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**Peter Obi**



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# NNPC to shut down Port Harcourt refinery for planned maintenance

By Agency Reporter

The Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPC Ltd) is set to shut down the Port Harcourt Refining Company (PHRC) for planned maintenance.

According to Olufemi O. Soneye, Chief Corporate Communications Officer at NNPC Ltd, "We are working closely with all relevant stakeholders, including the Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA), to ensure that maintenance and assessment activities are carried out efficiently and transparently."

"NNPC Ltd remains committed to



delivering sustainable energy security for Nigeria. Further updates will be provided regularly through official channels,

including its website, media platforms, and public statements.

# FG reaffirms commitment to partnering with IOM on migration matters

By Friday Omosola

The Federal Government (FG) has reiterated its commitment to working closely with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to address key migration issues affecting Nigeria.

Minister of Budget and Economic Planning, Abubakar Bagudu, made this known during a courtesy visit by the new IOM Chief of Mission to Nigeria, Dimanche Sharon, at his office in Abuja.

Bagudu praised the IOM for its continued role in supporting Nigeria's migration management efforts and proposed that the organisation could evolve into a global ombudsman for migration issues.

He described migration as a divine process, noting that individuals should be allowed to move freely within legal frameworks.

The minister highlighted climate change, shifting land use patterns, and urbanisation as major drivers of migration.



He emphasised the need for enabling migration towards areas with arable land, commercial prospects, and improved living standards.

Bagudu assured the IOM delegation of the ministry's full cooperation, revealing that the International Cooperation Department had already signed multiple agreements aimed at addressing internal and international migration challenges.

However, Sharon commended the minister for his coordination efforts, describing the ministry as a key actor in

Nigeria's development framework.

She encouraged Nigerians to reshape the global perception of their country by promoting the many positive stories often overlooked internationally.

The IOM Chief expressed a desire to leverage diaspora remittances to foster national development, improve education, enhance nutrition, and expand access to healthcare.

She also urged the government to prioritise Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in its development plans.

Sharon affirmed the IOM's dedication to supporting Nigeria's national priorities, stating that the organisation operates as an extension of the government.

She listed IOM's key activities in the country, including Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR), labour migration, diaspora policy formulation, migration health, and migrant protection and assistance.

# 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
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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
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3X2	17,260.00
2X2	12,945.00
2X1	8,630.00
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## POLITICAL COLOUR

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## POLITICAL BLACK & WHITE

SIZE	RATE
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FULL PAGE	315,777.50
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## CORPORATE BLACK & WHITE

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QUARTER PAGE	80,706.50
14X2	78,222.50
10X6	217,830.00
10X5	192,305.50
10X4	142,787.50
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4X4	44,493.00
4X3	33,524.00
4X2	22,350.00
3X2	16,763.00
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CENTRE SPREAD HALF PAGE B & W	550,000.00
DOUBLE SPREAD B & W	725,000.00
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## PUBLIC NOTICE BLACK & WHITE

SIZE	TOTAL RATE
FULL PAGE	280,690.00
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QUARTER PAGE	84,641.50
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10X5	201,600.00
10X4	149,440.00
10X3	127,108.00
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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
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## 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
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## ALLURE RATE

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10X5		295,625.00
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## PICTURE & CAPTION

SIZE	RATE	7.5% VAT	TOTAL
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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
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# Adeniyi attributes Customs N1.3trn revenue in Q1 to Tinubu's reforms

By Friday Omosola

The Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) has recorded an all-time high revenue of ₦1.3 trillion in the first quarter of 2025 — more than double the ₦600 billion collected during the same period in 2023.

Comptroller-General of Customs, Adewale Adeniyi, attributed the impressive revenue growth to a series of transformative reforms introduced under President Bola Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda.

He made the disclosure in a forthcoming State House documentary marking the President's second anniversary in office.

Adeniyi clarified that the revenue boost was not driven by higher import volumes, which have actually declined due to foreign exchange constraints.

Instead, he credited enhanced operational efficiency, improved port processes, greater transparency, and stricter enforcement against revenue leakages across Customs formations.

"We collected ₦1.3 trillion in Q1 2025 alone. This is not due to higher imports. What has changed is efficiency, transparency, and enforcement," he said.

He announced that the Service is gearing up to roll out the \$3.2 billion E-Customs Modernisation Project, a comprehensive digitisation initiative aimed at transforming cargo processing, surveillance, and payment systems across Nigeria's ports and borders.

"We're moving from a manual, paper-based system to a fully digital service. The E-Customs Project is central to our future. Once fully deployed, it is projected to generate \$250 billion in cumulative revenue over 20 years," Adeniyi added.

The CG also highlighted the recent launch of the Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) Programme, which fast-tracks clearance for compliant importers, thereby easing congestion at the ports.



"It's about trust and efficiency. If you're compliant, you get green-lane treatment. This is how modern customs systems operate globally," he explained.

Adeniyi confirmed that the Service has tightened its grip on smuggling and revenue evasion.

Over the past nine months, ₦64 billion has been recovered from under-assessed and undervalued imports, while major smuggling syndicates operating around Seme, Idiroko, Katsina, and Sokoto borders have been dismantled.

Joint operations with the Nigerian Army, Police, and Department of State Services (DSS) have further strengthened border enforcement.

"We're no longer just chasing smugglers in the bush. We're deploying data, drones, and port intelligence to take real-time action. Systemic leakages are now being plugged," he said.

To facilitate trade, the NCS is fast-tracking the implementation of the National Single Window — a digital platform that consolidates all regulatory agency processes into one portal.

According to Adeniyi, this reform has already reduced cargo clearance timelines



at Apapa and Tin Can Ports from 21 days to as few as 7 to 10 days for compliant businesses.

The Customs boss also revealed that the Service has introduced fast-track lanes for agro-exporters and is working with the Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC) to streamline outbound cargo documentation, in line with the government's strategy to boost non-oil exports.

"We're promoting exports aggressively. Last year, Nigeria exported over ₦340 billion in solid minerals and agricultural commodities through formal channels — a 38% increase. We're aiming higher in 2025," he stated.

Internally, the agency is undergoing significant transformation, with over 1,800 officers trained in data analytics, artificial intelligence, and risk profiling.

"Customs is evolving into an intelligence-led organisation. We're retraining officers to meet global standards," Adeniyi noted.

# Uzodimma urges swift probe into JAMB website breach

By Friday Omosola



**G**overnor Hope Uzodimma of Imo State has urged security agencies to expedite investigations into the recent breach of the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) website.

Uzodimma, who is also chairman of the South East Governors' Forum, made this known in a statement released on Saturday through the state's Commissioner for Information, Public Orientation and Strategy, Declan Emelumba.

He praised both the Nigeria Police Force and the Department of State Services (DSS) for apprehending suspects linked to the cyberattack.

The cyber intrusion disrupted

JAMB's operations during the most recent examination cycle, affecting over 370,000 candidates—many of whom were from the South East region.

On Friday, the police and DSS confirmed the arrest of 20 individuals accused of tampering with the 2025 computer-based testing platform.

The suspects allegedly accepted bribes to manipulate the system, leading to widespread confusion and distress among students and parents.

