



SYNAGOGUE PASTOR TB JOSHUA SECRETLY PURCHASES \$60 MILLION G550

News / Business aviation



Pastor Temitope Joshua, the leader of the Synagogue Church of All Nations (SCOAN), has joined Nigeria's big league of miracle and prosperity priests who own private jets, reporters has learned authoritatively.

Widely-known as TB Joshua, the church leader took possession of the nearly brand-new **Gulfstream G550** aircraft in April 2015, a few months after a building collapse at the premises of his megachurch in the Ikotun-Egbe suburb of Lagos killed 116 people.

Registered as "Synagogue Of Nations," the jet was purchased using the Bank Of Utah trustee as the front for purchasing the jet.

Pastor TB Joshua's jet is the most expensive of the four owned by Nigerian pastors. Pastor David Oyedepo (Bombardier Challenger 604), Pastor Enoch Adeboye (Gulfstream GIV), and Ayo Oritsejafor (Bombardier Challenger 601) are also jet owners. It would be recalled that Pastor Ortsejafor's jet was cited in South Africa for money-laundering money last year. The new Nigerian government is said to be investigating the circumstances of that case, which involved federal funds.

Pastor TB Joshua's jet has already started making the rounds. In June, it left the Murtala Muhammad International Airport in Lagos on a whirlwind of South America, departing north from there to Kentucky in the United States.

The jet, which has US registration number N131LK, was built in 2010. It was delivered to its first user in 2013 before making it to TB Joshua early this year. SaharaReporters learned that the jet made a voyage to Nigeria in December 2013, as the Bank of Utah was apparently pitching it to Pastor TB Joshua. The man of God reportedly asked to see it and bless it before finally taking delivery.

It could cost up to \$3 million to maintain the jet annually, depending on how heavily it is used.

Sources at the church told our correspondents that Pastor Joshua claims the jet was paid for by at least eight African Heads of State in 2014. It was first kept in Israel before the tragic church collapse in September in which 116 persons, mostly South Africans, were killed.

When reporters reached Pastor Joshua, he denied owning a private jet. Instead, he said he frequently charts private jets because he travels extensively, noting, for instance, that he has an oncoming trip to Argentina.

His claim runs contrary to information from the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA), which claimed that N131LK is on record as belonging to Pastor TB Joshua through SCOAN.

"What the Bank of Utah does is to help non-US citizens act as agents to purchase aircraft using US financing," a source at NCAA told reporters.

The source recalled that the same bank was also instrumental to purchasing jets from Bombardier on behalf of the government of Rivers State under Governor Rotimi Amaechi, and Akwa Ibom under Godswill Akpabio.

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