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COI QUERY RESPONSE

NIGERIA - INFORMATION ON POLITICAL CORRUPTION

Sahara Reporters in December 2024 mentioned that: “President Bola Tinubu of Nigeria has been ranked as the third most corrupt leader in the world, according to the Organised Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP).”¹

In December 2024 *PM News* notes that: “...our judiciary, particularly in recent times, has become bedeviled with so many interfering crises which have, in turn, affected HRs drastically. Some of the challenges are identified below: Political corruption through the interferences and undue influences by the Executive and Legislative arms of government, undermining public confidence; Stifling of independence of the judiciary; Favouritism of the elite and affluent at the expense of the marginalized.”²

The *Social Science in Humanitarian Action Platform (SSHAP)* in November 2024 points out that: “NEMA is involved in trauma management as the kind of complex emergencies it responds to usually have traumatic effects on people. However, the agency's resources are usually so limited that it cannot engage in interventions beyond counselling, referral to health centres and organising funded social activities. The government's provision of trauma management services is limited due to a lack of funds. In addition, uptake of the services offered is further restricted by the perception of corruption of state officials and the fact that services are mostly concentrated in urban areas.”³

In October 2024 *CIVICUS Monitor (World Alliance for Citizen Participation)* reported that: “On 1st May 2024, police arrested Daniel Ajukwu, an investigative reporter with the Foundation for Investigative Journalism (IFJ) in Lagos. He was arrested for breaching the 2015 Cybercrimes Act in relation to his reporting on alleged corruption by an official of the presidency. He was detained for ten days before being granted bail. His passport was reportedly confiscated. The arrest of Ajukwu

¹ Sahara Reporters (31 December 2024) Nigerian President, Tinubu Ranks Third Among World's Most Corrupt Leaders – Report

² PM News (17 December 2024) Human rights in crisis: Addressing the challenges facing Nigeria

³ Social Science in Humanitarian Action Platform (SSHAP) (8 November 2024) Key considerations: Post-trauma impacts in conflict-affected communities in northern Nigeria

sparked a protest before the headquarters of the police in Abuja on 9th May 2024 by the Action Group on the Protection of Civic Actors, a coalition of media and civil society groups.”⁴

A report issued by *Freedom House* in October 2024 states that: “Journalist Segun Olatunji was abducted and detained by army officers in March 2024 after publishing a story with the online outlet First News that investigated a corruption scandal involving former president Buhari's chief of staff, Femi Gbajabiamila, and Buhari's aide and nephew (see C3 and C7). Olatunji was asked to provide a written apology to Gbajabiamila. First News issued an apology and stated that the story was false, prompting Olatunji—who maintained the article was accurate—to resign. Before his detention, Olatunji had removed another story from First News's website about how government officials had 'diverted' public funds, after he reportedly received phone calls objecting to the story.”⁵ The report further points out that: “During the coverage period a number of bloggers, journalists, and private citizens were arrested for their online activities, including for investigative reporting into corruption cases involving government officials, negative coverage of authorities or powerful businesspeople, or for violation of blasphemy laws in states under Sharia jurisdiction. Despite the amendment of Section 24 of the Cybercrimes Act in February 2024 (see C2), authorities continued to detain journalists using the previous, broadly defined version of the "cyberstalking" offense through the end of the coverage period.”⁶

This document further notes that: “In May 2024, police arrested Daniel Ojukwu, a journalist with the Foundation for Investigative Journalism (FIJ), after his reporting revealed corruption implicating senior Nigerian officials. The police moved him to Abuja, but did not confirm the detention for several days, leading the FIJ's founder, Fisayo Soyombo, to criticize the arrest as an "abduction." Ojukwu was accused of cyberstalking, cyberbullying, and conspiracy under the Cybercrimes Act, and was granted bail after 10 days in detention.”⁷

ENACT in August 2024 mentioned that: “The emergence of Yahoo Plus Plus scams in Nigeria can be attributed to a confluence of criminal, socio-economic, cultural and technological factors. At its core lies a desire for wealth, particularly among youngsters facing unemployment and poverty. This frustration is compounded by societal influences that glorify displays of affluence and ill-gotten wealth. Adebowale told ENACT that Nigerian youths are socialised into corruption by watching the political class loot public funds.”⁸

The *US Department of State Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* in April 2024 reported that: “Although the law provided criminal penalties for corruption by officials, the government did not consistently implement the law. There were numerous reports of government corruption.”⁹ The report further commented that: “Massive and widespread corruption affected all sectors of government, including the judiciary and security services. In August, President Tinubu appointed former governor Abubakar Bagudu the Minister of Budget, despite Bagudu's widely reported history of helping then-President Sani Abacha steal hundreds of millions of dollars from the government in the 1990s.”¹⁰

⁴ CIVICUS Monitor (World Alliance for Citizen Participation) (31 October 2024) Dozens of people killed in crackdown on #EndBadGovernance protests against high cost of living; journalists arrested, prosecuted under amended Cybercrimes Act, p.4

⁵ Freedom House (16 October 2024) Freedom on the Net 2024 – Nigeria, p.8

⁶ *ibid*, p.6

⁷ *ibid*, p.16

⁸ ENACT (22 August 2024) Cybercrime / Yahoo Boys scammers dabble in dark magic, p.2

⁹ US Department of State (22 April 2024) 2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Nigeria

¹⁰ *ibid*

In March 2024 *Bertelsmann Stiftung (Germany)* mentioned that: “And today, Nigeria faces several challenges, including increasing poverty rates, widespread insecurity and ongoing political corruption.”¹¹

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