Uzodimma hailed the arrests as a crucial step towards uncovering the full extent of the sabotage and restoring public confidence.

He stressed the importance of completing the investigation quickly and prosecuting those involved without delay.

The governor maintained that swift legal action would serve as a strong warning to others contemplating similar acts of cybercrime.

Describing the incident as a stain on the country's image, the governor emphasised the need for urgent corrective measures.

He also praised JAMB Registrar Professor Ishaq Oloyede for his transparency and dedication to maintaining the integrity of the examination process despite the challenges.

# Peter Obi confirms 2027 presidential bid under Labour Party

By Friday Omosola



**F**ormer presidential contender Peter Obi has reaffirmed his intention to contest the 2027 general elections under the Labour Party's (LP) banner.

Obi, the party 2023 presidential candidate disclosed this in a 7-minute video shared via the party's WhatsApp network on Saturday.

The former Anambra State governor addressed questions from a group of young supporters.

Obi dismissed the internal turmoil plaguing both the LP and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) as being orchestrated by the current administration.

According to him, such interference is a deliberate attempt to weaken opposition forces.

When asked about his political plans for 2027, Obi stated clearly: "I remain in the Labour Party and will run on its platform."

Responding to concerns regarding his perceived silence on LP disputes, Obi insisted that the instability in both major opposition parties was not organic.

"What you see happening in Labour and PDP is the handiwork of the government. Quote me anywhere," he declared.

He recalled a similar episode during the presidency of Musa Yar'Adua, noting that the former president had intervened to ensure internal democracy was upheld.

"Back then, I approached Yar'Adua, and he directed the INEC Chairman, Professor Maurice Iwu, to ensure there was no undue interference. The issue was resolved," he said.

Obi warned that systematic manipulation continues to hinder the proper functioning of political parties in Nigeria, arguing that a healthy democracy cannot exist without a credible and vibrant opposition.

He pledged to address these structural flaws if allowed to serve again.

He also urged Nigerians, particularly the youth, to take active responsibility for protecting their votes, emphasising that true change depends on civic vigilance.

Encouraging his supporters not to lose hope, Obi admitted that resistance to reform is expected from those who benefit from the status quo.

He went on to advocate for an age cap on public office holders, remarking that by 2027 he would be 65 and had no desire to pursue elected office into his seventies.

# Lagos named world's fastest-growing tech city in 2025

By Friday Omosola



**L**agos State has been named the world's fastest-growing tech city for the year 2025, according to the latest Global Tech Ecosystem Index released by Netherlands-based data intelligence firm Dealroom.co.

The report places Lagos ahead of Istanbul, Turkey and Pune, India, in the "Rising Stars" category.

The category highlighted emerging cities with rapidly expanding tech ecosystems, measured by enterprise value growth and unicorn creation, adjusted for GDP per capita and cost of living.

Dealroom.co noted that Lagos has grown its ecosystem valuation by 11.6 times since 2017, despite operating within a relatively smaller economy.

The city is now home to five unicorns: Interswitch, Flutterwave, Jumia, OPay, and Moniepoint, reinforcing its appeal as a major destination for tech start-ups.

"Lagos (1) is topping the list, having created five unicorns and grown its ecosystem valuation 11.6x since 2017 despite having a smaller economy," the report stated.

Following Lagos in the global ranking are Istanbul (2nd), Pune (3rd), and other emerging hubs including Belo Horizonte and Curitiba in Brazil, Mumbai in India, and Riyadh in Saudi Arabia.

The growth of Lagos' tech landscape has been credited to initiatives introduced under Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu's administration, including a N1 billion grant fund

managed by the Lagos State Science Research and Innovation Council (LASRIC) to support local start-ups.

Reacting to the report, the State's Commissioner for Information and Strategy, Gbenga Omotoso said Sanwo-Olu expressed excitement about the ranking.

"We are thrilled but not surprised because of the hard work that our youths are doing. We plan to make Lagos a big centre for tech experts. If Microsoft or Google and other giants are looking for good hands, there will be a big pool from which they can draw.

"Thousands of our youths are busy at tech hubs, using technology to resolve everyday challenges. We will keep encouraging them."

# Troops recover stolen cattle after killing 21 bandits in Katsina

By Friday Omosola

Security forces have eliminated 21 armed bandits during a successful raid on Shawu Forest, situated in the Ruwan Godiya Ward of Faskari Local Government Area, Katsina State.

The operation was disclosed in a statement issued on Saturday by the State Commissioner for Internal Security and Home Affairs, Nasiru Mu'azu Danmusa.

According to Danmusa, troops from the 17 Brigade Strike Group of the Nigerian Army launched a targeted offensive against a terrorist hideout as part of the ongoing Operation Forest Sanity III.

The raid resulted in the death of multiple terrorists and a significant disruption of their operational capabilities. Some were swept away while attempting to escape across a river.

Notably, no soldiers were injured or killed during the mission.

The troops recovered an assortment of weapons and equipment, including around 40 motorcycles and an undisclosed number of rustled cattle.

The raid also yielded one General Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG), five AK-47 rifles, a pump-action gun, 21 AK-47 magazines, and 17 Motorola Communication radios.

Further items retrieved included 64 rounds of 7.62mm NATO belted ammunition, 448 rounds of 7.62mm special ammunition, four pump-action cartridges, two RPG-7



chargers, and a single RPG-7 explosive.

Other seized materials comprised five 48mm CS hand grenades, a Baofeng handheld radio, six mobile phones with three spare batteries, a jungle camouflage hat, and three magazine pouches.

Additional discoveries included a motorcycle manual pump, an empty wallet, three jungle bags filled with various charms, and a cash sum of ₦15,260.

Danmusa noted that the troops launched the offensive at approximately 8:50 a.m. on 23 May, engaging the terrorists in a fierce gunfight.

The intensity of the assault forced the bandits to flee, abandoning their encampments and using their livestock as cover while retreating through thick vegetation and rocky terrain.

The troops pursued the fleeing suspects and continued their assault even as some attempted to cross the river to evade capture.

All recovered items are now secured in military custody for further investigation, while clearance operations continue in the area.

In response to the successful mission, Governor Dikko Radda commended the 17 Brigade Strike Group for their courage and professionalism.

Addressing the public from the State House, he reaffirmed his government's commitment to supporting the military's efforts to restore peace and security across affected regions.

The governor also urged the troops to sustain their momentum and continue to press forward until all criminal threats are neutralised.

# Economic Patriotism: Abdul Samad, Dangote lead by example in backing Nigeria's growth

By Otega Ogra and Temitope Ajayi

There is a particular kind of silence that greets progress in Nigeria—when food prices fall, inflation slows, the country is positively recognised, debts paid, or things begin to work. It is the kind of silence that would rather keep a good story buried than be told. But make no mistake. What we see in the market today is not magic. It is the outcome of vision, backed by execution, from the Tinubu-Shettima administration.

When President Bola Tinubu signed off on a six-month waiver to allow the importation of select food items, it was not an act of political showmanship. Rather, it was a visionary economic strategy at play. That singular decision broke a cartel of hoarders who had turned food insecurity into an immoral enterprise. But strategy alone does not and cannot lower the cost of rice. What does is when industry leaders respond with urgency.

