



Fubara seeks reconciliation with Wike in Abuja amid Rivers state emergency Pg 2

Dele Momodu: Only a strong Northern candidate can challenge Tinubu in 2027 Pg 9



The New Daily Prime

f @new daily prime x @prime_daili149 @ @new_daily_prime

...your prime source for excellence in journalism

EFCC declares foreigner wanted in connection with CBEX PAGE 7



EFCC Chairman, Olu Olukoyede

Economic and Financial Crimes Commission
PLOT 301/302, INSTITUTION & RESEARCH, CADASTRAL DISTRICT, JABI, ABUJA, NIGERIA
officialEFCC officialEFCC officialEFCC
www.efcc.gov.ng

WANTED

ELIE BITAR

The public is hereby notified that **ELIE BITAR**, whose photograph appears above is wanted by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) for fraud allegedly perpetrated on an online trading platform called **Crypto Bridge Exchange (CBEX)**. Bitar is 41 years old and his last known address is at Eng. George Ener Crescent, Lekki Phase 1, Lekki, Lagos State.

Anybody with useful information as to his whereabouts, should please contact the Commission in its Ibadan, Uyo, Sokoto, Maiduguri, Benin, Makurdi, Kaduna, Ilorin, Enugu, Kano, Lagos, Gombe, Port Harcourt or Abuja offices or through 08093322644; its e-mail address: info@efcc.gov.ng or the nearest Police Station and other security agencies.



Kardashian robbery suspect says heist was one 'too many' Pg 18



Trump cites legal advice in decision not to seek return of Kilmar Abrego Pg 23

After 20 months, African Union lifts sanction against Gabon Pg 21



Fubara seeks reconciliation with Wike in Abuja amid Rivers state emergency

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye



In a significant step towards reconciliation, the suspended Governor of Rivers State, Siminalayi Fubara, has met with the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Nyesom Wike, in Abuja.

The closed-door meeting, reportedly aimed at resolving the deepening political crisis in Rivers State, took place at Wike's private residence in the capital.

Reliable sources disclosed to NewDailyPrime that prominent political figures including Governor Dapo Abiodun of Ogun State, Governor Francis Nwifuru of Ebonyi State, and former Ogun State Governor, Olusegun Osoba accompanied Fubara.

The delegation is believed to have played a mediatory role in the encounter.

According to insider information,

upon arrival at Wike's residence, Fubara "walked straight into Wike's living room because that's a familiar terrain" and proceeded to beg the FCT Minister.

Though specific details of the discussion remain under wraps, an anonymous source confirmed the meeting took place, stating, "There was a meeting and I can confirm that."

Asked whether the meeting signals the end of the emergency rule imposed on Rivers State, the source replied: "That I can't confirm but all I know is that there was a meeting."

The development follows an earlier meeting between Fubara and President Bola Ahmed Tinubu in London, which many believe was part of a broader effort to de-escalate tensions in the oil-rich state.

The political rift between Fubara and his predecessor, Wike, began shortly

after Fubara assumed office in 2023. As tensions mounted, President Tinubu, citing threats from Niger Delta militants to attack critical oil infrastructure, declared a state of emergency in Rivers State. The drastic measure saw the suspension of Fubara, his deputy, and the entire state assembly for six months. A Sole Administrator was appointed to manage the state's affairs during the period.

Wike, commenting previously on the situation, expressed a desire for Fubara's outright removal from office, but noted that President Tinubu's intervention spared the suspended governor from complete ousting.

The outcome of the Abuja meeting remains uncertain, but political observers suggest it could mark the beginning of a fragile truce in the ongoing power struggle.

THE NEW DAILY PRIME RATE CARD

PUBLIC NOTICE COLOUR

PRODUCT COLOUR

EFFECTIVE FROM DECEMBER 1, 2024

SIZE	TOTAL RATE
FULL PAGE	372,500.00
HALF PAGE	213,000.00
QUARTER PAGE	106,500.00
14X2	118,000.00
10X6	261,585.50
10X5	255,238.00
10X4	206,890.50
10X3	179,608.00
9X6	254,977.00
9X5	225,738.00
9X4	193,500.00
9X3	166,223.50
8X6	225,368.50
8X3	106,934.50
7X4	180,173.50
6X4	100,434.50
6X3	82,750.00
6X2	52,499.50
5X6	123,749.50
5X5	110,000.00
5X4	76,833.00
5X3	66,875.00
5X2	42,916.50
4X4	60,166.50
4X3	36,499.50
4X2	29,333.50
3X3	28,000.00
3X2	17,400.00
2X2	13,000.00
2X1	8,600.00
1X1	4,400.00

SIZE	TOTAL RATE
FULL PAGE	329,868.50
HALF PAGE	192,500.00
QUARTER PAGE	100,000.00
14X2	109,500.00
10X6	242,500.00
10X5	237,500.00
10X4	192,500.00
10X3	171,000.00
9X6	232,500.00
9X5	206,000.00
9X4	177,500.00
9X3	150,000.00
8X6	216,000.00
8X3	98,500.00
7X4	164,002.00
6X4	94,010.50
6X3	78,500.00
6X2	47,500.00
5X5	100,000.00
5X4	61,500.00
5X3	57,819.00
5X2	40,379.50
4X4	55,000.00
4X3	31,000.00
4X2	22,003.50
3X2	17,260.00
2X2	12,945.00
2X1	8,630.00
1X1	4,315.00

POLITICAL COLOUR

SIZE	RATE
CENTRESPREAD	1,200,000.00
DOUBLE SPREAD	885,000.00
FULL PAGE	420,000.00
HALF PAGE	213,250.00
QUARTER PAGE	115,012.50

POLITICAL BLACK & WHITE

SIZE	RATE
CENTRESPREAD	1,050,000.00
DOUBLE SPREAD	745,000.00
FULL PAGE	315,777.50
HALF PAGE	184,700.00
QUARTER PAGE	95,222.50

CORPORATE BLACK & WHITE

SIZE	TOTAL RATE
FULL PAGE	254,533.50
HALF PAGE	142,787.50
QUARTER PAGE	80,706.50
14X2	78,222.50
10X6	217,830.00
10X5	192,305.50
10X4	142,787.50
10X3	121,355.50
9X6	192,305.50
9X3	107,757.50
8X6	170,725.00
8X3	70,390.00
7X4	58,666.50
6X4	67,048.00
6X3	53,361.50
6X2	37,694.00
5X6	83,850.00
5X4	55,900.00
5X3	43,705.00
5X2	27,938.00
4X4	44,493.00
4X3	33,524.00
4X2	22,350.00
3X2	16,763.00
2X2	10,877.00
2X1	5,588.50
1X1	2,795.50

SPECIAL POSITIONS

2X6 FRONT PAGE	700,000.00
2X6 BACK PAGE	300,000.00
2X6 INSIDE PAGE	155,000.00
3X6 FRONT PAGE	1,200,000.00
4X6 FRONT PAGE	2,250,000.00
5X6 FRONT PAGE	3,350,000.00
10X6 FRONT PAGE	8,250,000.00
EARPIECE FRONT PAGE(1.5X2)	246,500.00
EARPIECE INSIDE PAGE(1.5X2)	117,875.00
EARPIECE BACK PAGE	236,796.50
CENTRE SPREAD COLOUR (PUBLIC NOTICE)	1,027,000.00
CENTRE SPREAD COLOUR (PRODUCT)	929,000.00
CENTRESPREAD B&W	800,000.00
CENTRE SPREAD HALF COLOUR	575,000.00
CENTRESPREAD STRIP COLOUR	191,668.50
DOUBLE SPREAD COLOUR	721,500.00
DOUBLE SPREAD HALF COLOUR	432,881.00
DOUBLE SPREAD STRIP COLOUR	144,294.00
CENTRE SPREAD B&W	835,000.00
CENTRE SPREAD HALF PAGE B & W	550,000.00
DOUBLE SPREAD B & W	725,000.00
DOUBLE SPREAD HALF B & W	425,000.00
FULL WRAP AROUND	15,000,000.00
HALF WRAP AROUND	8,500,000.00
HALF PAGE FRONT	5,500,000.00

PUBLIC NOTICE BLACK & WHITE

SIZE	TOTAL RATE
FULL PAGE	280,690.00
HALF PAGE	164,178.00
QUARTER PAGE	84,641.50
10X6	228,000.00
10X5	201,600.00
10X4	149,440.00
10X3	127,108.00
9X6	201,600.00
9X5	169,050.00
9X4	137,875.00
9X3	112,875.00
8X6	179,368.00
8X5	143,500.00
8X4	93,500.00
8X3	82,434.50
7X4	111,173.50
6X4	82,434.50
6X3	59,250.00
6X2	40,000.00
5X6	98,749.50
5X4	65,833.00
5X3	49,375.00
5X2	32,916.50
4X4	52,666.50
4X3	39,499.50
4X2	26,333.50
3X2	19,750.00
2X2	13,000.00
2X1	6,500.00
1X1	3,292.00

PRODUCT BLACK & WHITE

SIZE	TOTAL RATE
FULL PAGE	210,795.50
HALF PAGE	124,236.00
QUARTER PAGE	70,950.00
14X2	76,128.35
10X6	194,961.00
10X5	162,222.445
10X4	103,963.00
10X3	N/A
9X6	162,222.445
9X5	168,191.50
9X4	N/A
8X6	N/A
8X3	N/A
7X4	72,676.00
6X4	65,000.00
6X3	41,124.50
6X2	29,858.00
5X6	71,378.00
5X4	42,825.00
5X3	29,858.00
5X2	22,841.00
4x4	N/A
4X3	N/A
4X2	17,737.50
3x3	23,458.00
3X2	14,923.00
2X2	10,200.00
2X1	5,439.50
1X1	2,700.00

