



FG donates N2bn, 20 truckloads of grains to flood-ravaged Mokwa

Pg 2

Amaechi snubs Wike, says he won't trade words with 'children'

Pg 5



The New Daily Prime

f @new_daily_prime x @prime_daili149 @ @new_daily_prime

...your prime source for excellence in journalism

Trump okays fresh travel ban for 12 countries

Pg 17 & 18



**Skitmaker Pg 13
Nasboi survives car accident**



**Youth investment will drive Africa's progress Pg 16
- Bill Gates**

Tunde Bakare visits Tinubu, calls for real action to fix Nigeria

Pg 7



Ronaldo breaks Germany jinx as Portugal reach Nations League final Pg 23

FG donates N2bn, 20 truckloads of grains to flood-ravaged Mokwa

By Friday Omosola

Vice President Kashim Shettima on Wednesday pledged the Federal Government's (FG) commitment to rebuilding Mokwa, a Niger State community recently devastated by severe flooding.

Shettima, who represented President Bola Tinubu during a visit to the area, announced the immediate release of ₦2 billion and 20 truckloads of grains to provide relief for affected residents.

Shettima arrived in Mokwa at approximately 12:30pm, where he was received by Niger State Deputy Governor Yakubu Garba, the Etsu Nupe and Chairman of the State Council of Traditional Rulers, Yahaya Abubakar, and members of the state executive council.

Speaking to residents, Shettima described the disaster as a national sorrow, stating that what happened in Mokwa had touched every part of the country.

"Mokwa has always stood as a vital crossroads in Nigeria's geography and commerce. It is an agricultural hub and a cultural stronghold that connects the North and South.

"This makes your pain a shared national burden. While this disaster is devastating, it will not define you. We will rebuild. We will restore the vibrancy for which Mokwa is known," he said.

Shettima conveyed Tinubu's condolences, assuring the people of immediate intervention and a long-term commitment to disaster prevention.

"His Excellency, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, sends his heartfelt condolences and stands in solidarity with you during this trying time. He has directed immediate action to assess the damage



and provide the necessary support to aid your recovery," Shettima said.

He stressed the government's resolve to address the ecological issues that contributed to the flooding and called for a united response to national emergencies.

"In times like these, we are reminded that a tragedy in one part of our nation is a sorrow shared by all. The preservation of life, whether threatened by natural calamities or human actions, is a responsibility we all share," he added.

Shettima also called for a long-term commitment to environmental resilience and sustainable development, stating that the best way to honour the lives lost was to prevent similar tragedies in future.

Garba, representing Governor Umar Bago, expressed appreciation for the FG's swift response, noting that officials from the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) were on the ground within 24 hours of the disaster.

"This visit by the Vice President is a reassurance of President Tinubu's

commitment to the well-being of our people," Garba said.

The Secretary to the Niger State Government, Abubakar Gawu, said the Shettima's visit uplifted the grieving community, while commending the timely interventions by NEMA.

Special Adviser to the Governor, Murtala Bagana, described the flood as a national tragedy and thanked the Shettima for physically identifying with the affected residents.

The Etsu Nupe, Abubakar, expressed gratitude to Tinubu for the prompt release of relief materials and praised Shettima for visiting in person to console the people.

The FG delegation also included the Minister of Information and National Orientation, Mohammed Idris, and the Minister of State for Agriculture and Food Security, Senator Aliyu Sabi Abdullahi—both indigenes of Niger State.

THE NEW DAILY PRIME RATE CARD

PUBLIC NOTICE COLOUR

PRODUCT COLOUR

EFFECTIVE FROM DECEMBER 1, 2024

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

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

POLITICAL COLOUR

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

POLITICAL BLACK & WHITE

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

CORPORATE BLACK & WHITE

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

SPECIAL POSITIONS

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

PUBLIC NOTICE BLACK & WHITE

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

PRODUCT BLACK & WHITE

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

ALLURE RATE

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

PICTURE & CAPTION

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

GENERAL INFORMATION

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

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

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

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

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

2,000.00
3,750.00
4,250.00

CONTACT US

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

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

ALL RATES ARE VAT INCLUSIVE

FG, FAO unveil N200m aquaculture initiative to boost Nigeria's fish production

By **Fatimah Idera**

The Federal Government, in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), has launched a N200 million aquaculture support initiative aimed at boosting local fish production and reducing Nigeria's reliance on fish imports.

The initiative, titled "Scaling Fish Farming through Finance", a component of the FISH4ACP project was formally inaugurated at the Eriwe fish farming cluster in Odogbolu, Ogun State. The project is expected to significantly enhance Nigeria's aquaculture capacity and help meet the country's rising demand for fish.

Speaking at the launch, Mr. Wellington Omoragbon, Director of Fisheries and Aquaculture at the Federal Ministry of Marine and Blue Economy, emphasized the importance of the initiative in promoting sustainable fisheries. Represented by Mr. Paul Opuama, Director II in the ministry, Omoragbon noted that despite Nigeria's abundant water resources, fish production continues to fall short of demand.

"One of the biggest challenges facing fish farmers in Nigeria is access to finance, particularly due to the soaring cost of feed," he said. "Through this partnership, we can help our farmers scale their operations and close the fish production deficit."

Omoragbon also commended FAO and other development partners for their ongoing support in strengthening Nigeria's aquaculture sector.



FAO's Representative in Nigeria and to ECOWAS, Mr. Koffy Kouacou, highlighted the urgency of reducing the country's annual fish importation, which currently stands at over two million metric tonnes. He explained that the initiative is designed to improve access to financing for fish farmers, with the aim of increasing local production and reducing imports.

"This project, supported by the European Union and other partners, will enable 40 fish farmers to receive between N2.5 million and N5 million each during the pilot phase," Kouacou stated. "Our goal is to empower these farmers to expand their operations, create more aquaculture-related business opportunities, and produce more fish locally."

The launch event brought together stakeholders from government, development agencies, and financial institutions. Kouacou emphasized the collaborative nature of the project,

noting the involvement of both the Ogun State Government and financial partners.

Also speaking at the event, Mr. Hugh Briggs, Programme Manager for Agriculture at the European Union Delegation to Nigeria, revealed that the FISH4ACP project is currently being implemented in 12 countries worldwide, with Nigeria receiving the largest portion of the grant funding.

He described the initiative as a strategic step toward achieving food security, empowering small-scale fish farmers, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of Nigeria's aquaculture sector.

The Scaling Fish Farming through Finance initiative is expected to serve as a model for future interventions in the agriculture sector, demonstrating the value of coordinated support, sustainable finance, and public-private collaboration in closing Nigeria's fish production gap.

Amaechi snubs Wike, says he won't trade words with 'children'

By Friday Omosola

Former Minister of Transport, Rotimi Amaechi, has dismissed criticisms from Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike.