Last week at the Aso Villa, the seat of the Presidency in Abuja, Abdul Samad Rabi, did not just show up to thank President Bola Tinubu. He came prepared and showed up with results. He brought evidence—bag by bag, commodity by commodity—of how Mr. President's policy met action. Rice that once sold for N110,000 for 50kg bag now sells for less than N70,000. Flour is down. Maize is down. And for once, the loudest people in the room are the ones who used to profit from scarcity, not the ones out to end the criminal profiteering.

What happened here was disruption. The BUA team, as well as other major Nigerian manufacturers and industrialists who heeded President Tinubu's call, understood the assignment. They flooded the market, shattered the economics of hoarding, and exposed a truth few want to say: sometimes, the real enemy is not the system. It is the silence and sabotage that follow reform.



But Alhaji Rabi did not stop at food. He announced a second move upon the advice of fellow billionaire industrialist Aliko Dangote, which was just as consequential. In an economy that is recovering from FX volatility, energy price surges, and imported inflation, cement manufacturers have decided to freeze the price of cement, not for everyone, but for every contractor working under the government's Renewed Hope infrastructure projects. This is not charity at play. This is alignment. Our two big businessmen understand the time, and they are doing their businesses conscious of the need to balance profitability with social responsibility. We have Aliko Dangote and Abdul Samad Rabi to thank for leading the way and showing how to be worthy examples to Corporate Nigeria. The truth is that the business environment has been quite challenging. While this is so, there is also the problem of arbitrariness in how prices of goods and services have moved in the last two years. Many businessmen and women have taken undue advantage of Nigerians to engage in price gouging, unduly raising the cost of living for average Nigerians.

Cement isn't just a product. It is the

bloodline of infrastructure. By holding the price steady for public works under the Renewed Hope Agenda, Dangote Cement, BUA Cement, Lafarge, and new entrant like Mangal Cement didn't just make a corporate gesture. They bought the government fiscal room, time, and momentum. That is what nation-building looks like when it wears a private-sector face.

It gets deeper. Working with Aliko Dangote, Abdul Samad Rabi in the same spirit of putting country first, other cement manufacturers are partnering with the two prime movers in the cement manufacturing sector to resuscitate the Cement Technology Institute of Nigeria, pledging up to N20 billion annually to train artisans, real human capacity, not PowerPoint plans. We live in Nigeria, where, for the longest time, conversations about growth rarely touch skills. This novel move is, therefore, a bet on people because when people are trained, projects do not just get built but they endure.

**Continue reading  
on next page**

## Cont from page 9

President Tinubu alluded to something important during that meeting. He did not just commend BUA, he called the actions of the private sector who have taken a bet on Nigeria throughout this period, “economic patriotism.” Whilst many sit on the sidelines waiting for stability before they act, it matters when Nigerians step in to create it. Nigeria does not just need big men, it also needs bold moves. What Rabi'u, Dangote, and their peers are doing from freezing prices and disrupting hoarding to funding technical skills is not corporate PR. It is policy execution, and that is what separates firms that extract value from those that build it.

In this phase of Nigeria's transformation, we will need more of the latter. Our country can make do with more businessmen and women who understand that the private sector is not a spectator sport; that stability is not gifted but engineered. And that to win the confidence of 250 million people, you must show, not tell, that the future of Nigeria is under construction.

And if we tell these positive stories loud enough and well, if we stop whispering good news while bad actors shout, we may just shift the national mood from that of despair and hopelessness to productivity.

We make bold this statement because, when industry starts to move like this, it is more than just a market correction. It is a clear signal that the tide is turning positively.

Our country must be a nation of strong, hopeful, and productive people. While some of the challenges of nation-building still persist, we must never shy away from telling those who take undue advantage of fellow citizens that businesses can still make fair and decent profit and not overburden citizens.

President Tinubu knew from his first day

in office that the task of reforming and retooling our economy for optimum performance would not be easy. He also knew what would be his place in history if he refused to take the difficult but necessary decisions that would create medium – and long-term sustainability and prosperity for Nigerians.

Truly, the last two years have posed some economic challenges for Nigerians. As the reforms kick in, the macroeconomic variables are turning positive. The fiscal space is becoming more robust. National and subnational debts are being repaid, investors' confidence growing faster at higher rate than last decade. Nigeria is getting more favourable credit rating from global institutions, inflation slowing down and the country is in stronger balance of trade position with more robust foreign reserves.

All these positive indicators point to how effective the policy prescriptions have been. The government is also working hard to tackle insecurity across the country with remarkable progress. At the same time, the government is investing in critical infrastructure such as roads, energy, rail, ports, irrigation, and social services.

Overall, the economy recorded 3.84% GDP growth in Q4 2024, the highest in three years. The President Tinubu-led administration restored a new wave of final investment decisions into the oil and gas sector by signing an executive order that shortened the contracting cycle and free up more fiscal incentives. On the back of these, the hydrocarbon economy has been bolstered by over \$8 billion in new investments from SHELL, ExxonMobil, and TotalEnergies.

The economy prospects are very bright, and the shared prosperity promised by President Tinubu is crystalising. Nigeria only needs more patriotic and passionate citizens who will always commit to national development and advancement.

As the President has always said, the future of Nigeria will be one built by Nigerians, for Nigeria, and indeed, for Africa. No one, but ourselves, will build the Nigeria of our collective dream or Africa for us. The time to build together is now!

***-Ogra and Ajayi are senior aides to President Bola Tinubu***



# Nigeria not sliding into one-party rule — politicians joining APC for self-gain

By Friday Omasola, Helen Okechukwu and Fatimah Idera

Political Analysts have said Nigeria is not sinking towards one-party system. According to them, politicians who are defeated are defecting to All Progressives Congress for opportunity.

This followed the recent defections from key opposition parties, such as the People's Democratic Party (PDP) to the APC.

Over recent months, governors and senators from the PDP had defected to APC.

This raised the alarm that no credible alternative may emerge to challenge President Bola Tinubu or the APC in the 2027 elections.

Reacting to the matter in an interview with New Daily Prime, political analyst Professor Busuyi Mekusi of African Literature in the Department of English Studies at Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba Akoko (AAUA), attributed the wave of defections not to a political shift towards unity, but to the lack of ideological depth within the opposition.

He said many of the defectors are driven by personal ambitions rather than loyalty to Mr Tinubu or commitment to governance.

He also criticised the opportunistic nature of the moves, noting that these defections reflect self-interest rather than alignment with the APC's vision or values.

Mr Busuyi noted, "It is what we call ethnic survivors in politics because the ruling party also has almost everything in its foot. Another fact is that they believe that the ruling party is domineering and can do and not do and for me, such an assumption is dangerous because they will be suggesting that our institutions are not viable enough to guarantee and protect the rights or the aspirations of the individual."



"But if we look at the 2023 election, we also know that Tinubu is also doing everything possible to ensure that he consolidates his vote, his support and judging from the fact that he is his major opponent, the 2023 election is now aligned into one force. In Nigeria, we planted a very unique democracy—our democracy is still evolving with all its many challenges. And one of the challenges we are facing as a nation that is a democratic government is the issue of lack of ideology in our political formation, identification and membership."