ALLURE RATE

SIZE	RATE	TOTAL
CENTRESPREAD		967,500.00
DOUBLE SPREAD		806,250.00
ALLURE COVER		750,000.00
(IBC) Inside Back Cover		376,250.00
(IFC) Inside Front Cover		430,000.00
(BC) Back Cover		483,750.00
Full Page		430,000.00
10X5		295,625.00
Half Page		225,000.00
EVENT		250,000.00

PICTURE & CAPTION

SIZE	RATE	7.5% VAT	TOTAL
PHOTO NEWS PAGE 2	50,000.00	3,750.00	53,750.00
PHOTO NEWS (3X3)	30,000.00	2,250.00	32,250.00
PHOTO NEWS (4X4)	53,333.30	4,250.00	57,583.30
PRESS RELEASE (4X4)	30,000.00	2,250.00	32,250.00
EVENT COVERAGE	100,000.00	7,500.00	107,500.00
FEATURES	200,000.00	15,000.00	215,000.00

GENERAL INFORMATION

SERIES DISCOUNT
5 PAGES 2.5%
10 PAGES 5%
15 PAGES & ABOVE 7.5%

SURCHARGE
PAGE 3 (100%)
PAGE 4, 5, 7 AND 8 (50%)
PAGE 2 (75%)

LOOSE INSERT
LEAFLET, POSTERS 1,000 COPIES
SPECIAL INSERTS (8 PAGES) COPIES
SPECIAL INSERTS (4 PAGES) 1,000 COPIES
HANDLING CHARGES FOR LESS THAN 35,000 COPIES
HANDLING CHARGES MORE THAN 35,000 COPIES

CLASSIFIED ADVERT RATES
CHANGE OF NAME
GUIDE BLACK & WHITE
GUIDE COLOUR

25,000.00
45,000.00
30,000.00
75,000.00
100,000.00

2,000.00
3,750.00
4,250.00

CONTACT US

Correspondent Address:
Real Group Plaza, No.1 Junaid Dosumu
Street, CBD, Alausa, Ikeja, Lagos
Call the Editor on: 07025014298, 09014323792

E-mail Address:
info@newdailyprime.news
Terms and Conditions apply

ALL RATES ARE VAT INCLUSIVE

FG targets efficiency in MDAs with procurement reforms

By Friday Omosola

The Federal Government (FG) has unveiled a major digital reform aimed at boosting efficiency and accountability across Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), as part of its broader strategy to strengthen governance and service delivery.

Minister of Information and National Orientation Mohammed Idris made this known on Wednesday during the launch of the Nigeria Procurement Certification Portal in Abuja.

The initiative, developed by the Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP) in collaboration with the World Bank, is designed to overhaul Nigeria's public procurement system and align it with global best practices.

Idris said President Bola Tinubu's administration is committed to institutionalising bold reforms that will enhance transparency, efficiency, and professionalism in the public sector.

"This event represents a major milestone in the ongoing transformation of Nigeria's public procurement system, fully in line with President Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda, especially its focus on strengthening governance structures to deliver public services more effectively, transparently, and accountability," he stated.

According to him, the new digital portal directly tackles longstanding



challenges in the procurement sector.

This, he said, includes bureaucratic bottlenecks, poor procurement practices, lack of skilled personnel, and the absence of structured capacity-building mechanisms.

He noted that the portal will offer structured certification programmes and provide digital access to training and evaluation.

"It ensures that our procurement officers are not just compliant, but qualified and globally competitive," he said.

Idris commended the Director-General of the Bureau of Public Procurement, Adebowale

Adedokun, for his visionary leadership and dedication to advancing innovation within the country's procurement ecosystem.

The Minister also stressed the importance of stakeholder engagement, especially public awareness, in ensuring the success of the reform.

"Citizens must understand that the portal is not just a tool for the government but a platform for them to demand better services, expect greater transparency, and hold institutions accountable," he said.

He called on all MDAs to embrace the initiative, urging the media to amplify its benefits and monitor its implementation.

Nigeria welcomes EBRD's first West African office as EU strengthens ties

By Friday Omosola

The Nigerian government has reaffirmed its commitment to deepening its strategic partnership with the European Union (EU), as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) prepares to open its first office in West Africa, based in Lagos.

This milestone comes after Nigeria became the 77th shareholder of the EBRD in February 2025.

The bank's expansion into Sub-Saharan Africa was approved by the EBRD Board of Governors in 2023.

During a courtesy visit by Ambassador Gautier Mignot, Head of the European Union Delegation to Nigeria and ECOWAS, to the Presidential Villa yesterday, Vice President Kashim Shettima praised the EU's longstanding support.

He emphasised the increasing opportunities for cooperation in trade, investment, and youth empowerment.

"You are our natural partners and allies. Beyond the geography that binds us, we have a cultural affinity that goes back

He highlighted that Nigeria is entering a new phase of economic openness under President Bola Tinubu, noting that the President had made bold moves to address long-standing structural challenges.

"Some of the dysfunctions in the Nigerian economy – the opaque exchange rate regime and the fuel subsidy – President Tinubu dared to remove them. All the encumbrances towards investment in this country are gradually being eliminated," he added.



Welcoming the EBRD's expansion into Nigeria, Shettima called the opening of its Lagos office a symbolic and strategic development that would send a strong message: "More than ever before, Nigeria is ready for business."

He also acknowledged the EU's significant humanitarian and stabilisation efforts, particularly in conflict-affected regions like Borno State, where he previously served as governor.

"I know the prominent role that the EU played in stability and humanitarian support in Borno State. You deserve commendation, not condemnation. We will always stand by those who stood by us in our hours of need," Shettima stated.

Additionally, he addressed migration cooperation and praised the ongoing efforts under the EU-Nigeria Readmission Agreement.

He urged the revitalisation of youth-focused programmes, such as the Nigeria

Jubilee Fellows Programme (NJFP).

"There is a need for us to recalibrate the programme for the good of our young men and women," he said.

However, EU Ambassador Gautier Mignot expressed the EU's strong commitment to Nigeria, especially in light of the global political climate.

He reiterated that the EU sees Nigeria as a key partner in the 21st century.

"We are determined to keep our commitment globally and here in the region and Nigeria in terms of partnerships, cooperation, and humanitarian aid," Mignot said.

He added that the EU stands firmly for free and fair trade, mutual benefits, and respect for sovereignty.

**Continue reading
on next page**

Cont from page 5

In another key development, Shettima lauded the proposal for a partnership between Nigeria and the Asia Economic Development Committee (AEDC) of South Korea to manufacture solar equipment and electric vehicles, as well as advance information technology for security enhancement in Nigeria.

Speaking during a courtesy visit by a delegation from AEDC, led by Chairman Yoon Suk-hun, stated that Nigeria was ready for partnerships that would support the industrialisation agenda of President Tinubu's administration and improve the lives of citizens.

"Nigeria is open to and interested in

any form of arrangements that will lead to the transfer of technology and the establishment of industries for solar equipment production and electric vehicle manufacturing," he stated.

He reiterated the Tinubu administration's commitment to fostering a conducive environment for private investment in Nigeria, assuring the AEDC delegation of government cooperation in their ventures.

"This government wants to be the facilitator for businesses to thrive in Nigeria. We will create a safe passage and a conducive environment for private businesses

like yours to thrive," the Vice President affirmed.

Yoon Suk-hun, leading the AEDC delegation, explained that their proposal to invest in Nigeria was driven not by profit maximisation but by a desire to transfer technology in key areas such as solar energy, electric vehicles, and information technology infrastructure for security enhancement.

The AEDC delegation's visit also included discussions on opportunities for collaboration in the renewable energy and automobile manufacturing sectors, which are crucial for Nigeria's future industrial growth.

Presidency denies ministers' dismissal, orders crackdown on fake news platform By Friday Omosola

The Presidency has dismissed widespread reports alleging that President Bola Tinubu dismissed three ministers.

The reports claimed that the President relieved the Minister of Power, Adebayo Adedun; the Minister of Defence, Mohammed Abubakar; and the Minister of State for Defence, Bello Matawalle, of their duties.

In a post on his X page, the Special Adviser to the President on Information and Strategy, Bayo Onanuga, described the story as entirely fabricated and devoid of any factual basis.

He called on security agencies to take swift action against fake news websites and platforms, as well as individuals who irresponsibly circulate unverified reports and contribute to their viral spread.

He wrote: "Security agencies must urgently take action against fake news websites and platforms and the purveyors who fail to check the authenticity of the stories and make them go viral.



"Press freedom and freedom of speech will not exist when some people can wake up and concoct their news and narratives without regard for truth. Fake news is simply licentiousness and must be criminalised."

The New Daily Prime gathered that, as of the time of filing this report, all three ministers mentioned in the story remain in their respective positions.

EFCC declares foreigner wanted in connection with CBEX

By **Damilola Olufemi**

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has declared a foreign national, Elie Bitar, wanted over his alleged role in a cryptocurrency scam connected to the online trading platform, Crypto Bridge Exchange (CBEX).

In a bulletin made public by the commission, Bitar, aged 41, is said to be the mastermind behind a scheme that lured unsuspecting investors into putting money into CBEX under the pretense of profitable cryptocurrency trading. The operation has reportedly resulted in substantial financial losses for victims across Nigeria. The EFCC has described the case as a significant cyber-enabled financial fraud, emphasizing the growing threat of digital scams in the country.