The former Rivers State governor, during his appearance on ARISE Television yesterday, said he refused to be drawn into what he described as petty exchanges.

Amaechi responded to Wike's comments by asserting that his political elevation came through divine intervention, the courts, and the people of Rivers State, not through Wike's influence.

"God, Peter Odili, the judiciary and Rivers people were the reasons I became governor. Let him explain how he contributed to it. I'm only saying this to make it clear—I won't engage in back-and-forths with children," Amaechi said.

The dispute follows Amaechi's recent speech during his 60th birthday celebration, where he raised alarm over worsening economic hardship and questioned the country's development trajectory.

"We keep blaming the elites, but Nigeria's problem lies in its followership. We don't have genuine capitalists—people who invest in production. Are we even producing anything? Sometimes I wonder if we truly want to function as a country. What matters now is how we transform Nigeria," he stated.

He added: "Everyone is hungry. If you're not, I am. If the opposition really wants to remove the government in power, it is possible."



Wike, speaking during a media chat on Monday, dismissed Amaechi's comments as self-serving, suggesting they were driven more by political ambition than concern for ordinary Nigerians.

"He never raised issues of hunger when he was Minister of Transportation," Wike argued.

"Now that he's no longer in office, he suddenly remembers the people? His hunger is for power, not for food."

The FCT minister also accused Amaechi of making light of Nigerians' suffering, saying, "You're not helping anyone by insulting Nigerians under the guise of critique."

Amaechi, in response, flatly denied Wike's claim of having made him governor, stressing that his appointment was the result of legal battles and widespread public support.

Recalling his appointment of Wike as Chief of Staff, Amaechi explained that he rejected Wike's lobbying for the

finance commissioner role because he wanted closer oversight.

"Mohammed Adoke came all the way from Abuja that week to tell me to appoint him as commissioner for finance. I refused. I wanted him as chief of staff so I could monitor him directly," he said.

According to Amaechi, "He wasn't offered the finance portfolio. And I say all this only to clarify things—I don't trade words with juniors. Like it or not, I was his boss. I gave him that position."

He continued, mocking Wike's perceived political self-aggrandisement.

"He appointed himself to every role—chief of staff, governor, minister, even local government chairman."

Amaechi also takes a swipe at Wike's political style, saying, "There's no regard for legacy or dignity anymore. People just say and do anything for attention."

EFCC nabs impostor journalist for alleged N2m bribe in \$4.5bn PTF fraud probe

By Damilola Olufemi

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has arrested a 63-year-old man, Ernesto Chukwukamma, for allegedly impersonating a journalist and extorting money under false pretences in connection with a \$4.5 billion Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF) investigation.

In a statement released on Tuesday, EFCC spokesperson Dele Oyewale said Chukwukamma claimed to be affiliated with a group of journalists attached to the anti-graft agency, using that cover to deceive a petitioner.

According to Oyewale, the suspect allegedly told the petitioner that he had access to a damaging report implicating



them in the PTF probe and demanded N2 million in exchange for halting the investigation.

“He claimed that members of a supposed correspondents’ chapel with the EFCC

owned a report accusing the petitioner of embezzling \$4.5 billion during the winding down of the PTF,” Oyewale explained.

The EFCC stated that Chukwukamma went so far as to threaten the petitioner to ensure compliance, presenting himself as someone with influence over the investigation.

He was arrested while attempting to withdraw the N2 million allegedly extorted from the victim.

“The suspect will be charged in court as soon as investigations are concluded,” Oyewale added.

Waste disposal violators in Lagos to pay N250,000 fine or jail term

By Damilola Olufemi

Tokunbo Wahab, Lagos State Commissioner for the Environment and Water Resources, has warned that the government will begin strict enforcement against environmental violations, including illegal waste dumping and littering, with penalties of up to ₦250,000 or a three-month jail term.

In a post shared on X (formerly Twitter) on Wednesday, Wahab emphasised the state’s resolve to crack down on deliberate acts that harm the environment.

“During Lagos State Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources media briefing yesterday, we made it clear that Lagos will no longer tolerate deliberate environmental abuse,” he stated.

Wahab revealed that over 3,000 people have already been arrested for various environmental infractions, with the government intensifying both monitoring and public education campaigns to ensure



compliance.

He also announced that from July 1, Lagos will begin full enforcement of its ban on single-use plastics (SUPs).

“From July 1, full enforcement of the ban on Single Use Plastics begins. Offenders who dump refuse illegally, litter the streets, or deface our environment will face stiff penalties, up to ₦250,000 fine or 3 months in jail,” Wahab said.

He reminded residents that existing bans on cart pushing, public defecation, and illegal street trading remain active and will be enforced vigorously.

“The law on cart pushers still stands, public defecation remains banned, and illegal street trading will not be tolerated. This is about saving our environment, for us and the generations to come,” Wahab added.

Tunde Bakare visits Tinubu, calls for real action to fix Nigeria

By Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi

Pastor Tunde Bakare, the founder of the Citadel Global Community Church (The Latter Rain Assembly), recently visited President Bola Tinubu in Lagos to discuss the state of the country. The private meeting between the two leaders focused on national issues and Pastor Bakare's desire to see Nigeria improve in his lifetime.

Speaking after the visit, Pastor Bakare said his main reason for seeing President Tinubu was to share his vision for a better Nigeria. He said he wants to see real change and progress happen in the country while he is still alive.

"Well, my visit to President Tinubu is about how the country will go well," he said. "My life, my personal vision is to see a nation that works in my lifetime. That is what I discussed with Mr. President."

Although Pastor Bakare refused to share the exact details of their conversation, he made it clear that the meeting was important and respectful. He praised President Tinubu for receiving him warmly and listening to his thoughts.

"I've had a private conversation with Mr. President, and I'm glad that he received me well. I trust that God will help our nation," Bakare said. "What transpired in my discussion with him stays with him and with me. God guiding him and giving him wisdom will help this nation not to go down the drain, but to bounce back so that he can leave a mark that cannot be erased."

The meeting came a few months after Pastor Bakare publicly



criticized the Tinubu administration during a sermon at his church in April. At that time, he warned the President not to act like "God" and said the country was moving in the wrong direction under his leadership. However, his recent comments show a willingness to engage with the government and offer solutions, rather than just criticism.

Speaking about his hopes for the country, Pastor Bakare said Nigeria needs peace, unity, and cooperation. He believes Nigerians must start working together, regardless of where they come from.

"I'd like to see a peaceful nation," he said. "I'd like to see Nigerians be their brother's keeper. I'd like to see good collaboration between the best of the North and the best of the South to steer Nigeria in the best direction."

