

3 YEARS OF PURPOSE AND IMPACT



**40TH CONVOCATION PRESS BRIEFING
DELIVERED BY
THE VICE-CHANCELLOR,
PROFESSOR WAHAB OLASUPO EGBEWOLE, SAN
ON
MONDAY, 20TH OCTOBER, 2025**

Introduction:

Good morning, distinguished members of the press, colleagues, students, staff, alumni, partners, and friends of the university.

It is with a deep sense of responsibility and humility that I welcome you all to this press briefing titled ***Three Years of Purpose and Impact***, ahead of the 40th Convocation Ceremony of the University of Ilorin - the *Better by Far* University. As I address you today, at the midpoint of my tenure as the 11th Vice Chancellor of this great institution, I find it both necessary and appropriate to reflect on the path we have travelled together, the milestones we have reached, the challenges we have encountered, and the journey that still lies ahead.

When I assumed office three years ago, I shared with the university community an ambitious action plan rooted in five guiding principles: **academic excellence, innovation, institutional integrity, inclusive growth, and sustainable development**. These were not mere slogans. They represented a vision for repositioning our university to meet the demands of a rapidly changing world, while remaining anchored in our core values. We set our minds to the need for our University to press the reset button for the **Sun to Rise Again**. I am pleased to inform you that indeed the **Sun is already Rising**.

Today marks a significant milestone, not only in the annals of this University but also in the collective journey of excellence, innovation, and service that we continue to uphold. This 40th Convocation is a celebration of decades of commitment to academic distinction, character development, and national impact. This year, our university will also be celebrating our golden jubilee with a lineup of activities between **Sunday, 23rd and Friday, 28th November, 2025**. The week-long celebration will feature a series of high-profile events including public lectures, exhibitions, cultural displays, alumni homecoming, awards and honours. To set the tone of our 50th anniversary celebration, the logo was unveiled on Monday, 13th January 2025, between 15th and 17th April, 2025, we hosted the first international conference themed **Globalising Education: Strategies, Challenges and Sustainability**, organised by the Centre for International Education (CIE).

We celebrated our distinguished alumni on 16th July 2025 by giving an Award of Excellence to two worthy individuals, one an alumnus of the university, the second, a friend of the university who had made generous donations to the university. Ten other distinguished alumni were recognised and 50 others conferred as Unilorin Ambassadors. This golden

jubilee presents an opportunity to reflect on five decades of academic excellence, impactful research, national service, and global engagement since our establishment in 1975 as a University College affiliated with the University of Ibadan. Today, we stand tall as one of Nigeria's most respected and consistently ranked universities - a model of stability, academic productivity, and visionary leadership. A Press Briefing shall be held to herald our golden jubilee celebrations. Be sure to be our guests then.

At this Convocation, we shall confer degrees and diplomas on thousands of deserving graduands from our various faculties and institutes - young men and women who have been trained in the **Unilorin way** - a philosophy built on discipline, diligence, and distinction. Beyond the award of degrees, this convocation will feature other activities that highlight the progress we have made and the direction in which we are headed. From the Convocation Lecture to the commissioning of projects and the recognition of outstanding individuals, we are set to showcase what makes Unilorin truly **better by far**.

One other unique feature of the 40th Convocation is the investiture of seven (7) distinguished academics as Emeritus Professors having been so pronounced by the Senate of the University in line with our academic calendar, over the years. Specifically, during the 2024/2025 academic session, the University Senate approved the appointment of three (3) distinguished Emeritus Professors. We have invited you here today not only to inform you of the schedule of events but also to partner with you in telling our story — the story of an institution that has remained uninterrupted in academic calendar, unwavering in its standards, and unyielding in its vision of becoming a world-class citadel of learning. During this briefing, you will hear more details about the programmes lined up, the number and categories of graduands, special awards, and other notable highlights of this 40th Convocation.

Once again, I thank you sincerely for your continued support and for your presence here today. As we celebrate 40 years of excellence, we look forward to many more decades of impactful service to Nigeria and humanity. Before I continue, I wish to extend my heartfelt appreciation to every member of the University of Ilorin Community. This milestone would not have been possible without your collective effort, dedication, and unwavering commitment to the vision and mission of our University.

I acknowledge and appreciate with profound respect and gratitude, the Principal Officers of the University. The Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the Governing Council, for his strategic

oversight and unwavering support for the growth and stability of this University, through our Pro-Chancellor, I thank all the other distinguished members of the Governing Council. **The Deputy Vice-Chancellors**, Academic, Management Services, and Research, Technology and Innovation — for their tireless efforts in steering core aspects of our academic and administrative operations with diligence and foresight; the **Registrar**, for ensuring the seamless coordination of our administrative structures; the **Bursar**, for prudent financial management and ensuring the sustainability of our projects and programmes; the **University Librarian**, for championing access to knowledge and constantly upgrading our academic resources in line with global standards.

