nigeria and abroad. His academic background informs his strategic approach to business and governance. He has received numerous awards for his contributions to economic development and philanthropy.

### Leadership in aviation

As head of United Nigeria Airlines, Dr. Okonkwo has expanded the airline's domestic network, improving air travel accessibility and safety. He is vocal about the challenges facing the aviation sector, including the foreign exchange crisis, high operational costs, and policy inconsistencies. He has called for government intervention in forex allocation and policies that support sustainable aviation growth.

He recently revealed that fleet reductions among Nigerian airlines are severe, with some experiencing a 40% decline in operational aircraft, potentially rising to 70% if current economic conditions persist. He attributes this crisis to the high cost of aviation fuel, foreign exchange fluctuations, and maintenance costs.

### Political and economic advocacy

Beyond aviation, Dr Okonkwo advocates for economic reforms, entrepreneurship, and youth empowerment. He champions policies supporting Igbo entrepreneurship, particularly through apprenticeship programmes. He has also spoken on national economic policies, criticising government inefficiencies and calling for better governance.

In politics, Dr Okonkwo advocates for devolution of power, improved food security policies, and structural reforms promoting sustainable economic growth. He has expressed concerns about government policies impacting businesses and pushed for measures stimulating local production.



### Philanthropy and social impact

Dr Okonkwo supports education, entrepreneurship, and community development projects, including scholarship programmes, business mentorship, and funding for research on Igbo economic advancement. His endowment of a research project at UNIZIK Business School reflects his commitment to documenting and promoting the Igbo apprenticeship system.

09.

### DR. ALLEN ONYEMA

Dr. Allen Ifechukwu Onyema is a Nigerian businessman, lawyer, and

philanthropist, best known as the founder, Chairman, and CEO of Air Peace, Nigeria's largest privately owned airline. Born in Anambra State in 1964, Onyema studied law at the University of Ibadan and was called to the Nigerian Bar in 1989.

### Career and aviation achievements

Onyema entered the aviation sector driven by a passion for job creation and national development. In 2013, he established Air Peace to boost Nigeria's economy, create employment, and enhance the country's global reputation. Despite challenges, including obtaining an Air Operator's Certificate (AOC), Air Peace commenced operations in 2014 with seven aircraft. The airline quickly expanded its domestic and international routes, now operating flights across Africa, Asia, and North America.

Under Onyema's leadership, Air Peace has become a major player in Nigerian aviation, known for its customer service, affordability, and safety. The airline pioneered the use of the Boeing 777 for commercial operations in Nigeria and continues to expand its fleet.

A notable achievement was Air Peace's humanitarian role during crises. In 2019, Onyema sponsored the evacuation of over 500 Nigerians from South Africa following xenophobic attacks. In 2022, Air Peace was among the airlines that helped evacuate Nigerian students from Ukraine during the Russia-Ukraine war.

### Philanthropy and National Contributions

Beyond aviation, Onyema advocates for national unity and social development. Through his Foundation for Ethnic Harmony in Nigeria (FEHN), established in 2005, he promotes peace and reconciliation, particularly in the Niger Delta. His peacebuilding efforts have earned him recognition from the Nigerian government and international organisations.

### Recognition and legacy

Onyema has received numerous national and international honours, including:

- Officer of the Order of the Federal Republic (OFR)
- Various aviation industry leadership awards
- Recognition from international business and aviation organisations.

10.

### DR. CHRISTOPHER EDEH

Dr. Christopher Edeh is an aeronautical engineer with over 30 years of experience

with over 30 years of experience in military and civil aviation. He holds a doctorate from Moscow State Technical University of Civil Aviation and is actively involved in training and policymaking.

As the founder of Eastwing Aviation Institute, Dr. Edeh has shaped aviation education in Nigeria. The institute, approved by the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), is the first aviation training school in the South-East region, offering National Diploma and Higher National Diploma programmes for aspiring aviation engineers, and cabin crew.

Dr. Edeh advocates for accessible aviation education. He established a non-governmental organisation to support talented but underprivileged youths. His work has directly impacted workforce development, with many mentees securing prominent roles in Nigerian aviation.

Dr. Edeh consults for government and private stakeholders, influencing aviation policies and regulations. His contributions have earned him multiple recognitions. He continues to shape the industry's future, ensuring Nigeria's competitiveness in global aviation.





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**Emmanuel Ekene Nnamani**

Chairman, Enugu State Internal Revenue  
Service (ESIRS)





## Step out of the ordinary: Unforgettable travel experiences in Southeastern Nigeria



**The enchanting Ngwo Pine Forest and Cave: A hidden gem, Enugu State**

Our first destination feels like something out of a fairytale. Welcome to the Ngwo Pine Forest, a magical escape tucked away on the outskirts of the bustling Enugu City, aptly nicknamed the Coal City. But take heed: once you set foot in Ngwo, leaving may prove difficult!

### **The journey to Ngwo**

Your adventure begins the moment you hit the road. As you navigate Enugu's winding paths, the hum of city life fades, giving way to rolling hills and dense clusters of greenery. Nestled among small villages lies the Ngwo Pine Forest, a treasure waiting to be uncovered.

Insider tip: Make a stop at a roadside vendor and exchange a few naira for a refreshing drink of palm wine. This local delicacy is not just a treat—it's a part of the adventure.

### **A cathedral of pines**

As you step into the forest, time seems to slow. Towering pine trees form a natural canopy that filters sunlight into soft, dappled

**I**magine a land adorned with lush greenery, where towering hills offer breathtaking views.

Imagine a place where caves conceal secrets of ancient civilisations, where vibrant festivals pulse with the energy of a proud people, and where meals are so rich they take you on a sensory journey! Welcome to Southeastern Nigeria!

The South East comprises five states—Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo—each brimming with history and culture. But beyond their rich heritage, these states are also blessed with spectacular natural beauty. Whether you're an experienced

adventurer, a culture enthusiast, or simply seeking to break free from the routine of everyday life, this region promises experiences that will leave you enchanted.

Picture yourself strolling through a misty forest, or scaling a hill to discover a shimmering waterfall. Imagine joining a lively crowd, swaying to the rhythmic beats of Udu drums at a festival older than your great-grandparents! Intrigued? Excellent. Let me be your guide as we explore just five of the best attractions across the states of Southeastern Nigeria

patterns, and the air feels delightfully fresh. But it's the tranquil silence that first strikes you—a living quiet, punctuated by the rustling of leaves, birdsong, and the gentle whispers of the wind. It's a sanctuary from the chaos of daily life.

This serene atmosphere draws couples for romantic strolls and families eager to explore its hidden nooks.

Photography enthusiasts, take note: the interplay of light and shadow here is a dream come true for your camera lens.

The Hidden Treasure: Ngwo Cave and Waterfall

Just when you think it couldn't get any better, it does. The forest leads you to Ngwo Cave and Waterfall, a destination that feels straight out of a fantasy novel.

The journey to the cave is an adventure itself, winding through lush vegetation on a narrow trail. At the end of this path, you'll find the cave—a narrow, almost unassuming opening in the rock that leads to a world untouched by time. Inside, the sound of water dripping echoes faintly, adding to the mystical ambiance.