He added that the situation within the APC reflects deeper concerns about the general state of political party management in Nigeria.

Mr Busuyi also stated that Mr Tinubu must respond swiftly if he hopes to stay ahead of challengers eyeing his position.

He noted that while Nigeria appears to be edging closer to single-party dominance, a strategic resurgence may still emerge in the coming months—even if the PDP currently lacks momentum.

"The PDP has been embattled and has been struggling for survival. And it's been fixed with many internal contradictions."

The party wanted, or, yes, decided to rule Nigeria for 16 years. But it's coerced to rule Nigeria for 16 years. And the APC, as an opposition political party, abstained after 16 years. And since then, the party has been struggling to survive."

"We shouldn't forget, how did the party get to the point it went? It started because some elements in the PDP felt they shouldn't implement rotational presidency. That is, the presidency they believe should rotate between the North and the South. And this led to a form of bickering, particularly as part of the push for 2023."

"And some members, particularly led by Nyesom Wike, you know, walked out of the party. And the party has never remained the same again. And we shouldn't forget that the person who also got the presidential ticket, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, also left the PDP for the APC, only for him to come back. And he received the ticket from Nyesom Wike, who said he funded the political party when these other people left. So, what is happening now, for me."

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on next page**

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Also speaking, political commentator Dr. Bayo Fasunwon from Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba Akoko, dismissed fears that Nigeria is on the verge of becoming a one-party state, despite the defection of prominent opposition figures to the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC)

Fasunwon maintained that party switching by politicians does not automatically transform a multi-party democracy into a one-party system.

He noted that the wave of defections reflects a strategic mindset among politicians who believe unseating the APC at the polls may be difficult, if not impossible.

Fasunwon criticised this outlook as defeatist, suggesting it stems more from political calculation than ideological alignment.

“So, they are losing battles when they have not started. But in politics, you expect that. Organizations and parties you have never heard of before may come up. For example, look at the Labour Party. At

the time, it sprung up and it won’t sit. So, there can still be some, you know, some other parties that may come that may even shake both the ruling party and even the PDP.

“I haven’t said that it’s not in the best interest of Nigeria to go into a one-party state. Because if you are a one-party state, you are talking about dictatorship. You are talking about tyranny. You are talking about the situation whereby change can only occur through coup plotting. And revolution. And once a nation deteriorates to that level, then there will be political instability, there will be insecurity, and it may even lead to the implosion of that nation.”

Similarly, another analyst, spoke about the fear of a one-party system, saying it is a rhetorical device used to deflect attention from organisational weaknesses, the absence of credible messaging, and the failure to connect with the electorate in a meaningful way.

He explained that when a party lacks internal cohesion and cannot forge alliances or offer a compelling

alternative, the dominance of the ruling party appears overwhelming—not because it is invincible, but because the opposition is uninspired.

Ahmed noted, “Although there was no significant panic about Nigeria becoming a one-party state gained mainstream traction, Why? Because the opposition — then fragmented—regrouped, recalibrated, and eventually formed the All Progressives Congress (APC), which unseated the PDP in 2015 and this shows that political power can shift when strategy replaces complaint.

“What we are seeing instead is a failure by opposition parties to build grassroots structures, frame clear policies, inspire voter confidence, or even manage internal democracy effectively.”

He stated that when one-party dominates all levels of government unchecked, institutions become vulnerable to manipulation, and the culture of checks and balances weakens.



# Senate approves bill for establishment of FMC in Kafanchan

By **Helen Okechukwu**



**T**he Nigerian Senate has approved the Federal Medical Centre (FMC) Act (Amendment) Bill, 2024, which proposes the creation of a Federal Medical Centre (FMC) in Kafanchan, Southern Kaduna.

The bill, initiated by Senator Sunday Katung of Kaduna South Senatorial District, is intended to enhance access to specialized healthcare in a region that has long faced challenges in medical service delivery.

In a statement issued after the bill's passage, Senator Katung highlighted the importance of the proposed centre, stating that it would reduce the need for residents to travel far

distances to receive adequate medical attention—a factor that often contributes to delayed care and preventable loss of life.

Senator Katung also expressed his appreciation to President Bola Tinubu, Senate President Godswill Akpabio, Deputy Senate President Jibrin Barau, and other senators for their roles in supporting the bill.

**Read Also:** NHIA adds five hospitals in Lagos to boost emergency maternal care

He described the move as a significant step toward correcting healthcare disparities in Southern Kaduna, a region he said has suffered neglect in federal health

investments.

Beyond improving healthcare delivery, the senator noted that the proposed medical centre is expected to serve as a catalyst for economic growth by creating employment opportunities, attracting medical professionals, and fostering a hub for research and training.

With legislative approval secured, the groundwork is now set for the medical centre to begin operations, offering new hope for improved healthcare and economic progress in Kafanchan and surrounding communities.

# Nigeria urged to prioritise diagnostics as a basic health right

By Helen Okechukwu



Over three years after the Lancet Commission on Diagnostics revealed a global crisis in diagnostic access, millions in Nigeria still lack basic tools needed to detect and treat diseases like tuberculosis, diabetes, and cancer.

In 2021, the Commission found that 47% of people globally—and 81% in low- and lower-middle-income countries—could not access essential diagnostic services. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed just how deadly this gap can be.

Countries like India and members of the African Collaborative Initiative have made progress through free diagnostic programmes. Experts say Nigeria must follow suit.

“Diagnostics are foundational. Without them, our health response is reactive, not preventive,” said virologist Prof. Oyewale Tomori. He warned that Nigeria remains too dependent on donor and private-sector services.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) reports that over 60% of Nigeria’s primary health centres lack tools as basic as malaria test kits and haemoglobin meters.

Dr. Gabriel Adakole, a public health physician, stressed that diagnostics should be included in Universal Health Coverage (UHC). “If we want UHC to be meaningful, diagnostics must be free and accessible at the primary healthcare level, just like immunisation,” he said.

Prof. Susan Horton, lead author of the

Lancet report, added: “diagnosis is little more than educated guesswork.” She urged governments to invest in rural-friendly technologies and workforce training.

Health policy expert Dr. Aminu Ibrahim called for a dedicated diagnostics budget under the Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF), warning that “Without it, UHC is just a slogan.” He also recommended scaling up proven tools like GeneXpert, mobile X-rays, and tele-labs.

“These aren’t futuristic ideas. They are available now—and they need to be implemented,” he said.

Dr. Jumoke Mark summed it up: “Diagnostics aren’t a luxury. They’re the first step to closing Nigeria’s health inequality gap.”

# Bola Ayànfé's praise night restores lost gift after years

By **Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi**

The city of Manchester came alive on Saturday, May 18, as worshippers from across the UK and Nigeria gathered for “In His Presence 4.0”, a spirit-filled evening of praise, worship, and fellowship hosted by Minister Bola Ayànfé.

The event, themed “Abba Father” (Romans 8:15), was organized under the banner of Àyànfé and De Torch and took place at the Manchester Recording Studios, 3 Archway, Hulme.