The Commission revealed that Bitar's last known residence was located at Eng. George Enemoh Crescent, Lekki Phase 1, Lagos State. Investigators believe he may have fled the area following initial reports of investor complaints and mounting evidence of fraudulent activity.

The EFCC called on the public for assistance in locating Bitar, stating that citizens with any relevant information are encouraged to report to any of the agency's zonal offices in cities such as Lagos, Abuja, Kano, Port Harcourt, Enugu, and others via email at info@efcc.gov.ng.

The EFCC reiterated its commitment to tracking down individuals involved in financial crimes, particularly those

exploiting emerging digital platforms to defraud people

Recall that Adefowora Abiodun, who was declared wanted among five others for promoting the cryptocurrency trading platform, Crypto Bridge Exchange (Cbex), has voluntarily turned himself in to the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) for investigation.

He was said to have reported at the anti-graft agency on Monday.

This followed the ruling and approval of Justice Emeka Nwite of the Federal High Court in Abuja last Thursday to arrest the six promoters pending the conclusion of investigations and possible prosecution.

Six promoters were declared wanted by the EFCC over a suspected \$1 billion investment fraud.

Around 4:00 p.m., Abiodun, one of the suspects, turned himself in at EFCC headquarters with his lawyers.

His counsel, Babatunde Busari, said Abiodun was ready to cooperate and clear his name against false media reports.

Meanwhile, following the commission's counsel, Fadila Yusuf's submission, Abiodun, along with five others – Adefowora Oluwanisola, Emmanuel Uko, Seyi Oloyede, Awerosuo Otorudo, and Chukwuebuka Ehirim – were declared wanted.

www.efcc.gov.ng

WANTED



ELIE BITAR

The public is hereby notified that **ELIE BITAR**, whose photograph appears above is wanted by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) for fraud allegedly perpetrated on an online trading platform called **Crypto Bridge Exchange (CBEX)**. Bitar is 41 years old and his last known address is at Eng. George Enemoh Crescent, Lekki Phase 1, Lekki, Lagos State.

Anybody with useful information as to his whereabouts should please contact the Commission in its Ibadan, Uyo, Sokoto, Maiduguri, Benin, Makurdi, Kaduna, Ilorin, Enugu, Kano, Lagos, Gombe, Port Harcourt or Abuja offices or through 08093322644; its e-mail address: info@efcc.gov.ng or the nearest Police Station and other security agencies.

NNPCL refinery bosses, senior officials fired in sweeping shake-up

By Damilola Olufemi

In a major leadership restructuring, the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL) has dismissed the managing directors of its three key refineries—Port Harcourt, Warri, and Kaduna. The move, led by the new management team appointed earlier this month, is part of a broader reform effort to revive Nigeria's struggling oil and gas output.

Alongside the refinery heads, several high-ranking executives within the NNPCL were also relieved of their duties. Among them is Bala Wunti, formerly of the National Petroleum Investment Management Services (NAPIMS), a subsidiary responsible for managing Nigeria's petroleum investments.

The managing directors of the Port Harcourt Refining Company, Warri Refining and Petrochemical Company, and Kaduna Refining and Petrochemical Company were all removed as part of the latest leadership changes.

"The decision wasn't arbitrary," said a company insider. "The ongoing underperformance of these refineries has been a sore point. With very little improvement seen despite years of funding and promises of turnaround, something had to give."

Also affected by the shake-up were some senior managers, many of whom were close to retirement. The new leadership reportedly wants a clean slate and fresh thinking to tackle persistent bottlenecks.

In a related development, Maryam Idrisu has been appointed as the new Managing Director of NNPC Trading, the subsidiary in charge of all crude oil sales and trading activities. Her elevation is seen as part of the effort to bring in competent hands to oversee key commercial operations within the company.

It was reported that the company confirmed that the changes extended to officials approaching retirement. Employees with only a year left in service have reportedly been asked to step down as part of the reset.

The shake-up follows the removal of



Mele Kyari as Group Chief Executive Officer of NNPCL by President Bola Tinubu on April 2, 2025. Kyari's ouster, along with the dismissal of other board members, signalled the administration's commitment to restructuring the national oil company and boosting production.

Although the company's Chief Corporate Communications Officer, Olufemi Soneye, has yet to comment publicly, multiple sources within the organisation confirmed the leadership purge and its link to performance concerns.

Poor Performance Prompted Dismissals
Officials close to the presidency say the decision to part ways with Kyari and other former executives stemmed from their inability to meet key operational targets. One source described the previous leadership as "recycling old ideas" and becoming entrenched in inefficiency.

"This isn't just a routine reshuffle," the official said. "It's a bold move to break out of stagnation. We need dynamic, capable professionals who understand the energy landscape and can move the needle."

The president has set clear performance benchmarks for the new team, including ambitious targets for crude oil and gas output. By 2030, Nigeria is expected to ramp up oil production to 3 million

barrels per day, with an interim goal of hitting 2 million by 2027. In terms of gas, the mandate is to deliver 10 billion cubic meters by the end of the decade.

"The idea is to evaluate all upstream assets, identify underperforming fields, and bring them back online. The goal is optimisation and delivery—no excuses."

New Leadership at the Helm of NNPCL
In the wake of Kyari's dismissal, the Presidency announced a new 11-member board for NNPCL. Bayo Ojulari was appointed as the new Group CEO, with Musa Ahmadu-Kida named as non-executive chairman.

Ojulari, a seasoned industry veteran from Kwara State, brings decades of experience to the role. He was previously Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer at Renaissance Africa Energy. Under his leadership, Renaissance spearheaded a \$2.4 billion acquisition of Shell Petroleum Development Company's Nigerian operations—a landmark deal led by local investors.

His appointment is being seen as a signal of the government's shift toward technocratic leadership and results-driven governance within the oil sector.

Dele Momodu: Only a strong Northern candidate can challenge Tinubu in 2027

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

Dele Momodu, a prominent chieftain of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), has asserted that only a formidable candidate from Northern Nigeria stands a real chance of unseating President Bola Tinubu in the 2027 presidential election.

Speaking on Arise Television's Morning Show, the former PDP presidential aspirant stressed that the North remains pivotal in determining the outcome of national elections and warned that perceived marginalisation under Tinubu's administration could alienate Northern voters.

"I believe Tinubu can only be effectively countered by another strong candidate from the North, any Southerner who thinks they can challenge Tinubu is likely wasting their time. The PDP—or any coalition—must recognise that power dynamics require strategic thinking," Momodu said.

He likened Nigerian politics to an "optical illusion," suggesting that appearances are often deceptive and strategy must be rooted in realism.



Momodu also emphasised the need for broad-based coalitions, suggesting that political alliances involving Northern heavyweights—such as Senator Rabiu Kwankwaso—would significantly strengthen the opposition's chances.

His comments come amid growing Northern dissent. Hakeem Baba-Ahmed,

a former Special Adviser on Political Affairs to Tinubu in Vice President Kashim Shettima's office, recently hinted that the North would soon determine its political trajectory.

He also urged Tinubu to "step aside" and allow a younger generation of leaders to take charge of the country's future.

Akwa Ibom gov Umo Eno confirms plans to leave PDP, hints at joining APC

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

Governor Umo Eno of Akwa Ibom State has confirmed growing speculation that he will soon leave the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), citing the party's dwindling capacity to help him achieve his political aspirations.

Speaking on Tuesday, April 29, during the Town Square meeting of the Ukanafun/Oruk Anam federal constituency, held at QIC Central School, Ikot Akpankuk, Eno likened the PDP to a faulty aircraft, suggesting it could no longer carry him to his "next destination."

"If you wanted to travel with Ibom Airline, and on the verge of taking off, it developed a fault that won't enable it to fly, won't you board the next available



plane to take you to your destination?" the governor asked his supporters.

The remarks come amid mounting rumours that Eno is preparing to defect to

the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) ahead of the 2027 general elections.

Though he did not explicitly mention the APC, the analogy was widely interpreted as a signal of an impending switch.

This follows a wave of high-profile defections from the PDP, including that of Delta State Governor Sheriff Oborevwori, who recently joined the APC along with a number of supporters, citing the move as being in the best interest of his people.

Governor Eno's potential departure marks another significant blow to the PDP, which has been battling internal divisions and dwindling influence in recent months.

Nigeria police resumes issuance of tinted glass permits

By Damilola Olufemi

The Nigeria Police Force has officially resumed the issuance of tinted glass permits across the country, following a directive from the Inspector-General of Police, Kayode Egbetokun. This move comes after growing public concerns over frequent reports of motorists being harassed for driving vehicles with factory-fitted tinted windows.

Recognising the widespread use of modern cars designed with tinted glass for comfort and privacy, the police have now reintroduced a more transparent and technology-driven permit system. The new platform allows Nigerians to apply for permits online via this website, with built-in identity verification features linked to their NIN and TIN, as well as biometric checks and background screening.

Authorities say the revamped system is

intended to strike a balance between public safety and the legitimate use of tinted windows. While many motorists install tinted glass for practical or medical reasons, security agencies have flagged its misuse in crimes such as kidnapping, armed robbery, and “one-chance” scams. The permit process aims to reduce this risk by creating a clear record of approved users.

To ensure credibility, the new digital permits are embedded with QR codes for easy authentication. Applicants are expected to receive their permits within 72 hours of applying. In addition, a 30-day grace period starting May 1, 2025, has been approved to allow vehicle owners time to regularise their documents before active enforcement begins.

Importantly, the police have emphasised that any officers caught misusing the enforcement process, through extortion or



harassment, will face disciplinary action. The renewed focus is not only on compliance but also on maintaining professionalism and public trust.