Some chambers are spacious and easy to explore, while others require a sense of adventure to navigate. Emerging from the cave, you'll be greeted by yet another marvel: the waterfall. Cascading from the top of the cave, it forms a shimmering, misty curtain that catches the sunlight like diamonds. Brave visitors often stand beneath the cascade, revelling in the invigorating rush of cold water—a moment frequently described as the highlight of the journey.

### Activities to dive into

#### • Take a guided tour

Local guides, brimming with stories and legends, add depth to your experience. Many of these tales weave together the cave's spiritual significance to the local communities. Book a guided tour to uncover these rich narratives.

#### • Sketch or photograph

Whether you're an artist or a photographer, the forest and waterfall offer an endless source of inspiration.

#### • Plan a picnic

Pack a basket, pick a cosy spot under the pines, and spend a leisurely afternoon with loved ones. Many visitors also bring books, journals, or yoga mats to immerse themselves fully in the serenity.

#### • Explore the hidden corners

Feeling adventurous? Venture into the narrower tunnels of the cave or climb the rocks near the waterfall. You never know what hidden wonders you might stumble upon!

#### • Engage with locals

Take the time to connect with villagers near Ngwo. They are often eager to share their culture and traditions. Sample local delicacies like roasted yam with palm oil, and pick up a few Igbo phrases to make your trip even more memorable.

### Tips for a seamless visit

**Wear comfortable shoes:** Uneven forest trails and cave paths call for sturdy footwear.

**Bring a change of clothes:** If you plan to stand under the waterfall, you'll want something dry to change into.

**Carry snacks and water:** Vendors near the entrance may not cover all your needs, so it's best to come prepared.

**Visit early:** Morning visits are ideal for capturing the forest's serene beauty and giving you ample time to explore.

**Respect the environment:** Keep Ngwo pristine by avoiding littering.

**Pro tip:** On special occasions, the villagers organise cultural displays featuring traditional Igbo music, dance, and storytelling. Time your visit around one of these events for a truly unforgettable experience.

Ngwo Pine Forest and Cave isn't just a destination—it's a journey into the heart of Southeastern Nigeria's beauty and heritage. Ready to step into the fairytale?





## Ogbunike Caves, Anambra State

Our next destination lies deep in the heart of Anambra, a place that many say feels like stepping back in time. Welcome to the Ogbunike Caves, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

There's something uniquely captivating about caves—they ignite our deepest curiosities. As some of the oldest structures on Earth, caves hold the secrets of ancient worlds. Few, however, evoke the same sense of wonder and mystery as the Ogbunike Caves. Tucked away in the quiet town of Ogbunike, these caves are more than just a geological marvel—they are a spiritual treasure revered by locals. Prepare for a journey that takes you not only into the past but also into yourself.

### A gateway to the past

The journey to the caves is simple yet filled with its charms. Ogbunike is a short drive from the bustling city of Onitsha. Picture transitioning from the lively, urban energy of Onitsha to tranquil greenery and winding roads. Along the way, you might catch glimpses of the serene Nkisi River, which adds to the allure of the trip.

When you arrive, the entrance to the caves is a sight to behold. Imagine a gaping mouth carved into the hillside, shaded by towering trees that stand as sentinels to this sacred site. Centuries ago, locals would gather here to chant praises to their gods. But that's a story for later—let's explore further.

### The descent: Walking into the heart of Ogbunike

The adventure begins with the descent—more than 300 steps deep. The staircase winds its way down, and you may find yourself holding onto the walls for balance. If you're nervous, try counting each step to keep your mind occupied, because this is a descent you won't soon forget.

The deeper you go, the cooler it gets—soon it feels as though you've walked into an air-conditioned room. The temperature shift adds an eerie thrill to the experience. As the light dims, the sounds of the outside world fade, replaced by the voices of your fellow explorers and the occasional flutter of bats. Finally, you reach the bottom, and the real magic begins.

Welcome to the caves! Inside, you'll find an intricate network of interconnected tunnels and chambers. Some are so vast they resemble underground cathedrals, while others are narrow enough to require crouching to pass through. The rock formations are mesmerising, forming unique shapes that spark the imagination—some resemble animals or even human figures if you let your mind wander.

Guides will regale you with fascinating stories tied to the caves—tales of ancient rituals, hidden retreats, and the lives of

those who once sought refuge here. It's an enthralling mix of history, culture, and mystery.

You're not alone, though—the caves are home to a variety of creatures, most notably bats. These winged inhabitants may swoop overhead, prompting the occasional squeal from visitors. But don't worry; the caves are far from haunted!

As a mark of respect for the sacredness of the site, certain rules must be observed. For instance, women are not allowed to enter during their menstrual cycle, and visitors are asked to remove their shoes when venturing into deeper chambers. These customs are integral to the spiritual significance the caves hold for the locals.

### What to do at Ogbunike Caves

#### Pay for a guided tour

Local guides offer a wealth of knowledge about the caves' history, myths, and geography. They'll also lead you along the safest paths, ensuring you don't miss any hidden wonders.

#### Wildlife watching

From the bats inside the caves to tropical birds and vibrant butterflies flitting through the surrounding forest, Ogbunike is a haven for nature lovers.

#### Photography

The caves and their surroundings provide a visual feast. The interplay of light and shadow, the textures of the rocks, and the lush greenery make for stunning photos.

**Tip:** Bring a camera with strong low-light capabilities to capture the caves' magic.

#### Picnicking and relaxation

The forest around the caves is ideal for a picnic. Pack a basket, lay out a blanket, and enjoy a tranquil meal surrounded by nature.

#### Cultural immersion

Engage with the locals to learn about their traditions and rituals. From myths about protective spirits to historical accounts of those who sought sanctuary in the caves, their stories are as captivating as the site itself.

#### Tips for visiting

- Dress appropriately: Sturdy shoes are essential for navigating the descent. If you plan to get wet, bring a change of clothes.
- Respect the rules: Follow all guidelines provided by your guide or the local community.
- Bring a torch: While some areas are naturally lit, many sections of the caves are dark.
- Stay hydrated: The trek to and from the caves can be tiring, so carry water with you.
- Come with an open mind: The caves are as much a natural marvel as they are a cultural treasure. Embrace the experience fully.





## National War Museum, Abia State

Nestled in Umuahia, the capital of Abia State, is a museum that preserves the painful yet poignant legacy of Nigeria's past. Established in 1985, the National War Museum stands as a monument to the nation's civil war, safeguarding the stories and artifacts of a turbulent era. The beauty of this museum lies in its rawness, exposing grim events that might otherwise have faded into obscurity.

### The road to history

Your journey begins the moment you step onto the museum grounds. Greeting you is a striking display of military tanks, warplanes, and naval vessels—an unmistakable prelude to the experience ahead. The museum is expansive, with exhibits thoughtfully divided into indoor and outdoor sections, ensuring a comprehensive exploration of Nigeria's wartime history.