He also said that Nigeria has spent too much time talking without

taking action. "We've danced around some subjects for too long a time. It is time to take concrete action," he stated firmly.

Pastor Bakare's message was clear: it is time for serious steps to fix the problems Nigeria faces. He wants the government and citizens alike to stop making empty promises and start doing the real work needed to build a better country.

His meeting with President Tinubu shows that there is still room for dialogue between different leaders, even when they do not always agree. While the results of their conversation remain private, many Nigerians will be hoping that the meeting will lead to real progress.

As the country continues to face economic challenges, insecurity, and social unrest, Pastor Bakare's call for action is a reminder that fixing Nigeria will take honesty, unity, and strong leadership from all sides.

Sowore: Coalition will secure, not stop, Tinubu's re-election in 2027

By Friday Omosola

Omoyele Sowore, former presidential candidate of the African Action Congress (AAC), has dismissed ongoing opposition coalition talks ahead of the 2027 general elections.

Speaking during an interview on Channels Television's Politics Today, Sowore warned that the movement lacks clear ideological direction and could inadvertently secure President Bola Tinubu a second term in office.

The New Daily Prime reported that former Vice President Atiku Abubakar and other notable politicians are championing the coalition.

Sowore argued that the current political manoeuvring is superficial and disconnected from the real struggles of ordinary Nigerians.

"What they're building is not a genuine coalition of the marginalised; it's a distraction," he said.

"Rather than challenge the system, they're enabling its survival. The masses are being misled into thinking these individuals are working in their interest."

He criticised the coalition's structure, claiming it is disorganised and ideologically barren.

The Ondo-born questioned their inability to unify under a credible platform or sustain consistent engagement.

"They now claim they want to register a party — that alone reflects their isolation. Any alliance without a moral or ideological foundation is destined to fail," he remarked.

His comments follow rising efforts by key political figures to realign ahead of 2027.

Despite Atiku's meeting with Labour Party's Peter Obi and ex-Kaduna State Governor Nasir El-Rufai, who recently dumped the All Progressives Congress (APC) for the Social Democratic Party (SDP), signs of unity remain elusive.



The PDP Governors' Forum has distanced itself from the initiative, citing potential risks to the party's internal cohesion.

Obi, meanwhile, has maintained that he will not participate in any alliance that seeks power without addressing Nigeria's underlying governance challenges.

El-Rufai's shift to the SDP stirred further speculation, but the party leadership has since clarified that no formal alliance has been established with either El-Rufai or Atiku.

Offering an alternative path, Sowore urged Nigerians to reject elite-driven politics and focus on grassroots mobilisation for systemic change.

"The real solution lies with the people crafting their own future," he said. "As long as citizens allow political elites to dictate the narrative, they will remain trapped in cycles of hardship. That's been Nigeria's reality since the return to civil rule."

Sowore went further, questioning the democratic credentials of the current system.

"We don't practice democracy here — it's merely a civilian façade. What we need now is genuine democratic transformation," he said.

He also drew a line between what he called principled activism and self-serving political opportunism, taking a swipe at some figures associated with the coalition.

"I lead a movement representing the truly oppressed — not one led by the politically hungry, like Amaechi and his allies," he declared.

Asked whether Nigerians should pin their hopes on the current government amid worsening economic conditions, Sowore dismissed the idea, stating that the country's citizens are enduring unnecessary suffering.

"I've said it before — the more hope you invest in this administration, the more disappointment you'll face. If we keep following this path, nothing meaningful will change," he warned.

"There's no future under these policies. What lies ahead is simply a continuation of past failures."

Oyebanji reaffirms commitment to digital learning, commissions smart school

By Friday Omosola

Governor Biodun Oyebanji of Ekiti State has reaffirmed his administration's commitment to advancing digital education by integrating e-learning infrastructure across all public schools in the state.

The governor made this known during the commissioning of a Digital Smart School at Government College, Ado Ekiti.

The facility was donated by the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Equipment Hub Group, Gbolahan Olayomi.

Oyebanji noted that the Smart School, equipped with modern ICT tools and interactive learning platforms, aligns with the state government's education reform agenda to upgrade public schools and improve learning outcomes.

He assured that similar facilities would soon be extended to other schools across the state.

Commending Olayomi for the generous donation, Oyebanji said the e-learning centre would enhance teaching delivery and facilitate a more engaging and effective learning environment.

The governor disclosed that the choice of Government College for the facility was based on its record of academic excellence.

"When the request came, I asked the Ministry of Education which school had been performing well. If a donor is making such a significant investment, it must be value-driven," he said.

"Their initial decision was to take it to my community, but I insisted on objectivity over sentiment. I am glad I stood by that."

He further revealed plans to train and



retrain teachers to align with global digital trends and effectively utilise computer-based and interactive technology tools.

Oyebanji also announced the forthcoming recruitment of 1,800 teaching and non-teaching staff to support the introduction of digital smart schools.

He stressed that the process would be strictly merit-based.

"I have approved the recruitment of 1,800 teachers and support staff. Let me state clearly that it will be based on merit. If anyone approaches you claiming to represent me, it's false. I won't send anyone," he said.

The governor urged teachers and students to take full advantage of the government's capacity-building initiatives and reiterated his administration's dedication to free and compulsory education from primary to secondary school level.

However, the Head of Service, Folakemi Olomojobi, lauded Oyebanji for his

transformative leadership across all sectors.

She described the Smart School as comparable to educational facilities in developed countries and encouraged parents to enrol their children to benefit from its world-class resources.

The donor, Gbolahan Olayomi, described the project as a significant contribution to the state's educational transformation.

He said the facility supports Oyebanji's vision of preparing Ekiti students for a technologically driven future.

Olayomi explained that the Smart School replaces traditional teaching tools with advanced digital screens equipped with cameras, allowing lessons to be recorded and revisited, and enabling remote learning.

The facility includes 16 solar-powered smart classrooms, 16 Wowbii interactive touchscreens, internet access in all rooms, and CCTV for effective monitoring.

'Why Governor Adeleke visited Tinubu'

By Damilola Olufemi

Governor Ademola Adeleke's media aide, Olawale Rasheed, has debunked speculation that the Adeleke family's recent visit to President Bola Tinubu signals plans to dump the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) for the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC).

The clarification follows viral images of the Governor, his brother, Dr. Deji, and his nephew, music star David (popularly known as Davido), visiting President Tinubu in Lagos on Tuesday.

The meeting fueled rumours that the governor might be aligning with the APC ahead of the 2026 elections.

In a statement issued on Wednesday, Rasheed dismissed the defection narrative, insisting the visit was purely a friendly gesture.



"The media speculation about likely or imminent defection is fake news. He remains a member and leader of the PDP in Osun State. The visit by the dynasty to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu is a routine courtesy visit. Any reading of the defection agenda into the visit is mere fake news," the statement read.