This initiative is part of a broader commitment by the Nigeria Police Force to adopt a more accountable, transparent, and citizen-friendly approach to law enforcement, where technology and public service go hand in hand for a safer Nigeria.

Court upholds conviction of Professor who falsified election results for Akpabio

By Damilola Olufemi

The Court of Appeal sitting in Calabar has affirmed the conviction and sentencing of Professor Peter Ogban, who was imprisoned in 2021 for manipulating election results in favour of Godswill Akpabio during the 2019 senatorial race in Akwa Ibom State.

Professor Ogban, a lecturer at the University of Calabar and serving as a returning officer at the time, was found guilty of altering vote counts in Oruk Anam and Etim Ekpo local government areas to favour Akpabio, then a candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC). The fraud took place in an election that Akpabio ultimately lost to the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) candidate, Chris Ekpenyong.

Akpabio emerging Senate President
Despite the initial defeat, Mr Akpabio would later return to contest again in 2023 and secure a seat in the Senate, eventually becoming its president.



The appellate court, in its ruling on Wednesday, not only upheld the three-year sentence handed down by the State High Court in Uyo but also expressed disapproval of Professor Ogban's conduct, especially given his position in academia.

During the original trial, Professor Ogban

had admitted to inflating the APC's vote count by approximately 5,000 in Oruk Anam. He had pleaded for leniency, but the trial judge, Justice Augustine Odokwo, emphasised the seriousness of the offence and ruled that the prosecution had proven its case beyond a reasonable doubt.

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) led the prosecution in this landmark case aimed at holding electoral officers accountable.

Ogban is not the only academic recently convicted of electoral misconduct. Another university lecturer, Professor Ignatius Uduk of the University of Uyo, was also sentenced to three years in prison for similar offences. He was convicted of fabricating and announcing false results during the 2019 elections in the Essien Udim State Constituency, allegedly in favour of an APC candidate allied with Akpabio.

Lagos to deepen cultural collaborations with international stakeholders

By Friday Omosola

The Lagos State Government has reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening cultural development through strategic partnerships with both local and international stakeholders.

This assurance was given by the Commissioner for Tourism, Arts and Culture, Toke Benson-Awoyinka, during a courtesy visit by the Co-founder and Managing Director of IGA Nigeria Limited, Gbolahan Ajala.

Ajala served as a Heritage Consultant to the State Government.

Welcoming the delegation, Benson-Awoyinka noted that the Ministry's ongoing projects align with the vision of the visiting team.

"As a government, we place a high premium on culture and heritage," she said.

"Our projects—such as the transformation of theatres into cinemas and the creation of youth engagement centres—reflect our dedication to promoting the cultural sector. We are open to sponsorships, endorsements, and properly documented proposals that support cultural growth."

She also highlighted government-backed initiatives such as talent hunts and the Lagos Creative Initiatives (LACI), designed to nurture young creative talents across the state.

The Commissioner expressed optimism about future collaborations in areas such as museums, archives, and cultural exhibitions.



Benson-Awoyinka further noted the government's interest in festival partnerships that could enhance the growth of the cultural and creative industries both within and beyond Nigeria.

Also present at the meeting, held at the Ministry's conference room in Alausa, was the Permanent Secretary, Olanrewaju Bajulaiye, who expressed strong support for the proposed partnerships and reaffirmed the Ministry's commitment to positioning Lagos as a leading cultural and creative hub.

Nadine Siegert, Director of the Goethe-Institut Nigeria and President of the EUNIC (European Union National Institutes for Culture) Nigeria Cluster, expressed eagerness to work more closely with Lagos-based artists and institutions.

"Cultural heritage, museums, and archives are among our key areas of interest," she said, adding that collaboration with both state and federal agencies is vital.

Also speaking, Toluwanimi Owolana, Cluster Coordinator for the Africa-Europe Partnership for Culture, introduced a European Union-funded initiative supporting festival producers across six West African countries, including Nigeria.

"Lagos holds a central position in this initiative, and we look forward to collaborating with the Ministry to drive it forward," she said.

Tolulope Ami-Williams, Project Coordinator for the 'Claiming the Future' initiative, also spoke on a community-based mural and performance exhibition scheduled for six locations across Lagos, including Badagry, Makoko, and Bariga.

She appealed for the Ministry's support in securing the necessary approvals.

"Our initiative engages young artists, mentors, and host communities. We hope to receive the Ministry's backing to ensure the project's success," she said.

PDP plots 2027 return in Kaduna

By Damilola Olufemi

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Kaduna State is setting its sights on a strong political comeback, with its leadership expressing confidence in reclaiming power in the 2027 elections. Since taking over six months ago, party chairman Chief Edward Masha has focused on rebuilding internal unity and strengthening grassroots connections to reinvigorate the party's appeal.

Under Masha's leadership, the PDP has ramped up engagement with key stakeholders and communities across the state. This effort, he believes, is helping the party re-establish itself as a credible opposition force and a viable alternative to the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC).

Despite facing challenges, including a wave of defections to the APC, Masha maintains that the PDP has remained resilient. The party's reconciliation drive, led by Shuaibu Miqati and the Reconciliation Committee, has reportedly made progress in healing internal rifts, with many previously aggrieved members returning to support the party's renewed direction.

As the PDP looks ahead, its strategy includes consolidating existing seats in the National Assembly, retaining its three senatorial positions, and expanding its reach both at the state and federal levels.

Meanwhile, the party has sharply criticised the APC-led administration



in the state. Masha pointed to rising insecurity in several local government areas—including Kauru, Kaura, Zangon-Kataf, Kajuru, Lere, and Birnin Gwari—as evidence of the government's failure to effectively address safety concerns. He also flagged issues such as ongoing workers' strikes, underfunded hospitals, and neglected rural infrastructure as signs of poor governance.

According to him, while the government spends lavishly on events and unfulfilled projects, PDP lawmakers have been focused on grassroots impact—delivering boreholes, classrooms, laboratories, healthcare facilities, scholarships, and agricultural support to struggling communities.

On the legal front, the PDP continues its court battle to challenge the legitimacy of the current local

government leadership. The party is seeking to overturn the elections of all 23 council chairmen and 255 councillors, intending to restore what it describes as genuine democratic governance at the grassroots level.

Looking to the future, the Kaduna PDP is determined to build on its performance in the 2023 elections and stage a full return by 2027. The party has made it clear that any attempt to manipulate the upcoming elections will be met with firm resistance, and it is ready to defend the will of the people.

With growing dissatisfaction over the state of affairs and renewed energy within its ranks, the PDP is positioning itself as a party ready to lead Kaduna State into what it promises will be a more inclusive and accountable era.

Court orders EFCC to release businesswoman Achimugu within 24hrs

By **Damilola Olufemi**

The Federal High Court in Abuja on Wednesday directed the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) to release prominent businesswoman and socialite Aisha Achimugu within 24 hours.

Justice Inyang Ekwo issued the directive during a brief ruling, adding that all parties involved, particularly the EFCC, must appear before the court on May 2, 2025, to confirm compliance with the order.

Earlier in the week, the judge had ordered Achimugu to present herself at the EFCC for questioning regarding an ongoing probe into allegations of money laundering and related financial crimes. Following her submission, the EFCC was instructed to accompany her to court on Wednesday, April 30, to update the court on developments.

Achimugu was reportedly apprehended by the EFCC early Tuesday morning at the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport. According to the agency, she is being investigated for conspiracy, fraud, money laundering, corruption, and owning assets suspected to have been acquired illegally.

Though she had previously been detained and later released on administrative bail, the EFCC claimed she breached her bail conditions and was subsequently declared wanted. A public notice was



later issued seeking help in locating her.

The agency disclosed in its affidavit that Achimugu, during an earlier visit to their office on February 12, 2024, accompanied by her legal counsel, Darlington Ozurumba, provided a written statement explaining large financial transactions linked to her accounts. She acknowledged that over ₦8.7 billion had been invested by partners toward acquiring oil assets, including a signature bonus for oil bloc purchases made in November 2022.

The EFCC stated that its investigation revealed Achimugu, through her company Ocean Gate Engineering Oil and Gas Limited, had purchased two oil blocs—Shallow Water PPL 3007 and Deep Offshore PPL 302-DO—for a combined \$25.3 million. The transactions were reportedly carried out mostly in cash through Bureau De Change operators before being

transferred to the government through corporate bank accounts.

The commission alleged the funding for these acquisitions could not be traced to any legitimate source of income or business associates, and that bribes were paid to officials of the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission as part of the process.

Furthermore, the EFCC noted that the oil blocs acquired by Achimugu's firm have yet to enter production. The agency also revealed that she maintains 136 bank accounts across ten banks in both her personal and company names.

In light of the court's prior decision dismissing Achimugu's suit (case number FHC/ABJ/CS/451/2024), the EFCC said it had continued its investigation and sought additional information from agencies such as the Federal Inland Revenue Service and the Central Bank of Nigeria.

Moro: PDP lost 2023 presidential election because of Okowa

By Friday Omosola

Senator Abba Moro, who represents Benue South in the National Assembly, has blamed the choice of Ifeanyi Okowa as vice-presidential candidate for the Peoples Democratic Party's (PDP) loss in the 2023 presidential election.

Okowa, the former Governor of Delta State, who recently defected from PDP to the All Progressives Congress (APC), was the running mate of ex-Vice President Atiku Abubakar in the election won by President Bola Tinubu.

In an appearance on Arise News on Tuesday, Okowa also revealed that Atiku is preparing to leave the PDP ahead of the 2027 elections.

Moro, speaking during an interview on Channels Television Politics Today described the selection of Okowa as a 'serious mistake' that contributed to the party's electoral failure.