### What's inside?

#### Traditional Warfare Gallery

This section highlights the indigenous weapons used by Nigerian tribes before colonial times. Here, you'll encounter spears, shields, and bows—tools that reflect the ingenuity and resourcefulness of early warfare.

#### Armed Forces Gallery

Celebrating the evolution of Nigeria's military, this gallery showcases uniforms, badges, and historical photographs. Each piece offers a glimpse into the journey of the nation's armed forces.

#### Nigerian Civil War Gallery

The emotional heart of the museum, this gallery chronicles the Nigerian Civil War (1967–1970). Artifacts include Biafran currency, propaganda posters, and the notorious "Ogbunigwe" (a locally made bomb). The detailed descriptions accompanying these items bring history to life, immersing visitors in the events of the war.



### Outdoor Exhibit

The museum's outdoor section features a remarkable collection of military hardware, including:

**Biafran Red Devil Tank:** An armoured vehicle ingeniously crafted during the war.

**Warplanes:** Soviet MiG fighter jets and B-26 bombers that played pivotal roles in the air battles of the conflict.

**Naval craft:** Boats and submarines that reveal the maritime strategies employed by both sides during the war.

These relics are a testament to the resilience and resourcefulness of the engineers and soldiers who created them under immense pressure.

## Activities and visitor engagement

- **Guided tours:** Knowledgeable guides lead visitors through the galleries, offering insights and answering questions to enrich your experience.
- **Educational programmes:** Schools and groups can participate in excursions, workshops, and historical reenactments, making it a perfect learning opportunity.
- **Photography:** The outdoor exhibits, with their towering machines, provide excellent photo opportunities for visitors.

## Culinary adventure

- After immersing yourself in history, indulge in the culinary delights of Umuahia. The city offers an array of local restaurants serving traditional dishes, such as Abacha (African salad)—a light yet flavourful meal made from cassava. Pair it with freshly tapped palm wine from the region's palm trees—a refreshing drink that's the perfect way to unwind after your visit.

## Why Visit?

The National War Museum is more than just a collection of artifacts—it's a space for reflection, education, and connection. By preserving the stories of Nigeria's past, it fosters a deeper understanding of the importance of unity and peace.

Plan your visit to this remarkable destination and uncover the powerful stories that have shaped Nigeria's identity.



### Mbari Cultural and Art Center, Imo State

If you're a lover of art and architecture, the Mbari Cultural and Art Centre in Imo State is an absolute must-visit. This open-air museum celebrates Igbo creativity through a stunning display of sculptures, murals, and traditional buildings.

Offering an immersive experience that engages all the senses—sight, sound, touch, and even taste—the centre weaves a captivating narrative of Igbo culture. Every corner, exhibit, and performance tells a story, from the bold strokes of traditional art to the rhythmic beats of the drums. Whether you're an art enthusiast, a culture lover, or a curious traveller, this unique destination will deepen your understanding of one of Nigeria's most influential ethnic groups.



The rich history of Mbari: A journey through time

The term "Mbari" holds profound significance in Igbo spirituality. Traditionally, Mbari was a sacred space where the gods were honoured, rituals were performed, and the finest works of art were created as offerings to deities. The Mbari Cultural and Art Centre seeks to preserve and share this ancient tradition with the world.

Located in the vibrant city of Owerri, the capital of Imo State, the centre greets visitors with bold, colourful architectural designs. The buildings themselves are masterpieces, featuring intricately carved wood and stonework that have been carefully preserved for generations.

As you wander through the grounds, you'll find yourself in a veritable museum of sculptures. These include depictions of gods and spirits, as well as everyday scenes from Igbo life, such as farming, dancing, and hunting. A standout feature is the collection of Igbo masks—crafted from wood, clay, and metal—each with intricate details that convey the deep connection between the physical and spiritual worlds. Outdoors, larger-than-life sculptures blend seamlessly with the natural landscape, creating an enchanting harmony between art and nature.

### **Engage with Igbo art: An immersive experience**

#### **The art of Igbo craftsmanship**

A highlight of the Mbari Centre is the chance to watch Igbo craftsmen at work. Skilled artisans carve intricate designs into wood, create dazzling beadwork, and shape exquisite pottery—all while sharing the cultural significance of their creations. These crafts, passed down through generations, offer a rare insight into the artistic traditions that define the Igbo community.

You don't just have to admire these works; you can take a piece of Igbo artistry home with you. Hand-carved masks, beaded jewellery, and beautifully painted canvases are available for purchase, serving as lasting reminders of your visit.

#### **Cultural performances and dance**

Immerse yourself in Igbo culture through live performances of traditional music, dance, and theatre. The

rhythmic beats of the drums and the vibrant energy of the dancers will captivate you, as they tell stories of Igbo heritage. Performances often take place in the centre's open-air amphitheatre, adding to the magical atmosphere.

If you're lucky enough to visit during a festival or special cultural event, you may witness an Igbo masquerade dance. Performers in elaborate costumes and masks bring ancient myths and legends to life in a spectacle that's as thrilling as it is unforgettable.

#### **Educational tours and cultural workshops**

For those eager to delve deeper, the Mbari Centre offers guided tours led by passionate curators. These experts will enrich your understanding of Igbo cosmology and cultural heritage, explaining how these traditions continue to shape the lives of the Igbo people today.

Visitors can also participate in hands-on workshops, such as pottery-making or beadwork. Guided by master artisans, these sessions provide a unique opportunity to learn and create, offering a deeper connection to Igbo culture.

#### **The flavours of Mbari: Igbo cuisine**

No visit to the Mbari Cultural and Art Centre is complete without sampling the flavours of Igbo cuisine. The centre's traditional restaurant serves a variety of local dishes, such as Jollof rice, a spicy, tomato-based dish beloved across West Africa; pounded yam and Egusi soup, A hearty and flavourful combination that's quintessentially Nigerian; and Bitter leaf soup (Ofe Onugbu), made with local herbs and vegetables, a dish that offers a taste of authentic Igbo cooking.

For snacks, try Chin chin (crispy, fried dough) or Akara (bean cakes), paired with a refreshing cup of Zobo (hibiscus drink) or palm wine.

### What to wear for your visit

**Modest and comfortable clothing:** As a cultural site, respectful attire is recommended. Women might opt for long skirts or trousers with sleeved tops, while men can wear long trousers and shirts.

**Comfortable footwear:** Sturdy sandals or trainers are ideal for navigating the indoor and outdoor exhibits.

**Light jacket or sweater:** If you're visiting in

cooler months or in the evening, bring a jacket or sweater to stay comfortable.

**Sun protection:** A hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen are essential for exploring the outdoor spaces.

The Mbari Cultural and Art Centre is more than just a tourist destination—it's a journey into the heart of Igbo heritage. With its rich history, vibrant art, and immersive experiences, it promises to leave you with lasting memories and a profound appreciation for the traditions of the Igbo people.



## Cultural Centre, Ebonyi State

In the vibrant heart of Abakaliki stands the Ebonyi State Cultural Centre, a destination that opens a window into the indigenous arts, history, and traditions that have defined the people of Ebonyi for generations.