Meanwhile, the Osun APC has responded

with a firm message that its 2026 governorship ticket is not open for external bidders. Speaking to journalists, former Speaker of the Osun State House of Assembly, Timothy Owwoeye, dismissed any suggestions of welcoming Governor Adeleke into the APC.

"I'm saying this categorically that the APC ticket is not for sale. As a matter of fact, as of today, we don't see Adeleke as a member or part of the APC as a party," Owwoeye stated.

He went further: "If not for fear of the unknown that is disturbing the Adeleke family and the PDP, they wouldn't be showing signs of interest in the APC. Now that they've realised their time is almost up, they're scrambling."

He added, "Come August 8, 2026, we're taking back Osun. The PDP and Adeleke will have no place in the APC."

One year on: UN, Aid groups demand release of detained staff in Yemen

By Helen Okechukwu

The United Nations (UN) and leading aid organizations have renewed urgent calls for the immediate and unconditional release of humanitarian workers detained by Houthi authorities in northern Yemen.

According to World Health Organisation (WHO), this week marks one year since dozens of staff from the UN, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society, and diplomatic missions were arbitrarily arrested — with some held since as far back as 2021.

Currently, 23 UN and five NGO personnel remain in detention. Tragically, two humanitarian workers — one from the UN and another from Save the Children — have died while in custody. Others have been denied basic rights, including the chance to attend the funerals of loved ones.



"Nothing can justify their ordeal. They were doing their jobs, helping people in desperate need: people without food, shelter, or adequate healthcare," the statement reads.

"Yemen remains one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, with over 19 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, many of whom rely on it for survival."

The continued detention of humanitarian staff threatens lifesaving operations and undermines international support for peacebuilding in the region.

While a few detainees have been freed recently, signatories urge Houthi authorities to honor promises made, including those to the WHO chief during his December 2024 visit to Sana'a.

The joint statement warns that the prolonged detention of aid workers not only stalls humanitarian work but also chills international engagement with Yemen's ongoing peace process.

"The UN and INGOs will continue to work through all possible channels to secure the safe and immediate release of those arbitrarily detained," the statement concludes.

Rivers sole administrator Ibas appoints 11 new permanent secretaries

By Damilola Olufemi



The Administrator of Rivers State, Vice Admiral Ibok-Ete Ibas (rtd), has consented to the appointment of 11 new Permanent Secretaries.

This was made known in a statement by the Acting Head of Service, Mrs. Inyingi Brown.

The appointees include: Imaonyani Roselin Ephraim-George, Dr. Mina T. Ikuru, Dabite Sokari George, Soibitein Duke Harry, Lauretta Davies Dimkpa, Uche R. Ideozu

Others are: Chimenum Mpi, Jeremiah Egwu, Nicholas Iminabo Wokoma, Vera Sam Dike, Aleruchi Akani

Meanwhile, the statement added that the date for the official

swearing-in ceremony will be communicated subsequently.

Ibas appoints LGA administrators
Recall that in April 2025, Ibas announced the appointment of administrators for the 23 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of the state.

He also approved the reconstitution of previously suspended boards of agencies, commissions, and parastatals.

The approval for the appointments, which took effect from Monday, April 7, 2025, was contained in a Special Government Announcement issued on Wednesday by the Secretary to the State Government, Prof. Ibibia Worika.

With a Federal High Court in Port Harcourt having earlier barred Ibas from making such appointments, this new development comes amid mounting legal and political tensions in the state.

In Suit No. FHC/PH/CS/46/2025, filed by PILEX Centre for Civic Education Initiative led by Courage Msirimovu, Justice Adamu Turaki Mohammed issued an interim injunction.

The order restrains the Sole Administrator and his agents from appointing sole administrators under any designation to oversee the LGAs. The court granted the motion ex parte filed on March 28 and has fixed April 14 for a substantive hearing.

5 overlooked symptoms of bowel cancer that often mimic everyday illnesses

By Helen Okechukwu



Bowel cancer, also called colorectal or colon cancer which usually start from the large intestine called the colon. It is the second deadliest cancer worldwide.

Although the causes of bowel cancer is yet-to-be-identified, but reports evidence that lifestyle, diet, health conditions and family history could be the leading cause of bowel cancer.

While it mostly affects older adults, cases are rising among younger people, particularly among people under 40. Early detection saves lives—but symptoms are often subtle or mistaken for minor issues.

Here are five warning signs you shouldn't ignore:

Changes in bowel habits

Persistent diarrhea, constipation, or feeling like you haven't fully emptied your bowels could signal

cancer, not just stress or diet changes.

Blood in stool

Bright red or dark blood in your poop may seem like hemorrhoids, but recurring bleeding can be a sign of bowel cancer.

Unexplained weight loss

Losing weight without trying may look like a bonus, but it could mean your body isn't absorbing nutrients properly—potentially due to a tumor.

Fatigue and weakness

Ongoing tiredness, even with rest, may point to internal bleeding and anemia caused by bowel cancer.

Lump in the tummy or rectum

A persistent lump or swelling in the abdomen or rectum should be checked out, as it could be a tumor.

Other symptoms include cramps, bloating, vomiting, and inability to pass gas.

Don't panic, but be proactive

While these symptoms may overlap with other gastrointestinal conditions like hemorrhoids, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), infections, or inflammatory bowel diseases IBD (e.g., Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis).

Medical professionals advise that if symptoms persist for three weeks or more, you should consult a healthcare professional.

Early screening and diagnosis dramatically improve outcomes, and recognizing these often-overlooked signs could save lives.

Protect your gut: eat a fiber-rich, balanced diet with probiotics, and stay alert to changes.

Skitmaker Nasboi survives car accident

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigerian comedian and musician Lawal Nasiru, popularly known as Nasboi, escaped unharmed after a car accident on Wednesday.

The entertainer revealed that his car rammed into a stationary trailer. The incident occurred during his ongoing nationwide tour, which he had launched to catch the attention of Afrobeats star Davido for a potential music collaboration.

Crash during campaign tour

Nasboi, who has gained popularity for his viral comedy skits and music, had just begun what he called a “campaign tour” across Nigeria. The goal, according to him, is to earn a verse from Davido.

His fans have been closely following his journey on social media. The accident, however, raised immediate concerns about his safety and the continuation of the tour.

Nasboi goes live to reassure fans

Soon after the incident, Nasboi took to his Instagram page to reassure fans that he was fine. In a live video, he appeared calm and grateful.

He confirmed that there were no injuries and that no one else was harmed in the crash.

“I don’t even know what to say,” he said with a nervous laugh. “It’s crazy, but I just thank God that nobody got hurt. No injuries at all. I’m still shocked, but I’m okay.”