Permit me at this point, with deep respect and profound gratitude, to specially acknowledge the invaluable role of the Senate of the University of Ilorin — the highest academic decision-making body of our institution. To the distinguished members of Senate, I extend my sincere appreciation for your unwavering guidance, intellectual rigour, and steadfast commitment to upholding the academic integrity and excellence for which our University is renowned. Over the years, and particularly as we prepared for this 40th Convocation Ceremony, your leadership and scholarly insights have been critical in shaping our academic programmes, policies, and standards. You have continued to safeguard the credibility of our degrees and ensure that every graduand presented here today has met the high standards that define the *Better by Far* legacy.

I would like to take a special moment to extend my deepest appreciation to a group of individuals whose tireless efforts often take place behind the scenes, yet whose impact is central to everything we are celebrating today, our Deans of Faculties, Directors of Centres and Institutes, and Heads of Departments. Dear colleagues, your leadership at the faculty, directorate, and departmental levels has been nothing short of exemplary. You have remained pillars of academic administration, ensuring that the triple mandate of the University and more are consistently upheld with excellence and integrity. You have worked diligently to maintain academic standards, navigate administrative challenges, support staff and students, and uphold the vision of the University of Ilorin as the *Better by Far* institution. The success stories of our graduands today are, in no small measure, a direct result of your guidance, mentorship, and commitment to excellence.

I wish to offer my deepest appreciation to the dedicated and hardworking members of our academic and non-teaching staff. To our academic staff, I say a heartfelt thank you. Your

dedication to scholarship, teaching, research, and mentorship is the lifeblood of this University. You have continued to uphold the highest standards of academic excellence, even in the face of evolving challenges and increasing expectations. Your tireless efforts in classrooms, laboratories, studios, and fieldwork have shaped and will continue to shape the brilliant minds we are proud to graduate today. You are not just educators; you are moulders of destinies. The quality and global relevance of our graduates are a testament to your commitment and professionalism. You have made the University of Ilorin a beacon of academic excellence in Nigeria and beyond, and for this, we remain immensely proud and grateful.

To our non-teaching staff, I extend equally profound gratitude. From administration to health services, from security to COMSIT, from works department to physical planning unit, from registry to bursary, and every unit in between — your work may often be behind the scenes, but it is critical to the smooth functioning of this institution. You have remained the silent engine room of the University — ensuring that systems run, processes are followed, students are supported, and structures are maintained. Without your efficiency, this convocation ceremony — and indeed, the daily life of the University — would not be possible. Together, both academic and non-teaching staff have formed a strong, united workforce that has sustained the legacy of excellence that this University is known for. It is because of you that the University of Ilorin continues to stand *Better by Far* — not just in name, but indeed. On behalf of the entire University Management, I say a big thank you. Thank you for your loyalty, your resilience, your professionalism, and your belief in the mission of this great institution.

In the year under review, the University continued to enjoy the support of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund). An intervention fund of **Two billion, five hundred and sixty million, five hundred and sixty-two thousand, three hundred and sixty-two Naira, sixty-six kobo (₦2,560,562,362.66)** was allocated to the University by TETFUND for year 2025 and this covers eleven (11) areas including physical infrastructure/programme upgrade, Academic Staff Training, ICT support, entrepreneurship, career services among others. The University equally received the sum of **Three Hundred Million Naira (₦300,000,000)** for Zonal Interventions to execute different projects. Equally, a Special High Impact Project (SHIP) was given to our University to upgrade facilities in the sum of **Four Billion Naira (₦4,000,000,000)** at the College of Health Sciences and another **Seven Hundred and Fifty**

Million Naira (₦750,000,000) for the construction of hostel at the College. The award was presented by the Honourable Minister of Education, Dr. Maruf Tunji Alausa on 29th April, 2025. All these further confirmed that TETFUND has come to serve as lifeline for tertiary education in Nigeria.

Another Federal Government intervention is Nigerian Education Loan Fund (NELFUND) and I am happy to report that the University of Ilorin has secured a total sum of **One Billion, Five Hundred and Ninety-Six Million, Seven Hundred and Sixteen Thousand, Eight Hundred and Sixty-Four Naira (₦1,596,716,864)** for 12,983 students in the 2024/2025 academic session. This loan was across all disciplines including medical students. This laudable programme of the Federal Government of Nigeria has guaranteed that no student will drop out as a result of funding.

Achievements

Distinguished guests, gentlemen of the press, ladies and gentlemen, as we mark this historic 40th Convocation Ceremony, it is important not only to celebrate our graduands but also to reflect on how far we have come as a University community. In the five decades, the University of Ilorin has grown from humble beginnings into a leading institution of higher learning, a national treasure and an emerging global academic brand. The *Better by Far* identity is no longer a slogan, it is a lived reality, built on excellence, stability, innovation, and a deep commitment to public service. Suffice it to say that we have translated purpose into action.