The gathering attracted a diverse audience, including notable figures from Nigeria—top government officials, pastors—and the UK, further solidifying the event’s growing reputation as a major fixture in the international Christian worship calendar.

atmosphere was one of deep spiritual engagement. The crowd worshipped in unison to anointed songs, with moments of intense prayer and prophetic declarations. Minister Ayànfé was joined by a powerful lineup of gospel ministers, including:

- Oore Okunuga
- Shola Oshineye
- Denyefa Peters
- Min. Bola De Voice
- Busola Atuegbe

The event featured live praise sessions, soul-lifting worship, and messages of hope anchored in biblical truth. DJ Abioye and event host Femi Adesanya added vibrancy to the 19th-hole-style celebration, blending musical excellence with joyful celebration.

## Worship Without Borders

New Daily Prime spoke briefly with one of the invited guests, Prince Ademola Frederick, who described his experience during the praise and worship session. He testified that he felt the presence of the Holy Spirit and experienced God’s power in a profound way. According to him, he was so blessed that God immediately restored his gift of speaking in tongues—a gift he had not experienced in many years. He expressed deep appreciation to the convener for organizing such a special program to honor God and receive from Him.

## Continued Growth & Community Impact

“In His Presence 4.0” marks the



fourth edition of what has become a signature worship experience for many. The organizers expressed gratitude for the overwhelming turnout and pledged to continue expanding the reach and impact of the gathering.



## A Night of Spirit and Sound

Led by Bola Ayànfé, who also serves as the convener of the event, the



# Why I stopped going to church, Seyi Shay reveals

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

**N**igerian singer and songwriter Seyi Shay has opened up about a personal decision that surprised many fans.

The music star recently shared why she stopped attending her former church, and her reason has sparked conversations online.

In a post on her Instagram story, Seyi Shay revealed that a disagreement with a church leader's stance on music in worship pushed her to leave the church.

The leader had suggested that the congregation stop singing modern gospel songs and return to traditional hymns and songs based strictly on Bible verses.

Singer rejects call to drop modern gospel

According to Seyi Shay, the church leader urged the choir and congregation to focus only on old hymns and scriptural songs during praise and worship. These songs, often regarded as "classic" in many Christian circles, are typically hundreds of years old and come from Western Christian traditions.

The singer, however, disagreed strongly with this idea.

She explained that many of these hymns have troubling origins. In her view, some of the traditional Christian songs that churches still sing today were written by individuals involved in slavery or by people who lived during that time and supported systems that hurt Africans and their descendants.

Music with a dark history

Seyi Shay expressed discomfort over singing hymns that were passed down from slave-owning societies. She said she could not understand how people, especially those of African descent, could feel spiritually uplifted by singing songs tied to such painful histories.

In her words, she questioned how anyone could "feel blessed and happy" singing music that may have been written by people who enslaved, tortured, and oppressed African ancestors.

The singer's statement drew attention to a



deeper issue within some faith communities: the lack of awareness about the history behind religious traditions, especially music.

"Do your research," Seyi urges

Seyi Shay encouraged fellow Christians to do some digging before singing old hymns. She believes that people should know where these songs come from and who wrote them. For her, singing a hymn should not just be about tradition or melody, it should also be about understanding the message and the messenger.

"Do your research!" she wrote in her post. "Ignorance is not Godly!"

The singer made it clear that she values truth and awareness over blindly following customs, especially when those customs may have harmful roots.

A bold step away

In a bold conclusion to her Instagram post, Seyi Shay stated that she stopped going to that church entirely because of the church leader's comments.

"Guess what, I stopped going to that church. Periodt," she wrote.

Her decision shows how deeply she feels about the issue and reflects her belief in standing up for what she thinks is right, even if it means stepping away from a place of worship, she once called home.

Fans react online

Following her post, social media buzzed with mixed reactions. Some people praised

Seyi Shay for speaking up and standing by her beliefs. Others felt she may have been too harsh in her judgment of traditional hymns and the people who still sing them.

However, many agreed that her comments raise important questions. Should churches be more careful about the history of the songs they sing? Is it time to re-examine what worship should look like in today's world?

A call for thoughtful worship

Seyi Shay's remarks have stirred a larger conversation about worship, history, and awareness. While not everyone may agree with her stance, her message is clear: worship should not be blind.

Christians, she says, should understand what they're singing, who wrote it, and what it represents.

Her words echo a broader call in many communities to be more thoughtful about traditions, especially those that may carry painful or controversial pasts.

For Seyi Shay, worship must come from a place of knowledge, not ignorance. And she hopes others will take the time to look deeper before they sing.

# 'My Sister Sold Me for Prostitution in Mali', Jumoke George's daughter reveals Mali experience

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

**A**deola Omotoso, the daughter of Nollywood actress Jumoke George, has finally broken her silence after being missing for over four years.

In a heartbreaking interview, she revealed that she was trafficked to Mali and forced into prostitution.

The 41-year-old woman shared her story shortly after her rescue by the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM).

Her case, which shocked the entertainment industry and the public, highlights the dangers of human trafficking and how vulnerable people can be tricked with false promises.

**A mother's long search ends**

In 2020, veteran Nollywood actress Jumoke George reported her daughter missing. Adeola had vanished without a trace, and for four long years, the family lived in fear and uncertainty. During this period, there were no confirmed reports of her whereabouts.

That changed recently when NIDCOM announced it had rescued Adeola from Mali. The Commission, which works to protect the rights of Nigerians living abroad, coordinated her return to Nigeria. Her rescue brought both relief and sorrow as she shared the terrifying details of her journey.

**Lured with promises of a better life**

In an emotional interview on the "Talk to B" podcast, hosted by actress Biola Bayo, Adeola told her story. She said it all began when she met a woman who promised to help her travel abroad for better job opportunities.

"I met someone who told me about traveling to Mali," Adeola said. "She told me there was a pharmacy I could work in. She made it sound like a good opportunity."

Desperate for a better life, Adeola agreed to go without telling anyone in her family. What followed was a long and dangerous journey by road. She traveled through Cotonou, Togo, Ghana, and several other West African countries before finally reaching Bamako, the



capital of Mali.

**Betrayed and sold for N250,000**

Adeola said her nightmare began the moment she arrived in Mali. She contacted the person she had been told to meet. When she got to the woman's house, the truth came out.

"She told me that she bought me from my sister for N250,000," Adeola revealed. "She said I must pay her back 1.5 million CFA and that I would do that through prostitution."

Shocked and terrified, Adeola realized she had been sold into sex slavery. She was taken to a brothel and forced to work there. She said she lived in fear and had no way of contacting her family or escaping her situation.

**Life in the brothel**

For months, Adeola endured abuse and exploitation. She said the conditions were harsh, and the women were watched closely. Many of them, she said, were young Nigerian girls who had also been trafficked.

"We were treated like property," she said. "They monitored our movements. We could not leave unless we had a customer. It was like prison."

Despite the danger, Adeola never gave up hope. She looked for any chance to escape. That chance finally came when she met a local food vendor.

**Escape and rescue**

One day, Adeola convinced the food vendor to

help her. The woman offered her a small job and a place to hide. From there, Adeola was able to contact someone who alerted the Nigerian authorities.