### A walk through Ebonyi's traditions

This cultural hub is more than a museum—it is a living celebration of Ebonyi's heritage. Handwoven baskets, intricate beadwork, and bold textiles are beautifully displayed, telling stories of craftsmanship passed down through generations. The centre also boasts a remarkable collection of pottery, each piece carefully crafted using age-old techniques.

Visitors can immerse themselves in the creative process through interactive workshops. Whether it's weaving, pottery-making, or beadwork, these sessions provide a hands-on opportunity to learn the traditional methods behind these exquisite crafts. This unique experience brings Ebonyi's cultural narratives to life, making it an ideal destination for families, school groups, or anyone curious about the region's rich heritage.

### Cultural performances that tell a story

One of the most captivating aspects of the Ebonyi State Cultural Centre is its dedication to preserving and showcasing the state's vibrant music and dance traditions. Performances are a regular feature, and the rhythm of local drums sets the stage for mesmerising traditional dances.

Accompanied by music played on locally crafted instruments—such as gongs, flutes, and drums—the dances often convey stories that reflect the values and beliefs of Ebonyi's communities. These lively performances are not just entertainment; they are a window into the soul of Ebonyi's culture.

### A hub for Ebonyi's arts and crafts

The cultural centre is a treasure trove for art enthusiasts and shoppers alike. From hand-carved wooden sculptures to intricately designed bead



necklaces, the range of crafts on display is impressive. Many of these items are available for purchase, allowing visitors to take home a piece of Ebonyi's artistry as a souvenir or gift.

Beyond this, the centre serves as a platform for emerging local artists, providing them with an opportunity to showcase their talents. This makes it not only a repository of tradition but also a space that fosters contemporary creativity.

Practical tips for your visit

The Ebonyi State Cultural Centre is conveniently located in the heart of Abakaliki, easily accessible from the city's main roads. The centre is open daily, but it's worth checking in advance for performance schedules or special events to make the most of your visit.

There is ample parking available on-site, and the friendly staff are on hand to ensure your experience is both enriching and enjoyable.

What to wear

The centre's design makes it easy to navigate, with a mix of indoor and outdoor spaces to explore. Given Abakaliki's warm climate, lightweight and breathable clothing is recommended. For outdoor activities, bring a hat or sunscreen to stay comfortable under the sun.

If your visit coincides with a festival or special event, take note of the stunning traditional attire worn by locals. Visitors are often encouraged to dress similarly to fully immerse themselves in the experience, adding an extra layer of connection to the culture.

So, when planning your next adventure to southeastern Nigeria, make sure to include the Ebonyi State Cultural Centre on your itinerary. It's more than a tourist destination; it's an inspiring journey into the heart and soul of Ebonyi.



# The ripple effect: How hospitality management influences aviation, tourism, and local economies



In today's interconnected world, hospitality management serves as a cornerstone for the aviation and tourism industries. While its role may often go unnoticed, it is integral in transforming routine travel experiences into memorable journeys. Hospitality management ensures that every interaction—whether at an airport, onboard a flight, or at a tourist destination—is smooth, enriching, and enjoyable. However, its impact extends far beyond individual travellers. This field is a powerful economic driver, significantly shaping local economies and fostering sustainable growth in communities worldwide.

The aviation-tourism nexus: A symbiotic relationship.

Aviation and tourism are inextricably linked, and hospitality management functions as the glue that binds them together. Airlines, airports, and tourism businesses rely heavily on hospitality principles to create seamless, enjoyable experiences for travellers. Whether it's through the thoughtful layout of an airport lounge, the attentiveness of cabin crew, or the warmth of hotel staff, hospitality management is at the heart of customer satisfaction.

Consider the international airport. It is more than just a transportation hub; it is a microcosm of global connectivity. Hospitality management is evident in every aspect of the airport experience, from check-in counters to security screening and onward to lounges, retail spaces, and dining areas. Travellers passing through a well-managed airport are more likely to remember their experience positively and to



recommend both the airport and the destination it serves.

For airlines, in-flight hospitality is equally critical. The quality of food and beverage offerings, the professionalism of crew members, and the entertainment options provided all contribute to a passenger's overall impression. Airlines that prioritise these elements of hospitality often enjoy greater customer loyalty and a stronger reputation in the competitive aviation market.

The ripple effect: Hospitality and economic growth

Effective hospitality management doesn't just enhance the travel experience; it creates a ripple effect that benefits local economies in profound ways. Destinations that invest in high-quality hospitality services attract more visitors, leading to a cascade of economic advantages:

- **Increased spending:** Tourists are more likely to dine at local restaurants, shop at local stores, and engage in cultural activities when they encounter exceptional hospitality.
- **Job creation:** The demand for skilled workers in hospitality, from airport staff to tour guides, creates both direct and indirect employment opportunities.

- **Infrastructure development:**

To support growing tourism and aviation industries, governments and private entities often invest in better roads, transportation networks, and facilities.

- **Growth of related sectors:** The hospitality industry supports other industries, such as agriculture, manufacturing, and technology, by sourcing goods and services locally.

- **Higher tax revenue:** Increased tourism leads to higher tax collections, which can be reinvested into community projects, healthcare, and education. For instance, an airport staffed with well-trained hospitality professionals can significantly boost a destination's appeal. These staff members often serve as informal ambassadors, providing travellers with valuable information about local attractions, events, and culture. When tourists feel welcomed and informed, they are more likely to extend their stays and spend more money, creating a cycle of sustainable economic growth that uplifts the entire community.

### The role of training in hospitality management excellence

A key driver of success in hospitality management is the

ongoing training and development of staff. In an industry where customer expectations continually evolve, training is essential to maintaining high standards and ensuring consistent service quality.

Leadership plays a pivotal role in fostering a culture of hospitality excellence. When executives and managers prioritise training and model best practices, they set the tone for the rest of the organisation. A strong commitment to continuous learning creates an environment where employees feel motivated to improve, innovate, and provide exceptional service.

### Effective training programmes should include the following elements:

- **Comprehensive and ongoing learning:** Training should not be limited to onboarding. Regular sessions help employees stay updated on industry trends, new technologies, and customer preferences.
- **Role-specific customisation:** Different roles within the aviation and tourism industries require specialised training, but all employees should share a foundational understanding of hospitality principles.

- **Soft skills development:** Emotional intelligence, cultural awareness, and communication skills are just as important as technical expertise in creating meaningful customer interactions.
- **Adapting to trends:** As travel trends evolve, training must address emerging challenges, such as sustainability, digital innovation, and post-pandemic health protocols.
- **Measuring impact:** Organisations should regularly evaluate the effectiveness of their training programmes through customer feedback, performance reviews, and operational metrics.
- **Interpersonal skills:** High emotional intelligence, active listening, and problem-solving abilities are invaluable in hospitality roles.
- **Adaptability:** The ability to stay calm under pressure and respond effectively to unexpected situations is crucial in fast-paced environments like airports.
- **Multilingual abilities:** Proficiency in multiple languages is a significant asset in serving diverse customer bases.
- **Commitment to growth:** Employees who demonstrate a willingness to learn and evolve are more likely to contribute to long-term organisational success.