Research

- Our staff featured prominently on Google Scholar with citations from around the world. Leading the **list of 10 of our staff most cited academic on Google Scholar** is an Associate Professor at the Department of Veterinary Public Health and Preventive Medicine, Dr. Ismail Odetokun, with an impressive 11,826 citations. Followed closely by Dr. Afis Basiru of the Department of Veterinary Physiology and Biochemistry with 11,755 citations, Prof Olugbenga Odebode of the Department of Surgery, 11,073 citations while the 10th on the list is Prof Kolawale Wasiu Wahab of the Department of Medicine with 6,379. This showed the visibility and credibility of our research to the global academic community.

- **One Hundred and Seventy-Seven Million Naira (₦177,000,000)** was awarded to eighty-one (81) academic staff under the 2025 Senate Research Grants. The initiative is aimed at supporting and enhancing research productivity within the university.
- The University benefited from the National Research Fund by winning grants in the total sum of **Two Hundred and Twenty Million, Five Hundred and Thirty-Eight Thousand, Eight Hundred and Thirty-Four Naira and Twelve Kobo (₦220,538,834.12)** to conduct research in eight different projects.
- The sum of **Two Million Naira only (₦2,000,000.00)** research support grant was received from the National Automotive Design and Development Council (NADDC) in recognition of our university team members' dedication, creativity, and teamwork during the design phase of Electric Vehicle (EV) Campus Shuttle (8-Seater) Bus competition. The support grant is to compensate for all the diligent sacrifices and to further help our team led by Prof A.T. Ajiboye of the Department of Computer Engineering to advance their EV research.
- Through the Nigerian Society of Engineers (NSE)-MIDAS Partnership for Quality Engineering Education, our university through the Faculty of Engineering and Technology was selected as one of the 15 Nigerian universities for the donation of academic software licenses worth **\$17,437,500 by MIDAS IT India**. The formal handover/presentation ceremony is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, November 5, 2025, at the National Engineering Centre, Abuja.
- The University of Ilorin through years of cutting-edge research developed patented innovations in biomass-plastic composites as sustainable alternatives to wood for furniture and structural applications. To enhance the societal and economic impact of these significant Research and Development achievements by taking them off the shelves, the university is in partnership with the National Board for Technology Incubation (NBTI) to translate our research outcomes into market-ready products through the establishment of a Campus-Based Technology Incubation Centre (CB-TIC). The Centre is expected to drive commercialisation of Unilorin's patented technologies, solve local environmental problems through sustainable resource use and provide durable and affordable alternatives to wood for public schools, and the wider market.

I am pleased to report that, with the support and goodwill of all our stakeholders, we have recorded **modest but meaningful achievements** in several key areas:

- **Academic Quality and Research Output:** Our university has experienced a measurable improvement in teaching quality, with several programs undergoing successful accreditation reviews. Research output has grown both in volume and relevance, with increased interdisciplinary collaboration and a rise in peer-reviewed publications.
- **Infrastructural Development:** Over the past three years, we have commissioned and completed new learning spaces, laboratories, and digital infrastructure. We have started the process of modernising student hostels, lecture halls and faculty offices to ensure a more conducive environment for learning and work.
- **Digital Transformation:** We successfully implemented an enterprise-wide Learning Management System, streamlined administrative processes through digitisation, and enhanced our virtual learning capabilities—changes that have proved vital in maintaining continuity and accessibility. Today, we are gradually abandoning all forms of pen and paper for digitalisation.
- **Student Support and Welfare:** Through targeted interventions, we have expanded scholarship opportunities, enhanced career services, and improved student engagement platforms. Our commitment to student welfare remains central to everything we do.
- **Community Engagement and Partnerships:** We have deepened our partnerships with industry, government, and civil society. These collaborations have opened new doors for research funding, internships, curriculum development and employability.

These accomplishments are not mine alone. They are the outcome of a **collective effort**—from faculty and staff who give their best every day, to students who strive for excellence, and to alumni and friends whose continued faith in the institution sustains us.

2024/2025 ACADEMIC SESSION REPORTS

The 2024/2025 academic session commenced on 26th September 2024 while the matriculation ceremony for over 11,000 newly admitted students into our various programmes was held on 17th December, 2024. I have the pleasure, therefore, to highlight some of the notable achievements that underscore our continued progress.

- In a bold move to ease transportation challenges on our campus, 30 campus shuttle buses were unveiled on 6th January, 2025. The initiative reflects our commitment to improving commuter experience for both staff and students. This was a public-private

initiative on, Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) basis. It is our hope that the University will be building on the numbers in a way to improve ease of transportation on campus and ensure security of our staff and students. The model being put in place is to allow our students to manage the buses by providing opportunity for them to work and study. Equally important is the fact that the transaction on the buses will be totally cashless. The App being used was developed by our students. The pilot project is still on and we are eagerly waiting for the deployment of a minimum of 50 CNG buses to boost the fleet.

