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Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan writes IGP, accuses Akpabio of tarnishing her image

By Damilola Olufemi

The Senator representing Kogi Central, Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan, has petitioned the Inspector-General of Police (IGP) in Nigeria, Kayode Egbetokun, claiming that Senate President, Godswill Akpabio, orchestrated “a coordinated smear campaign” targeted at destroying her image.

Natasha claimed in a letter titled ‘Petition Against Coordinated Defamation and Cyberbullying by Sponsored Syndicate at the Behest of the President of the Senate – Godswill Akpabio,’ dated May 15, and accused the Senate President of “deploying media proxies to publish false and damaging stories” about her.

She refers to numerous online platforms which concurrently published articles on May 10, alleging she sponsored terrorism, orchestrated killings in Kogi central, and involvement in illegal arms deals.

“These publications were not only identical in content but also strategically timed and syndicated across various platforms in a manner that suggests a centrally coordinated attack,” Ehiogie West-Idahosa, counsel to the senator, wrote in the petition.



She added that the claim was “baseless, malicious, and defamatory,” but also posed a danger to her life, her family, and her political career and the posts published “cyberbullying and character assassination” orchestrated to delegitimise her as a federal lawmaker and create grounds for politically motivated investigations or legal actions.

The senator who was suspended some weeks ago referred to her being maligned during the Kogi state governorship election in 2023, as a contestant on the platform of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

Natasha calls for probing

She urged the IGP to probe Akpabio

and the media outlets involved, saying, “I respectfully request that your esteemed office investigate this matter thoroughly and bring to justice all individuals and organisations involved in this coordinated defamation campaign,” the petition reads.

“It is imperative that those who misuse their positions of power to intimidate and malign others are held accountable.

“This pattern of cyberbullying and political blackmail must not be allowed to continue unchecked.

“It poses a grave threat to democracy, free speech, and the integrity of our institutions,” she stated.

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How 34,000 Nigerians become U.S. citizens in two years

By Damilola Olufemi



More than 34,000 Nigerians officially became citizens of the United States through naturalisation between 2020 and 2022, according to fresh data published by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

The findings are part of the Naturalisations Annual Flow Report compiled by the Office of Homeland Security Statistics, which places Nigeria among the top 20 countries of origin for newly naturalised Americans during the period.

The report, which draws data from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), indicates that Nigeria ranked 15th overall and was the highest-ranking African nation on the list. Naturalisation is the process by which foreign nationals become U.S. citizens after fulfilling a set of criteria

outlined in the Immigration and Nationality Act.

According to the report, Nigerian naturalisation numbers steadily increased across the three years. In 2020, 8,930 Nigerians gained citizenship, accounting for 1.4 per cent of the total 628,258 naturalisations that year.

The following year saw that number rise to 10,921—an increase of over 22 per cent—as USCIS resumed operations following an 11-week COVID-19 lockdown that delayed many oath-taking ceremonies.

By 2022, naturalisations among Nigerians peaked at 14,438, representing a 32 per cent increase from the previous year. Over the three years, this amounted to an overall growth of nearly 59 per cent.

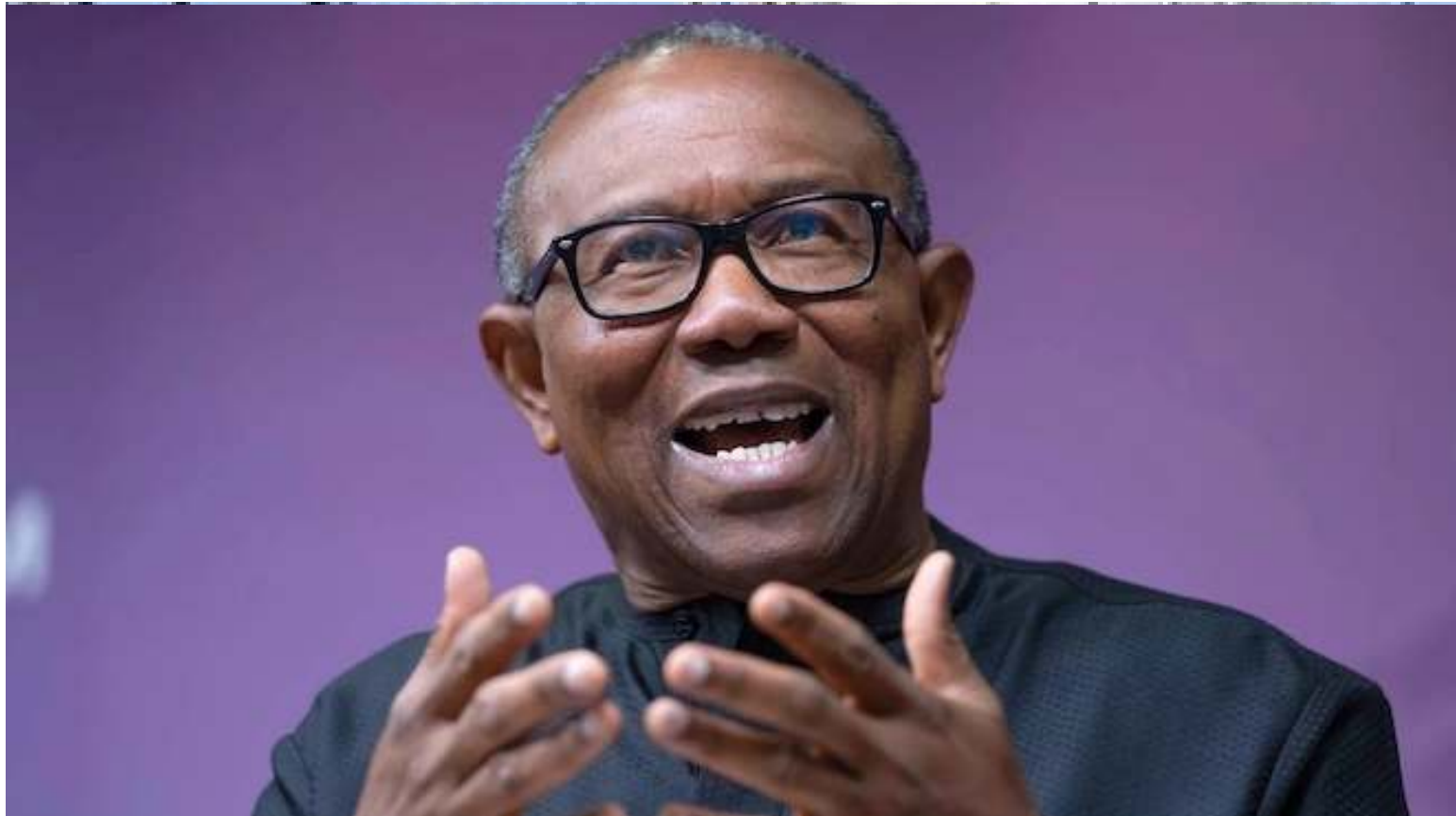
Naturalisation data is primarily sourced from Form N-400, the formal application submitted by individuals seeking American citizenship. Information captured includes an applicant's birth country, age, marital status, and U.S. state of residence. This data is processed through USCIS's digital systems and the Central Index System, which tracks cases from biometric screening to the final oath ceremony.

The benefits of naturalisation extend beyond legal residency. Once granted, new citizens receive nearly all the rights accorded to native-born Americans, such as voting rights and access to federal benefits.

Regionally, Nigeria was a standout performer on the African continent

Obi declares war on hunger, rejects coalitions ahead of 2027 election

By Friday Omosola



Peter Obi, the Labour Party's 2023 presidential candidate, has set the record straight amidst the mounting speculation over a possible alliance among opposition figures to challenge President Bola Tinubu in the 2027 presidential race.

The former Anambra State governor made it clear that his sole coalition of interest is one committed to tackling hunger, poverty, and Nigeria's failing healthcare and education systems.

During a visit to the Anglican Diocese of Kubwa in Abuja on Monday, Obi stressed that he was not pursuing political office out of desperation.

"My commitment is to a coalition against hunger, against poverty, and the deteriorating state of healthcare. For me, politics is not about chasing positions; it's about doing what is

right," he stated.

He lamented the country's focus on political manoeuvring at the expense of critical issues like improving education for Nigerian children.