### Strategic hiring: The foundation of hospitality excellence

A well-executed hospitality management strategy begins with hiring the right people. In the aviation and tourism industries, where first impressions can make or break a traveller's experience, strategic hiring is indispensable.

Rather than focusing solely on technical qualifications, organisations should prioritise candidates with the following traits:

- **Cultural fit:** Employees should align

Hiring the wrong candidate can lead to service inconsistencies, lower team morale, and increased turnover—all of which negatively impact the customer experience. Conversely, investing in a rigorous hiring process creates a strong foundation for exceptional hospitality management.

Looking ahead: The future of hospitality management in aviation and tourism. As global travel continues to recover and evolve, the importance of hospitality management will only grow.

Technological advancements, such as artificial intelligence and biometrics, are reshaping the aviation and tourism landscapes, offering new opportunities to enhance customer experiences. However, the human element remains irreplaceable.

Organisations that strike the right balance between technological innovation and personalised service will have a distinct advantage in the competitive market. For instance, while automated check-ins and baggage handling systems streamline operations, the warmth of a helpful staff member can turn a stressful journey into a pleasant one.

Sustainability is another critical area where hospitality management can make a difference. By adopting eco-friendly practices and promoting responsible tourism, destinations can appeal to environmentally conscious travellers while preserving natural and cultural resources for future generations.

Finally, the success of hospitality management hinges on collaboration. Stakeholders across the aviation and tourism industries—including airlines, airports, hotels, and local governments—must work together to create cohesive, customer-focused experiences. By sharing insights and aligning goal

- goals, they can amplify the positive ripple effects of hospitality management.

### Conclusion

Hospitality management is far more than a behind-the-scenes function; it is a transformative force that drives satisfaction, loyalty, and economic prosperity. By connecting aviation and tourism, enhancing traveller experiences, and fostering sustainable growth, it plays a pivotal role in shaping our global economy.

For organisations and communities alike, the key to unlocking these benefits lies in embracing a holistic approach to hospitality—one that prioritises training, strategic hiring, and a commitment to excellence. As the aviation and tourism sectors continue to evolve, so too will the opportunities to create meaningful, lasting impacts through the art and science of hospitality management.





# South East Nigeria's Reign on the Global Stage: The Pageant Champions Taking the World by Storm



In the lights on the global stage are shining brighter than ever, and they are shining on the beautiful and handsome youths from South East Nigeria! From Miss Nigeria, to Mister International to Miss Universe, to Miss World, our stars are not just competing, they are setting records. They are cementing Nigeria's place as a defiant competitor in the world of beauty and male pageantry. Think of Samuel Nwajagu's historic win at Mister International 2024, and Chidimma Adetshina's cinema-worthy rise to runner-up at the Miss Universe 2024. It is so clear that Nigeria's South East is producing world-class icons.

## A Crown for the History Books: Samuel Nwajagu's Triumph

When Samuel Nwajagu stood under the dazzling lights of Bangkok, Thailand, on December 14, 2024, he had no idea that history was about to be rewritten with his name. But moments later, the lights dimmed on others and focused on his chiselled face and the crowd erupted in a standing ovation. He had done what no Nigerian, or African, had ever done before: he had won the Mister International 2024 winner. Before him, many Africans and Nigerians had walked through that stage but had returned with nothing.

Nwajagu, a proud son of Anambra State and a fitness enthusiast came and he conquered. The 27-year-old University of Port Harcourt graduate fought through the rigorous competition, went up against 47 striking and intelligent men from around the world, the highest number in the pageant's history, and claimed the crown. He also won the Best in Swimwear subtitle. Discipline, hard work, and sheer determination was all he needed to stand out and they were enough.



When his name was called, many people burst into tears. Other African who'd been through that competition, jumped in pure joy and excitement for the man that had broken the jinx.

As Nwajagu embraced Mr. Vietnam, his runner up, the reality of his achievement finally sank in. Tears threatened to spill, but he held them back. He sat like a King while the outgoing titleholder, Thitisan Goodburn of Thailand, placed the crown on his head

Outside the building, Nigerians all over social media erupted in celebration. One fan perfectly captured the sentiment: "Odogwu, you made us proud! Africa stands tall today because of you."

Samuel Nwajagu rewrote history in 2024, and made Nigeria and the whole of the South East proud!

But he was not the only one.

### Miss Universe 2024: Chidimma Adetshina's Near-Coronation

If Nwajagu's win sent shockwaves through the male pageant world, Chidimma Adetshina's performance at Miss Universe 2024 was nothing short of electrifying. Representing Nigeria, she became the first-ever Nigerian to secure the first runner-up position in the prestigious competition! The Competition was held in Mexico City, and featured over 80 beautiful, elegant and intelligent ladies from all around the world, as contestants. But 78 of them were no match to Chidimma Adetshina.

Adetshina, a model and humanitarian from Enugu, had spent years preparing for this moment. Even with the thick controversy she endured as a result of an unconfirmed accusation from some South Africans, she still contested and won Miss Nigeria 2024, and earned her place in the Miss Universe Competition. Here, her grace, poise, and razor-sharp intellect made her an early fan favorite. When she stepped on the stage in Mexico, in the evening gown segment, Wrapped in a shimmering emerald-green dress that

paid tribute to Nigeria's lush landscapes, the audience gasped. But it was during the final question round that she sealed her place in the competition's history.

When asked how she thinks she has inspired women watching from around the world, Adetshina's response was poignant: "As a woman who has faced adversity, I believe I have a powerful story. I stand here today not as Chidimma Adetshina but as a symbol of hope, a beacon of Oo faith. And as someone who has persevered with grace, I believe I have fought not only for myself but for Africa."

The crowd erupted in a loud applause, and social media buzzed. Many Nigerians had stayed awake past midnight, sitting with fingers crossed and praying for her. And they were not disappointed. When the final two were selected, Chidimma made the cut! Nigerians and everyone in the South East were so happy and proud! Social media was agog with excitement. The title ultimately went to Miss Philippines, but Adetshina was crowned Miss Universe Africa and Oceania. She was also ranked the highest African Contestant of 2024.

Her placement is Nigeria's highest at any Miss Universe pageant.

Adetshina's impact is undeniable. Her journey has inspired millions, and, because of her, Nigeria's presence in global pageantry has never been stronger. What is more, she made everyone in the South East proud!

Months before that competition, another lady from the South East had attempted something similar.

### Miss World 2024: Ada Eme's Top 40 Finish

The Miss World 2024 competition was a tough one with fierce contenders from every corner of the globe. Still, amongst 112 contestants, Nigeria's representative, Ada Eme, secured a top 40 finish that definitely improved Nigeria's reputation in the

global pageantry scene. The competition was held on the 9th of March at the Jio World Convention Centre in Mumbai, India and featured segments of public speaking, fitness and even talent, and Ada Eme scaled through all! Though she didn't make it to the final five, her journey was enough to make South Easterners and Nigerians proud.