"Given what we know now, with the benefit of hindsight, some of us believe the PDP would have won the election had a different vice-presidential candidate from the South been selected," he said.

Moro criticised Okowa's failure to deliver his home state of Delta to the PDP, questioning his commitment to the party during the election.



Senator Abba Moro, who represents Benue South in the National Assembly

Senator Abba Moro

He noted that two out of the three senators from Delta were elected on platforms other than the PDP, despite Okowa being both a sitting governor and former senator at the time.

"How else would you describe a situation where a sitting governor and vice-presidential candidate couldn't deliver his state to his own party's presidential candidate?" he asked.

The senator also took issue with Okowa's recent public expression of regret over his role in the PDP campaign.

According to Moro, such a remark underscores the lack of genuine

commitment by the former governor.

"His soul was not in the PDP. His soul was not in that election. That is why we performed very miserably in Delta State," he said.

Reacting to the broader implications for the PDP, Moro admitted that former vice president and PDP presidential candidate, Atiku Abubakar, remains a key figure in the party.

He warned that Atiku's exit, should it occur, would leave a noticeable void.

"Atiku has a significant place in PDP's history – as a founding member and a two-time presidential candidate. If he leaves, it will certainly create a vacuum," Moro said.

Abia to recruit 771 new health workers, okays new salary scale from May 1

By Helen Okechukwu

The Abia State Government targets to recruit about 771 health workers as it okays a new salary scale with immediate effect beginning from May 1.

The recruitment exercise will span various healthcare departments, including doctors, nurses, pharmacists, medical lab scientists, and other categories of healthcare workers.

The new salary scale known as the Abia State Health Workers Salary Scale (ASHWOSS) was revealed on Wednesday in a document shared and signed by the state Health Commissioner, Prof. Ogbonnaya Uche, in Umuahia.

The health commissioner said the state salary structure is in line with the federal salary structure for health workers, including doctors, nurses, and pharmacists, among others.

“This means that Abia Health workers, with effect from May 1st 2025, will begin to enjoy the same pay as their federal



government counterparts.

“Abia will also recruit 771 new health workers, including doctors, nurses, pharmacists, medical lab scientists, physiotherapists, radiographers, and other categories of healthcare workers,” Prof. Uche stated.

It added that the 771 new health workers to be recruited stem from the assessment

carried out across health facilities and agencies of the Ministry of Health.

Also, the state health commissioner said funds have been released for the emolument of the 771 new staff to be employed.

According to Prof Uche, instructions have been given to the ministry to develop a special pay package to attract and retain key health professionals.

Uche added that the state needed experts skilled in areas such as laparoscopic surgery, anaesthesia, intensive care, transplant and robotic surgery, cardiac and brain surgery, and newborn care.

“Other areas requiring specialists include interventional (radiology, neurology, cardiology and nephrology), ophthalmology, oncology, orthopaedics and plastic surgery on a case-by-case basis, as may be applicable.”

Bayelsa govt to collaborate with partners to improve affordable healthcare service

By Helen Okechukwu

To help improve affordable and accessible healthcare service in the state, the Bayelsa State Government expressed its readiness to collaborate with the Association of Medical Laboratory Scientists of Nigeria (AMLSN) and other key stakeholders in the health sector.

To back this, the Deputy Governor, Mr Lawrence Ewhrudjakpo, revealed its approval for the recruitment of the medical laboratory scientists and doctors in the civil service recruitment exercise which is ongoing.

This revelation was made known on Wednesday during a courtesy visit led by the Bayelsa branch of AMLSN to Deputy Governor Ewhrudjakpo's office in Yenagoa.

“We are ready to collaborate with you to make health services more affordable and accessible to all Bayelsa people,” the deputy governor said.

Ewhrudjakpo highlighted the importance of cooperation among health workers for quality results and noted that every sector is superior



to others.

Expressing belief over the employment process, he assured that competent and certified personnel, including other health medical practitioners, would be employed.

“We are making progress in the health sector in Bayelsa, but we also admit that there is still much room for improvement.

He said, “As you are aware, applicants are applying to the state civil service, and some employment slots have been approved for medical doctors and laboratory scientists to be employed.

“We need competent and highly qualified personnel to be employed in the service to provide quality services.

He added, “Every health worker has a role in health promotion. No profession in the health sector is superior to another.

The State Chairman of AMLSN, Eunice Ayamaer-Lelei, underscored the importance of providing modern laboratory equipment and employing more qualified laboratory scientists.

She stressed the pivotal role played by laboratory scientists in healthcare delivery and urged the state government to implement an approved call duty allowance for members of AMLSN.

Oxford experts reveal 13 ways video games may impact mental health

By Helen Okechukwu

Oxford Internet Institute (OII) experts said being exposed to video games has the tendency to leave a positive or negative impact on the mental health of gamers.

The team of researchers' framework aimed at clarifying the complex relationship between gaming and mental health.

The effects include improving memory, relieving stress, misogyny, feelings of loneliness, obsessive behaviour, among others, the study suggest.

The group of expert findings published in the Journal Technology, Mind and Behaviour outlines 13 ways in which video games could have an effect on players' mental health and will help "cut through the noise".

The result of the findings also provided answers to the harms or benefits of gaming more directly.

The study highlights that while existing literature is "rich with associations, proposed effects, and verbal theory", it lacks the rigorous, causal models needed for meaningful scientific testing.

"By focusing on cause and effect, we hope this work encourages better theory development and, ultimately, better digital wellbeing for players," said Dr Nick Ballou, postdoctoral researcher, who is part of the OII within the university's Social Sciences Division.

To build the framework, the academics undertook a three-step approach. First, they mapped out a broad range of potential mental health impacts linked to gaming.

Next, they examined how these effects are influenced not just by the games themselves but also by the player's personal circumstances and social context.

Finally, they reframed these effects in explicitly causal terms—a critical shift, the researchers say, the field has long needed.

Dr Nick Ballou, a postdoctoral researcher at the OII, explained, "But our framework helps cut through the noise.



Ballou further explained that the team of researchers looked beyond the games to understand how personal and contextual factors shape mental health outcomes.

The researchers outlined 13 mental health impacts of video games:

Stress Relief – Gaming may help reduce stress, but excessive use could lead to emotional instability.

Psychological Needs – Games can fulfil needs for autonomy, belonging, and mastery, but can also result in feelings of failure or isolation.

Social Connection – Multiplayer games can strengthen friendships, but playing with strangers may foster toxic environments.

Healthy vs. Obsessive Passion – A healthy passion for gaming can be beneficial, but obsessive gaming can be harmful.

Narrative and Nostalgia – Game storylines can evoke nostalgia and a sense of meaning or vitality.

Exercise Games – Active games may improve mood and energy levels temporarily.

Identity Exploration – Games offer safe spaces for experimenting with different identities.

Cognitive Benefits – Fast-paced games might enhance executive function, memory, and attention control.

Therapeutic Gaming – Games supporting therapies like CBT can improve treatment engagement.

Neglect of Daily Life – Excessive play may cause players to ignore work, sleep, or relationships, resulting in guilt and fatigue.

In-Game Spending – Microtransactions have been linked to overspending and gambling-like behaviours.

Anxiety – Obsessive gaming may lead to increased anxiety and disrupted routines.

Sexualised Content – Exposure can harm body image in women and foster misogynistic attitudes in men.

The researchers acknowledged that reshaping the academic conversation on gaming and mental health will be challenging but necessary.

"Parents are looking for actionable guidance about how to manage children's play, and players themselves seek ways to monitor and regulate their own play behaviour," the team noted.

They expressed hope that their framework will drive more evidence-based recommendations and empower healthier digital habits across all age groups.

Historic Breakthrough: Scientists use living human brain tissue to replicate early Alzheimer's

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

In a historic world first, scientists in Britain have successfully used living human brain tissue to mimic the early stages of Alzheimer's disease, marking a major step forward in the urgent quest for a cure.

A research team at the University of Edinburgh, working in partnership with NHS surgeons, exposed healthy brain tissue from living patients to toxic forms of amyloid beta, a protein heavily linked to Alzheimer's. By doing so, they were able to observe in real-time how the disease attacks and disrupts critical brain cell connections.

The method offers a rare and powerful opportunity to watch Alzheimer's develop at the cellular level, paving the way for faster and more accurate drug testing. Experts have hailed the breakthrough as a transformative leap that could significantly boost the chances of finding effective treatments for the disease, which is forecast to affect nearly 153 million people globally by 2050.

Tiny fragments of healthy brain tissue were collected from consenting cancer patients undergoing surgery at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh. Normally discarded after operations, the tissue was instead quickly preserved in oxygenated artificial spinal fluid and rushed by taxi to nearby laboratories, where scientists immediately began experiments.

"We pretty much ran back to the lab," said Dr. Claire Durrant, a Race Against Dementia fellow and emerging leader at the UK Dementia Research Institute. "And then we start experiments almost straight away."

From left: Dr Claire Durrant, Sir James Dyson and Sir Jackie Stewart. Photograph: Douglas Robertson

At the lab, the brain tissue was sliced into pieces less than a third of a millimeter thick and kept alive in nutrient-rich fluid at body temperature. Researchers then



exposed the living brain slices to a toxic form of amyloid beta extracted from Alzheimer's patients who had passed away.

Their findings were striking. Unlike exposure to normal forms of the protein, the brain cells showed no signs of attempting to repair the damage caused by the toxic variant. Even slight changes in amyloid beta levels, either up or down, were enough to disrupt healthy brain function, indicating that the brain relies on a delicate balance of the protein to operate correctly.