In the 2023 election, Obi finished third behind Tinubu and PDP candidate Atiku Abubakar.

Many analysts have speculated that a united front between Obi, Atiku, and other opposition parties could unseat Tinubu in 2027.

Obi firmly rejected claims that he had agreed to serve as a vice presidential candidate in the next election, describing such rumours as selfish political games that undermine Nigeria's progress.

Additionally, Obi contributed

financially to a school development initiative in the diocese, highlighting how the church has had to shoulder significant responsibility due to the government's failure to provide free, quality basic education.

On Sunday at the Vatican, Obi was seen alongside former Ekiti State Governor Kayode Fayemi exchanging greetings with Tinubu after the inauguration Mass of Pope Leo XIV.

Addressing the encounter, Obi clarified that he is not an adversary of the President and extended the customary respect required by protocol during the visit.

He reiterated that his only true opponent remains corruption and the corrupt officials who have made life difficult for Nigerians.

2027: Why Nigeria's opposition is defecting to APC in drove

By Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi

An intensifying wave of defections from opposition parties to the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) is reshaping Nigeria's political landscape, less than two years into President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's administration. Findings by New Daily Prime suggest that beyond ideological realignments or internal party strife, the promise of automatic tickets and access to high-value federal contracts are at the heart of this political migration.

Multiple sources confirm that several governors and senators from the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and other opposition blocs are currently in advanced talks to defect. Although political cross-carpeting is common in Nigeria's democracy, its scale and frequency worry analysts, civil society groups, and the public.

Amid an economic downturn exacerbated by fuel subsidy removal, currency devaluation, and persistent insecurity, many Nigerians expected the opposition to rally and provide a united front ahead of the 2027 general elections. However, those hopes to appear to be dwindling. Coalition efforts spearheaded by former Vice President and 2023 PDP presidential candidate, Atiku Abubakar, are losing steam as key political figures abandon ship.

Insiders who spoke with New Daily Prime on condition of anonymity disclosed that numerous lawmakers have been enticed with guarantees of automatic re-election tickets under the APC platform. These political incentives are reportedly part of a broader strategy to bolster President Tinubu's bid for a second term.

Beyond electoral favours, allegations abound that financial inducements and multi-billion-naira government projects are being used to lure defectors. Although these claims have been consistently denied by official channels, they continue to gain traction within political circles.

A high-ranking political insider described the strategy as one designed to erode the foundations of the opposition. "This is



about draining the opposition of its strongest assets and consolidating dominance. Loyalty is being bought, not earned," the source revealed.

One of the most speculated targets is Osun State Governor Ademola Adeleke. Efforts by New Daily Prime to get official comments from his aides were unsuccessful; some outrightly declined to speak, while others remained evasive.

At present, Governor Sheriff Oborevwori of Delta State is the only sitting governor to have formally defected from the PDP to the APC, despite being elected on a PDP ticket in 2023. His defection is considered a significant coup for the ruling party.

The legislative chambers are experiencing an even more pronounced shift. Lawmakers at both the federal and state levels have continued to exit the opposition parties, with former governors, deputy governors, and long-serving legislators all finding new political homes under the APC. This trend suggests a well-coordinated effort to consolidate loyalists ahead of the 2027 election season.

A case in point is Senator Kawu Sumaila of Kano South, who recently left the New Nigeria People's Party (NNPP) for the APC. His defection sparked rumours that he was awarded projects worth over ₦90 billion for dam rehabilitation under the Ecological Fund.

Katsina State presents another telling example. All three PDP-elected members of the House of Representatives—Hon. Salisu Yusuf Majigiri, Hon. Abdullahi Balarabe Dabai, and Hon. Aliyu Ilyasu—have now defected to the APC. Repeated attempts to reach Dabai and Ilyasu were unsuccessful. Their phones appeared to be restricted, and inquiry messages sent to them were unanswered at press time. Majigiri, when contacted, confirmed he was collecting his APC membership card and declined to discuss the circumstances of his switch.

While definitive evidence of inducement remains elusive, the pattern of defections, coupled with persistent allegations, paints a compelling picture of political horse-trading under the guise of party realignment.

Democracy advocates warn that this trend threatens to erode Nigeria's multi-party system and weaken political accountability. Instead of encouraging constructive opposition and ideological debate, these defections may render opposition parties functionally irrelevant, turning elections into intra-party contests.

As Nigeria approaches another critical electoral juncture in 2027, a key question remains unanswered: are these defections a genuine realignment of political values—or simply a transactional scramble for power?

Sani blames rising insecurity on deep economic deprivation

By Friday Omosola

Kaduna State Governor Uba Sani has attributed the persistent insecurity in Northern Nigeria to deep-rooted poverty and widespread economic marginalisation.

He warned that meaningful progress will remain elusive without a comprehensive response to these challenges.

In an appearance on 'Channels Television's Sunday Politics', the governor reflected on his background as an activist, noting his long-standing advocacy for social justice even during Nigeria's military rule.

"I've always stood on the side of the people. I was detained multiple times for challenging injustice," he recalled.

Sani said he prioritised tackling deprivation and economic inequality upon assuming office, relying on data he had access to during his tenure as Chair of the Senate Committee on Banking.

"Upon becoming governor, I examined the poverty indicators not just in Kaduna but across the entire northern region. The figures I encountered from the Central Bank and Sustainable Development Goals reports were disturbing," he said.

The data revealed that as of 2023, a staggering 60 to 65 per cent of Northern Nigerians—particularly in the North-West—were financially marginalised.

Sani warned that such conditions leave many young people vulnerable to exploitation by criminal elements.

"Insecurity here is largely rooted in economic despair. When youths are unemployed and hopeless, they become easy targets for recruitment by armed groups," he stressed.

The governor also highlighted the education crisis, revealing that over 350,000 children were out of school in Kaduna State at the time he assumed office.



"Out of the estimated 18.2 million out-of-school children nationwide, around 70 per cent are in the North. We've been working closely with development partners like the World Bank and UNICEF to address this," he explained.

While some improvements have been made, Sani cautioned that resolving the crisis would require sustained effort and patience.

"This situation didn't emerge overnight. It's the result of years of neglect. We failed to respond when it mattered most," he acknowledged.

"We must now be realistic. It could take more than a decade to see significant change."

Calling for collective responsibility, he urged northern leaders across all levels to unite behind a common agenda to fight poverty and exclusion.

"It's time for honest reflection. Ministers, lawmakers, and governors must work together. For the first time, we seem to be aligned on this issue, and that gives me hope," he said.

He also criticised the overreliance on force and palliative measures, arguing that long-term peace would only come through economic and social investments.

"Throwing money at the problem or relying on military interventions won't solve anything. We need to close the development gap between urban centres and rural communities," he emphasised.

Sani pointed to deficits in basic infrastructure, schools, and healthcare across many parts of the North-West as major contributors to the region's challenges.

"There are communities that have been left behind for decades. These gaps are fueling despair and instability," he said.

On a positive note, the governor mentioned that Kaduna State has recorded a decline in communal clashes, particularly those linked to religious or farmer-herder tensions.

"We've seen a significant drop in those kinds of crises in the last couple of years. It's not completely gone, but the situation is far better than it was," he noted.

He urged government institutions to build public trust through fairness and equity.

"People want to see that they're being treated justly. Without justice, no amount of development will restore their confidence in the system," Sani said.

Lagos sets date to begin full enforcement of single-use plastics ban

By Friday Omosola



The Lagos State Government has announced that it will begin full enforcement of the ban on Single-Use Plastics (SUPs) across the state starting from 1 July 2025.

Commissioner for the Environment and Water Resources, Tokunbo Wahab, disclosed this during a courtesy visit by the management of Tetra Pak West Africa Limited to the Alausa Secretariat over the weekend.

Wahab stated that the decision to phase out SUPs, including Styrofoam food packs, was a deliberate and strategic move to address Lagos's unique environmental vulnerabilities.

This, he said, given its coastal location, limited landmass of 3,575 square kilometres, and its dense population accounting for 10% of the nation's total.

"The decision to ban single-use plastics in Lagos from early 2025 was an existential one, not taken whimsically. We banned

Styrofoam food packs in 2024 and clearly stated that all SUPs would be phased out within 12 months.

