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# Supreme Court removes Julius Abure as Labour Party Chairman

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye



**T**he Supreme Court of Nigeria on Friday removed Julius Abure as the National Chairman of the Labour Party, following a unanimous ruling by a five-member panel.

The apex court set aside the decision of the Court of Appeal in Abuja, which had previously recognised Abure as the party's national chairman.

In its judgment, the Supreme Court stated that the Court of Appeal lacked the jurisdiction to make such a declaration, as the case primarily concerned internal party matters, which are outside the judicial domain.

The court stressed that disputes over party leadership fall within the realm of internal party affairs and should not be subject to judicial intervention. It also ruled in favour of an

appeal filed by Senator Esther Usman and another individual, deeming their appeal meritorious.

In its findings, the Supreme Court noted that Abure's tenure had already expired, effectively ruling him out of office.

The Court also dismissed the cross-appeal filed by the faction loyal to Abure within the Labour Party.

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## PUBLIC NOTICE COLOUR

## PRODUCT COLOUR

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SIZE	TOTAL RATE
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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
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SIZE	TOTAL RATE
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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
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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
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## PRODUCT BLACK & WHITE

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9X4	N/A
8X6	N/A
8X3	N/A
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6X4	65,000.00
6X3	41,124.50
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PHOTO NEWS (4X4)	53,333.30	4,250.00	57,583.30
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# Tinubu appoints Ayo Sotinrin as Bank of Agriculture MD

By Oluwatosin Ologun

**P**resident Bola Tinubu has appointed Ayo Sotinrin as the managing director (MD) of the Bank of Agriculture (BOA).

In a statement on Friday, Bayo Onanuga, Tinubu's special adviser on information and strategy, said the appointment is effective immediately.

Onanuga said Sotinrin brings a diverse and extensive background in both the private and public sectors to his new role, having consulted for global institutions such as the World Bank, African Development Bank (AfDB), Department for International Development (DFID), and United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

"Before this appointment, he held the position of group chief executive officer at SAO Group," the presidential aide said.

"His leadership at SAO Agro, an agribusiness company, was marked by groundbreaking agricultural initiatives, including developing a 20,000-hectare oil palm plantation and large-scale poultry, aquaculture, maize, and cassava operations in Ondo State.



"He also led SAO Capital, raising over \$750 million in infrastructure and development finance, including the landmark \$200 million Akure Water Supply Project.

"In the public sector, he served as special adviser (environment and urban development) to the minister of state FCT from 2011 to 2015.

"He has consulted extensively for global development partners such as the World Bank, AfDB, DFID, and USAID and played key advisory roles on federal and state-level projects.

"His international background includes roles at the Royal Bank of Scotland International, Deutsche Bank, and the UK Environment

Agency.

"Mr Sotinrin holds an executive MBA from Said Business School, Oxford University; an advanced diploma in environmental conservation; and a master's in engineering business management from Warwick University.

"Mr Sotinrin's appointment aligns with the Tinubu administration's strategy to revitalise Nigeria's agricultural sector."

Tinubu emphasised that Sotinrin's proven ability to mobilise capital, innovate in agribusiness, and collaborate across sectors will be instrumental in repositioning the BOA as a catalyst for food security, sovereignty, and rural prosperity.

# CCTV installed on Third Mainland Bridge to check suicide attempts – Umahi

By Oluwatosin Ologun



**D**avid Umahi, minister of works, says the installation of closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras on the Third Mainland Bridge in Lagos is intended to prevent suicide attempts.

Umahi, while featuring as a guest on Channels Television's Politics Today on Friday, said the cameras were installed to check sand excavation around the bridge.

He said security personnel would monitor footage from the CCTV and enforce speed regulations.

"We have put CCTVs down under the deck so that anybody that is excavating sand within the 10-

kilometre radius will be spotted. We have built, beside the bank of the sea on Third Mainland Bridge, an examination house where we have the police, navy, army and local security.

"They will all be there watching the CCTV so that anybody who is trying to take his life on the third mainland bridge, they will spot the person. With this CCTV, there will be no more excavation of sand under the deck around the pies," Umahi said.

During the interview, the former Ebonyi governor expressed concerns about sand excavation beneath the deck of the bridge.