"We believe this tool could help accelerate findings from the lab into patients, bringing us one step closer to a world free from the heartbreak of dementia," Durrant said.

Further observations revealed that brain slices taken from the temporal lobe, a region known to be impacted early in Alzheimer's, released higher levels of tau, another protein heavily involved in the progression of the disease. This discovery may help explain why certain parts of the brain are more vulnerable in the early stages of Alzheimer's.

The groundbreaking study was supported

by Race Against Dementia, a charity founded by racing legend Sir Jackie Stewart, and received a £1 million donation from the James Dyson Foundation.

James Dyson himself praised the research as progress "towards solving one of the most devastating problems of our time."

"Working with brain surgeons and their consenting patients to collect samples of living human brain and keep them alive in the lab is a groundbreaking method," Dyson said. "It allows researchers to better examine Alzheimer's disease on real human brain cells rather than relying on animal substitutes."

Leading dementia experts have also lauded the innovation. Professor Tara Spire-Jones of the UK Dementia Research Institute called it "an important development," adding that studying live human tissue in real time provides a vital new tool for understanding and ultimately treating Alzheimer's disease.

The fight against dementia, a disease that devastates millions of families worldwide, may have just gained a powerful new weapon.

Kardashian robbery suspect says heist was one 'too many'

By Oluwatosin Ologun

At the Paris trial of 10 people accused of robbing Kim Kardashian at gunpoint in 2016, a defendant who wrote a book about the jewellery heist Tuesday said he regretted participating while one of his co-accused vehemently denied any involvement.

Yunice Abbas, 71, says he remained in a Paris hotel lobby on the lookout while two other suspects on the night of October 2-3, 2016 stormed into her room, tied her up and made away with around \$10 million worth of her jewels.

But Abbas has sought to capitalise on the crime by publishing his version of events in a 2021 book titled "I Kidnapped Kim Kardashian".

A prosecutor held up a copy of the book in court, and the presiding judge asked the author why he had bragged about the theft.

Sitting in the dock in a short-sleeved check shirt, Abbas shook his head vigorously from left to right.

"It makes me very uneasy," said the short bald man, adding that he "totally regretted" taking part in the theft.

Abbas has said he arrived at the scene of the robbery on a bicycle then left by the same means, dropping a bag of loot as he fled.

He picked it up but missed a diamond necklace, the only item that police were able to retrieve from the holdup.

Abbas told the hearing stealing from Kardashian was the one job "too many" that "opened his eyes" to his wrongdoing.

The defendant, who now has Parkinson's disease, held his right hand over his left placed on his heart throughout the court session. He said it was to stop it from racing when he became anxious.

The presiding judge on Tuesday reviewed



the accused's criminal past.

He listed, among others, a conviction for fake number plates for carrying out robberies, another for equipping cars with secret compartments to hide cannabis, and a third for armed robbery in which Abbas held a gun.

Not a 'thug'

One of his co-accused, Didier Dubreucq, similarly faced questions of his past convictions.

Arriving in the afternoon after receiving chemotherapy — having been diagnosed with cancer while in pretrial detention — Didier assured the court he was physically and mentally capable of speaking.

"Does it bother you if I say that back then you were a robber?" court president David De Pas asked, referring to Didier's convictions of armed robberies decades ago for which he already served a 23-year sentence.

"I'm a good guy," the 69-year-old said, rejecting suggestions that he was a "thug".

Since becoming a father at the age of 50, Didier said he put an end to the "big mistakes" he committed in the past and denied being involved in robbing Kardashian.

Although in recent years he nicknamed her "Karda-bothersome, because unintentionally, she ruined my life", Didier acknowledged with a piercing gaze that matched his alias "Blue Eyes".

'Easy shortcuts'

Earlier, Abbas explained his history, saying that he had "moments of weakness" when he needed money.

"I fell back on things that I thought were easy shortcuts but only ended up complicating my life," he said.

Between past convictions he worked as a car mechanic, working for others or re-opening a closed workshop.

Abbas, like all other nine defendants, is not in custody.

He said one of his neighbours had joked on Monday night, after he returned home from the first day of the trial, that the court had effectively already freed him.

His lawyer asked him if he would however be prepared to be punished if found guilty.

"You're never ready. But of course, there'll be a price to pay," he said.

Kardashian, 44, is due to testify on May 13 in a highly anticipated appearance.

Idrees Rasheed promotes indigenous Nigerian cuisine in Yoruba language

By Eyitayo Jemimah Ajayi

Nigeria-born Idrees Rasheed, a U.S. Army officer turned food content creator, caught my attention a few months ago when I stumbled upon his page. I was immediately impressed by his cooking skills and engaging voiceovers.

Idrees overcame the myth that when you relocate abroad, you drop your indigenous culture, food, and language and become like them. Tell me why Idrees speaks Yoruba so fluently with many anecdotes from evergreen Yoruba songs? His voice transcends from being didactic to lyrical, sometimes rhythmic, and even poetic, all in pure Yoruba.

The way he presents his content is revolutionary in all standards. From uplifting Yoruba delicacies to preaching the good gospel of the Yoruba language, Idrees Rasheed is a true son of the land. The content creator also uses engaging Yoruba tales, play of words, and cultural alliteration to spice up his voice-overs. While one might argue that his content's language might limit his visibility to a global audience, he satisfies his audiences that do not understand the culture with visuals that are enough food for the soul.

Idrees Rasheed has proven to be a true "Balogun" of indigenous cooking content, skillfully exploring the deep tenets of Yoruba pronunciation. Through his work, you not only learn new ways of preparing dishes but also enhance your knowledge of Yoruba songs and proverbs.

We cannot keep singing the praises of Idrees Rasheed without reviewing and sharing some of his content with you.

Food content launch- Pounded yam and egusi



Idrees Rasheed started using his page to share his cooking videos around September 2024. His first cooking video amassed over 4 million views, which is pretty impressive for a start. For this reason, we will be checking out the meal that brought him to the cooking limelight.

To start this video's voiceover, Idrees sampled 'Opon Apala Ti Sun' by Musiliu Haruna Ishola. For his first cooking video, Balogun cooked the Ekiti best delicacy, pounded yam and egusi soup. What makes a soup sweet is the unity in the diversity of proteins in that soup. As Balogun said in his video, he nourished the meal with a lot of assorted fish and meat, such that you can take a bite without taking one of them. There are truly some soups that you eat and never get depressed.

The morsel to accompany this rich soup is the proper Pounded yam. Balogun did not forsake his culture by dumping it, but borrowed from the European culture, a machine to make his work easier. The pounded yam could unfortunately not be pruned by the wooden pestle inside the mortar, but by the blades of a blender. At the end of the day, we have our indigenous

pounded yam ready in Balogun's dish.

Idrees Rasheed shows cooking prowess in making rice and beans

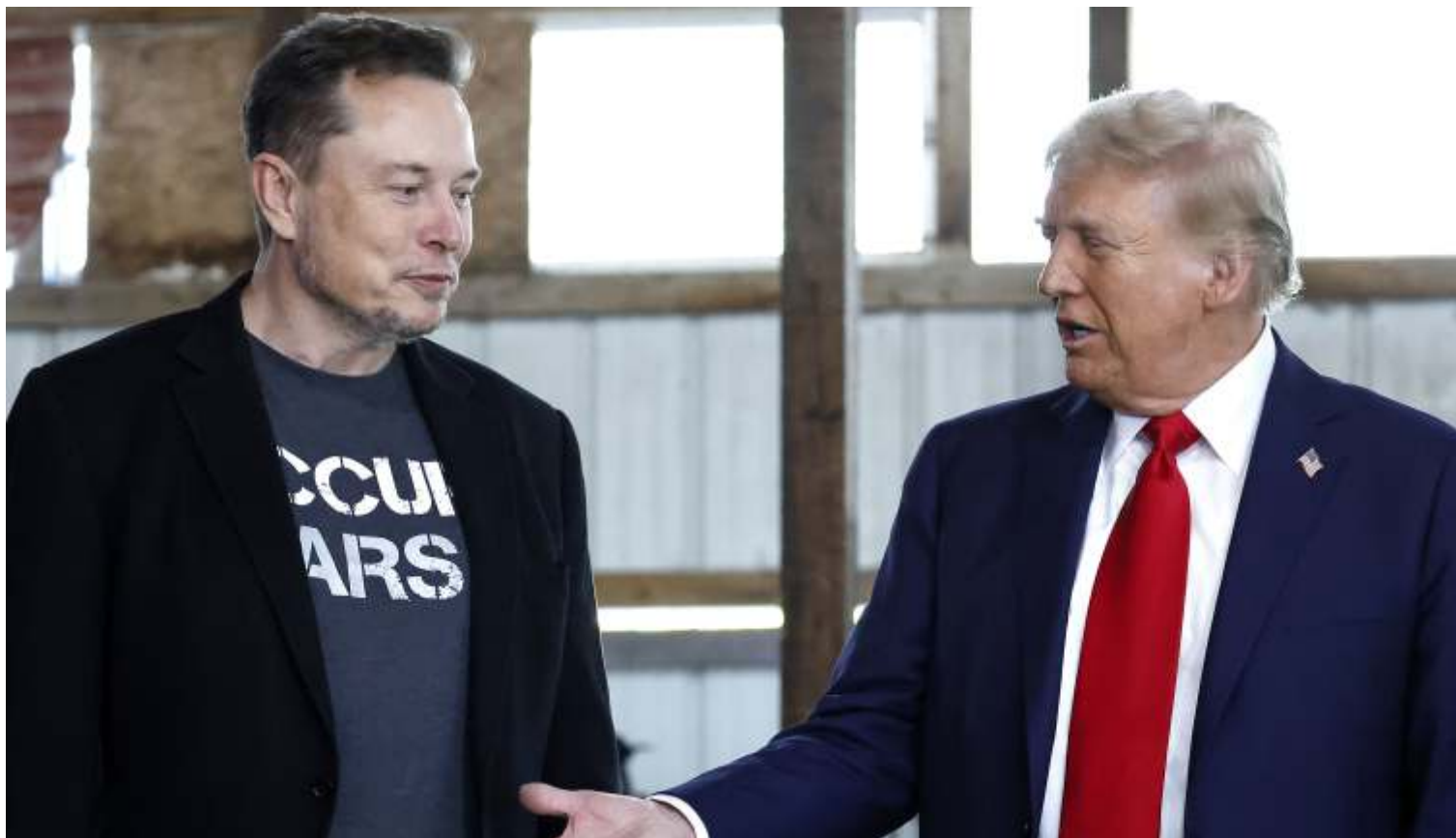
If you have been trying to cook your rice and beans together without them getting mashed, then you might want to try Balogun's recipe. Rice and beans on their own are a yummy combo, but they need a good pepper mix to be complete. Idrees is known for the abundance of assorted proteins in his meals, and this meal is not an exception.