"Eighteen months later, full enforcement will now begin. By 1 July 2025, enforcement starts—and heavens will not fall," Wahab declared.

He added that the state had engaged extensively with stakeholders, particularly the Food and Beverages Recyclers Alliance (FBBRA), and had already achieved a compliance rate of approximately 70%.

Wahab urged manufacturers and distributors to take responsibility and adhere to global best practices.

"When producers, with due respect, try to undermine the system and introduce practices unacceptable elsewhere in the world, the government must stand firm," he said.

"We all have to do the right thing at the

right time for the greater good."

He further noted that while Styrofoam packs were relatively straightforward to eliminate, SUPs presented greater complexities.

However, the state intentionally delayed enforcement beyond the initial 12-month period to allow adequate time for transition and compliance.

Also speaking at the meeting, Haithem Debbiche, Managing Director of Tetra Pak West Africa, expressed full support for the Lagos State Government's ban.

He described the initiative as a step in the right direction for sustainability and environmental health.

"Tetra Pak has been in Nigeria since 1970 and we are committed to sustainability. We support the ban and recognise that while progress has been made, more work lies ahead," Debbiche said.

Aiyedatiwa pledges implementation of key reforms in UNIMED

By Friday Omosola



Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa of Ondo State has pledged to implement key reforms at the University of Medical Sciences (UNIMED), Ondo, following the submission of a comprehensive report by the institution's visitation panel.

Speaking in Akure on Monday while receiving members of the panel during a courtesy visit, Aiyedatiwa described their work as a crucial step towards institutional development and academic excellence.

The panel, tasked with reviewing the performance and structure of UNIMED, submitted a two-volume report detailing its findings and recommendations.

While commending the panel's diligence and objectivity, the governor expressed particular satisfaction with its decision to assess institutional roles rather than focus on individuals.

He emphasised that building enduring institutions requires a focus on structure

and continuity.

"What makes me particularly pleased is the fact that you focused not on individuals, but on the positions they occupy. That is how institutions are built and sustained," Aiyedatiwa said.

"Proper structures and processes must be in place to guide whoever assumes leadership roles within the university."

He assured the panel that its report would not be shelved but critically examined and acted upon.

"Your labour and sacrifices will yield visible results. The real reward is in seeing your recommendations drive real change in our university system," he added.

The governor reiterated his administration's commitment to transforming education in the state and stated that the ultimate goal is to position UNIMED as a world-class institution.

"The whole idea is to build a better

university—one that can compete globally, provide a top-tier learning environment, and become a model of excellence among specialised institutions," he said.

Earlier, the chairman of the panel, Victor Olumekun, revealed that the panel had worked tirelessly for eight weeks to undertake a thorough review of the university's operations.

"We focused on processes and systems. We deliberately avoided judging personalities and instead assessed the positions and the roles they occupy.

"We believe every officeholder should be guided by structure, accountability, and performance standards," Olumekun stated.

He also advocated for a culture of annual performance reviews within universities to promote continuous improvement and ensure administrators remain aligned with institutional objectives throughout their tenures.

Lagos health workers get scrubs, crocs from First Lady's initiative

By Helen Okechukwu

Nurses and midwives in Lagos State have received new professional kits, including scrubs and Crocs, under the Renewed Hope Initiative (RHI) led by Nigeria's First Lady, Senator Oluremi Tinubu.

The kits were officially presented on Monday by the First Lady of Lagos State, Dr. Claudiana Sanwo-Olu, during a ceremony at the Banquet Hall of the Office of the First Lady in Alausa, Ikeja.

The event was also attended by the wife of the Deputy Governor, Mrs. Oluremi Hamzat, and other top officials from the Lagos State Ministry of Health.

Dr. Sanwo-Olu, who is the Lagos State Coordinator of the Renewed Hope Initiative, praised the national First Lady for her commitment to improving healthcare, especially for mothers and children.



"This presentation is more than a distribution of kits, it is a message that we acknowledge your dedication, celebrate your service, and stand with you in delivering quality healthcare," she said.

Read Also: UI authorities raise alarm over egg donation by female students
The donation is part of a larger effort that

has seen the RHI launched across all six geopolitical zones of Nigeria.

Lagos follows Ondo

Lagos is the latest to benefit, following the South-West rollout in Akure, Ondo State, where 10,000 sets of scrubs and Crocs were distributed.

The items were handed over through the Lagos State Primary Health Care Board. Dr. Sanwo-Olu promised that the government would continue to support frontline health workers, describing nurses and midwives as "pillars of strength" in the health sector.

Also speaking at the event, Mrs. Oluremi Hamzat praised the Renewed Hope Initiative for making a positive impact.

She noted that giving health workers the right tools helps improve maternal and child health services across the state.

Kano govt, GAMMUN lead hypertension awareness campaign

By Helen Okechukwu

The Kano State Government, in partnership with the GAMMUN Centre for Care and Development, has reaffirmed its commitment to preventing and managing hypertension through public awareness and advocacy.

During a sensitisation rally for World Hypertension Day 2025, Health Commissioner Dr Abubakar Labaran said the state will continue to raise awareness, promote early detection, and improve treatment for non-communicable diseases (NCDs).



cancer, and mental health disorders.

He highlighted progress under the National Hypertension Control Initiative (NHCI), which has trained 412 health workers across 208 primary healthcare centres, expanding hypertension care from 52 to 260 PHCs in the state.

Mental health and psychosocial support services were also added to the training to ensure holistic patient care.

As part of the campaign, the government screened over 158,000 people for hypertension and diabetes in one week, diagnosing 26,900 with hypertension and 4,747 with diabetes.

Dr Labaran urged residents to check their blood pressure regularly and adopt healthy habits such as reduced salt intake, exercise, and avoiding alcohol and tobacco.

A stakeholder, Hussein Namadi of the Association of People Living with Hypertension, pledged continued support for awareness campaigns and policy advocacy.

FG to tackle hypertension

According to Voice of Nigeria (VON), Dr Labaran noted that Governor Abba Kabir Yusuf has prioritised strengthening the health system, especially to tackle hypertension, diabetes, sickle cell disease,

Temporary ban on sachet alcohol valid till December 31 – NAFDAC

By **Damilola Olufemi**



The National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) has explained its standpoint on the nationwide ban on sachet alcohol.

Mr. Kenneth Azikiwe, Director of the FCT Directorate of the agency, while addressing the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) on Monday stated that the temporary lifting of the ban is only valid until December 31, 2025.

He shared that the contemporary ministerial lifting of the sachet alcohol ban is not permanent and implored Nigerians to dismiss any false information saying otherwise.

“There is a ministerial lifting on the ban on sachet alcohol, but it is only

temporary and will be reviewed by December 31, 2025.

“After this date, the full enforcement of the ban will commence.

“The minister granted this temporary relief to allow manufacturers and regulators time to collaborate and ensure a more structured and effective implementation of the ban,” he said.

He emphasised that the agency has sensitised Nigerians on the sachet alcohol ban.

“We have sensitised distributors, and we’ve emphasised that alcohol should not be sold to individuals under the age of 18, which is also clearly indicated on product labels,” he added.

Azikiwe also commended the Distillers and Beverages Association of Nigeria (DIBAN) for supporting the awareness drive.

He reassured the public that NAFDAC remained fully committed to regulating alcohol consumption and reiterated that sachet alcohol products containing less than 200 millilitres would be phased out after December 2025.

Recall that NAFDAC began enforced the ban of sachet alcohol on February 1, 2024. The ban covers alcohol sold in sachets or PET bottles smaller than 200ml.

Africa CDC, Unitaid sign MoU to boost production of health products in Africa

By Helen Okechukwu

To strengthen and improve quality access to medicines, diagnostics, and medical oxygen, the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), in a strategic partnership with Unitaid, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding to enhance the manufacturing of health products in Africa.

Unitaid, established in 2006, is a global health organisation that helps people in low- and middle-income countries get fast access to new and affordable health products, with over 100 important tools provided.

This deal, which was signed during the 78th World Health Assembly, aims to improve a sustainable regional manufacturing system, positioning it as a central pillar of Africa's health security and autonomy.