The Miss World pageantry places heavy emphasis on social impact, so Ada Eme's advocacy for education and women's rights resonated deeply with everyone. She definitely left a clean mark, and proved that Nigerian women are forces to be reckoned with.

#### What's Next for South East Nigeria's Pageant Stars?

With back-to-back wins at Mister International, Miss Universe, and Miss World, South East Nigeria is solidifying itself as a breeding ground for world-class beauty Queens and Kings. But the journey doesn't end here.

Samuel Nwajagu has already begun his reign as Mister International, and is taking on ambassadorial roles in the fashion and fitness industries. Adetshina, too, has hinted at plans to expand her advocacy for women's education, and to launch a foundation to empower young girls in rural Nigeria. And more young people from the South East are trooping into the Pageantry world because of these massive influences.

As the world watches, one thing is clear: South East Nigeria's rise in Global Pageantry is just beginning. If last year's victories are any indication, the next wave of contestants from the region will not just participate in international competitions, they will win and dominate.

So, to the next young dreamer in Enugu, Anambra, Abia, Imo, or Ebonyi, watching these champions on screen, take note: The world is waiting for you. And if history has taught us anything, it is that Nigeria, and the South East in particular, does not come to play. It Comes to win.

So, who will be the next face to take the world by storm? It might be you.



Mr. Nigeria International 2024: Ohaja Joseph Chibunna steals the Spotlight

South Easterners also made their mark in Nigeria's male pageantry scene, thanks to Ohaja Joseph Chibunna, who was crowned Mr. Nigeria International 2024. His journey wasn't just about looking good in a suit, he fought hard to earn his spot, and he succeeded! Ohaja triumphed above countless competitors and won the crown!

And it is a good thing he did because with a focus on youth empowerment, social change, and community service, Ohaja has used his platform to advocate for causes close to his heart. Whether it is speaking out against Period Poverty for Women, or working to uplift the Elderly, his reign has been about impact.

And the best part? He is just getting started. Ohaja's victory also came with an opportunity for him to compete in the world competition in Philadelphia, and even though he had a hard time adjusting, he fought till the end.

Nigerians and South Easterners are so proud of Ohaja Joseph!



# AVIATION NEWS

## KEYAMO UNVEILS AIRCRAFT MANUFACTURING PLANS FOR NIGERIA

The Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, Festus Keyamo, has announced plans to establish an aircraft manufacturing facility in Nigeria. Speaking at the launch of XEJet's flight support and engineering hub in Abuja, Keyamo stated that the government is taking concrete steps to kick-start local aircraft production.

The initiative aims to reduce dependence on foreign-built aircraft, create jobs, and boost Nigeria's aviation industry. However, experts have raised concerns over the country's lack of necessary infrastructure, skilled labor, and regulatory framework to support such a venture.

Keyamo assured that the government is working on partnerships with global aerospace firms to facilitate technology transfer and training. While no specific timeline was provided, he hinted that a groundbreaking ceremony would take place soon.

Keyamo emphasized that Nigeria must take advantage of its large market and growing aviation industry to become a regional hub for aircraft production. The minister also highlighted partnerships with local banks and construction firms as part of the government's strategy to create an enabling environment for such projects.



XeJet CEO Emmanuel Iza echoed this sentiment, stating that while Nigeria might not manufacture entire aircraft immediately, it can start with components such as landing gears and wings.

The absence of clear milestones leaves room for skepticism, given the history of ambitious government projects that fail to materialize. The success of this initiative will ultimately depend on sustained political will, financial backing, and a commitment to overcoming Nigeria's infrastructure challenges. But if successful, this project could position Nigeria as a key player in Africa's aviation sector. The industry will be watching closely to see if this plan takes off.

## UNITED AIRLINES FLIGHT DECLARES EMERGENCY TO LAGOS

A United Airlines Boeing 787-8 flight bound for Washington D.C. was forced to return to Lagos



after declaring an emergency mid-flight. The incident, which took place on January 24, 2025, resulted in injuries to multiple passengers and crew.

The aircraft, carrying 245 passengers and 11 crew members, departed from Murtala Muhammed International Airport (MMIA) at 11:59 p.m. but had to turn back due to a sudden mid-air crisis. Reports indicate that the plane lost pressure, leading to sharp descents that injured several passengers. Some hit their heads on the ceiling, while others lost consciousness due to the impact.

Emergency responders were on standby as the plane landed safely at 3:22 am.

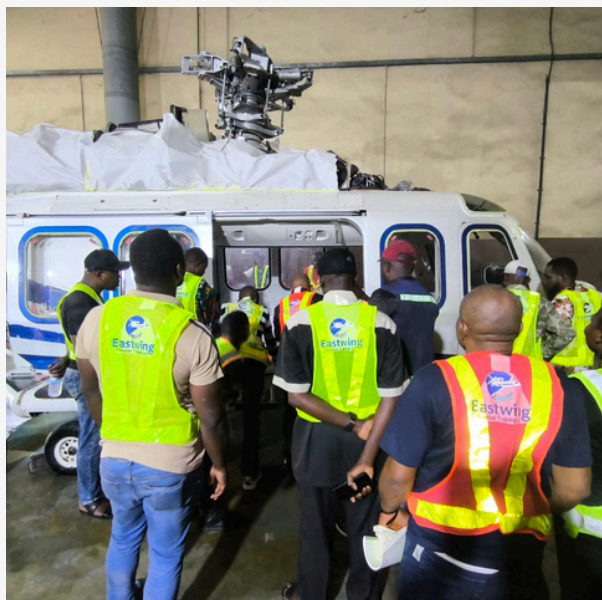
Medical teams treated injured passengers, with four passengers and two crew members sustaining serious injuries, while 27 passengers and five crew members suffered minor wounds. Some of the injured were transported to Duchess Hospital in Ikeja, while others received first aid at the airport.

A United Airlines spokesperson confirmed the emergency landing, citing an unspecified technical issue as the cause. Although the pilot initially considered diverting to Ghana, they ultimately decided to return to Lagos.

The Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) has launched an investigation into the incident. While no fatalities were recorded, the situation raises concerns about in-flight safety and aircraft maintenance.



## RIVERS STATE GOVERNOR SPONSORS YOUTHS FOR AVIATION ENGINEERING TRAINING AT EASTWING AVIATION



Rivers State Governor Siminalayi Fubara has launched an initiative to empower youths in Rivers, and address both the region's unemployment issues, and the global shortage of skilled aviation professionals. Through a scholarship program at Eastwing Aviation Institute, Fubara is sponsoring ten Rivers indigenes to receive specialized training in AW139 helicopter engineering, in collaboration with Eastwing Aviation Institute.

Governor Fubara's initiative comes at a crucial time when the aviation sector is grappling with a shortage of qualified technicians. With increasing demand for specialized skills, particularly in helicopter maintenance, the

governor's investment in youth development is expected to fill a critical gap in the aviation industry.