Through the efforts of NIDCOM and other groups working to fight human trafficking, Adeola was rescued and brought home. Now back in Nigeria, she is safe and receiving the care she needs to recover.

**A call for justice**

Adeola's story has sparked outrage and calls for action. Many Nigerians are demanding that the traffickers involved in her case be arrested and prosecuted. Her mother, Jumoke George, has not made a public statement since the rescue but is said to be grateful and relieved.

NIDCOM has urged young Nigerians to be careful of offers to travel abroad without proper documentation or official support. The agency continues to work with international partners to track and rescue victims of trafficking.

**A cautionary tale**

Adeola Omotoso's experience is a painful reminder of the dangers of human trafficking. Her story serves as a warning to others and a call for stronger action to protect vulnerable citizens.

# “We gave it a shot, but it failed”, Peter explains P-Square split

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

**N**igerian singer Peter Okoye, widely known as Mr P and one-half of the famous P-Square duo, has opened up about his decision to part ways with his twin brother and music partner, Paul Okoye, also known as Rudeboy.

In a recent interview with Cool FM in Lagos, Mr P spoke candidly about the reasons behind the separation. He emphasised that while many fans may not fully understand, he and his brother made the best decision for themselves and their careers.

“Going solo brings joy”

“There’s a joy that comes with going solo,” Mr P said during the radio chat. “Please respect our decisions. We’ve tried it, it’s not working.”

His comments came months after Paul Okoye confirmed that the popular duo had split again. The brothers, who first went their separate ways in 2016, reunited in 2021 to the delight of fans worldwide. However, the reunion was short-lived.

In August 2023, Paul revealed that the pair had decided to stop working together. Since then, both artists have returned to solo careers.

A history of breakups and reunions

P-Square, one of Nigeria’s most successful music groups, rose to fame in the early 2000s. With hit songs like “Do Me,” “Personally,” and “No One Like You,” the twin brothers quickly became household names across Africa and beyond.

But behind the scenes, things weren’t always smooth. The group first broke up in 2016 following a long stretch of tension, both personal and professional. For years, fans speculated about the reasons, citing differences in lifestyle, business, and creative direction.



The brothers later reconciled in 2021, promising a fresh start. They even released new music together and went on tour, sparking hope that the P-Square magic was back for good.

Unfortunately, the reunion didn’t last.

Why did the split happen again

Mr P explained that staying together as a group became difficult. Despite their best efforts, he said, things just didn’t work out the way they hoped.

“There were things we both had to deal with individually,” he said. “We gave it our best shot. But sometimes, it’s better to go your separate ways and stay happy.”

He added that both he and Paul are focused on their happiness, health, and personal growth. “Music is important, but peace of mind comes first,” he noted.

Fans react

News of the latest split has left fans divided. While some continue to hope for another reunion, others have shown support for the brothers’ solo careers.

Social media users have shared mixed reactions. Some expressed sadness over the breakup of one of Africa’s most iconic

music duos. Others praised the artists for choosing their well-being over pressure from the industry.

“They gave us so much good music over the years,” one fan wrote on X (formerly Twitter). “If this is what they need to be happy, we should support them.”

Solo careers take shape

Since returning to solo work, both Mr P and Rudeboy have stayed active in the music scene.

Mr P has released several singles and continues to perform across the continent. His style blends Afrobeats, R&B, and pop, and he often includes energetic dance routines in his shows.

Paul, on the other hand, has maintained a slower, more soulful style as Rudeboy. His music often focuses on love, heartbreak, and social themes. He, too, has built a strong fan base on his own.

Both singers have proven they can stand alone, even without the P-Square brand.

No bad blood

Despite going their separate ways, Mr P made it clear that there’s no animosity between him and his brother.

# Golf glory, good vibes: See who won big at NUGA's Captain's day 2025

By Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi

**T**he Nigeria-UK Golfing Association (NUGA) hosted its much-anticipated Captain's Day 2025 at the prestigious Mannings Heath Golf Course in Sussex, drawing a vibrant crowd of golf enthusiasts, guests, and members for a memorable 27-hole competition under sunny skies.

A total of 59 out of 60 registered players teed off, making the first NUGA major of the year a resounding success. The annual event, seen as a celebration of camaraderie and friendship within the association, was hosted by Captain Fred Adegeye, who, along with his family, was praised for organizing an unforgettable tournament.

The event was split between two courses: a 9-hole "4 Club" competition on the Kingfisher Course and an 18-hole competition on the Waterfall Course.

NUGA Captain's Day 2025 It featured intense contests, spirited sportsmanship, and post-match entertainment that included lively music by DJ Abioye and event anchoring by Femi Adesanya.



Kingfisher Course (4 Club, 9-Hole



Competition) Winners:

Hole 8 (Longest Drive using Captain's Classic 3-wood): Chris Dokosi

Hole 3 (Nearest to Pin): Femi Adesanya

Hole 7 (Nearest to Pin): Trevor Dean

1st Place: Olumuyiwa Alabi (3/4 handicap of 2)

2nd Place: Dejo Olayinka (3/4 handicap of 5)

Best Team (Special Ball): Group 14

Waterfall Course (18-Hole Competition) Winners:

Hole 5 (Nearest to Pin): Noel A.

Hole 10 (Nearest to Pin): Tony Sokan

Hole 14 (Nearest to Pin): Akeem Balogun

Hole 7 (Nearest to Pin in 2): Olayemi Balogun

Hole 13 (Longest Drive): Femi Adesanya

Hole 17 (Longest Drive): Finella Una

Division Winners:

Division 3 Winner: Margaret Oboh (31 pts, countback)

Division 3 Runner-up: Ekemini Umoh (31 pts)

Division 2 Winner: Femi Ogunyemi (32 pts)

Division 2 Runner-up: Sola Noah (30 pts)

Division 1 Winner: Olumuyiwa Alabi (37

pts, countback)

Division 1 Runner-up: Dejo Odeyinka (37 pts)

Other Awards:

Best Guest: Jude Ororho

Best Veteran (Over 70s): Dan Selo Ojeme

Best Ladies Player: Finella Una

Lowest Gross (74): Olumuyiwa Alabi

2nd Lowest Gross (78): Finella Una

Overall Captain's Day Winner (27 holes): Olumuyiwa Alabi

2nd Place: Dejo Odeyinka

3rd Place: Ayo Oshowo

The well-attended reception at the 19th hole brought the day to a celebratory close, as members toasted to good golf, shared stories, and acknowledged outstanding performances.

Captain's Day 2025 reaffirmed NUGA's commitment to fostering unity through sport and left attendees eagerly anticipating the association's next major event.

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on next page**

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# Trump administration cracks down on press access at Pentagon

By **Fatimah Idera**



**U**.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth has issued orders requiring journalists to have official escorts within much of the Pentagon building, effective immediately. This move bars credentialed reporters from most of the Department of Defense headquarters in Arlington, Virginia, unless they have official approval and an escort.

The decision is reportedly based on concerns about operational security and protecting classified national intelligence information. Hegseth emphasized that protecting sensitive information is “an unwavering imperative for the Department,” as unauthorized disclosure could put U.S. Service members’ lives in danger.