- On 10th January, 2025 the University Administration inaugurated the first of its kind Advancement Board with a mandate to strengthen the institution's resource base through strategic resource mobilisation, partnerships, and endowments. The Board is chaired by Dr. Abdulwahab A. Ibrahim, FCA, with Alhaji Bolaji Elelu and Mr. Adediran Olatunji, *SAN*, serving as external members. Statutory members of the Board include the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Management Services), as the Vice-Chancellor's Representative and Alternate Chairman; the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research, Technology and Innovation), the Registrar, the Bursar, the University Librarian, and Director of Advancement, as the Secretary of the Board. They are joined by the University Internal Auditor, one member of Senate, one member of Congregation, and one member of Convocation.
- The Advancement Centre in collaboration with the Centre for Management and Leadership, Ilorin organised the 1st Distinguished Personality Lecture of the Centre in honour of His Excellency, Adegboyega Oyetola, *CON*, the Honourable Minister of Marine and Blue Economy. The theme of the Lecture was **The Nexus Between Blue Economy and Higher Education for Sustainable Development in Nigeria**. Impressed with the proactiveness of the University of Ilorin in creating a Centre for Blue and Regenerative Economy to promote research, development and training that supports the sustainable use of marine and ocean resources in Nigeria, His Excellency, Adegboyega Oyetola, *CON*, graciously agreed to fully sponsor the iconic project of the Advancement Centre which is the construction of a N250 Million Building Complex that will house the Centre for Blue and Regenerative Economy as well as the Centre for Management and Leadership, named after the sponsor. The Minister was also conferred with a Honorary Fellow of the Centre for Management and Leadership, Ilorin.

- From the result of the accreditation exercise carried out in October/November 2024, University of Ilorin secured 100% National Universities Commission (NUC) accreditation, with 36 of the 37 courses it presented for the exercise getting full accreditation while one got interim accreditation.
- In a bid to drive university – industry linkages, the University set up the Science Technology and Innovation Park (STIP) with a view to bridging the gap between academy and industry. The intention is to draw multi-national and global companies build their industries on our campus. To deliver on this project, a carefully selected team of five academic staff from the Faculties of Engineering & Technology, Law, Physical Sciences, Education and Pharmaceutical Sciences was inaugurated on 12th May, 2025 with a mandate to drive the establishment of a hub that would drive innovation, research, and collaboration with industry partners. The team is being supervised by Prof. Daniel Kitaw, a Visiting Professor from Ethiopia.
- An indigenous company Starlink Global & Ideal Ltd, donated a 90KVA Solar Inverter to address the electricity challenges facing our institution and a Hilux van to enhance operational capacity of our institution. The CEO, Dr. Muritala Adeniji was given an Award of Excellence at the investiture ceremony held on 16th July, 2025.
- Dr. Tunji Olowolafe was also given an Award of Excellence in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the development of the University. He sponsored 40 academic staff to international conferences to the tune of **Two Hundred Million Naira (₦200,000,000)**, supported his 1984 medical set in the donation of an Anatomage Machine to the College of Health Sciences, worth more than **Forty Million Naira (₦40,000,000)** and donated a brand new hilux vehicle to the university.
- The sum of **Six Hundred Million Naira (₦600,000,000)** was collectively donated to the university at the Award of Excellence and Investiture ceremony of Distinguished Alumni and Unilorin Ambassadors which held on 16th July, 2025.
- The Federal Government through a delegation from the National Automotive Design and Development Council (NADDCC) has almost concluded work on the construction of state-of-the-art Solar Powered Electric Charging Station in our University.
- The New Media Team emerged as the Best in Corporate share of Voice (social media), in addition, the University's Social Media Manager, Mr. Lukman Temitope Omoniyi, also emerged as a finalist in the outstanding spokesperson (Education Sector) category.

This award was organised by the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) in partnership with the Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation.

- In July 2025, the University was awarded **Seventy-Five Million Naira (₦75,000,000)** for finishing runners-up at the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board's (JAMB) 2025 National Tertiary Admissions Performance Merit Award (NATAP-M).
- The University hosted the Nobel Laureate, Prof. Wole Soyinka on 19th and 20th May, 2025 as part of activities to mark our maiden cultural day celebrations organised by the Centre for Cultural Studies and Creative Arts.
- The Defence Space Administration (DSA) in conjunction with the National Space and Research Development Agency (NASRDA) has completed an edifice for the development of research in space and is scheduled for commissioning in November 2025.
- In appreciation of the need to prepare our students for the world of work and make them prepared for the 21st Century challenges, the University established the University of Ilorin Innovative Skills Pioneering Entrepreneurship (U-INSPIRE) where the University partnered with the industry to equip the students with skills needed by the industry and improve their employability rating. We are pleased to inform the public that the first set of graduates numbering 7290 out of 9929 students that registered for the programme were unveiled on 17th October, 2025. No doubt, this is one of the great initiatives that is set to change the trajectory of higher education in Nigeria as we are currently in talks with the NELFUND to add the U-INSPIRE idea into its intervention lines.