According to Umahi, the initial construction of the approach slab was done as a cantilever, which was structurally inappropriate.

He stated that the slab failed when the sand fill beneath it leaked, compromising its integrity and posing a serious risk to commuters.

The minister also expressed satisfaction with the level of work on the Lagos-Calabar coastal highway.

He added that 30 kilometres of the road would be ready for President Bola Tinubu to inaugurate on May 25.

# Post-Fubara: Ibas moves to stabilise Rivers with 2025 budget

By **Elizabeth Jenrola Oso**



**T**he Administrator of Rivers State, Vice Admiral (Rtd) Ibok-Ete Ekwe Ibas, has revealed that the 2025 appropriation bill is being drafted to prioritize healthcare, education, agriculture, infrastructure, and job creation.

Speaking Thursday during a meeting with the Rivers State caucus in the National Assembly at Government House, Port Harcourt, Ibas emphasized the administration's commitment to economic development, peace-building, and technological advancement.

“Since the Supreme Court verdict on the state’s budget, we have acted swiftly to craft a new budget that

reflects our commitment to public service and infrastructural growth,” he said. “We’re making the process transparent, inclusive, and expedited to avoid further delays.”

He added that collaboration with lawmakers is crucial for keeping Rivers State “on the path of progress and enduring peace.”

The delegation, led by Senator Barinada Mpigi (Rivers South-East), included fellow lawmakers Allwell Onyesoh, Kingsley Chinda, and other members of the House of Representatives. Mpigi assured the administrator of their support for all peace and development initiatives.

The move comes amid efforts to resolve the state’s prolonged budget

crisis, which began in 2023 with a divided state assembly and culminated in legal battles that invalidated the 2024 budget passed by suspended Governor Siminalayi Fubara.

In March 2025, President Bola Tinubu declared a state of emergency in Rivers, suspending the governor, his deputy, and the entire state assembly. Ibas was appointed as sole administrator shortly after.

Last month, the state’s previously withheld FAAC funds were released, paving the way for renewed fiscal planning and governance.



# Court gags parties in Akpoti-Uduaghan vs Akpabio case, bars media interviews, social media streaming

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



A Federal High Court in Abuja has issued a restraining order barring all parties involved in the ongoing legal tussle between Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan and Senate President Godswill Akpabio from speaking to the press or streaming court proceedings on social media.

Justice Binta Nyako, who is now presiding over the matter, gave the order on Friday following a complaint raised by Kehinde Ogunwumiju, counsel to Akpabio, alleging that Akpoti-Uduaghan had been engaging with television stations to discuss the details of the ongoing suit.

In a brief but firm ruling, Justice

Nyako directed that both parties and their legal representatives must desist from granting media interviews concerning the case. She also placed a ban on the online streaming of court proceedings, citing the need to preserve the sanctity of the judicial process.

The case stems from a suit filed by Akpoti-Uduaghan, seeking to halt disciplinary proceedings initiated against her by the Senate Committee on Ethics, Privileges, and Public Petitions. On March 4, Justice Obiora Egwuatu, who initially presided over the case, issued an interim order restraining the Senate from proceeding with disciplinary actions against the Kogi senator.

However, just two days later, the Senate adopted the committee's report and suspended Akpoti-Uduaghan for six months over allegations of gross misconduct.

In a twist, Justice Egwuatu vacated his earlier order on March 19 and subsequently recused himself from the case on March 25 after Akpabio alleged bias. The case was reassigned to Justice Nyako by Chief Judge John Tsoho.

The legal face-off continues to draw national attention as tensions escalate between the legislative arm and the embattled senator.

# Oba of Benin blesses Okpebholo, says more development for Edo State

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

**T**he Oba of Benin, Ewuare II, has praised Governor Monday Okpebholo for his victory at the Edo Governorship Election Tribunal, describing the outcome as a sign that his ancestors had brought him to restore the lost glory of Edo State.

During a solidarity visit by Governor Okpebholo to the Oba's palace in Benin on Thursday, April 3, the monarch expressed his support for the governor and his administration.

The visit followed the tribunal's ruling that upheld Okpebholo's election as the rightful governor of the state, a decision that was widely celebrated by his supporters.

Oba Ewuare II, who spoke in Edo language, referred to Governor Okpebholo as a "true traditional son of the land" and urged his ancestors to bless him and his family for their steadfastness in the face of opposition.