Social media reaction

In a follow-up Instagram post, the skitmaker shared a photo of the damaged car and added a caption that read:

“Thank God for life. A few hours ago!! No injuries sustained, no single scratch.



Now I’m thinking if I should stop or continue.” He wrote

The post drew thousands of reactions from fans and fellow entertainers, many of whom expressed relief and offered words of encouragement.

Tour faces uncertainty

Although Nasboi did not directly link the crash to the stress of the tour, his statement hinted at some emotional exhaustion.

The phrase “Now I’m thinking if I should stop or continue” has sparked speculation that he may pause or cancel upcoming tour dates.

So far, Nasboi has not released an official statement confirming whether the accident will affect his campaign efforts.

A rising star in comedy and music

Nasboi has become a household name in Nigeria’s entertainment space. Known for his witty skits, celebrity impressions, and now music, he continues to grow his fan base across the country.

His unique blend of humour and music

has made him one of the leading voices among the new wave of digital entertainers.

Fans have been supportive of his campaign to collaborate with Davido, sharing and reposting his tour updates online.

Gratitude despite setback

Despite the accident, Nasboi remained in good spirits and full of gratitude. His lighthearted reaction to the situation further endeared him to fans, many of whom praised him for staying strong.

“Na to give up at this point,” he said jokingly in the video. “But we thank God.”

What’s next?

As of the time of this report, Nasboi has not provided more details about the crash or whether there was damage to other vehicles or property.

However, he made it clear that the most important thing was that no life was lost.

His fans now wait to see if the tour will continue and whether his dream collaboration with Davido will come true.

‘I started to earn from music videos in 2023’ - TG Omori

By **Fatimah Idera**

Renowned Nigerian music video director, ThankGod Omori Jesam, popularly known as TG Omori, has revealed that he only started making profits from directing in 2023, despite years of high-profile work in the industry.

TG Omori made this surprising revelation during an interactive session with fans on X (formerly Twitter) on Tuesday. Known for his vibrant visual storytelling and stylish cinematography, Omori has worked with many of Nigeria’s biggest artists, including Burna Boy, Asake, and Davido. Yet, he said his financial success didn’t match his professional fame, not for a long time.

Five years of production debt

The director shared that he was trapped in production-related debt for five years. During that time, he struggled to break even on many projects.

“I only started making profits in 2023,” he told a fan who asked about how directors calculate production costs and include their own earnings. “Every time I’m losing money from pick-up shoots or something! The budget is never enough.”

Omori explained that the cost of producing high-quality music videos often exceeded what he was paid. As a result, he had to cover extra expenses out of his own pocket.

“It’s a tough life for creatives,” he added. “I had to keep paying off debts while taking on more work to survive. I only managed to clear the debt because my brand and personality started bringing in additional money.”

“Hug a creative today”

In his response, TG Omori highlighted the emotional and financial pressure that many creatives face behind the scenes. He encouraged fans to appreciate the work that artists, directors, and other creatives put into their craft.

“It’s a tough life for creatives. Hug a creative beside you today,” he wrote,



ending his post with a call for empathy.

Davido paid TG Omori N100 million for ‘Jowo’ video

Omori’s financial breakthrough may have been influenced by his growing brand value and rising demand among A-list Nigerian artists. One of the turning points in his career came in 2023 when superstar singer Davido revealed that he paid TG Omori a staggering N100 million to direct the music video for his hit track “Jowo.”

The revelation came during an interview with Beats FM Lagos. Davido said he was willing to invest such a large amount because he believed in Omori’s talent and vision.

Shortly after the interview, Omori confirmed the payment in a post on social media. The video, featuring top-quality production and visually striking scenes, went viral and was praised for its cinematic flair.

A long climb to the top

Though Omori is now widely regarded as one of Nigeria’s top music video directors, his journey was not always glamorous. He began directing music videos at the young age of 18 and quickly

earned a reputation for bold, creative visuals. But the financial side of his work often lagged.

Many fans assumed he had been wealthy for years, considering the calibre of artists he worked with and the luxury aesthetic of his videos. However, his recent confession paints a different picture, one of sacrifice, long nights, and the pressure to deliver excellence even when resources were limited.

Lessons in creative resilience

Omori’s story serves as a lesson about the hidden realities of working in the creative industry. Fame doesn’t always equal fortune, and many artists continue to hustle long after they’ve become household names.

His message has sparked conversations online about fair pay, creative budgeting, and the importance of investing in the people behind the scenes. For many fans, it was a reminder that talent alone isn’t enough; sustainability and support also matter.

As TG Omori continues to dominate the music video scene with his unique style, his candid words offer insight into the price of greatness and the resilience required to achieve it.

Elon Musk blasts Trump's spending bill as "disgusting abomination"

By **Fatimah Idera**

Billionaire tech mogul Elon Musk has launched a blistering attack on Donald Trump's flagship tax and spending bill, calling it a "disgusting abomination" and accusing Congress of driving the United States into financial ruin.

The scathing remarks, posted on Musk's X (formerly Twitter) platform, have intensified divisions within the Republican Party, just as the controversial bill moves to the Senate for final negotiations.

"I'm sorry, but I just can't stand it anymore," Musk wrote on Tuesday. "This massive, outrageous, pork-filled Congressional spending bill is a disgusting abomination. Shame on those who voted for it: you know you did wrong. You know it."

The legislation, dubbed by Trump as "The One Big Beautiful Bill," extends his 2017 tax cuts and includes new spending on border security and defense. However, it also proposes steep cuts to Medicaid, food stamps, and green energy tax incentives, programs widely relied upon by millions of Americans.

Musk, who until last week served as the head of the White House's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), claimed the bill would balloon the federal budget deficit to an "unsustainable" \$2.5 trillion. "Congress is making America bankrupt," he declared.

Though a key donor to Trump's last campaign, Musk has increasingly voiced concerns about the president's fiscal direction. He now argues that the bill undermines DOGE's core mission of cutting fraud and reducing waste.

His criticism found immediate backing from Representative Thomas Massie, one of the few House Republicans who voted against the bill. "He's right," Massie posted in response.

But House Speaker Mike Johnson pushed back, revealing he had spoken to Musk for over 20 minutes in an attempt to explain the



bill's merits. "With all due respect, my friend Elon is terribly wrong about the One Big Beautiful Bill. It's a very important first start," Johnson said. "I just deeply regret he's made this mistake."

Senate Majority Leader John Thune struck a more diplomatic tone. "So we have a difference of opinion. He's entitled to that opinion. We're going to proceed full speed ahead."

The bill passed the House by a narrow margin and now faces tough scrutiny in the Senate. Several fiscally conservative Republicans, including Senators Ron Johnson and Rand Paul, have echoed Musk's concerns.