Appointments

- The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Wahab O. Egbewole, SAN was elected as Vice President (West Africa), Association of African Universities (AAU) at the Association's annual general meeting held in Morocco in May, 2025.
- Prof. A. I. Abikan of the Department of Islamic Law appointed the new Director-General and member of the Council of the National Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (NIAL) Abuja on 5th December, 2024.
- On 18th December 2024, Prof. B.V. Owoyele, the immediate past Dean, School of Postgraduate School was elected new Chairman of the African Regional Committee (ARC) of the International Brain Research Organisation (IBRO) by the Board of Directors of IBRO. IBRO-ARC is composed of elected voluntary leadership that

focuses on supporting and promoting neuroscience in the African region based on its specific needs and conditions.

- The Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA) appointed Mr. Peter Osadugba as the new Bursar on 16th December 2024 for a period of five years. Mr. Osadugba graduated from our Department of Accounting in 1992.
- A Deputy Bursar of our Institution, Mr. AbdulRasheed Atanda Ahmed, was appointed as the new Bursar of Federal University of Agriculture, Zuru, (FUAZ) Kebbi State with effect from March 16, 2025, for a five (5) year tenure.
- Another Deputy Bursar of our University, Mr Abdul Ganiyu Olaniyan, was also appointed as the Bursar of the National Institute for Advanced Legal Studies (NIALS) by the Governing Council of NIALS on 9th May, 2025
- Prof. L. F. Oladimeji was appointed as the new Vice-Chancellor Al-Hikmah University. Prof. Oladimeji was a former Assistant National Secretary of the University of Ilorin Alumni Association, a graduate of the Faculty of Arts.
- An Associate Professor at the Department of Mass Communication Dr. Rasaq Muhammed Adisa was appointed Chairman of the Editorial Board of African Telescope Newspaper.
- The Immediate Past Dean of the Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences, Prof. S. M. Ajao was appointed the Pioneer Provost of the College of Health Sciences, Kwara State University Malete. He is presently on Sabbatical Leave at the Institution.
- Kwara State Governor, Mallam AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq, approved the appointment of Prof. Ademola Alabi Popoola, a Professor at the Department of Surgery, as the Chief Medical Director (CMD) of the newly designated Thomas Adewumi Teaching Hospital, Omu-Aran.
- Dr. Babatunde Omotowa an alumnus of our University was appointed a member of the Board of Nigeria National Petroleum Company (NNPC) PLC.

Students Awards

- A doctorate degree dissertation produced by a graduate of the Department of Geography and Environmental Management, Dr. Afeez Alabi Salami, won the 2024 Best Ph.D. thesis in Hydrological and Water Resources in Nigeria. The award was institutionalised by the Nigeria Association of Hydrological Sciences (NAHS).

- The immediate past President of the Ilorin Medical Students Association (ILUMSA), Dr. Oluwabukola Princess Alabi, was conferred with the prestigious “Most Outstanding Young Person in Nigeria Award”, otherwise called the Diana Award, in recognition of her excellent leadership qualities. The award, which was instituted in memory of the late Princess of Wales, Diana Frances Spencer is supported by her sons, the Prince of Wales, Prince Williams and Prince Harry, the Duke of Sussex.
- A final year student of the Department of Mass Communication and President of the Union of Campus Journalists (UCJ) of our institution, Miss Hannah Bolawatife Oladele, emerged the winner of the broadcast category of the sixth edition of the Campus Journalism Award. The contest attracted the participation of 373 student journalists from different institutions of higher learning across Nigeria.
- In a rare display of academic excellence, an 18 year-old student of the Department of Accounting, Miss Faith Aduragbemi Olabisi, qualified as a Chartered Accountant. Miss Olabisi is one of the several candidates who were successful in the November 2024 professional examinations of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN).
- Two 300-level students of the Department of Food Engineering, Abdulganiyu Amina and Folorunsho Moses, won the maiden edition of the Nigerian Institution of Agricultural Engineers (NIAF), Kwara State Chapter, Inter-Tertiary Institution Quiz Competition. The contest was held on May 8, 2025. The duo outshone their counterparts from other leading institutions across Kwara State to clinch first place and a cash prize of N100,00.00
- The Faculty Law of our institution emerged victorious in the maiden edition of the Wahab Egbewole National Disability Right Moot Court Competition. The University’s team, comprising Mr. Ologunde Ajibola and Mr. Opoola Opeyemi, both 500 level Common Law students, clinched the coveted trophy after a keenly contested final round. The competition drew participants from several Law Faculties across the country, which was held on May 15, 2025 in University of Ilorin.
- Two students of our institution were awarded the Erasmus mobility under the KA171 agreement with the Friedrich Schiller University of Jena, Germany. The students are: Khafeelat Ayonke Sadiq of the Department of Adult and Primary Education and Roseline Olufeyisayo Olarinde of the Centre for Cultural Studies and Creative Arts.

