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KASU 2026 RETREAT: REFLECTIONS ON TOGETHERNESS, RESPONSIBILITY AND INSTITUTIONAL PURPOSE

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Over the years, I have attended numerous retreats, some as a journalist covering events from the periphery, others as a participant seated within the circle of deliberation. From this experience, I have formed a firm conviction: retreats often reveal more about an institution's culture than its official reports ever can.

Some gatherings are routine. They are organized because the calendar demands it. Speeches are delivered, resolutions are adopted, photographs are taken, and little changes afterwards.

Others leave a different imprint.

The 2026 Strategic Management Retreat of Kaduna State University was one of those rare moments that invited deeper reflection.

During the retreat, there were moments I deliberately detached myself from the larger groups. I moved away from the rows and

sat quietly at the back of the hall. From that vantage point, I observed not only the speakers but the listeners, their posture, their engagement, the seriousness with which they took notes, the nods of agreement, even the occasional furrowed brows when uncomfortable truths were raised.

What I saw was not passive attendance. I saw ownership. The retreat, convened to assess the implementation of the university's 2023–2028 Strategic Plan, could easily have been reduced to a presentation of milestones. Indeed, there were achievements to acknowledge, progress in research relevance, digital innovation, staff development, infrastructure upgrades, and stronger community engagement even as the university continues to align itself with the developmental aspirations of Kaduna State and the broader national vision, staying true to its motto: Education for Unity and Development.

But what gave the gathering its deeper meaning was the willingness to interrogate gaps.

Speakers did not shy away from acknowledging unfinished tasks. Participants did not merely applaud successes; they asked probing questions about sustainability, accountability, and measurable impact. There was a recurring emphasis on discipline in implementation and fairness in recognizing effort.

From my quiet seat at the back, it became evident that something more significant than presentations was unfolding. There was a collective recognition that a strategic plan is not a ceremonial document. It is a moral commitment.

Leadership, under the stewardship of the Vice Chancellor, Professor Abdullahi Ibrahim Musa, alongside the Deputy Vice Chancellors and other members of management, emphasized collaboration rather than command. What emerged was not the image of hierarchy dictating direction but of a community negotiating its shared future.

That spirit of togetherness stood out.

In institutions, progress is rarely the result of isolated brilliance. It is born of alignment when leadership vision meets staff commitment, when leadership leads by example, when administrative systems support academic excellence, when individual effort contributes to collective reputation.

The increasing visibility and recognition enjoyed by Kaduna State University, nationally and internationally, is not accidental. It reflects years of incremental work, conversations like these, decisions like these, and moments of honest evaluation like the ones witnessed during this retreat.

As the sessions drew to a close, I found myself reflecting not on the speeches delivered but on the atmosphere sustained throughout the three days.

The 2026 retreat reaffirmed that togetherness remains one of KASU's quiet strengths. It demonstrated that institutional growth is not sustained by documents alone but by people willing to engage, to listen, to evaluate, and to act.

There was seriousness without hostility.

There was critique without cynicism.

There was ambition tempered by realism.

Most importantly, there was unity not as rhetoric but as practice.

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If implementation follows the spirit that characterized these deliberations, then the retreat will not be remembered merely as an event but as a turning point.

And sometimes, it is from the back of the room, in quiet observation, that one sees most clearly the future taking shape.





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