"We have enough holdouts to stop the process until the president gets serious about spending reduction and reducing the deficit," Johnson told CNN.

Trump, however, remains defiant, dismissing critics as "grandstanders" on his Truth Social platform. "So many false statements are being made about 'THE ONE, BIG, BEAUTIFUL BILL'," he wrote on Monday.

Despite Musk's vocal opposition, the White House stood firm. Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said, "The president already knows where Elon Musk stands on this bill. It doesn't change his opinion: this is one big,

beautiful bill and he is sticking to it."

The Congressional Budget Office and independent analysts estimate the bill would add between \$2.3 trillion and \$5 trillion to the national deficit over the next decade. The administration insists economic growth from the tax cuts will offset the costs.

"We believe it will actually reduce the deficit by \$1.4 trillion," said Russ Vought, head of the Office of Management and Budget.

Democrats are sounding the alarm. A new analysis by Yale and the University of Pennsylvania warned the bill could cause over 51,000 preventable deaths by slashing healthcare funding.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer said, "Donald Trump and his so-called 'big, beautiful bill' is ugly to its very core." In a surprising turn, he later added on X, "I didn't think it was imaginable but ... I AGREE WITH ELON MUSK."

Senator Bernie Sanders joined in, writing, "Musk is right: this bill IS a 'disgusting abomination'. We shouldn't give \$664 billion in tax breaks to the 1%. We shouldn't throw 13.7 million people off of Medicaid. We shouldn't cut \$290 billion from programs to feed the hungry."

Youth investment will drive Africa's Progress – Bill Gates

By Oluwatosin Ologun



The Chairman of the Gates Foundation and co-founder of Microsoft, Bill Gates, has stated that Africa's future will be shaped by the investments it makes in its young population.

Speaking on Wednesday as a panelist at the Gate Foundation's Goalkeepers event in Lagos, Gates emphasised that Africa's youthful demographic offers a unique advantage — but only if proper investments are made in health and education.

"The amazing thing about Africa — and I show people this slide all the time — is that it is a very young continent. The portion of children born in Africa is expected to exceed half by the end of this century. The city (Lagos) we are in today will, by far, become the largest city in the world. That'll be interesting and keep things vibrant," he said.

"Africa has this incredible offset of its youth, and that will make it the most interesting continent throughout this century. How much that youth can really drive progress will depend on the investment decisions we make in the next 20 years — in their health and their

education. If we prioritise that, there's an unbelievable future here."

Asked whether he remained hopeful that Africa and Africans can still deliver on big health goals, Gates responded affirmatively, citing examples of local success stories.

"Well, certainly, Gombe State is an example — really focusing on the performance of the workforce and being willing, even with very tight budget conditions (which is true throughout Africa), to emphasise not just health, but specifically primary health care. And we see very quickly that when that's done, childhood deaths go down, maternal deaths go down, and nutrition rates go up," he said.

'AI Transforming Health Care'

"AI is coming along — AI which is improving at the global level, and AI which is being shaped specifically by entrepreneurs in Africa to meet African needs.

"If you take the combination of Africa getting richer, more philanthropists emerging, rich countries restoring

generosity, and the sharing of best practices and innovation. We have some incredible tools coming along, even for things like sickle cell disease — which we need to get rid of. It's a dramatic burden."

The Microsoft co-founder expressed optimism that the global child mortality rate could be halved from the current five million cases annually and lauded Nigeria for its strong local partnerships.

"Here in Nigeria, we've had amazing partners who understand delivery and how we can work to support government efforts. Ultimately, the government has the responsibility. We're here to accelerate those systems.

"These next 20 years, the countries in Africa will reach a stage of real economic momentum. Helping them accelerate that — understanding unique challenges, simplifying delivery, and lowering costs — will make a world of difference. The last 25 years went way better than I expected — childhood death rates, for example. We have a lot to be proud of, but even more to work on," Gates stated.

Trump okays fresh travel ban for 12 countries

By Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi

In a sweeping and controversial move, U.S. President Donald Trump has reinstated a travel ban barring entry to citizens of 12 countries, citing national security concerns and the need to protect American interests. The executive proclamation, signed late Wednesday, marks a revival of one of Trump's most contentious policies from his first term in office.

The ban, which takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on Monday, impacts a wide swath of the globe, with a notable focus on African nations. Out of the 12 countries now fully barred, seven are located in Africa, reigniting fears of discriminatory immigration practices and renewed debate over the human cost of national security policies.

The 12 Countries on the Full Ban List

The countries affected by the new travel ban include:

- Afghanistan
- Myanmar (Burma)
- Chad
- Republic of the Congo
- Equatorial Guinea
- Eritrea
- Haiti
- Iran
- Libya
- Somalia
- Sudan
- Yemen

Additional Countries Face Partial Restrictions

In addition to the outright ban, seven other countries face enhanced restrictions, including limits on permanent immigration and certain visa categories. These are:

- Burundi
- Cuba
- Laos
- Sierra Leone
- Togo
- Turkmenistan
- Venezuela



These restrictions, according to administration officials, aim to prevent security lapses by tightening immigration protocols and vetting processes for travellers from nations identified as posing potential risks to the United States.

Trump's Justification: National Security First

In the signed proclamation, President Trump stated:

"I must act to protect the national security and national interest of the United States and its people."

The decision stems from a January 20, 2025, executive order that directed the Departments of State and Homeland Security, along with the Director of National Intelligence, to conduct a risk assessment on countries exhibiting "hostile attitudes" toward the United States. The final list reflects findings of that security review.

Historical Echoes: A Return to a Controversial Legacy

The new travel ban is being viewed as a

resurrection of the 2017 executive order issued during Trump's first term, which originally blocked travel from seven predominantly Muslim-majority countries. That earlier policy led to chaos at airports around the world, where students, business travellers, and even green card holders were detained or denied entry into the U.S.

That order, dubbed by critics as the "Muslim Ban," was legally challenged multiple times and went through several revisions before a version was ultimately upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2018.

- The 2017 list included:
- Iraq (later removed),
- Syria,
- Iran,
- Sudan,
- Libya,
- Somalia,
- Yemen

**Continue reading
on next page**

Cont from page 17

It also later expanded to include North Korea and certain Venezuelan officials.

African Nations Bear the Brunt

This latest version of the ban again disproportionately affects African countries, leading critics to accuse the Trump administration of repeating the same discriminatory patterns.

Among the African countries facing a full ban:

Chad
Republic of the Congo
Equatorial Guinea
Eritrea
Libya
Somalia
Sudan

Backlash from Civil Rights Groups and Global Leaders

Immigration advocates, legal experts, and human rights organizations have swiftly condemned the new policy.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) issued a statement Thursday morning calling the ban “a blanket act of discrimination disguised as national security.”