Accompanied by fries and orange juice, this is a go-to meal any day, anytime.

Without saying much, Balogun is indeed the Minister of Enjoyment, Shallipoppi was talking about in his song. He is taking the Nigerian dishes to the 'intercontinental and monumental level' by creating visibility for Nigerian and African cuisines. Cheers to Balogun for elevating the culture through food and language in the diaspora!.

DOGE work led to fraud referrals to Justice Department-Trump

By Fatimah Idera



U.S. President Donald Trump said on Tuesday that there were referrals for fraud made to the Justice Department based on the findings of the Department of Government Efficiency, the cost-cutting agency that Trump ally and billionaire Elon Musk spearheaded.

In an interview with ABC News aired on Tuesday, Trump said, “Of course, there have been referrals for fraud from the work of DOGE.”

Trump did not give details on who the allegations were against, but repeated that there have been referrals several times during the

interview.

Since taking office on January 20, the Trump administration has been on a cost-cutting spree overseen by the DOGE.

The drive has seen the gutting and attempted dismantling of multiple agencies and the firings of over 200,000 federal workers. It has faced legal challenges and lawsuits.

However, Critics have portrayed the spending cuts as reckless and dangerous, particularly in emergency and humanitarian assistance abroad, while Trump and Musk say they are needed to fight waste and fraud.

Musk has said he will step back next month from his role overseeing DOGE. His 130-day mandate as a special government employee was set to expire at the end of May. He said he will continue to help Trump overhaul the government, but not full-time.

His reduced role leaves DOGE’s future in doubt, but governance experts said they believe the cost-cutting will continue.

A DOGE website that gives regular updates on what it claims it has saved U.S. taxpayers – \$160 billion to date – has been riddled with errors and corrections.

After 20 months, African Union lifts sanction against Gabon

By Damilola Olufemi

The African Union has lifted sanctions against Gabon, it said in a statement on Wednesday, after the central African nation was suspended from the organisation following a coup in August 2023.

A meeting of the Peace and Security Council on Gabon's political transition "reviewed the processes and found them to be generally successful", the AU's Political Affairs Peace and Security department said on X.

The statement said Gabon would be welcome "to immediately resume her participation in the activities" of the AU.

Why was Gabon suspended?

Gabon was suspended when General Brice Oligui Nguema took power after overthrowing President Ali Bongo, whose family had been in power for 55 years.



Nguema pledged to hand back the oil-rich country to civilian rule after a two-year transitional period, and was elected president in April with 94 per cent of the vote.

According to the new constitution, the president will lead the country with expanded powers.

The decision by the AU to lift sanctions follows a meeting last year between Nguema and Ivory Coast's President Alassane Ouattara, in which Nguema asked for support in lifting sanctions.

The country of 2.3 million people has endured high unemployment, regular power and water shortages, and heavy government debt despite its oil riches.

Alleged ISIS member questioned in Iraq over New Orleans terror attack

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

An alleged member of the Islamic State is being interrogated in Iraq after officials there accused him of helping incite the devastating New Year's Day terror attack in New Orleans that left 14 people dead.

However, U.S. authorities say no direct link has been established between the suspect in Iraq and Shamsud-Din Jabbar, the 42-year-old Texas man who plowed a rental truck into a crowd of revelers on Bourbon Street before dying in a shootout with police.

Although Jabbar flew a black-and-white ISIS flag from the back of the truck during the rampage, the Islamic State never formally claimed responsibility for the attack.

"While we continue to work with our law enforcement partners, both in the U.S. and internationally, based on the information to date, we continue to believe that



Shamsud-Din Jabbar acted alone in carrying out the attack on Bourbon Street," the FBI said in a statement to CBS News on Tuesday.

According to U.S. authorities, Jabbar rented a white Ford pickup truck in

Houston before making the drive to New Orleans. In the early hours of January 1, he deliberately drove through several blocks of dense crowds celebrating the new year, killing 14 people and injuring dozens more before engaging in a fatal shootout with responding officers.

Prior to the attack, Jabbar posted videos to social media in which he pledged allegiance to ISIS and expressed a desire to kill, federal investigators said.

Meanwhile, Iraqi authorities revealed on April 27 that the U.S. had requested assistance through the National Center for International Judicial Cooperation. The suspect now in Iraqi custody was allegedly part of the Islamic State's foreign operations office.

The FBI said its investigation into the New Orleans attack remains ongoing.

UK joins US in airstrikes on Houthi rebels

By **Elizabeth Jenrola Oso**

In the first military operation authorised by the Labour government, British fighter jets joined American forces overnight in coordinated airstrikes against Houthi rebels in Yemen.

Royal Air Force Typhoon jets, supported by Voyager air tankers, struck a series of buildings located 15 miles south of the capital, Sana'a. According to the UK Ministry of Defence, the targeted sites were being used by the Iran-backed Houthi movement to manufacture drones responsible for recent attacks on merchant shipping in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden.

Defence Secretary John Healey described the strikes as a response to "a persistent threat from the Houthis to freedom of navigation," noting the broader economic impact. "A 55% drop in shipping through the Red Sea has already cost billions, fuelling regional instability and risking economic security for families in the UK," Healey posted on social media shortly after midnight.

Further official updates are expected later on Wednesday.

This marks Britain's first participation in the intensified American bombing campaign known as Operation Rough Rider, launched under President Donald Trump in March. While the UK had previously joined the US for five rounds of airstrikes earlier in 2024, it had refrained from participating in the renewed and more aggressive phase until now.

Since March 15, US Central Command reports that 800 targets have been struck, resulting in the deaths of "hundreds of Houthi fighters and numerous Houthi leaders." However, concerns are growing over the rising civilian toll. This week, Houthi officials claimed 68 people were killed in a strike on a migrant detention centre in Saada, while 80 civilians reportedly died during an attack



on the port of Ras Isa on April 18.

Annie Shiel, US Director at the Center for Civilians in Conflict (Civic), criticised the ongoing air campaign, stating that the strikes "continue to raise significant questions about the precautions taken to prevent civilian harm, as required by both international law and US policy." She also pointed to an apparent shift in doctrine under Trump's leadership, with greater emphasis on offensive capability and reduced attention to mitigating civilian casualties.

The UK government insisted it had taken all necessary measures to minimise harm to civilians. According to the Ministry of Defence, Paveway IV precision-guided missiles were employed following "very careful planning," and the strike was conducted at night to further lower the risk to civilians. No formal damage assessment has yet been released.

While the Pentagon offered little immediate comment, US Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth has repeatedly stressed that American military operations must focus on "lethality, lethality, lethality," notably cutting several programmes aimed at reducing civilian casualties.

Meanwhile, the Houthis, who have controlled Sana'a since 2014, confirmed multiple airstrikes around the capital and in Saada Province but offered few other details. The rebel group claims its attacks on shipping are in support of Hamas and Palestinians amid Israel's ongoing military offensive in Gaza.

In a separate incident underscoring the risks involved in the region, a \$60 million US Navy F-18 Super Hornet jet was lost at sea on Tuesday. Reports suggest the USS Harry S. Truman aircraft carrier, towing the jet, made a hard evasive manoeuvre to avoid incoming Houthi fire, causing the aircraft to slip overboard and sink.

Operation Rough Rider has not been without controversy domestically. Criticism has been directed at Hegseth's unconventional use of the unclassified Signal messaging app to share sensitive operational details, including within a group that allegedly contained at least one journalist.

The situation in the Red Sea remains highly volatile as western allies step up efforts to counter Houthi attacks, with tensions likely to rise as the conflict increasingly threatens global shipping lanes and regional stability.

Trump cites legal advice in decision not to seek return of Kilmar Abrego

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

President Donald Trump said he “could” call Salvadoran President Nayib Bukele to help return Kilmar Abrego Garcia to the United States, but stopped short of committing to action, citing legal advice and casting doubt on Abrego Garcia’s character.

In an interview aired Tuesday with ABC News’ Terry Moran, Mr. Trump acknowledged that he had the means to contact Bukele “there’s a phone on this desk,” Moran noted but suggested he was reluctant to intervene.

“I could,” Mr. Trump said. “If he were the gentleman that you say he is, I would do that, but he’s not.”

What led to Trump’s comment?

