



# **NIGERIAN NAVY**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

27 January 2024

### **SPONSORED MALICIOUS PUBLICATION AGAINST THE OFFICE AND PERSON OF THE CHIEF OF THE NAVAL STAFF**

The attention of the Naval Headquarters has again been drawn to the unfounded, baseless and malicious publication by Peoples Gazette, an online publisher reputed for blackmail, character assassination and libel, and with the Nigerian Navy as one of its recurring targets as it was in June 2023 in a similar malicious article alleging the immediate past Navy Chief did not want to hand over. The People Gazette has again originated a false report saying, “Naval Chief Emmanuel Ogalla lands in trouble over multibillion naira oil bunkering, contract-splitting fraud.”

The allegations that the Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS) accepted over \$170 million in bribes as well as alleged involvement in multi-billion naira contract splitting fraud in the last 6 months are untenable, baseless and untrue.

Firstly, there are clear procedural requirements in the arrest, detention and release of any vessel or persons found culpable in the maritime environment. It is until these processes are duly concluded that such vessels are released to appropriate prosecuting agencies for further actions. Indeed, all arrested vessels mentioned in the publication that were involved in crude oil theft and illegal oil bunkering are being investigated and none of such vessels has been released as alleged.

Secondly, the CNS does not award or oversee oil bunkering contracts; the award of such is the sole prerogative of NNPC.

Thirdly, all contracts awarded by the Navy follow due process in line with the laws of the Federation. The Nigerian Navy (NN) and her roles is an offshoot of the constitutional provisions and duly guided by extant laws and regulations of the land. The policing roles of the Navy empowered her to monitor the maritime domain of the Nation. These among others include arrest of vessels that contravene any of the maritime laws and SPOMO Act 2019.

The Service is aware of the coordinated frantic efforts to blackmail the office and person of the CNS by some disgruntled elements who are feeling the heat of the Nigerian Navy's renewed vigour to fight crude oil theft and illegalities in the maritime domain as well as those who have in one way or the other shortchanged the Navy before now.

Specifically, the continuous rejuvenated operations towards curbing oil theft has given the oil thieves sleepless nights hence the decision to engage in the malicious publications. It would be recalled that the Nigerian Navy recently launched OPERATION DELTA SANITY which provided for a holistic, more robust roadmap towards the reinvigorated stance of the NN towards the fight against crude oil theft and other forms of illegalities in the Nation's maritime environment.

Indeed, the NN is aware of these antics as it is expected considering the current resolve of the NN to engage oil thieves head on. The cartel hitherto believed no individual could confront its ranks. Fortunately, the recent achievements of the NN in this regard have put them on their heels hence the resort to cheap blackmail through immoral and compromised online media publishers.

Pertinently, the NN will continue to ensure legitimate businesses in the maritime domain thrive seamlessly. Also, these distractions will in no way retract the NN's resolve to confront these criminals who must be brought to justice for Nigeria's economy to rebound. The security and economy of the Nation is greater than any group of persons that think they must continue to drain the country.

Accordingly, members of the public are therefore enjoined to discountenance completely the malicious publication that emanated from Peoples Gazette because it is totally untrue and completely baseless being a figment of the shallow imagination of the writer, his publishers, and their unpatriotic sponsors.

You are please requested to disseminate it to the public.



**AO AYO VAUGHAN**  
Rear Admiral  
Director of Information