The Oba expressed gratitude that the governor had not allowed the "machinations of evildoers" to derail the state's progress.

In a powerful show of support, the Oba performed a rare gesture, lifting the governor up from his kneeling position and offering a heartfelt prayer.

"It shall be well with you, your wife, and children. Your journey to Edo, our ancestors approved it. Our ancestors brought you to restore the



lost glory of Edo State, which evil doers wanted to ruin. We have been praying, and we will continue to pray for you, not to allow evil forces to destroy Edo," he declared.

The Oba's words carried a deep sense of history and spiritual significance, as he invoked the blessings of the ancestors over Okpebholo's tenure as governor.

He emphasised that the governor's victory and leadership were divinely ordained and that his success would attract more development to the state.

Governor Okpebholo's response

Governor Okpebholo, visibly moved by the Oba's words, thanked the monarch for his affection and support. He also expressed gratitude for the Oba's prayers and intercession for him and the people of Edo State.

The governor described the tribunal's ruling as historic, noting that it marked the first time a unanimous decision had been reached by a three-member panel in a gubernatorial election case in Edo State.

"This is the sweetest judgment ever. It is the first time we have seen a judgment where all the judges agreed that Monday Okpebholo won the election," he said, reflecting on the significance of the decision.

Okpebholo expressed his commitment to working towards the development of Edo State, thanking the Oba for his support in the face of challenges.

He reaffirmed that his administration would prioritise the welfare of the people, ensuring that the state's glory is fully restored.



# 75 Oyo nursing students secure funding from NELFUND loan scheme

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

The management of Oyo State College of Nursing Sciences, Eleyele, has confirmed that 75 of its students have successfully received financial support through the Nigerian Education Loan Fund (NELFUND).

**NELFUND**  
NIGERIAN EDUCATION LOAN FUND  
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The college's Provost, Gbonjubola Owolabi, made the announcement during a meeting with the management staff on Friday at the college's premises in Eleyele, Ibadan. The funds, she revealed, were received on Thursday, April 3, and they will help ease the financial burden on the students pursuing their education at the institution.

Owolabi expressed her gratitude for the initiative, highlighting that a total of 78 students had applied for the loan, and 75 of them were successful in securing the much-needed funds.

"This is to inform the college that we received the loan funds for 75 students yesterday (Thursday)," she said in a statement issued by the state's Commissioner for Information and Orientation, Dotun Oyelade.

She further lauded NELFUND for its support, stating, "Our college is grateful to NELFUND for this support to our students. The College also congratulates these 75 students."



Owolabi also highlighted that the loan programme was designed to alleviate financial barriers, enabling students to continue their education without the added stress of unmet financial needs.

Owolabi explained that the initiative was an essential step in ensuring that students who genuinely needed financial assistance could continue their education without interruption.

She also noted that this strategic effort was aimed at reducing the burden of financial constraints on students and fostering a more inclusive academic environment.

The provost further shared that the beneficiaries of the loan would be

invited to a meeting for the necessary documentation and to finalise the loan process for the 2025/2026 session. She noted that NELFUND had successfully paid the full fees for about 96% of the students who applied, describing the outcome as impressive.

In her closing remarks, Owolabi encouraged other students who had not yet applied for the NELFUND loan to do so, as the programme offered a valuable opportunity to ease the financial strain on their ongoing education.

She stated, "We urge other students to apply for the NELFUND loan, as this will greatly ease their educational pursuits."

# Alaafin of Oyo urges moderation as coronation ceremony approaches

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

The newly installed Alaafin of Oyo, Oba Akeem Owoade, has called on the indigenes and residents of the ancient town to celebrate his forthcoming coronation with moderation, stressing the importance of peace and communal unity for the town's growth.

In a statement issued by his Director of Media and Publicity, Bode Durojaiye, Oba Owoade, who ascended the throne in January 2025 following the passing of the late Oba Adeyemi, reminded the people of Oyo that "beating the drums of vendetta, persecution, and acrimony" would not serve their collective interest.

"Promoting peace and communal unity is a collective responsibility of every indigene of the ancient town, Peace and unity are crucial for community development, as they foster personal growth, robust institutions, and an enabling environment for infrastructural development," the monarch said.