“This is a policy that lacks both humanity and evidence,” said ACLU director Omar

Jamal. “It targets nations already grappling with internal challenges and sends a chilling message to refugees, students, and families around the world.”

International backlash has also begun to mount. Leaders from Iran, Somalia, and Sudan issued formal diplomatic objections. The African Union is expected to address the matter at its upcoming summit, calling it “a troubling setback for global cooperation.”

Analysts: Political Strategy or Security Safeguard?

Political analysts suggest that the ban could also be a strategic move ahead of the 2026 midterm elections. With immigration again becoming a hot-button issue, this action may appeal to Trump’s political base, particularly voters concerned with border security and foreign policy.

However, critics argue the move does little to address real threats and instead reignites divisive rhetoric.

“National security cannot be used as a cover for racial or religious discrimination,” said former Homeland Security official Linda Evans. “Real safety comes from intelligence cooperation and community building — not blanket bans.”

What Happens Next?

Legal challenges are likely imminent. Several civil rights groups have hinted at lawsuits that could delay or derail the policy’s full implementation. Meanwhile, affected travellers are scrambling to adjust their plans, with some cancelling visits, studies, and business trips.

U.S. embassies in the 12 banned countries have suspended visa appointments pending further guidance, leaving thousands in limbo.

For many, the policy resurrects painful memories from 2017 and raises renewed fears about a global order increasingly shaped by unilateralism and exclusion.

Whether the travel ban will survive legal and political scrutiny remains to be seen. But one thing is clear: the implications stretch far beyond immigration offices. The decision will shape diplomatic relationships, impact global perceptions of U.S. leadership, and test the country’s commitment to values of openness and fairness.

As the world watches, the U.S. faces a pressing question: Can security be achieved without sacrificing its soul?



UK accused of racism after visa denial to Nigerian security chief family

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

The UK Home Office is facing renewed allegations of racism and discriminatory immigration practices following its refusal to grant a visit visa to Samuel Onyekachi Ibeawuchi, a prominent Nigerian security entrepreneur, and his family. Critics say the decision is part of a broader, racially motivated clampdown on Nigerians seeking to visit the UK.

Ibeawuchi, who runs BKay Security Ltd, one of Nigeria's leading private security firms with high-profile clients including former Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan and Premier League footballer Alex Iwobi, applied for a UK visit visa alongside his wife and 18-month-old child. The family intended to spend three weeks in the summer visiting Ibeawuchi's sister, Hope Ibeawuchi-Beales, and her husband, Nick Beales, in London.

Despite assurances from Ibeawuchi-Beales and Beales, who works as head of campaigning at RAMFEL (Refugee and Migrant Forum of Essex and London), that they would support the visiting family during their stay, the application was rejected by the Home Office. The refusal letter cited concerns about the family's intention to leave the UK after their visit, stating: "This sponsorship does not satisfy me of your intention to leave the UK on completion of your visit." The letter further warned that future applications were also likely to be refused.

Officials also questioned the legitimacy of Ibeawuchi's income as a self-employed business owner, despite his submission of formal business registration documents as part of the application.

Reacting to the decision, Nick Beales accused the UK government of deliberately targeting Nigerians under what he described as an "overtly racist crackdown." He said, "Samuel and his wife both run successful businesses in Nigeria and have no interest in remaining here after visiting my family.



Had we applied for their visas a year ago, I have no doubt they'd have been granted."

Beales also aimed at the Labour government, criticising it for maintaining, if not escalating, the hostile environment policies once associated with the Conservative party. "It sadly says a lot when the Labour party is even more hostile to families such as ours than their Conservative predecessors," he added.

Ibeawuchi expressed disappointment over the decision. "We do not want to stay in the UK, just to come here to visit our family for three weeks," he said. "I feel very bad that the Home Office refused us. We submitted all the necessary documents and even photos showing both families spending time together."

Hope Ibeawuchi-Beales also spoke out, describing the emotional toll on her children. "Our two kids were so excited for their little cousin, aunt, and uncle to visit and had already planned all the things they wanted to show them in London," she said. "How do we explain to them that the UK government won't let their family visit them because they've decided to target Nigerians like their mother?"

She added that she had previously sponsored several family members without issue, insisting her brother would "without question" return to Nigeria after the holiday.

In response, a Home Office spokesperson maintained that visa applications are "assessed on individual merits" and that refusal reasons are "clearly explained" in the decision notice. They confirmed that applicants have the right to reapply, provided they address the concerns raised, specifically, in this case, financial circumstances.

The case has sparked outrage among migrant advocacy groups, who argue it reflects a broader pattern of racial discrimination in UK immigration policy. It comes amid reports of planned government crackdowns on visa applications from several countries, with Nigeria frequently named as a target.

As tensions grow around the UK's immigration stance, Ibeawuchi's case is fast becoming a flashpoint in the debate over fairness, race, and the true cost of Britain's immigration controls on families and communities.

Migrant avoids deportation after claiming he was targeted to spy on ISIS

By **Fatimah Idera**



In a case stirring debate over the intersection of national security and human rights, a Georgian asylum seeker who claims he was tortured and pressured to spy on Islamic State (ISIS) operatives has won the right to remain in the UK Migrant Avoids Deportation After Claiming He Was Targeted to Spy on ISIS—for now.

The 41-year-old Muslim man, whose identity has not been disclosed for safety reasons, argued that he fled his native Georgia after security forces in the former Soviet republic attempted to coerce him into becoming an informant on Islamic extremists. According to the man, Georgian special forces twice abducted and tortured him in 2017 after he refused to collaborate.

The man claimed his refusal to cooperate led to threats and persecution, prompting him to flee to the UK in 2019. He applied for asylum, citing fears that deportation would expose him to further abuse and potential reprisal — a violation, he argued, of his rights under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

His claims were initially rejected by the UK Home Office in 2023, with officials casting doubt on the credibility of his story. A first-tier immigration tribunal later echoed those findings, describing the

asylum seeker's account as "fabricated" and pointing to a lack of evidence that such practices occur in Georgia.

However, in a dramatic reversal, the man has now won an appeal at the Upper Tribunal. Judge Daniel Sills ruled that the original tribunal had "misrepresented" the facts and "failed to appreciate" key expert testimony, particularly surrounding the political and security climate in Georgia at the time.

The expert in question drew connections between the man's alleged persecution and the fallout from the 2017 siege in Tbilisi, in which Akhmed Chatayev — the Islamic State leader suspected of orchestrating the 2016 Istanbul airport attack — was killed. Chatayev's presence in Georgia and subsequent death sparked a major internal security response in the country.