However, the Pentagon Press Association has criticized the new

rules, calling them a “direct attack on the freedom of the press.” They argue that the press corps has had access to non-secured, unclassified spaces in the Pentagon for decades without concerns about operational security.

The new rules are: Journalists need official escorts within much of the Pentagon building, credentialed reporters are barred from most Department of Defense headquarters without approval and escort, criticized the rules as a “direct attack on the freedom of the press” and the Pentagon Press Corps has had access to non-secured spaces for decades without operational security concerns.

Trump administration has been cracking down on leaks and press access. Since President Donald Trump returned to office in January.

Recall the Pentagon launched an investigation, placing three officials on administrative leave and legacy media organizations, including The New York Times and CNN, were required to vacate their Pentagon office spaces, making way for other outlets.

Meanwhile, the administration has deployed lie detector tests to investigate unclassified leaks, warning officials that refusing polygraphs could lead to termination.

However, Journalists will be issued new credentials that more prominently identify them as members of the press and the Pentagon Press Association’s concerns about press freedom and operational security will likely continue to be a point of contention.

# Singer Billy Joel cancel tour due to brain disorder diagnosis

By **Fatimah Idera**



**U**.S. singer-songwriter and pianist Billy Joel said on Friday he is canceling all his scheduled concerts after he was recently diagnosed with normal pressure hydrocephalus, a brain disorder.

Billy Joel is undergoing physical therapy and has been advised to refrain from performing while he recovers.

According to a statement on social media. "I'm sincerely sorry to disappoint our

audience, and thank you for understanding," Joel said.

Joel's condition was exacerbated by recent concert performances, leading to problems with hearing, vision, and balance, according to the statement.

The condition, which is more likely in people over the age of 65, occurs when fluid builds up inside the skull and presses on the brain, according to the Cleveland Clinic. Its symptoms resemble those of

dementia and can sometimes be reversible.

The tour, which had stops in the United States, Canada, and England, had been due to start in February but was rescheduled to July due to an undisclosed medical condition. Joel, known for hits like "Piano Man" and "Uptown Girl", ended his record-breaking monthly Madison Square Garden residency—which had begun in 2014—last year.

# Judge orders Trump admin to return Guatemalan man wrongly deported to Mexico

By **Fatimah Idera**

**A** Federal Judge has ordered Trump administration on Friday to facilitate the return of a gay Guatemalan man who said he was deported to Mexico despite fearing he would be persecuted there, after officials acknowledged an error in his case.

U.S. District Judge Brian Murphy in Boston issued the order days after the Justice Department notified him that its claim that the man had expressly stated he was not afraid of being sent to Mexico was based on erroneous information.

The Justice Department said last week that upon further investigation, officials were unable to identify any Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer who had asked the man, identified as “O.C.G.,” about fears he had for his safety.

Murphy, an appointee of Trump’s Democratic predecessor Joe Biden, called the case a “horror” and said that “while mistakes obviously happen, the events leading up to this decision are troubling.”

The ruling marks the latest instance of a judge ordering President Donald Trump’s administration to facilitate the return of a migrant swept up in the Republican’s efforts to carry out mass deportations as part of his hard-line immigration agenda, following a mistake in an individual’s case.

In a class action lawsuit filed by O.C.G. and other migrants, the judge had blocked the administration from swiftly deporting people to countries other than their own without first hearing any concerns they had about their safety.



“Due process is, in some sense, a binary – one either receives what the Constitution requires, or one does not,” Murphy wrote. “It has been clear that O.C.G. did not receive what the Constitution requires.”

The Department of Homeland Security, which oversees ICE, and the White House did not immediately respond to requests for comment. The government likewise made an error with Maryland resident Kilmar Abrego Garcia, who was deported to El Salvador in March despite an order protecting him from removal. He remains there, despite a judge ordering the administration to facilitate his return.

Friday’s ruling comes two days after Murphy, in the class action lawsuit case, concluded that the Trump administration had violated his earlier ruling by attempting to deport a group of migrants to South Sudan.

According to his lawyers, O.C.G. is a gay man who fled Guatemala in 2024 after facing death threats based on his sexuality. He entered the United States through Mexico in May 2024. Murphy said that while an immigration judge in February found O.C.G. deserved protection from being returned to Guatemala, authorities two days later wrongly placed him on a bus to Mexico, where he had recently been raped and kidnapped.

Trina Realmuto, a lawyer for O.C.G. at the National Immigration Litigation Alliance, said his legal team was elated by Murphy’s ruling and would work to facilitate a return plan. After arriving in Mexico, O.C.G. had to choose between waiting months in detention to apply for asylum in Mexico or return to Guatemala. He chose the latter and went into hiding, his lawyers say.

# Ronaldo tipped for Club World Cup return

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

Cristiano Ronaldo could yet make a surprise appearance at this summer's revamped Club World Cup, despite his current club Al-Nassr failing to qualify for the tournament. FIFA president Gianni Infantino has hinted that the legendary forward is at the centre of discussions involving multiple clubs ahead of the historic 32-team tournament in the United States.

Ronaldo, 40, remains one of the biggest names in football and continues to impress with his performances in the Saudi Pro League. His contract with Al-Nassr, which he joined in late 2022 following a dramatic departure from Manchester United, is set to expire on 30 June. While the Riyadh-based club will not feature at the Club World Cup, Infantino has stoked excitement by suggesting Ronaldo could still play – for another team.

Speaking during an online interview with YouTuber and streamer IShowSpeed, Infantino made headlines by revealing ongoing conversations around the five-time Ballon d'Or winner's potential involvement.

"Ronaldo might play for one of the teams as well at the Club World Cup," Infantino said. "There are discussions with some clubs, so if any club is watching and is interested in hiring Ronaldo for the Club World Cup... who knows, who knows."

This summer's tournament, which kicks off on 14 June, will mark the beginning of a new era for the Club World Cup. Moving from its traditional December slot to a summer schedule, and expanding from seven to 32 teams, FIFA has opened up an additional transfer window from 1-10 June to allow clubs to secure last-minute reinforcements.

That window could be crucial in determining whether Ronaldo joins another team for a short-term stint. While there is no official confirmation of where



he might land, speculation is already swirling.

Spanish outlet Marca recently reported that an unnamed Brazilian club had extended an offer to the veteran striker. One possibility could be Botafogo, one of four Brazilian sides qualified for the tournament. When asked about the rumour, their head coach Renato Paiva responded with a smile and caution.

"Christmas is only in December," he joked. "But if he came, you can't say no to a star like that. I don't know anything – I'm just answering the question. But as I said, coaches always want the best. Ronaldo, even at his age, is still a goal-scoring machine. In a team that creates chance after chance, he would be good."

Botafogo, currently owned by American businessman John Textor – who also owns stakes in Premier League side Crystal Palace and French club Lyon – would be well-placed to afford a temporary marquee signing like Ronaldo. A short-term, high-impact deal could make commercial and sporting sense as they aim to make a statement on the global stage.

Other qualified clubs, including European giants like Real Madrid,

Juventus, Chelsea, and Manchester City, may also be keeping a close watch. Ronaldo's previous stints at Real and Juve were trophy-laden, and although a return to either club seems unlikely, the tournament's format opens doors for unexpected moves.