This strategic move, coordinated by Dr. Stanley Pepple, will also position Rivers as a hub for aviation expertise in Nigeria and is a

step towards enhancing the state's contribution to the industry. Eastwing Aviation's CEO, Christopher Edeh, praised the partnership, emphasizing that this collaboration will boost the local workforce while addressing a critical shortage of qualified personnel.

The ten beneficiaries of the scholarship were selected through a rigorous process led by Dr. Stanley Pepple. According to reports, the training program at Eastwing Aviation will equip them with the skills needed to maintain and operate one of the most advanced helicopters in the world. Eastwing Aviation's partnership will help local youths enter a growing industry that has traditionally been dominated by international professionals.

While these efforts signal hope for the youth of Rivers State, the question remains whether this initiative will be replicated across other states, potentially igniting a broader national movement towards improving local workforce capacity in aviation.





# Trending News of South-east Nigeria



The Southeast region of Nigeria is abuzz with exciting developments in the aviation sector. From new airport projects to expanded flight routes and improved infrastructure, the region is witnessing significant progress. Here are five major stories that made headlines, highlighting the rapid growth and transformation of aviation in the area.

## ENUGU STATE: Enugu Air Set to Take Off

The Enugu State government has allocated a whopping N41,132,463,000.00 to expand Enugu Air, with plans to acquire four additional aircraft. This strategic move is part of Governor Barr. Dr Ndubuisi Peter Mbah's comprehensive budget plan aimed at driving economic growth, development, and job creation in the state.

The expansion of Enugu Air is expected to increase connectivity, facilitate trade, and enhance tourism in the region. With the acquisition of new aircraft, Enugu Air will be able to operate more frequent flights, expand its route network, and provide better services to its passengers.

The Southeast region of Nigeria is abuzz with exciting developments in the aviation sector. Here are five major stories that made headlines:

In addition to the expansion of Enugu Air, the governor also plans to concession the Akanu Ibiam International Airport, which will attract private sector investment, improve infrastructure, and enhance the overall passenger experience. The construction of an international cargo terminal will further boost the state's economy by increasing trade volumes and creating new business opportunities. Governor Mbah's vision for modernizing urban and inter-urban transportation in Enugu is indeed exciting, and the future looks bright for Enugu Air. As the state continues to invest in its aviation infrastructure, it is likely to become a major hub for air transportation in the Southeast region, driving growth, development, and prosperity for the people of Enugu State.

## ABIA STATE: Federal Government Proposes Airport Establishment

The Abia State government has confirmed that the establishment of Abia Airport is a Federal Government-proposed project, slated for Nsulu Isiala Ngwa North. This development is expected to significantly boost economic activities in the state, creating new opportunities for trade, commerce, and tourism. The proposed airport will enhance connectivity within the region, providing a vital link to major economic hubs across Nigeria.

With Abia State's rich agricultural land, vibrant industrial base, and strategic location, the airport is poised to become a key driver of economic growth and development in the state. The Federal Government's proposal underscores its commitment to bridging the infrastructure gap in the Southeast region, generating employment opportunities, stimulating local economic activity, and improving the overall quality of life for residents in Abia State.

## EBONYI STATE: Aviation Training School in the Works

The Federal Government has notified the Ebonyi State government of plans to build an Aviation Training School in the state, a move that is expected to boost the aviation industry in the region. The proposed institution will provide training programs for pilots, aircraft maintenance engineers, air traffic controllers, and other aviation professionals. This development is a significant step towards addressing the shortage of skilled aviation personnel in Nigeria.

The governor's intention to hand over the existing Ebonyi Aeronautics University to the Federal Government to replace it with the South East College of Aviation underscores the state's commitment to developing the aviation sector. The new institution will offer a range of programs, including degree and diploma courses, as well as certification programs for aviation professionals. With its strategic location, the South East College of Aviation is poised to become a leading aviation training institution in Nigeria.

## ANAMBRA STATE: Night Landing Capabilities Soon

The Anambra State government has taken a significant step towards enhancing the operational capacity of the Anambra State Airport, approving N489 million for equipment to facilitate night landing. This development, as disclosed by the Commissioner for information, Dr. Law Mefor, will enable aircraft to land safely at night, thereby boosting the airport's services and increasing its attractiveness to airlines and passengers alike.

The installation of night landing equipment is expected to have a positive impact on the state's economy, as it will enable the airport to operate around the clock, increasing cargo and passenger traffic. This, in turn, will create new business opportunities, stimulate economic growth, and further establish Anambra State as a major economic hub in the Southeast region.

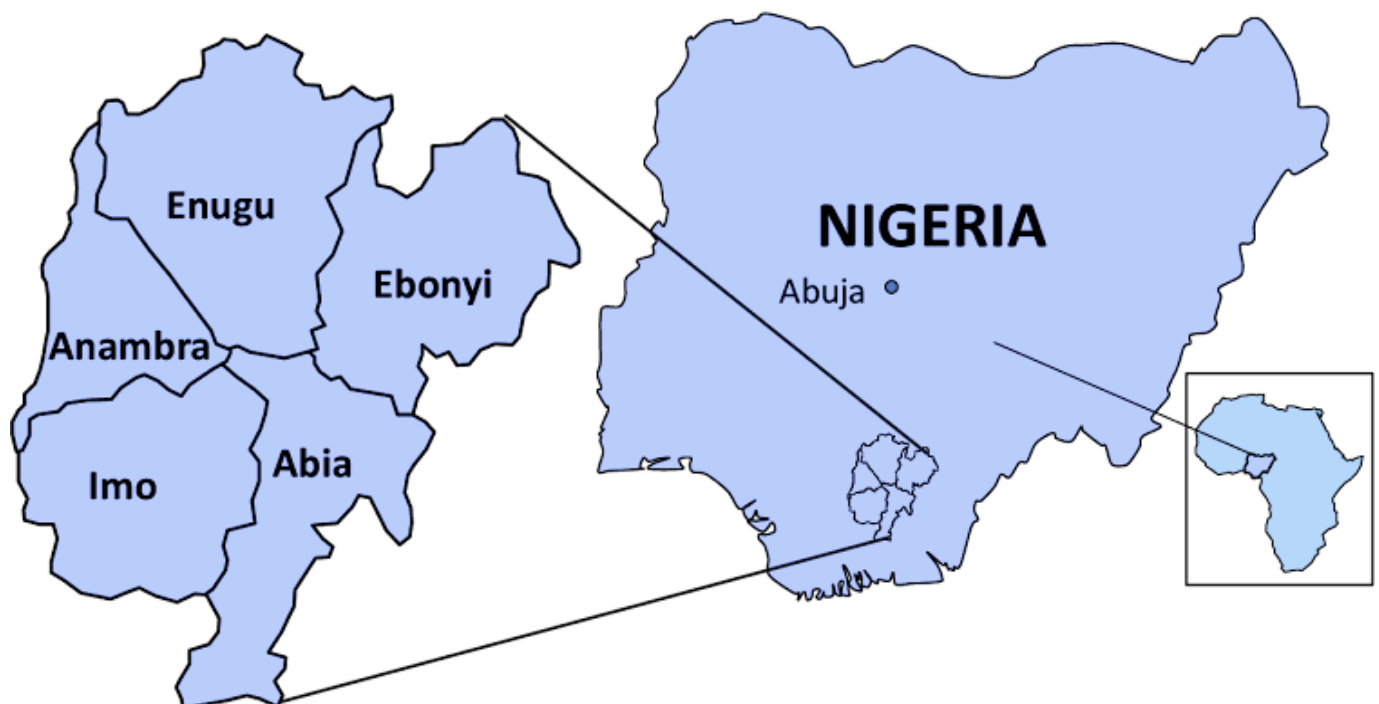
## IMO STATE: Aviation Operations Waxing Strong

Imo State: Aviation Operations Continue Uninterrupted

Contrary to speculation, Air Peace, United Nigeria, and Green African airlines have not been suspended from operating in Imo State. Only Dana Airlines was suspended, despite its partnership with IMO Air under the previous administration. This clarification has brought relief to passengers and investors, who can now confidently plan their travels and business operations through the Sam Mbakwa International Cargo Airport.