The monarch further emphasised that now is the time to build a sustainable and formidable communal unity in Oyo, urging all residents to encourage good relationships within the town and its surrounding areas.

Oba Owoade's call for peace comes as the town prepares for a historic event: his coronation as the 46th Alaafin of Oyo, scheduled for Saturday, April 5, 2025, at Olivet Baptist High School, Oyo.

The new monarch, 47 years old, was presented with the staff of office on January 13, 2025, and completed the traditional 21-day rites known as Oro Ipebi on March 29.

The coronation will mark the official



beginning of his reign over the ancient city.

A glimpse into the life of Oba Owoade  
Oba Owoade was born to a prominent and royal family of Owoade-Agunloye in Oyo town. He completed his secondary education at Baptist High School, Saki, before studying Mechanical Engineering at various institutions, including the Federal Polytechnic in Ilaro and The Polytechnic in Ibadan.

He went on to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Sunderland and Northumbria University, both in the United Kingdom.

A Certified Project Management Professional (PMP) since 2015, the Alaafin has had a diverse career in both Nigeria and abroad.

He worked in various engineering and managerial roles, including a position at Oil Reach Company in Glasgow, UK, before relocating to Canada. There, he served as a Project Coordinator at Manitoba Hydro, one of Canada's largest utilities, and became an entrepreneur with

a real estate investment and financial services business.

Preparations for the coronation

As the town eagerly awaits the coronation, preparations are in full swing. According to Durojaiye, hotels and guesthouses have been fully booked for the influx of visitors, and posters and billboards featuring Oba Owoade's image have adorned the town.

Roads are being rehabilitated to accommodate the expected motorcade, and special canopies are being erected at the Olivet Baptist High School, the main venue of the coronation.

Security measures have also been heightened for the event, and the popular Akesan market will be closed for the day. Other local markets will follow suit to ensure a smooth and secure occasion.

Residents of Oyo are in high spirits as they prepare to witness the historic event, which will be filled with pomp and pageantry, reflecting the deep cultural heritage and traditions of the town.



# Police arrest suspect in Rivers, launch manhunt for others over abduction, defilement of minor

By Helen Okechukwu

The Rivers State Police Command, through the C4I Strike Force operatives, has apprehended a 23-year-old, Emmanuel Godwin, for the abduction and defilement of a minor (name withheld).

This was relayed to journalists by the Rivers State Police Command spokesperson, Grace Iringe-Koko, on Friday.

Iringe-Koko revealed that the suspect was apprehended at approximately 3:20 a.m. on 2 April, at Chinda Street, Ikwerre Road, during the C4I Strike Force routine patrol along the Casablanca Axis, GRA Phase 2.

Further details disclosed that the suspect



a week.

Read Also: Police officer bowing reprisal attack

The police spokesperson, stated that efforts are ongoing to apprehend the other fleeing suspects, affirming that the 23-year-old suspect will be charged to court upon the conclusion of investigations.

was found in the company of the minor at 11 Nwogu Martins Street, located in Chinda, Ikwerre Road, Port Harcourt.

However, during interrogation, the arrested suspect confessed to the crime, revealing that the minor had been detained in a room where three other suspects also engaged in unlawful acts with her for over

Iringe-Koko reiterated the commitment of the state command to ensuring the safety and security of all residents within the state.

“Further updates on this case will be communicated in due course,” the spokesperson added.

# IGP transfers AIG Gumel over comment on Rivers crisis

By New Daily Prime

The Inspector-General of Police, Kayode Egbetokun, has removed the Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIG) in charge of Zone 7, Abuja, Usaini Gumel, and redeployed him to the Force Headquarters department of Community Policing, Research and Planning, following comments he allegedly made criticising the federal government’s handling of the political crisis in Rivers State.

Gumel’s sudden transfer is believed to be connected to his offhand remark describing the March 18 declaration of a state of emergency in Rivers and the suspension of Governor Siminalayi Fubara and his deputy as “unconstitutional.”

According to insider reports, Gumel made the statement casually during an informal chat with colleagues in his office. However, one of the officers present reportedly relayed his remarks to the IGP, who acted immediately.



“He made the comment on March 29, and the same day, the IG directed the Force Secretary to reassign him. A wireless signal effecting the posting came out the following day,” a source told Daily Nigerian.