The idea of seeing Ronaldo square off against long-time rival Lionel Messi in the tournament has also captured fans' imaginations. Messi's Inter Miami are set to play the opening match on 14 June, with the Argentine legend hoping to lead his MLS side deep into the tournament. His group includes African giants Al Ahly, Portuguese powerhouse Porto, and Brazilian outfit Palmeiras.

Between them, Ronaldo and Messi dominated football's golden era, winning every Ballon d'Or from 2008 to 2017. Messi has since added three more to his tally, bringing his total to a record-breaking eight. But even at 40, Ronaldo remains fiercely competitive – and a return to the global stage could give fans one more glimpse of the iconic rivalry.

Whether it's with a South American side, a European contender, or an ambitious outsider, one thing is certain: if Ronaldo steps onto the pitch at the 2025 Club World Cup, the world will be watching.

# Garnacho told to leave Man Utd amid Amorim rift

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

**A**lejandro Garnacho's time at Manchester United appears to be nearing its end after manager Ruben Amorim reportedly told the winger he is free to leave the club this summer.

The decision comes just days after United's Europa League final defeat to Tottenham, where Garnacho was controversially brought on as a substitute in the 71st minute despite having played a key role in earlier rounds of the competition. The snub sparked public frustration from both Garnacho and his brother, with tensions escalating in the aftermath of the loss.

Speaking after the match, the 20-year-old Argentina international hinted at his dissatisfaction, stating: "Up until the final I played every round helping the team, and today I play 20 minutes, I don't know. The final will influence [my decision] but the whole season, the situation of the club. I'm going to try to enjoy the summer and see what happens afterwards."

His brother, Roberto, took to social media to further stoke the fire: "Working as no-one else, helping every round, coming from two goals in the last two finals, just to be on the pitch for 19 mins and get thrown under the bus."

As reported by The Athletic, Amorim has since informed Garnacho that he will be allowed to seek a move away from Old Trafford. The decision adds another twist to a strained relationship that has never truly settled since Amorim's arrival from Sporting CP earlier this season.

Though Garnacho is United's second-highest scorer this season with 11 goals, he has failed to consistently fit into Amorim's preferred tactical setup, which lacks a role for a traditional winger. The Argentine has often been forced to adapt to unfamiliar positions or been left out entirely, despite his contributions in key matches.

The fracture between manager and player dates back to December, just a month after Amorim took charge. Ahead of the Manchester derby, Amorim



controversially dropped both Garnacho and Marcus Rashford, citing concerns over "training performances, game performances, and engagement with teammates." While Rashford would remain sidelined longer, Garnacho was quickly recalled. Still, the rift never fully healed.

In Bilbao, during United's crucial Europa League semi-final, Amorim opted to start Amad Diallo and Mason Mount in more central attacking roles behind Rasmus Hojlund, again leaving Garnacho on the bench.

When asked about Garnacho's future in a press conference ahead of United's final Premier League fixture against Aston Villa, Amorim remained non-committal: "I will speak with my players but the focus is the last game. I don't know what is going to happen but we have a plan."

He added, "We were prepared for both situations, with Champions League and without. We have an idea of the type of squad we want, but we still have the last game. We have time to address all these situations."

With no European football next season, Amorim is preparing for a squad reshuffle and is reportedly looking to reduce numbers while targeting new signings. Garnacho's potential departure could

prove financially beneficial, particularly under the Premier League's Profit and Sustainability rules, as the player qualifies as 'homegrown'. His sale would provide greater spending flexibility in the transfer market.

Chelsea were close to securing Garnacho's signature in January before talks collapsed. Napoli, fresh from winning the Serie A title, are also believed to be interested in acquiring the dynamic winger, who joined United's academy from Atletico Madrid in 2020.

As for potential incomings, United have been strongly linked with Wolves forward Matheus Cunha, who has a £62.5 million release clause.

Whether or not Garnacho features against Villa this weekend remains to be seen. But his emotional post-match comments and Amorim's stance suggest that the Argentine's promising yet turbulent spell at Old Trafford may soon come to an end.

# Ten Hag set to replace Alonso at Leverkusen

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

**E**rik ten Hag is set to make a dramatic return to the dugout as he prepares to replace Xabi Alonso as manager of Bundesliga giants Bayer Leverkusen.

The Dutchman, who has been out of work since his sacking by Manchester United in October, is reportedly close to finalising terms with the German club. If confirmed, the appointment will mark Ten Hag's first managerial role since ending a mixed stint at Old Trafford and a fresh chapter in his coaching career.

The 55-year-old has been biding his time on the sidelines, rejecting several offers since his departure from Manchester United. According to sources close to Ten Hag, he had always intended to return to management this summer, ideally with a project that matched his ambitions and values. That opportunity now appears to have arrived in the form of Leverkusen.

The German club has been on the lookout for a new manager after the highly successful Alonso stepped down. Alonso, who guided Leverkusen to their first-ever Bundesliga title in 2024 with an unprecedented unbeaten league campaign, is expected to take over from Carlo Ancelotti at Real Madrid at the end of the season.

Alonso's departure leaves big shoes to fill at the BayArena, but Leverkusen believe Ten Hag is the ideal candidate to build on the Spaniard's impressive foundations. The club not only secured their historic league title last season but also completed a domestic double, lifting the DFB-Pokal with a victory over Kaiserslautern.

Though Leverkusen couldn't replicate that exact dominance this season, they still managed a second-place finish in



the Bundesliga and secured Champions League qualification, keeping them among Europe's elite.

Ten Hag will return to familiar territory if the move goes through. The Dutch tactician previously worked in Germany, spending two years in charge of Bayern Munich's second team from 2013 to 2015. During that time, he developed his tactical philosophy and formed key relationships that still resonate in the German football scene.

His career peaked at Ajax, where he built a youthful, exciting team that reached the semi-finals of the Champions League in 2019. That success earned him a move to Manchester United in 2022, where he initially enjoyed success, winning both the FA Cup and League Cup in his first two seasons. He also guided United to a third-place finish in the Premier League during the 2022–23 campaign.

However, Ten Hag's reign at Old Trafford unravelled quickly in his third season. A string of poor results, inconsistent performances, and mounting pressure led to his dismissal on 28 October 2024, following a 2-1 defeat away to West Ham United. While United briefly showed faith in him after an unexpected FA Cup final win over

Manchester City, patience ultimately ran out.

Despite that turbulent end, Ten Hag remains highly regarded across Europe for his tactical acumen, emphasis on youth development, and disciplined style of play. Leverkusen's management believe his track record and experience are well-suited to maintaining the club's recent upward trajectory.

His task at Leverkusen will be twofold: continue developing the exciting core of young talent that flourished under Alonso, and make a deep run in next season's Champions League. With the backing of a well-run club and a talented squad, Ten Hag could well re-establish himself among Europe's managerial elite.

An official announcement is expected in the coming days, with Ten Hag likely to assume his new role at the beginning of July, in line with his original plan for a summer return.

For Leverkusen fans, the arrival of a proven manager with European pedigree offers reason for optimism. And for Ten Hag, it's a chance to begin anew — in a league he knows, at a club ready to win.