Despite struggling with 25 per cent of the global disease burden, Africa actively imports 95% of its pharmaceutical ingredients, with 70% of them being consumed.

The health organisations stated that India has about 10,000 pharmaceutical production sites, and China has 5,000 sites, but the African continent accounts for only 600 health product manufacturing sites serving a population of 1.1 billion.

Targeting equitable access to pharmaceutical products, the partnership aims to leverage innovative technologies developed



within and outside Africa in building capacity that will prioritise health products.

“These efforts will target key health priorities such as HIV, tuberculosis, malaria, hepatitis, cervical cancer, sexually transmitted infections, and other diseases and conditions – particularly those affecting women and children,” the statement noted.

Dr. Jean Kaseya, Director-General of the Africa CDC, reiterated the goals of the partnership in building a resilient future for Africa with quality access to health products for African citizens.

Dr. Jean said, “Together with Unitaid, we are building on African expertise, expanding our regional manufacturing capacity, and strengthening our ability to produce essential health products reliably, affordably, and closer to where they are needed.”

The two partners' strategic agreement

focuses on tackling regulatory, financing, and market barriers limiting regional health production in Africa.

The collaboration aims to strengthen pandemic preparedness and ensure faster, more equitable access to essential health tools that are developed and manufactured within the continent.

“By expanding regional production, we can help reduce supply chain risks and ensure faster, more equitable access to lifesaving products while investing in industry development in the region,” said Dr. Philippe Duneton, Executive Director of Unitaid.

Guided by a shared action plan, the partnership will focus on innovation in diagnostics and treatments, improving local manufacturing, expanding access to medical oxygen, and advocating for African-led health solutions.

Mushrooms might treat Parkinson, study suggests

By **Helen Okechukwu**



A new study, which is at its early stage of development, has suggested that mushrooms could be used to treat patients suffering from Parkinson's disease due to a component found in them.

A group of researchers from the University of California at San Francisco, in a report published in the journal *Neuropsychopharmacology*, highlighted this discovery using the hallucinogenic drug psilocybin.

The hallucinogenic drug psilocybin, found in magic mushrooms, according to the report, has potential benefits and may aid in improving mood, cognition, and motor symptoms for those who suffer from the degenerative movement disorder.

By 2040, a report disclosed that the number of Americans diagnosed with Parkinson's is expected to double.

With this development, it is good news for more than one million Americans living with Parkinson's—the second-

most common neurodegenerative disease after Alzheimer's.

Dr. Ellen Bradley, an assistant professor and associate director of UCSF's Translational Psychedelic Research Program and the first author of the paper, expressed optimism after the study showed improvement beyond expectations.

In the first-ever trial of a psychedelic drug on a neurodegenerative disease, researchers found that psilocybin, the active compound in magic mushrooms, was well-tolerated by Parkinson's patients and showed potential therapeutic benefits.

Mushroom study participants
The small study involved 12 participants (7 men, 5 women) who received two doses—10 mg and 25 mg—two weeks apart, combined with psychotherapy sessions.

Though some experienced temporary anxiety, nausea, or elevated blood

pressure, there were no serious side effects or worsening of symptoms.

At follow-ups a week and a month later, patients reported improvements in mood, cognition, and motor symptoms. One participant, Jeff Deming, said, "Physically, I feel better than I did 2-3 years ago."

Psilocybin mimics serotonin activity in the brain, which is often impaired in Parkinson's disease. Researchers believe its mood-boosting effects could help patients stay more active and socially engaged.

Lead researcher Dr. Joshua Woolley from UCSF said the results raise hope that psilocybin might one day help the brain repair itself.

A larger trial is now underway with 100 participants across two sites, including Yale University. The study is supported by an anonymous donor and the Michael J. Fox Foundation.

Pasuma escapes thug attack on convoy in Osun

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Tension gripped the town of Ikire in Osun State on Sunday as suspected hoodlums launched a violent attack on the convoy of renowned Fuji musician, Alhaji Wasiu Alabi Pasuma.

The incident, which occurred in the Irewole Local Government Area, shocked residents and temporarily shut down businesses.

Sudden violence in broad daylight

The attack happened in the afternoon and caught many residents and passers-by off guard. Witnesses said the attackers emerged without warning and began hurling stones at the vehicles in the convoy. Moments later, gunshots rang out, causing panic in the area.

Two vehicles, a black Hummer Jeep and a white Hilux truck, bore the brunt of the assault. Eyewitnesses said both cars sustained heavy damage, with shattered windows and dented bodywork visible after the incident.

“There was noise everywhere. People were running. I thought it was armed robbers,” said a local shop owner who spoke on condition of anonymity. “We had to close our shops and lie down until it stopped.”

Residents run for cover

As the attack continued, panic spread quickly. Residents ran for safety while traders hurriedly shut their stalls. Vehicles stopped in the middle of the road as drivers and passengers ducked to avoid getting caught in the violence. Children walking home from school were seen running with fear in their eyes, while others hid inside nearby buildings.

Some witnesses said the attackers appeared to be targeting the musician, although the motive behind the assault remains unclear. “It looked planned. They were many, and they focused only on the vehicles in the convoy,” a bystander claimed.

Purpose of visit unclear



Reports suggest that Pasuma was in Osun State for a musical performance, although full details of the visit were not confirmed at the time of the incident. It is also unclear whether the Fuji star was inside one of the attacked vehicles when the assault occurred.

There was no information on whether any member of his entourage sustained injuries during the attack. The damaged vehicles were later moved away from the scene by security agents and aides.

Police yet to respond

As of the time of filing this report, the Osun State Police Command had not issued any official statement regarding the incident. There was no confirmation of any arrests, and it is not known if an investigation has started.

The lack of immediate response from law enforcement has left many residents concerned. Several people in the area called on the police to act fast and ensure those responsible are brought to justice.

“We are no longer safe. If someone like Pasuma can be attacked in broad daylight, then who is safe?” said another resident. “We need the government and security agencies to protect us.”

Growing concerns over insecurity Sunday’s attack has sparked fresh concerns about security in Osun State. The town of Ikire, usually peaceful, has now become the center of public worry. Community leaders have urged residents to remain calm and vigilant while calling for improved security measures.

Some residents fear the incident may discourage public events and visits by high-profile individuals to the area. Others believe the attack was a targeted move by local gangs to send a message or assert control.

“We can’t allow thugs to control our towns,” a local youth leader said. “We want peace, and we want safety for everyone, whether you are a celebrity or a regular citizen.”

What’s next?

While the dust has settled for now, the people of Ikire are still reeling from the shock. Many expect answers from the police and are hoping for swift justice.

The attack on Pasuma’s convoy serves as a reminder of the growing need for security presence in public spaces and on Nigerian roads. Until law enforcement steps up, residents say, the fear may linger longer than the sound of the gunshots.

Having a child made me appreciate my parents more, Johnny Drille reflects on fatherhood journey

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigerian singer and songwriter John Ighodaro, widely known as Johnny Drille, has shared personal insights into fatherhood and how it has reshaped his view on family and life.

In a heartfelt interview with Dose Of Society, the soulful artist opened up about the emotional journey of becoming a father. He described parenthood as a profound and life-changing experience that deepened his respect and love for his parents.

A new chapter begins

Johnny Drille and his wife, Rima Tahini, welcomed their first child on November 17, 2023. Their baby girl, Amaris Esohe Ighodaro, marked the beginning of a new chapter for the couple. The announcement, which was met with warm congratulations from fans and colleagues, revealed the singer's joy and excitement at stepping into fatherhood.

Now, several months later, Drille is reflecting on how much his life has changed.

“Family first, always”

Speaking candidly, Drille emphasized that family remains the most important part of his life.

“The one rule I live by is family first,” he said. “I would abandon anything I’m doing anywhere in the world if my family needs me.”

This principle, he explained, has guided him throughout his career and continues to shape his decisions as both a husband and a father.

He described his family as his anchor, a constant source of strength in times of uncertainty.

“Family has always been my support



system,” he shared. “Every time I got overwhelmed by the world around me, I always run back to family. And it all felt better.”

A tribute to his parents

Drille’s reflections on parenthood naturally led him to think about his own upbringing. He expressed deep gratitude to his parents, who, despite financial hardships, did everything they could to provide a loving home.