Trump’s comments come amid mounting legal pressure on his administration to facilitate the return of Abrego Garcia, a Salvadoran national who was deported last month despite a 2019 court ruling explicitly barring his removal. The Supreme Court earlier this month partially upheld an order from U.S. District Judge Paula Xinis directing the government to “facilitate” Abrego Garcia’s return.

The administration has argued that returning Abrego Garcia is a matter for El Salvador’s government. However, President Bukele has stated he does not “have the power” to release Abrego Garcia, who was imprisoned at El Salvador’s infamous Terrorism Confinement Center following his U.S. deportation.

The situation has drawn significant scrutiny, particularly given that Abrego Garcia had been granted “withholding of removal” protections in 2019 due to credible fears of gang persecution in El Salvador. His removal was described by U.S. officials as an “administrative error.”

Despite these court protections, Mr.



Trump maintained a hard line in the interview, labeling Abrego Garcia an “MS-13 gang member, a tough cookie who ‘beat the hell out of his wife’”, allegations his legal team vehemently denies. Abrego Garcia has never been charged with gang-related crimes, and while his wife obtained a temporary protective order in 2021, she later told reporters the situation did not escalate and she withdrew from pursuing the case.

During a separate interview last week with Time magazine, Trump similarly stated he had not positively asked Bukele for Abrego Garcia’s release, attributing his inaction to advice from his attorneys.

“I haven’t asked him positively, but he said he wouldn’t [release him],” Trump said. “They get whatever my lawyers say.”

The broader context of Abrego Garcia’s deportation paints a starker picture. His removal was part of a sweeping Trump-era effort to deport alleged gang members under the Alien Enemies Act of 1798, an obscure law traditionally reserved for wartime enemies. While the administration has defended its use of the law as necessary for national security, courts and advocates have raised serious

concerns about a lack of due process and judicial oversight.

The Supreme Court recently ruled that individuals deported under the Alien Enemies Act must be granted an opportunity for judicial review, affirming that even during times of crisis, constitutional protections must not be discarded.

Asked by ABC News whether migrants should receive due process before deportation, Mr. Trump responded, “We follow the legal process,” but added, “If people come into our country illegally, there’s a different standard.”

“They get a process where we have to get them out,” he said. “They get whatever my lawyers say.”

As Judge Xinis presses for clarity on the administration’s efforts to secure Abrego Garcia’s return, the future remains uncertain, a transnational tug of war playing out across courtrooms, press rooms, and presidential desks.

For now, the phone on the President’s desk remains silent.

Teen suspect detained after triple shooting at Uppsala hair salon

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

A 16 year old has been detained on suspicion of murdering three people following a deadly shooting at a hair salon in the city of Uppsala, Sweden's Prosecution Authority confirmed on Wednesday.

The attack, which unfolded late Tuesday afternoon, sent shockwaves through the university city, located 45 miles north of Stockholm. According to police, the shooting appears to have been an isolated incident and is not believed to be connected to the city's Valborg celebrations, the traditional bonfire festival welcoming spring, set to take place Wednesday evening.

Police responded to several emergency calls reporting loud bangs shortly after 5 p.m. Upon arrival, officers discovered three individuals with gunshot wounds. All were declared dead at the scene.

"Quite soon we encountered three people who appeared to have been shot. They did not need to be taken to hospital," Magnus Jansson Klarin, a spokesperson for Uppsala police, told the Svenska Dagbladet newspaper.

While authorities are keeping details close to the vest, Swedish media outlets have reported that at least one of the victims had ties to organized gang crime. However, police have not



confirmed these reports, emphasizing that the investigation remains ongoing.

The shooting has further fueled national concern over escalating gang violence, particularly the increasing number of children being drawn into deadly conflicts. In recent years, Sweden has grappled with a surge in shootings and bombings linked to rival gang activity, a crisis that has dominated political discourse and prompted government intervention.

Police have launched an urgent appeal for public assistance after witnesses reported seeing a masked individual fleeing the crime scene on an electric scooter.

Condemning the killings, Sweden's Minister of Justice,

Gunnar Strömmer, described the attack as a "brutal act of violence," underscoring the growing sense of alarm over the country's security challenges.

In response to rising violence, the Swedish government announced plans earlier this year to tighten firearms legislation. The move follows the country's worst mass shooting, which occurred in February when a gunman killed 10 people at an education center in Örebro before turning the weapon on himself. Investigators are still working to determine his motive.

The Uppsala tragedy marks yet another grim chapter in Sweden's ongoing battle against gang related violence, a battle now claiming lives even younger than before.

Paramedic frustrated at delay during Bondi Junction stabbings response

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

A critical care paramedic who rushed to the Bondi Junction stabbing attack last year has told an inquest he was “frustrated” after being prevented from reaching injured and potentially dying victims inside the Westfield shopping centre.

Christopher Wilkinson, a New South Wales ambulance officer, gave evidence on Wednesday at the ongoing coronial inquest into the deaths of six victims killed on 13 April 2024 by Joel Cauchi, a 40-year-old man with schizophrenia. Cauchi fatally stabbed Ashlee Good, 38, Jade Young, 47, Yixuan Cheng, 27, Pikria Darchia, 55, Dawn Singleton, 25, and Faraz Tahir, 30, before being shot dead by police inspector Amy Scott. Ten others were injured in the attack.

Wilkinson, who arrived on the scene at 4:03 p.m., said his critical care ambulance was equipped with blood, plasma, and surgical packs, capable of performing emergency procedures including anaesthesia, intubation, and on-site surgeries.

Shortly after arrival, a paramedic alerted Wilkinson to a baby in need of urgent care. After handing over specialist equipment, he returned to a triage area he had set up, where a bloodied man identifying himself as a doctor tapped him on the shoulder, pleading for urgent care for another injured man.

Wilkinson deployed a CareFlight medical team to assist but noted he and other paramedics were not granted access to the Westfield centre. Instead, they waited outside as patients were slowly brought to them.



At 4:15pm, Tahir, a security guard, was carried out on a stretcher. Wilkinson and his team immediately began emergency surgery, but Tahir was pronounced dead at 4:24pm.

“The family can rest assured we did everything possible to save his life,” Wilkinson told the court.

Two other stabbing victims, a woman in her early 20s with a chest wound and another woman stabbed in the back, were later brought out, both stable enough to be transported to hospital without immediate critical intervention.

Wilkinson said after treating them, he stood waiting for more patients but none arrived. “I was left standing there wondering whether there were any other patients like Mr Tahir to be treated,” he said.

He later learned a “hot zone” had been established inside Westfield, preventing paramedics from entering until police

confirmed the area was secure. However, Wilkinson told the court he believed the designation took too long and delayed lifesaving treatment.

“Standing around on the outside and not going in simply because there could be another offender was not good enough,” he said. “It took far too long.”

He said while he respected the need for caution, particularly with fears of a second attacker, he believed paramedics should have been allowed to enter with police escorts to reach victims more quickly.

“If we’re not allowed into that hot zone, there is a delay and sometimes that delay costs lives. We need to change how we do things,” Wilkinson said.

He noted that the Westfield emergency alarms made communication difficult and added to the confusion.

UCL: Barcelona fight back against Inter in sensational semifinal draw

By Oluwatosin Ologun

Tesla CEO, Elon Musk acknowledged that his role in the Trump Administration with the Department of Government Efficiency, or DOGE, is weighing on the electric vehicle maker's stock, calling his advisory role "a very expensive job."

Musk's role at DOGE has sparked protests from voters who are opposed to DOGE's activities, including gaining access to sensitive data for millions of Americans and shuttering entire agencies as the billionaire seeks to slash government spending.

On Saturday, crowds amassed outside Tesla dealerships throughout the U.S. and in some cities in Europe to protest his government activities.

About one-third of Musk's estimated \$330 billion fortune consists of the stock he holds in the electric vehicle company that he continues to run while also working alongside Trump.

After Trump was elected in November, Tesla rose to a record high on Dec. 17 of \$479 per share, but the stock has since tumbled 48%.

"This is a very expensive job, is what I'm saying," Musk said of his DOGE activities during a Sunday evening town hall in Green Bay, Wisconsin, where he gave away \$1 million each to two voters.

In early Monday trading, Tesla slipped \$15.27, or 5.8%, to \$248.28.

"What [the protesters are] trying to do is put massive pressure on me, and Tesla I guess, to you know, I don't know, stop doing this," Musk said.



"My Tesla stock and the stock of everyone who holds Tesla has gone, went roughly in half. I mean it's a big deal."

He added, "Long term I think Tesla stock's going to do fine, so maybe it's a buying opportunity."

On Saturday, protesters flocked to Tesla locations in New Jersey, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Maryland, Minnesota and the automaker's home state of Texas, with pictures posted on social media accounts showing they held signs such as "Honk if you hate Elon" and "Fight the billionaire brologarchy."

Aside from the protests, Tesla is also facing pressure on the sales front, with some former owners saying they have ditched their vehicles over Musk's political activities.

Sales of new Teslas in Europe plunged by 45% in January, while recent data

also shows that Tesla trade-ins reached a record high this month.

In March, the highest share ever of Teslas from model year 2017 or newer were traded in toward new or used purchases at dealerships, according to Edmunds, a U.S. car shopping website. Notably, the trade-ins were not put toward purchases of new Teslas.

Tesla will disclose its first-quarter deliveries on April 2, with Wedbush Securities analyst Dan Ives forecasting that the company shipped 7% fewer vehicles compared with a year earlier.

"The anti-Musk and brand issues are clearly at play and a major factor in this weak 1Q delivery number," Ives wrote in a March 26 research note. "Musk needs to better balance being CEO of Tesla and running DOGE with investors and employees yearning for Musk's leadership at this juncture."