The case adds fuel to an ongoing political firestorm in Britain over the use of human rights protections by migrants and foreign nationals to resist deportation. It follows a string of similar cases where foreign nationals — including convicted criminals — have successfully challenged their removal from the UK on ECHR grounds.

Home Secretary Yvette Cooper has

proposed new legislation to tighten judicial interpretations of the ECHR and recalibrate what she has described as a "common sense" balance between individual rights and national security. The reforms are expected to include a tougher public interest test and new restrictions on judges' ability to block deportations.

While the Georgian asylum seeker's case is set to be reheard, it represents a broader challenge for the UK's immigration system — balancing compassion and legal obligation with concerns over credibility and national security.

"This is about more than one case," said a Home Office spokesperson. "We must ensure the asylum system protects the genuinely vulnerable, while not becoming a back door for unfounded claims."

The man's future in Britain now hinges on a fresh tribunal hearing, where the evidence will be reconsidered in full. Until then, his fate — and that of similar claimants — remains suspended in legal limbo.

Reeves pledges \$21bn to upgrade transport infrastructure beyond London

By Fatimah Idera



British Finance Minister Rachel Reeves on Wednesday pledged £15.6 billion (\$21.1 billion) to upgrade transport infrastructure in cities beyond London, marking a major step in addressing long-standing regional disparities.

Speaking in Rochdale, northwest England, Reeves unveiled the first commitments from her upcoming June 11 Spending Review, which will outline government department budgets through 2029. This is the most comprehensive multi-year review since 2015, aside from a COVID-specific one in 2021.

The announcement comes as Prime Minister Keir Starmer's Labour government seeks to demonstrate tangible progress in public services and infrastructure after poor results in recent local elections. Cities outside London have lagged in productivity, something the OECD

and others link to outdated, insufficient transport networks.

"A more prosperous Britain can't depend on just a few areas pulling ahead," Reeves said, criticising past strategies that funnelled investment into regions offering the highest financial returns. She argued that this approach had deepened the economic divide between regions.

The funding, which covers the period from 2027/28 to 2031/32, includes significant projects in the West Midlands, Greater Manchester, northeast England, and South Yorkshire. It also includes West Yorkshire's first mass transit system, serving an urban area of 2.3 million people.

Much of the funding had originally been promised by the former Conservative government after it scrapped part of a north-south high-speed rail project. However, local

authorities had been waiting for formal approval to proceed with the new plans.

Reeves acknowledged the difficult budgetary choices facing the new government, noting that some worthwhile proposals from fellow ministers were turned down due to fiscal constraints.

"There are good things I've had to say no to because it's crucial to keep control of public finances," she said. While she confirmed an increase in police spending, she did not provide further details.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies described the Spending Review as potentially "one of the most significant domestic policy events" for the Labour government, as it balances demands across key areas such as healthcare, defence, and infrastructure.

Dollar slips amid trade tensions ahead of jobs report

By Fatimah Idera



The U.S. dollar showed minimal movement on Wednesday as investors turned their attention to upcoming U.S. employment data, while closely monitoring trade developments tied to President Donald Trump's tariff negotiations with major partners, particularly China.

A key deadline set by the Trump administration loomed, requiring countries to present their best trade offers the same day a tariff hike on imported steel and aluminium, raising duties to 50 per cent, took effect.

The White House also indicated that President Trump is expected to speak with Chinese President Xi Jinping this week. The call follows renewed accusations from both nations that each has breached a previous agreement aimed at easing tariffs.

While trade tensions remain a dominant theme, economic data has regained influence over the dollar's movement. The currency dropped 0.8

per cent against major rivals on Monday following weak manufacturing data but rebounded nearly the same amount after Tuesday's stronger-than-expected U.S. job openings report.

Dollar largely unchanged against other major currencies

As of 0509 GMT, the dollar gained 0.2 per cent to trade at 144.23 yen but remained largely unchanged against other major currencies. The euro held at \$1.1370, the British pound at \$1.3514, and the Swiss franc at 0.8241 per dollar.

The dollar index, which tracks the greenback against six major peers, edged up 0.1 per cent to 99.296.

Markets are now focused on the ADP private employment report due later in the day, ahead of Friday's crucial non-farm payrolls release.

"Job openings were much stronger than expected," noted Joseph

Capurso, analyst at Commonwealth Bank of Australia, referring to the JOLTS report, a key metric for the Federal Reserve. "The low forecast for ADP means there's a relatively low bar for the dollar and yields to rise on a positive surprise."

In other currency movements, the Australian dollar dipped 0.1 per cent to \$0.6457 after GDP data revealed sluggish first-quarter growth, reinforcing expectations of further economic stimulus.

The Canadian dollar was flat at C\$1.3722, with markets anticipating the Bank of Canada will leave interest rates unchanged later in the day.

China's offshore yuan held steady at 7.1915 per dollar, while South Korea's won climbed around 0.2 per cent to 1,374.535 per dollar following liberal candidate Lee Jae-myung's presidential election victory.

Ronaldo breaks Germany jinx as Portugal reach Nations League final

By New Daily Prime



Cristiano Ronaldo scored the winner in a 2-1 victory over Germany in Munich on Wednesday, sending Portugal through to the Nations League final and breaking his run of bad fortune against the Germans.

Ronaldo's 68th-minute tap in, a record-extending 137th international goal, sealed a first win over Germany after five losses, his longest streak against any national side without tasting victory.

After a stuttering first half, Florian Wirtz produced a moment of magic to give Germany the lead three minutes after halftime, starting and finishing a clever burst through the middle and heading in the opener.

Portugal's Francisco Conceicao ran 35 metres to score a brilliant solo goal, levelling things up with half an hour remaining.

The stage was then set for Ronaldo, who had missed two solid chances earlier, to land the telling blow, turning in a Nuno Mendes pass from close range.

Portugal, winners of the inaugural Nations League in 2019, will now face either European champions Spain or France in Sunday's final at the same venue.

The loss is a setback for Julian Nagelsmann's Germany, who had lost just one of their previous 17 games.

Portugal had four players backing up from winning Saturday's Champions League final — and the ensuing celebrations — but it was Germany who struggled to find rhythm early.

The match started 10 minutes late

due to a violent storm which left hailstones scattered across the turf.

Aleksandar Pavlovic mislaid several passes while Portugal's approach of pressing Jonathan Tah almost paid dividends, with the defender insecure in possession.

Ronaldo, greeted by Portuguese cheers and German boos every time he came near the ball, almost scored the opener six minutes in, but his shot was claimed by old La Liga sparring partner Marc-Andre ter Stegen, playing his first match for Germany since September 2024.

Ronaldo then put Portugal in front, nervelessly tapping in a Nuno Mendes pass to make up for his previous misses — his 137th goal for Portugal in his 219th international.