“My parents didn’t have much,” he recalled. “I remember it was really hard sometimes and we would not have food to eat, and they would figure out a way to provide for us.”

Looking back, he realizes how much effort his parents made to protect their children from the harsh realities of life.

“They just made it work and made it fun for us. Back then, it looked fun. But now, when I think about it, I know they were shielding us from a lot.”

This realization has grown stronger since the birth of his daughter.

“Now I have a daughter, and I understand what it feels like to nurture someone,” he said. “Right now, I appreciate my parents even more, for what they did for me and

my siblings.”

Parenthood: A life-changing journey

For Drille, becoming a parent has not only brought joy but also a new sense of purpose. He spoke about how the experience changes a person in the most unexpected ways.

“Having a child changes your life in the most incredible ways,” he said. “And I think that’s not talked about enough.”

He added that fatherhood has made him more aware of the challenges his parents faced and the sacrifices they made.

“I’m grateful I had parents who nurtured me, especially in a crazy world like this. They helped me find my way through life.”

A message of gratitude

Johnny Drille’s words paint a picture of a man who is not only enjoying the beauty of fatherhood but is also using it as a mirror to reflect on the values that shaped him. His story serves as a reminder of the strength of family and the lasting impact of love and sacrifice.

As he continues to grow as an artist, husband, and now a father, Drille remains grounded in the values that have always guided him, family, gratitude, and love.

Stonebwoy angry I chose Shatta Wale to host me in Ghana, Peller says

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Popular Nigerian online streamer and content creator, Habeeb Hamzat, better known as Peller, has stirred up controversy after revealing a personal rift with Ghanaian dancehall star Stonebwoy.

According to Peller, Stonebwoy is unhappy with him for choosing fellow Ghanaian musician Shatta Wale as his host during a recent visit to Ghana.

Peller made this known during a live conversation with Nigerian singer Peter Okoye of the famous music duo P-Square. The streamer did not hold back as he shared details of what appears to be a growing tension between him and Stonebwoy.

“He’s angry because I picked Shatta”

In the livestream, Peller explained that Stonebwoy initially reached out and offered to welcome him to Ghana. The artist reportedly showed interest in playing host and spending time with Peller during his stay. However, despite Stonebwoy’s approach, Peller eventually chose Shatta Wale instead.

“Stonebwoy is mad at me because he said he’d take me to Ghana, but I ended up choosing Shatta Wale,” Peller said during the session. He added that this decision has affected his friendship with Stonebwoy, who now seems distant and displeased.

Why he chose Shatta Wale

Peller did not go into deep details about what influenced his decision, but sources close to the content creator say he has developed a close bond with Shatta Wale over the past year. Both have appeared in several livestreams together, and Shatta Wale has openly praised Peller’s creativity and sense of humor.

Some fans believe that Peller’s connection with Shatta Wale feels more natural and energetic. They see their friendship as a better match, especially for entertainment and social media



content. That may have made the streamer lean toward Wale despite Stonebwoy’s earlier offer.

Fans react to the drama

The online community has reacted strongly to Peller’s comments. Many fans have taken sides, with some accusing Peller of being disloyal to Stonebwoy. Others, however, believe he has the right to choose who he feels more comfortable with.

One fan on social media wrote, “Peller should be free to choose. It’s not that deep.” Another user replied, “But Stonebwoy was the first to reach out. That feels like a slap in the face.”

As the drama unfolds, both Stonebwoy and Shatta Wale have remained silent on the matter. Neither of them has made any public comment since the livestream aired.

Peller’s rise as a content creator

Habeeb Hamzat, known widely as Peller, has gained massive popularity in recent years through his online skits, game streams, and humorous takes on pop culture. His content attracts thousands of views, and he has built a strong fan base across West Africa.

Thanks to his rising fame, Peller has

grown close to several top music acts, both in Nigeria and Ghana. This has helped him cross into new markets and audiences. Collaborating with musicians like Shatta Wale and engaging with stars like Peter Okoye has boosted his profile.

A growing rift in Ghanaian music?

Though this may seem like a simple case of personal preference, some observers believe it may highlight deeper tensions within Ghana’s music industry. The rivalry between Stonebwoy and Shatta Wale is well-known. Both stars have competed fiercely for years, with fans often clashing online over who represents Ghana better.

By choosing one over the other, Peller may have unintentionally reignited those tensions. Some entertainment watchers say it’s a reminder of how sensitive relationships in the industry can be.

What’s next for Peller?

Despite the backlash, Peller remains focused on creating content and growing his brand. He has not apologized for his decision and continues to post regular updates for his followers. During the livestream with Peter Okoye, he appeared relaxed and unbothered by the controversy.

Dawn Richard returns to stand as week two of Diddy trial unfolds

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



The second week of Sean “Diddy” Combs’s criminal trial is underway, with more government witnesses expected to take the stand, including singer and former Danity Kane member Dawn Richard, who testified again on Friday.

Richard recounted a disturbing 2009 incident involving Combs and his ex-girlfriend, Casandra “Cassie” Ventura. According to Richard’s testimony, Combs allegedly assaulted Ventura with a frying pan while she was cooking eggs for him. The courtroom remained tense as the account added to a mounting list of violent claims surrounding the music mogul.

Combs, 55, is currently facing five serious criminal charges, including sex trafficking, racketeering conspiracy, and transportation to engage in prostitution. He has pleaded not guilty to all counts.

Sean “Diddy” Combs raises his hands as he is pointed out by Dawn Richard during

Combs’s sex trafficking trial Friday in New York City. (Jane Rosenberg/Reuters)

At the center of the trial are allegations made by Ventura, 38, who testified for four days last week. She described being coerced into organizing and participating in what she called drug-fueled “freak offs”—sex parties involving male prostitutes. According to Ventura, the events were not consensual but orchestrated under pressure, with threats and violence playing a significant role.

She detailed one 2016 incident at the InterContinental hotel in Los Angeles, where she claims she was physically assaulted by Combs while attempting to escape a freak off. Video footage of that attack, obtained and released by CNN last year, has become a key piece of evidence. Ventura further alleged that Combs used sex tapes to blackmail her into silence.

Combs’s legal team has portrayed the relationship between the pair as mutually

destructive and heavily influenced by substance abuse. They acknowledge instances of domestic violence but deny that Combs committed the crimes outlined in the charges. During cross-examination, Ventura was confronted with hundreds of text messages, some of which suggested she had willingly engaged in the freak offs.

The trial, which is expected to last eight weeks, is closely watched not only due to Combs’s celebrity status but also because of the explosive nature of the allegations. In addition to the criminal case, Combs faces over 70 civil complaints, including one filed by Richard. He has consistently denied all allegations in both the criminal and civil suits.

As the proceedings continue, the courtroom and public await further testimonies that could determine the future of one of hip-hop’s most powerful and controversial figures.

US VP Vance, Rubio received by Pope Leo XIV at Vatican

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



In a symbolic step toward resetting strained ties with the Vatican, Vice President J.D. Vance and Secretary of State Marco Rubio met with Pope Leo XIV on Monday to open a new chapter in U.S.-Vatican relations, centred around shared efforts to resolve global conflicts, including the war in Ukraine.

The high-level meeting marks the first formal encounter between the Trump administration and the newly elected Pope Leo XIV, the first American-born pontiff, whose peacemaking priorities appear to align with President Donald Trump's recent diplomatic agenda. The meeting follows the sudden death of Pope Francis last month, one day after a controversial meeting with Vice President Vance.

Pope Leo, in his inaugural Mass on Sunday, made an impassioned appeal for peace across several crisis zones. "Gaza's surviving children, families, older people are reduced to hunger," he said. "In Myanmar, unrest has cut short innocent young lives. And Ukraine awaits negotiations for a fair and lasting peace."

While the Vatican released only a brief

statement confirming the papal audience, it said Vance also held "cordial talks" with Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, the Vatican's foreign minister, discussing "ecclesial life and religious freedom," humanitarian law, and peaceful resolutions in war zones.

Images posted by L'Osservatore Romano, the Vatican's official newspaper, showed a smiling Pope Leo standing beside Vance, holding a Chicago Bears jersey personalized with "Pope Leo XIV"—a light-hearted diplomatic gesture that hinted at warmer relations ahead.