- Mr. Okekeogwegbe Chibuike Nnaemeka, a Master graduate of the Department of Applied Geophysics earned two prestigious awards of the Nigerian Mining and Geosciences Society (NMGS) and Agip Energy Prize for the 2024/2025 cycle.
- A team of students of our institution emerged the winner of the World Cancer Day competition, organised by the Kwara State Ministry of Health in collaboration with the office of the first lady, Kwara State.
- A 400-level student of the Department of Food Engineering, Qudus Aduragbemi Balogun, emerged as the project leader in a team that won the Prestigious European Youth Empowerment Fund. Other members of the team are: Prof. M.O Sunmonu and Dr. M. S. Sanusi. They jointly won the sum of €1,200 Youth Empowerment Grant.
- Six (6) of our former students bagged **Nine Million Naira (₦9,000,000)** grants of the Agripreneur Programme organised by the British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation. The beneficiaries are: Iliyas Elijah, Uthman Oladipo, Cynthia Olorunmaiye, Abdullahi Hanif Ayomide, Aliu Abdulbasit Olamilekan, and John Olumide Adeyemi.
- The best graduating student from the Department of Geology and Mineral Sciences, Faculty of Physical Sciences, Ikwere Emmanuel Chidera, won the Best thesis award for his outstanding undergraduate thesis during the 2022/2023 academic session. The award was presented during the 60th annual conference of Nigerian Mining and Geosciences Society (NMGS), this award is one of the highest honours in Nigeria's mining and geosciences sector aimed at celebrating exceptional academic work among students from leading Nigerian Universities that offers mining and geosciences programmes
- Sanusi Akanbi Kazeem, a 400-level student of the Department of Mathematics, Faculty of Physical sciences, broke the Guinness World Record for the longest Mathematics Lesson. This historic feat was achieved after conducting a marathon mathematics lesson that lasted 31 hours, 42 minutes, and 54 seconds, surpassing the previous record of 26 hours.
- The University of Ilorin chapter of Mission: BRAIN made history by emerging as the highest award-winning chapter of the global foundation for 2024. The student-led multidisciplinary brain health event drew over 2000 physical participants and more than 200 virtual attendees from around the world. Unilorin chapter clinched three of the awards which are: Service and Compassion, Healing Hands, and Academic

Leadership, in recognition of our outstanding outreach, research, and academic programmes.

- Two of our final year students of the Department of Veterinary Microbiology are among the winners of the Global Morris Animal Foundation Scholar, worth \$5,500. They are: BABALOLA, Karimot Abisola and IDRIS, Nahimah Opeyemi.
- YUSUF, Abdulsamad Olaitan of the Department of Mathematics Faculty of Physical Sciences emerged second position in the national competition organised by National Information Technology Development Agency and the Federal Ministry of Communication Innovation and Digital Economy on Cyber Security held on 9th and 10th of July, 2025, at Ladi Kwali Continental Hall Abuja. He was given a cash award of **Two Million Naira (₦2,000,000)** and award plaque.
- The university emerged as champions in public speaking and winners of the Novice Debate categories of the 12th All-Nigeria Universities Debating Championship (ANUDC). The Championship was held from 24th to 30th August, 2025 at the University of Ilorin Auditorium.

Projects to be Commissioned at the 2025 Convocation Ceremony

As part of our 40th Convocation Ceremonies, the following projects are to be Commissioned by the Visitor, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR

1. Faculty of Social Sciences building
2. One story Block of Four nos lecture halls for Faculties of Social Sciences and Management Sciences
3. English Drama Studio, Faculty of Arts
4. Renovated Blocks 1-10
5. Renovated Department of Geography & Environmental Management Building
6. Remodelled and developed Unilorin Innovation Hub
7. Technical and Entrepreneurship Centre Road

Linkages/Collaborations/Donations

In its bid to strengthen Linkages and collaboration, our university signed a number of Memoranda of Understanding with some universities and organisations across the world among which are:

- Tech Mindset Africa in Nairobi, Kenya to train 500 of our students on the use of Artificial Intelligence. The training is targeted at encouraging the beneficiaries to

acquire and expand needed skills in the exploration of Artificial Intelligence for innovations and career progression. A total of 68 students have graduated from the training.