The current manager of the Sam Mbakwa International Cargo Airport has assured investors of a friendly environment

for aviation operations, emphasizing the state's commitment to providing a conducive atmosphere for business growth. With ongoing projects aimed at upgrading airport facilities, Imo State is poised to become a major aviation hub in the Southeast region, offering seamless travel experiences and fostering economic development.





# THE FUTURE OF AVIATION: UNLOCKING ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES AT EASTWING AVIATION INSTITUTE



Aviation, the science and art of designing, manufacturing, operating and maintaining aircraft is a multi-faceted industry that plays a vital role in global connectivity, economic growth, and development. The industry encompasses various aspects, including air transport, recreational flying, and military aviation. As the demand for air travel continues to grow, the aviation industry is poised for significant expansion, creating a wealth of opportunities for individuals seeking careers in this exciting field.

The aviation industry offers a wide range of career opportunities for engineers, particularly in aircraft maintenance engineering. Aircraft maintenance engineers are responsible for ensuring the airworthiness of aircraft, conducting routine maintenance, and repairing faults. Other career opportunities in aviation include aircraft systems engineering, avionics engineering, and quality control inspection.

Furthermore, to succeed in the aviation industry, it is essential to receive high-quality training and education.

The first fatal plane crash on a Wright brothers' powered airplane in 1908, Transcontinental and Western Air Flight 599 in 1932, and the fatal crash of TWA Flight 6 that involved New Mexico Senator

Bronson M. Cutting in 1935, altered the trajectory of safety in the aviation industry (History of Aviation Safety, 2023).

Following these events and others, increased dedication to safety improvements was made to curtail future accidents and regulate flight safety. There have been many key innovations since these early tragedies such as cabin pressurization, radiotelegraphy from VHF radio to UHF radio, the glass cockpit, and the novel study of artificial intelligence to assist pilots in emergencies during flight.



Additionally, another innovation in civil aviation which is presently employed extensively is remotely piloted aircraft systems (RPAS), sometimes referred to as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) or unmanned aircraft systems (UASs). Although the first patent for RPAS was filed by Nikola Tesla in 1898 (Tesla, 1898, as cited in Tepylo et al., 2023), the first airworthiness certificate for a civil UAV was issued in October 2005 (FAA, n.d.). RPAS was however initially deployed for military operations in 1918, (Newcome, 2004) but has recently been used for commercial and recreational purposes.

These innovations have improved passenger comfort, improved the safety of transportation, and have helped meet the increased demand for air travel. According to the International Civil Aviation Organization (2022), 2.3 billion passengers traveled by air worldwide in 2021, a decline from 2019's 4.5 billion passengers because of the pandemic. However, passenger traffic recovered to pre-pandemic levels and exceeded 4.6 billion passengers in 2023.

Currently, a multidimensional approach to improving aviation safety is essential considering technological, economic, legal and management factors (Kazemi, 2022).

Towards this end, there has been a plethora of research in aircraft design, aviation accident analysis and risk assessment, aviation infrastructure, and unmanned aerial system safety. In addition, complex systems such as aviation primarily manifest dynamic complexity, a state characterized by relative uncertainty, intricate, and non-linear operations. Addressing these emerging challenges necessitates the application of advanced safety approaches.

However, the above snippet review from scholars in the realm of aviation is just to highlight the fact that this sector is also very vast.

In Nigeria, the acquisition of this aviation knowledge is highly limited especially in the south - eastern part of the country. The first ever existing Aviation school in the eastern part of Nigeria, Eastwing Aviation Institute, is a leading provider of aviation training, offering a range of courses designed to equip students with the skills and knowledge required to succeed in the industry. The institute's state-of-the-art facilities include real aircraft engines, minor and major equipment used for practicals, and a standard environment that simulates real-world scenarios.

Instructors at the institute are experienced and dedicated professionals who are committed to providing students with the highest quality education and training.

The school has strong connections with the aviation industry and provides students with opportunities for internships, job placements, and career advancement.

Finally, as a researcher I find it fulfilling sharing with the world the wealth of knowledge embodied by the institute and wishes that more people with passion like mine would be privileged to be benefactors of such rare opportunity. It is without doubt that my career choice will not only be financially beneficial in future but also set a strong foundation for immeasurable happiness to my loved ones and I.

**By Edith Emmanuel**  
**(Student, Aircraft Maintenance Engineering)**

# Creative Personality Profile: Ubi Franklin

## *Talent hunter, savvy manager with a Midas touch*



**U**bi Franklin is a resilient and accomplished music industry mogul. With over a decade of experience, Ubi has cemented his reputation as a savvy talent manager and entrepreneur.

According to Artmatazzmedia.com, Ubi did not start his journey into music early in his career.

Earlier in his life, Ubi had hoped to become a successful lawyer thus he pursued a degree in Law. However, years later, he succumbed to his passion for music and followed in the footsteps of his father who was said to have worked in the industry during his lifetime.

His big break came when he discovered and signed Iyanya, catapulting the young artist to stardom. This success was soon followed by another triumph with Tekno, solidifying Ubi's position as a talent spotter and nurturer.

Ubi's impressive roster of managed artists extends beyond Iyanya and Tekno, showcasing his touch in the industry. His expertise has been sought after by top acts, including Davido, who enlisted his services to manage Chioma's brand.

Despite facing personal challenges, including a highly publicized marriage crash and rumors of multiple baby mamas, Ubi's tenacity and perseverance have kept him at the forefront of the entertainment industry. His recent appearance at Davido's wedding, where he was seen in good spirits with his ex-wife, demonstrates his ability to rise above adversity and maintain meaningful relationships.

Ubi's remarkable journey serves as a testament to his exceptional qualities.

These traits have earned Ubi Franklin a revered position in the music industry, and we celebrate his achievements today.





# Bexley Heights



**LOCATION: LEKKI FORESHORE,  
LEKKI PHASE 1**

• 2-BEDROOM  
APARTMENTS

• 3-BEDROOM  
APARTMENTS

GET  
**20%**  
DOWN  
PAYMENT

**OFFER  
VALID FOR  
A LIMITED  
TIME**