Secretary Rubio, for his part, met Saturday with Cardinal Matteo Zuppi, the Vatican's envoy on Ukraine, to discuss the Holy See's role in facilitating peace negotiations. Rubio voiced support for the Vatican as a neutral site for talks between Russia and Ukraine, and as a mediator in the effort to repatriate hundreds of Ukrainian children taken to Russia during the conflict.

"We thank the Holy See for its willingness to be involved in this process," Rubio said. "I think it's a place

that both sides would be comfortable going."

The Trump administration, seeking to present the president as a global "peacemaker," has ramped up its diplomatic outreach in recent weeks. Officials point to several efforts that mirror the Vatican's goals, including a proposed ceasefire in Gaza and Trump's scheduled calls this week with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.

Monday's meeting represents a key moment of convergence between Washington and the Vatican after years of tension during Pope Francis's tenure, especially over immigration policy. Vance had previously clashed with Francis over his use of a medieval Catholic doctrine to defend strict border enforcement.

With Leo XIV now seated at the helm of the Catholic Church, U.S. officials hope a renewed spiritual and strategic alliance will bear fruit, not only in Ukraine but in a broader campaign for peace across global conflict zones.

Supreme Court clears way for Trump to end deportation protection for Venezuelans in US

By **Fatimah Idera**

The U.S. Supreme Court allowed Donald Trump's administration to strip temporary protected status from approximately 350,000 Venezuelans living in the United States, granted under his predecessor Joe Biden.

This decision is part of Trump's hardline approach to immigration, aiming to ramp up deportations.

The court granted the Justice Department's request to lift a San Francisco-based U.S. District Judge Edward Chen's order.

Chen's order had halted Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem's decision to terminate deportation protection for Venezuelans under the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) program.

However the court's brief order was unsigned, typical for emergency requests. However, it left open the door for challenges if the administration seeks to invalidate work permits or TPS-related documents expiring in October 2026.



Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson who is the sole member of the court to publicly dissent from the decision. Granting the administration's request would strip work authorization from nearly 350,000 people, expose them to deportation to an unsafe country, and cost billions in economic losses nationwide.

Currently advises against travel to Venezuela due to high risks of wrongful detentions, terrorism, kidnapping, crime, civil unrest, and poor health

infrastructure.

The U.S. government under Biden designated Venezuela for TPS in 2021 and 2023, with an extension to October 2026. Trump has pledged to deport record numbers of migrants in the U.S. illegally and strip certain migrants of temporary legal protections. The Trump administration terminated TPS for thousands of Afghans and Cameroonians in the United States in April.

CBS news chief out, resignation cites disagreement over future direction

By **Elizabeth Jenrola Oso**

Wendy McMahon, President and CEO of CBS News, is stepping down due to disagreements with the company's direction.

In a memo to staff, McMahon stated that the last few months have been challenging and that it's clear she and the company don't see eye-to-eye on the future. "It's time for me to move on and for this organization to move forward with new leadership," she wrote.

This decision comes amid a lawsuit filed by Donald Trump against CBS, alleging



the network edited an interview with Kamala Harris to favor the Democratic Party in the November election.

Trump initially sought \$10 billion in damages, later increasing the claim to

\$20 billion. CBS denies the allegations, calling the lawsuit completely without merit and seeking its dismissal. The case is currently in mediation.

The departure of McMahon follows that of Bill Owens, executive producer of 60 Minutes, who also cited concerns over editorial independence. Paramount Global, the parent company of CBS, is preparing for an \$8.4 billion merger with Skydance Media, pending FCC approval. Notably, Trump previously threatened to revoke CBS' broadcasting license if elected.

Joe Biden diagnosed with aggressive form of prostate cancer

By Fatimah Idera



Former President of the United States of America, Joe Biden, has been diagnosed with an aggressive form of prostate cancer.

The diagnosis was made after a small lump was discovered during a routine physical examination, and further evaluation confirmed the presence of cancer with a Gleason score of 9 (Grade Group 5) and metastasis to the bone.

According to his spokesman, Biden experienced increasing urinary symptoms, which led to the discovery of the prostate nodule.

“Last week, President Joe Biden was seen for a new finding of a prostate nodule after experiencing increasing urinary symptoms,” the spokesman said. “On Friday, he was diagnosed with prostate cancer, characterised by a Gleason score of 9 (Grade Group 5) with metastasis to the bone.”

The cancer is considered high-grade due to the Gleason score, indicating that the cancerous cells look quite different from normal cells. Since the cancer has spread to the bones, treatment will be more complex. However, the tumour appears to be hormone-sensitive, allowing effective management through treatments that deprive the tumours of hormones.

Reacting to the news, Donald Trump said, “Melania and I are saddened to hear about Joe Biden’s recent medical diagnosis. We extend our warmest and best wishes to Jill and the family, and we wish Joe a fast and successful recovery.”

Kamala Harris, Biden’s former vice president, expressed her support, saying, “Joe is a fighter and I know he will face this challenge with the same strength, resilience, and optimism

that have always defined his life and leadership. We are hopeful for a full and speedy recovery.”

UK Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer also extended his well-wishes, stating, “I am very sorry to hear President Biden has prostate cancer. All the very best to Joe, his wife Jill, and their family.”

This diagnosis comes after Biden, 82, faced scrutiny over his health and mental fitness towards the end of his presidency. Despite these concerns, his doctor, Kevin O’Connor, gave him a clean bill of health last year, stating that Biden “feels well and continues to be fit for duty.”

Biden had made a cancer moonshot initiative a priority in 2022, aiming to halve the cancer death rate, motivated by the loss of his older son, Beau, to the disease.

UK's largest gas storage facility faces shutdown

By **Fatimah Idera**

Britain's largest gas storage facility, Rough, is facing potential closure unless the government agrees to help fund its £2 billion redevelopment.

The facility, owned by Centrica, represents half of the UK's natural gas storage capacity and could be decommissioned without state support. Chris O'Shea, Centrica's CEO, warned that Rough would shut down, and the site would be dismantled, resulting in the loss of resilience in the UK's energy supply.

The facility, which lost £100 million last year, currently holds enough gas to meet Britain's needs for six days, half of the nation's total capacity.

If upgraded, Rough could provide up to 30 days of supplies. Without it, the nation's reserves could drop to just six days, significantly lower than countries like Germany, France, and the Netherlands, which



have around 100 days of reserves.

Centrica is seeking a cap-and-floor mechanism to fund the project, which would guarantee funding underwritten by a levy on consumer bills. The company has stopped filling the facility amid concerns about its financial viability due to falling wholesale gas prices. O'Shea stated that the site's closure would increase the risk of Britain running out of gas during a crisis, potentially leading to blackouts.

Govt open to dialogue on gas storage sites proposals

The government remains open to discussing proposals for gas storage sites, provided they offer value for taxpayers. However, O'Shea expressed doubts about achieving the government's 2030 target for a clean power grid, calling it very challenging. He believes the target is ambitious but uncertain, and having such a goal might still bring the country closer to achieving it.

Read more: Britain secures fuel shipment to keep its last steel blast furnaces alight

O'Shea's concerns about the 2030 target come amid analyst warnings that the UK may fall short of its renewable energy goals. The Energy Secretary faces pressure to adjust the pace of Britain's transition to renewables, considering the potential impact on energy bills and the country's energy security.

Trump's Treasury Secretary blames Biden for US credit downgrade

By **Fatimah Idera**

Donald Trump's Treasury Secretary, Scott Bessent, has attributed the United States of America's losing its top credit rating to Joe Biden's policies.

Bessent claimed that the Biden administration's spending over the past four years is responsible for Moody's decision to downgrade its rating of American debt.

"We didn't get here in the past 100 days," Bessent said on NBC's Meet the Press. "It's the Biden administration and the spending that we have seen over the past four years that we inherited." The downgrade means US government debt is now seen as higher risk, potentially leading to higher interest rates on future



borrowing.

Moody's became the last of the big three Wall Street credit rating agencies to strip the US of its triple-A status, citing a significant increase in government debt and interest payment ratios. Bessent downplayed the significance of the downgrade, stating that major investors like Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE are

still investing in the US, with some making 10-year investment plans.