- Management University of Africa, Kenya to provide opportunities for staff and students exchange as well as collaboration in all fields of study in the two Universities.
- Global Forum for Sustainable Rural Development (GFSRD) aimed at advancing sustainable rural development to underscore the commitment of the University to fostering global collaboration and driving impactful change in sustainable rural development.
- Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, New York, USA on 6th December, 2024, to foster Institutional Collaboration between the two universities.
- Offa Descendants Union North America (ODUNA) on 21st January, 2025 and other Institutions in the United States of America (USA) to facilitate the linkage and exchange programmes for our students and medical outreach.
- Opay, a Fintech company, to provide scholarship support of **Sixty Million Naira (₦60,000,000)** for intelligent but indigent students, over a period of 10 years. The company will sponsor 20 students annually, with each beneficiary receiving **Three Hundred Thousand (₦300,000)** to support their educational pursuits. The MoU was signed on Wednesday April 16, 2025.
- There is an ongoing discussion with the Government of Tunisia and two (2) Tunisian Universities for collaboration and mutual benefits. This collaboration cut across staff and students exchange and mobility, joint publications and joint supervision of postgraduate students and other forms of collaboration between our university and the two leading Tunisian universities. The discussions with the Ministry of Higher Education of Tunisia include the interaction with the Techno-park called SUPCOM.
- University of Venda, South Africa, to forge a new partnership aimed at fostering academic and research collaborations in key areas such as Green Technology, Agriculture, Law, and the exchange of students and faculty members. The delegation from University of Venda visited the University in April, 2025.
- University of the Free State, South Africa, to collaborate on research, joint publication, joint conferences, student and staff exchange, among others.
- The Nigerian Geological Survey Agency (NGSA) to establish a development-collaboration that will entail a short term work and learning experience for the

academic staff of our University on one hand, and the technical staff of the Agency on the other hand.

- Three frontline Malaysian Universities, University Teknologi, Sibul, Sarawak, Malaysia. The International Islamic University, Malaysia and the Universiti Malay, Malaysia. The collaboration was for further partnership in research, students and staff exchange and joint publications.
- Global Wissen Consult, one of the leading providers of digital entrepreneurship education to support and encourage students' entrepreneurship drive with digital skills.
- Ilorin Central Jumma'at Mosque for the construction of a 250-bed hostel at the university campus. I am happy to report that the Dangote Foundation has taken over the building of the hostel at the cost of more than One Billion Naira.
- Huawei of China with respect to various areas of interventions in digitisation and power.

Sports

- Three universities student-athletes; Aina Precious Olukayode (Dept of Educational Technology, Abdulazeez Abdullahi (Dept of Educational Management) and Mustapha Ruqqayat (Dept of Human Kinetics Education) qualified in the World University Games Trial held at the University of Jos between 6th – 12th April, 2025 to represent Nigeria in 100m, 110m hurdles and shot put respectively in the world University Games in Germany.
- Aina Precious Oluwakayode of the Department of Educational Technology, Faculty of Education; represented Nigeria in 100m race at the World University Games in Germany between July 14 – July 28, 2025.
- Staff Sports - 53 Staff of the University participated in the 11th Nigeria University Staff Sports Association Games held at Bayero University, Kano state between May 21, and Friday May 30, 2025, and won 3 Gold, 3 Silver medals.
- Abdulkareem Sulyman Angulu a Unilorin Judo Coach was elected on the 19th September – 2025 at Mashood Abiola National Stadium Abuja as The Technical Representative NIGERIA RUGBY FOOTBALL FEDERATION.
- Director of Sports and Students Union Sports Secretary Participated in Monieball 2025 Media Parley on October 2nd 2025 at the Post Square (Formerly NIPOST Tower) Victoria Island, Lagos in preparation for A 5-aside football competitions among 10 best selected Universities in Nigeria.

- University of Ilorin hosted one of the Group stages of Monieball 5 Aside football tournaments among four Universities in Nigeria. This event was sponsored by Moniepoint through Nigeria Universities Games Association between 6th – 8th October, 2025.

Challenges: The Hurdles Along the Way

As much as we are proud of the progress made, it is important to acknowledge the challenges that have, at times, slowed our pace:

- **Resource Constraints:** Like many public institutions, we continue to grapple with financial limitations. These constraints affect everything from infrastructural expansion to recruitment and retention of top talent.
- **Bureaucratic Bottlenecks:** Institutional reform is often slow and complex. Navigating regulations and legacy systems has been a persistent challenge in delivering some of our planned reforms on time.
- **Changing Educational Landscape:** The rapid evolution of technology and global best practices requires us to stay agile, yet adaptation is not always easy or immediate, especially in an environment where tradition and innovation must coexist.

These challenges have tested our resolve, but they have also strengthened our sense of purpose. We have not allowed setbacks to derail us. Instead, we have used them as opportunities to rethink, redesign, and recommit.

Students Graduating from the University of Ilorin in the 2024/2025 Academic Session

For the 40th Convocation Ceremonies, the University shall be graduating a total of 11,886 students. In the First Degree/Diploma category we have 316 First Class, 4120 Second Class (Upper Division), 5939 Second Class (Lower Division), 1078 Third Class and 11 Pass. The 40th Convocation Ceremonies also include 175 MB;BS graduands, 94 Nursing graduands, 40 Optometry graduands, 36 Veterinary Medicine graduands, and 64 Physiotherapy graduands. We have a total of 13 Diploma. Furthermore, the total numbers of Higher Degrees to be awarded at the 40th Convocation Ceremonies is 1, 520 out of this figure, there are 182 Postgraduate Diplomas, 916 Masters, 188 Professional Masters and 234 Ph. Ds from various Faculties.