Gumel, who had only resumed duty in Zone 7 on February 19, was replaced by AIG Mobolaji Victor Olaiya in a memo dated March 30, 2025, with reference number :

TH.5361/FS/FHQ/ABJ/SUB.5/314.

No official query or opportunity to defend himself was given to Gumel before his redeployment, sources claim.

The move is being interpreted in police circles as a disciplinary action, with Community Policing, Research and Planning described as a “punitive beat” compared to the strategic and more influential Zone 7, which covers the Federal Capital Territory and Niger State.



# NGO advocates for Just Energy Transition in Niger Delta communities

By Helen Okechukwu

**T**he Kebetkache Women Development & Resource Centre, a non-governmental organization (NGO) has called on Niger Delta communities to embrace energy transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources to improve environmental and socioeconomic conditions in the region.

Speaking at a town hall meeting in Ibaka Town, Okrika Local Government Area recently, Kebetkache's Project Officer, Dr. Confidence Otikor, emphasized the importance of cleaner energy alternatives.

She highlighted the benefits of transitioning to renewable energy, including improved air quality, reduced pollution, job creation, and enhanced energy security.

Dr. Otikor noted that the shift from fossil fuels to renewables plays a crucial role in reducing carbon emissions and mitigating climate change.

She explained that energy transition not only changes how energy is produced, distributed, and consumed but also ensures a more sustainable and resilient environment.

The town hall meeting was part of Kebetkache's sustained awareness campaign for a cleaner Niger Delta.

The project manager stressed the role of women in sustainable land management, conservation, and climate resilience, urging that they be actively involved in energy transition



processes to ensure inclusivity.

She revealed that Kebetkache's intervention is supported by BothEnds, an organization committed to addressing environmental degradation and gender inequality in the region.

The Niger Delta, she said, suffers from severe land degradation due to oil spills, gas flaring, deforestation, and soil erosion, which have led to decreased agricultural productivity and environmental instability.

"The loss of mangrove forests and available land from coastal erosion has led to diminished agricultural productivity, threatening the sustainability of the environment," Dr. Otikor stated. "Hence, the advocacy for a Just Energy Transition is crucial and has been on the need to consider everybody, while planning the strategy or a transition."

Other Kebetkache program officers in attendance, including Mrs. Mary Alexander, Mrs. Idongesit Smart, and Mr. Chukwuemeka Uneanyi, reiterated the need to adopt sustainable energy sources while ensuring gender-responsive policies in the transition process.

A key highlight of the event was the planting of over 200 mangrove trees at the Ibaka waterfront.

This conservation initiative aimed to mitigate the effects of oil pollution, deforestation, and land degradation, thereby restoring the community's ecosystem and improving livelihoods.

The NGO continues to advocate for cleaner energy sources and environmental sustainability, urging local communities and stakeholders to collaborate in making the Niger Delta a healthier place for future generations.

# 'I want to sleep with Bobrisky' – Portable sparks buzz

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

**C**ontroversial singer Portable reveals he once made romantic advances toward crossdresser Bobrisky, unaware at the time that he wasn't a woman.

In an interview with Echo Room, the outspoken artist admitted he once tried to pursue Bobrisky romantically—mistakenly believing the social media star was a woman.

"I slid into his DM"

During the interview, Portable said he privately messaged Bobrisky with romantic intentions. He revealed that he was unaware of Bobrisky's gender identity at the time.

"I wanted to toast Bobrisky and have sex with him," he confessed. "I didn't know he wasn't a woman."

A friendship turned sour

The misunderstanding eventually led to tensions between the two. Portable explained that the relationship became strained after he advised Bobrisky to stop identifying as a woman.

"Bobrisky is my friend," he said. "But we had issues because I told him to stop portraying himself as a woman. His way of life is against the will of God, and I had to speak my mind."

An apology with a caveat

Despite his criticism, Portable expressed regret if his comments hurt Bobrisky. He asked for forgiveness and said his actions were driven by his tendency to always speak the truth.



"If I've offended Bobrisky, I ask for forgiveness," he added. "I'm someone who always speaks the truth, no matter what."

Social media reacts

The confession has set social media abuzz. Reactions have poured in from fans and critics alike. While some applauded Portable for his honesty, others condemned his remarks about Bobrisky's identity and lifestyle.