"The Moody's downgrade, who cares?" Bessent said. "Moody's is a lagging indicator — that's what everyone thinks of credit agencies." This perspective is disputed, however, as some analysts believe the downgrade could increase yields on US Treasuries, raising borrowing costs for the federal government.

Trump has repeatedly blamed Biden for US economic issues, including last month's economic shrinkage. The credit rating agency warned that US finances are likely to worsen, especially with Trump's proposed tax cuts and ongoing tariff battles expected to slow growth and stoke inflation.

Two Mexican navy cadets killed as training ship hits Brooklyn Bridge

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

A promotional naval tour turned tragic over the weekend when Mexico's naval training ship Cuauhtémoc collided with the iconic Brooklyn Bridge, killing two cadets and critically injuring 11 others. The incident sent shockwaves across Mexico and the international maritime community, as the historic vessel's masts were snapped during the collision, halting a celebratory world voyage.

The accident occurred as the Cuauhtémoc, a majestic 297-foot-long sailing ship carrying 277 people, lost power while navigating the East River amid strong tides and a steady 10 mph wind. Eyewitnesses watched in horror as the vessel's towering masts struck the underside of the bridge, splintering on impact and crashing down onto the deck.

Videos posted online captured the dramatic moment of impact, with sailors in ceremonial uniforms visibly clinging to yardarms moments before disaster struck. Witnesses described seeing a sailor dangling from a harness for nearly 15 minutes before being rescued. Two people were carried off the ship on stretchers and transferred to smaller boats for urgent medical care.

President Claudia Sheinbaum of Mexico confirmed the fatalities early Sunday in a post on X (formerly Twitter), expressing deep sorrow over the loss of two young cadets: Adal Jair Marcos, 22, of Puebla (originally from Oaxaca), and América Yamilet Sánchez of Xalapa, Veracruz. Both were reportedly on the same mast at the time of the crash.

"Our solidarity and support go out to their families," Sheinbaum wrote. "The ministry of the navy, with support from local authorities, is currently attending to the wounded."

A government bulletin later reported 22



total injuries, 11 of which were classified as critical. Nine others were listed in stable condition. The Navy vowed to investigate the accident thoroughly, pledging support and transparency to the affected families.

The Cuauhtémoc, commissioned in 1982 and operated by the Mexican Navy, has long symbolized Mexican naval pride and diplomacy. Each year, the vessel embarks on international tours to complete the training of naval cadets, representing Mexico in ports around the globe. Its current voyage was a 254-day mission commemorating the 200th anniversary of Mexico's independence from Spain, with stops scheduled in 15 countries, including the UK and several Caribbean nations.

The ship departed from Acapulco on April 6 with 64 women and 213 men on board. Its voyage has now been suspended indefinitely.

Despite the terrifying collision, no injuries were reported on the bridge itself. New York City Mayor Eric Adams confirmed in a Facebook post that the bridge sustained no structural damage.

The Brooklyn Bridge, a symbol of American engineering since 1883, accommodates over 100,000 vehicles and 32,000 pedestrians daily.

By Sunday morning, the full extent of the damage to the Cuauhtémoc was visible. Photos showed the vessel docked with two masts completely shattered and a third precariously tilted. Uniformed Mexican naval personnel were seen boarding the ship, likely beginning damage assessment and recovery operations.

For many, the tragedy is a sobering reminder of the risks inherent in naval service. In its statement, the Mexican Navy emphasized its commitment to safeguarding personnel and supporting affected families: "The navy, aware of the risks naval personnel face in their operations, deeply regrets what happened and reaffirms its commitment to the crew's families."

The world tour meant to spread a message of peace and goodwill has instead become a solemn tale of loss, courage, and mourning at sea.

National Sports Festival opens in Abeokuta as Tinubu pledges reform in sports sector

By Friday Omosola

President Bola Tinubu has said his administration revived the long-dormant National Sports Commission (NSC) to insulate the sports sector from bureaucratic interference and vested interests, stressing its vital role in nation-building and unity.

Tinubu spoke through Vice President Kashim Shettima at the opening ceremony of the 22nd National Sports Festival, tagged 'Gateway Games Ogun 2024', held in Abeokuta, Ogun State yesterday.

The President reaffirmed his government's commitment to positioning sports as a tool for national cohesion and development.

"For decades, sport has placed Nigeria on the global map—not just in glory, but in grit," Tinubu stated.

"From medal-winning Olympians to world-renowned footballers, we have nurtured a lineage of excellence that has made every Nigerian walk taller."

Explaining the rationale for reviving the NSC after nine years of inactivity, the President said the move was intended to foster autonomy and innovation in a sector that continues to bring global recognition to Nigeria.

"We have chosen to shield it from bureaucratic interference and the distractions of vested power interests. We want it to thrive—autonomous, innovative, and focused—because we recognise its critical place in building a healthier, stronger, and more united Nigeria," he said.

Highlighting the significance of the festival, Tinubu described the event not just as a physical contest but as a tribute to his administration's 'unrelenting



commitment' to preserving the spirit of sportsmanship and patriotism.

Tinubu

"The choice of Ogun State as host may be geographical, but the excitement it generates resonates across the nation. It is proof that sport remains one of the most powerful forces for national cohesion," he added.

Tinubu also commended Ogun State Governor Dapo Abiodun for his outstanding role in hosting the festival, describing the state as 'a gateway to knowledge, industry, culture, and excellence', and now, 'a gateway to greatness.'

Governor Abiodun, in his welcome remarks, said the President's support for the festival underlined his dedication to sports development, national unity, and youth empowerment.

"Our decision to host this festival stems from the belief that sports is a unifying force and a catalyst for socio-economic development," the governor stated.

"This festival provides a platform to showcase the resilience and talent of Nigerian youth."

Also speaking, the Chairman of the National Sports Commission, Shehu Dikko, pledged that the Commission was determined to elevate Nigerian sports to new heights.

Tinubu

He expressed confidence that the festival would produce athletes capable of winning global honours.

Ogun State's Commissioner for Sports, Wasil Ishiaka, added that the games would foster a spirit of healthy competition among young people while contributing to community development.

The 22nd edition of the National Sports Festival commenced with the lighting of the ceremonial torch, symbolising national unity and the celebration of Nigeria's diversity.

Osimhen hails Galatasaray's third straight league title

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

Nigerian striker Victor Osimhen has expressed immense joy after playing a key role in Galatasaray's emphatic Turkish Super Lig triumph, marking the club's third consecutive league title and their historic 24th overall.

Osimhen, who joined the Istanbul giants from Napoli last summer, continued his sensational debut season by scoring the opening goal in Galatasaray's commanding 3-0 victory over Kayserispor on Sunday. The match, played at the iconic RAMS Park, was a title-clincher, ensuring Galatasaray retained their crown with two matches to spare.

Speaking to the club's official website after the match, Osimhen couldn't hide his excitement.

"I feel very happy. It is incredible to take part in Galatasaray's history and reach the fifth star," the 26-year-old said. "We have two matches left. We will look to have fun. I am enjoying the moment at the moment. I am not thinking about my future."

His comments reflect not only satisfaction with his personal achievements but also a deep appreciation for the club and its passionate supporters. Osimhen's goal on Sunday was his 36th of the season across all competitions, underlining his status as one of the most lethal strikers in Europe this year.

Osimhen's arrival at Galatasaray was initially met with skepticism, particularly after his record-breaking spell with Napoli in Italy, where he helped secure the Serie A title in the



2022/2023 season. However, he has quickly silenced critics and endeared himself to fans with his consistent performances, energetic playing style, and clutch goals in critical matches.

Under manager Okan Buruk, Galatasaray have become a dominant force domestically, and Osimhen's presence has added a new dimension to the team's attacking arsenal. Alongside the likes of Kerem Aktürkoğlu and Mauro Icardi, the Nigerian international has helped form one of the most potent front lines in Turkish football history.

The victory over Kayserispor was a comprehensive one. Osimhen's 26th-minute strike set the tone for the evening, followed by goals from Dries Mertens and Icardi, sealing a well-deserved win and sparking wild celebrations among fans in Istanbul and across Turkey.