Invitation:

Distinguished guests, gentlemen of the press, ladies and gentlemen, let me use this opportunity to invite you to all the other activities and events lined up for the 40th

Convocation Ceremonies which commenced with a special Jumat Service on Friday 17th October 2025 at the University Central Mosque and an interdenominational church service on Sunday 19th October 2025 at Chapel of the Light on our campus. Tomorrow, 21st October, 2025, the Command Performance of the Convocation Production titled ***Joromi*** will be performed at the Performing and Film Arts Theatre. The Convocation Lecture titled **The Gen-Z Playbook: Navigating Work and the Real World** will be delivered here in this Auditorium on Wednesday 22nd October, 2025 at 9.00am by **His Excellency, Babatunde Raji Fashola, SAN, CON**, Former Governor, Lagos State and Former Honourable Minister, Federal Ministry of Works and Housing. The award of degrees to 4-year Programmes graduands in the various Faculties will hold immediately following the Convocation Lecture at this Auditorium while the Chancellor's cocktail in honor of the Convocation Lecturer will take place at 12.30 pm at the Multipurpose Hall on the same day. The award of degrees to 5-year and 6-year programmes graduands will hold on Thursday 23rd October 2025 by 9am. Thereafter, the Visitor of the University, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, *GCFR* will commission some completed projects at various sites on our campus by 1.30pm on the same day while the day's event will be rounded off with the Convocation Luncheon and Merit award to deserving staff members by 4pm at the Multipurpose Hall of the university.

The 40th Convocation ceremonies will be ended with a Jumat Service on Friday 24th October 2025 at the University Central Mosque by 1.30pm and a thanksgiving Church Service will hold on Sunday 26th October 2025 at St. Thomas Aquinas Chaplaincy at 9am prompt. Let me add that entry to the venues of the programmes lined up will be strictly by invitation cards and I enjoin all our visitors to comport themselves by following all instructions from university officials assigned different responsibilities. I sincerely thank all members of the ceremonial committee for their selfless service and dedication to the success of these events.

The Road Ahead: Sustaining Impact

As we look forward to the remaining years of this administration, I am more determined than ever to consolidate our gains and accelerate progress in areas where we are yet to meet our goals:

- **Curriculum Reform:** We will intensify efforts to make our programs more responsive to market needs and global standards, preparing our students not just for today's jobs, but for the challenges of the future.

- **Research for Development:** We aim to further link our research agenda to national and regional development goals, ensuring that knowledge generated within these walls contributes directly to societal progress. Our research focus is to strengthen the Sustainable Development Goals with a view to addressing the fundamental issues in Nigeria and globally.
- **Staff Development and Welfare:** A renewed focus will be placed on training, motivation, and performance management to ensure that our greatest asset—our people—can thrive and deliver excellence.
- **Inclusive Access and Equity:** We will continue to work towards a more inclusive and equitable university community, where no student or staff member is left behind on the account of gender, socio-economic background, or disability.

These are not easy goals, but they are necessary. And with your continued support, I believe they are entirely within reach.

Appreciation and a Call to Action

Let me take this opportunity to thank all who have stood by this institution through the highs and lows. To our academic and non-academic staff—again, thank you for your commitment and resilience. To our students—you remain our greatest inspiration. To parents, alumni, partners, regulatory agencies, and members of the governing council—your support and constructive engagement have been invaluable.

However, I must also say: **there is still more to be done, and we cannot afford to slow down now.**

I therefore call on all stakeholders to renew their commitment, to raise their voices in support of our mission, and to join us as we build a stronger, more relevant, and more resilient university for the next generation.

CONCLUSION

As the University of Ilorin celebrates 50 years of academic distinction and impact, we look back with pride at the strides we have made in nurturing leaders, advancing knowledge, and shaping national and global development. At the same time, we look forward with renewed determination to sustain our legacy of excellence in teaching, research, and community service. The 40th Convocation Ceremonies and the Golden Jubilee Anniversary of the

University of Ilorin are not just milestones; they are a testament to five decades of unwavering commitment to excellence, innovation, integrity, and service to humanity. It is a time to look back at our achievements and look forward to chart a new path to sustainable excellence.

We therefore invite our esteemed stakeholders – alumni, staff, students, parents, partners, and friends of the University – to join us in making this season of celebration truly memorable. Together, we shall not only honor our past but also ignite the promise of a greater future for the University of Ilorin – better by far, for another fifty years and beyond. As we celebrate, we must remain mindful of what we have learned from history, that transformation is not an event—it is a continuous process. It takes vision, it takes courage, it takes patience, and above all, it takes collaboration. So, as we move into the next phase of this journey, I remain confident that together, we will continue to turn challenges into opportunities, and purpose into lasting impact.

Thank you for your attention—and thank you for your partnership. Let us continue to build a university we can all be proud of.