Galatasaray's triumph also means they have now earned the right to wear the coveted fifth star on their jersey — each star symbolizing five league titles. For the club and its supporters, this milestone holds immense symbolic value, further cementing their legacy as Turkey's most successful team.

While Osimhen chose not to address rumors surrounding his future, speculation has been swirling about a possible return to one of Europe's top five leagues. However, for now, the Nigerian forward is clearly focused on enjoying the present moment and delivering more glory for Galatasaray.

"I'm not thinking about my future," he reiterated. "Right now, it's about the team and celebrating this historic achievement."

Osimhen's performance has not gone unnoticed, and several European clubs are reportedly monitoring his situation. However, Galatasaray fans will be hoping to keep their star striker at the club for at least another season, particularly with the UEFA Champions League campaign on the horizon.

With two league matches remaining, Osimhen has the opportunity to further extend his goal tally and possibly break the club's single-season scoring record. Regardless of what the future holds, his impact this season has already earned him a legendary status in Istanbul.

Lawal warns against Flying Eagles overhaul

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

Following Nigeria's bronze medal finish at the 2025 U-20 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON), former international and youth football advocate, Dimeji Lawal, has cautioned against sweeping changes to the Flying Eagles squad, warning that an overhaul could be counterproductive as the team prepares for the upcoming FIFA U-20 World Cup later this year.

Lawal, who is also a respected football administrator, made the comments in an interview with Completesports.com after the Flying Eagles defeated host nation Egypt on penalties to claim third place at the continental tournament. The medal win comes after a campaign marked by highs and lows for the Nigerian side, which narrowly missed out on a place in the final after falling to Senegal in the semi-finals.

Despite calls in some quarters for a complete restructuring of the team due to their inconsistent performances in the group stages, Lawal believes the current squad has shown enough promise and resilience to warrant continuity, with only minimal changes needed to strengthen the group.

"It will be unfair to demand a total overhauling of the Flying Eagles," Lawal said. "It is like condemning all their efforts after winning a bronze at the tournament."

The former youth international emphasized the need for measured improvements rather than rash decisions, urging the coaching crew to build on the current squad's foundation by introducing a few new players who can add depth and quality in key areas.

"I can only advocate for the inclusion of a few fresh players to the team that



can make the Flying Eagles stronger ahead of the U-20 World Cup," he added. "You can't really say that the whole team failed to perform well. What the players need is encouragement and not a total overhaul of the team."

The Flying Eagles' campaign at the U-20 AFCON featured moments of brilliance, including a dramatic comeback win over Ghana in the group stage and a solid defensive display against Egypt in the bronze medal match. Several players, including captain Daniel Bameyi—who was named in the tournament's Best XI—earned praise for their performances, further supporting Lawal's argument for continuity.

Head coach Ladan Bosso, who has led the team since 2022, is also under scrutiny, with questions being asked about his tactical decisions and squad selection. While some fans and analysts have called for new leadership ahead of the World Cup, others, like Lawal, believe that changing the technical team now could disrupt the squad's rhythm and preparation.

"We should be talking about how to support the coaches with quality scouting and better logistics to ensure

the team is in peak form for the World Cup," Lawal said. "These young players have gone through intense pressure and showed character. That should not be taken lightly."

With the FIFA U-20 World Cup scheduled for November 2025, Nigeria has just a few months to fine-tune the squad. Preparations are expected to ramp up soon, including international friendlies, training camps, and possible invitational tournaments. There is also hope that some of the players will secure professional contracts with clubs in Europe or Asia, which could aid their development ahead of the global competition.

As Nigeria seeks to improve on their previous U-20 World Cup record—the team has reached the final twice but never lifted the trophy—calls like Lawal's for stability and strategic reinforcement may prove vital.

The Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) is yet to announce any changes to the team's setup, but sources indicate that internal reviews are ongoing. Whether or not Lawal's advice is heeded, the spotlight remains firmly on the Flying Eagles as they enter the next crucial phase of their journey toward the world stage.

Kane predicts tough Europa final: Spurs vs Man United

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

Harry Kane, one of Tottenham Hotspur's most iconic former players, has weighed in on the highly anticipated UEFA Europa League final between his former club and Premier League rivals Manchester United, predicting a fiercely contested clash on Wednesday night in Bilbao, Spain.

The final, which will take place at the historic San Mamés Stadium, marks the first time in over a decade that both clubs are meeting in a European final, with both desperate for silverware to salvage underwhelming domestic campaigns.

Speaking to Sky Sports ahead of the showpiece, Bayern Munich's talisman and England captain Harry Kane emphasized the magnitude of the occasion, while cautioning that Spurs' inexperience in big finals might be a decisive factor.

"It's been a tough season obviously, for Tottenham in the league," Kane acknowledged. "But they have a chance to make it one of the best seasons in recent history."

Tottenham, who have not won a major trophy since the League Cup triumph in 2008, have endured a rollercoaster campaign marked by inconsistency and injury setbacks. However, their resilience in Europe has seen them overcome giants like AC Milan and Sevilla on the road to Bilbao. For many fans, a Europa League triumph would be a statement of intent and a sign of progress under their current manager.

Despite having moved on to Bayern Munich in the summer of 2023, Kane remains emotionally invested in Spurs' fortunes.



"Obviously wishing them all the best – I still have a lot of friends there, in the players and the staff. I know how much it will mean to them, how much it will mean to the fans," Kane said, clearly still connected to the North London club where he made his name.

Manchester United, on the other hand, are no strangers to big European nights. The Red Devils, who won the Europa League in 2017 under José Mourinho, are making their third European final appearance in eight years. Under Erik ten Hag, United have found some form in cup competitions this season, despite finishing outside the top four in the league.

"It's going to be tough, every final is," Kane noted. "United have experience in the bigger games, maybe, but Tottenham have shown they can compete at any level, and they deserve to be in the final."

For Kane, watching this clash from afar will be bittersweet. Having come close to glory with Spurs on multiple occasions, including the Champions League final loss to Liverpool in 2019, he knows all too well how fleeting these opportunities can be.

"I'll be away with my wife somewhere

relaxing and I'll be keeping an eye on it for sure, so I wish them all the best."

The build-up to the final has been intense, with both fanbases eager to secure a European title. Tottenham will be looking to rely on key players like captain Son Heung-min and midfield maestro James Maddison, while Manchester United will hope for magic from Bruno Fernandes and Rasmus Højlund to tip the scale in their favour.

Football pundits have described the clash as evenly matched, with both clubs having similar strengths and vulnerabilities. Tottenham's fast counter-attacking style could pose a challenge for United's defense, while United's ability to control midfield battles might test the discipline of Spurs' young squad.

Kick-off is scheduled for 9 PM local time (8 PM WAT), and fans across the world are bracing for what could be one of the most dramatic finals in recent Europa League history.

Whether Spurs finally break their long-standing trophy drought or United add another European title to their rich history, one thing is clear — this final promises drama, passion, and a defining moment in both clubs' seasons.

Bameyi named in U-20 AFCON team of the tournament

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi



Flying Eagles captain Daniel Bameyi has earned a place in the 2025 U-20 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) Team of the Tournament following a stellar performance throughout the competition in Egypt.

The 19-year-old centre-back was ever-present for Nigeria, playing every minute of the team's six matches and scoring once as the Flying Eagles secured a bronze medal. His consistency and leadership stood out, earning him widespread praise from fans and analysts alike.

Bameyi, who plays his club

football for Bayelsa United, also claimed the Man of the Match award in Nigeria's second group game against Tunisia—a performance that further solidified his reputation as one of the competition's most reliable defenders. He had earlier been named in the Team of the Group Stage, underscoring his high-level displays across the tournament.

South Africa and Morocco, who finished as tournament champions and runners-up respectively, dominated the Best XI with four players each. Other notable inclusions were Sierra Leone's Momoh Kamara, who won the Golden Boot with four goals, and

Egypt's dynamic midfielder Mohamed Goweily.

The Coach of the Tournament award went to South Africa's Raymond Mdaka, who led his team to their maiden U-20 AFCON title in impressive fashion.

For Bameyi, the recognition is a testament to his growth as a player and leader. As Nigeria looks ahead to the FIFA U-20 World Cup later this year, his presence will be crucial in anchoring the defense and inspiring the team on the global stage.