Many users pointed out that labeling someone's lifestyle as "against God's will" can be harmful, especially in a society where LGBTQ+ people face ongoing discrimination and stigma.

Bobrisky remains silent

Bobrisky, whose real name is Okuneye Idris Olanrewaju, has not responded publicly to Portable's comments. Known for his bold personality and glamorous online presence, Bobrisky is one of Nigeria's most talked-about internet figures. His lifestyle often sparks strong opinions in a country where discussions about gender and identity remain highly sensitive.



Portable: No stranger to controversy

Since his rise to fame with the viral hit "Zazoo Zehh," Portable has been in the news frequently—often for controversial reasons. From heated feuds to chaotic social media rants, the singer has carved a niche as one of Nigeria's most unpredictable public figures.

His latest confession adds another layer to his already complex public persona—equal parts entertainer, provocateur, and street preacher.

A bigger conversation

Beyond the headlines, the exchange between Portable and Bobrisky reignites broader conversations around gender, acceptance, and personal freedom in Nigeria. As public figures speak out, even controversially, they contribute—intentionally or not—to shaping how society navigates these evolving topics.

Whether the two will reconcile remains to be seen. But for now, Portable has once again made it clear: he's not afraid to say what's on his mind—no matter the backlash.

# ‘Sex work glorification devalues hustle’ – OAP Lolo

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigerian media personality Lolo 1 has strongly criticized the growing public acceptance of sex work, calling it a threat to hard work and moral values.

She says this trend threatens the value of hard work and honest living in today’s society.

During a recent episode of the Say My Piece podcast, Lolo 1 shared her growing concern over what she sees as a moral decline. She pointed out that many young people now openly promote sex work, sometimes even celebrating it as a successful path to wealth.

Open promotion of sex work alarming, says Lolo 1

Speaking passionately, she said society is starting to lose its sense of shame.

According to her, the boldness with which some individuals now speak about sex work shows how deeply values have shifted. “If you can blatantly come out and say you are a sex worker, you asked someone for money, and you got it and bought a car... and when you told me she bought a house, she bought this, what do you think every other average person would look at?” she asked.

The wrong message to young people

Lolo 1 warned that these public displays of wealth, gained through sex work, send the wrong message to young people. In her view, it encourages shortcuts over effort.

“They are downplaying the value of hard work,” she said. “They are downplaying the value of sweating, of growing something, of doing legitimate work.”

“Your body is not a shop”

She emphasised the importance of self-respect and urged women not to treat their bodies as tools for financial gain. “I



keep telling women in my circle that your body is not a shop,” she said. “Maybe I belong to a slowly dying generation.”

The entertainer, who is also a lawyer and mother, reflected on her personal values and how they differ from what she sees in today’s world. She expressed concern that traditional values are fading quickly. In her view, the normalization of sex work reflects a larger problem — the weakening of moral standards across society.

Blurring the line between right and wrong

She did not just criticize sex workers but also questioned a society that celebrates their success. “For somebody to come out and say, ‘This is what I do for money,’ I’m beginning to rethink many things,” she said.

Lolo 1 then challenged society directly. “Okay, if this is where we are now, let’s just make it [prostitution] a legitimate thing,” she added, suggesting that the line between legal and illegal work is becoming more blurred by the day.

Mixed reactions from the public

Her comments have sparked reactions across social media, with many

agreeing that young people today are under pressure to succeed quickly, often by any means necessary. Critics of the current trend say that glamorizing sex work not only misguides the youth but also undermines those who choose to work hard and build honest careers.

Still, some argue that sex work should not be shamed, especially in a world where job opportunities are limited and economic hardship is real. They believe everyone should have the freedom to choose how they survive, and that society’s focus should be on creating more opportunities rather than judging people’s choices.

A call to return to integrity

But for Lolo 1, the bigger issue is about setting standards. She believes that public figures and influencers should be more careful about the messages they spread.

She ended her podcast appearance by encouraging women to find pride in what they build with their hands and minds — not just their looks or their bodies.

As the debate continues, one thing is clear: the conversation about values, work, and success in modern Nigeria is far from over.



# ‘Why brands don’t want me’ – Oluwadolarz

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigerian comedian Oluwadolarz says false assumptions about his stage name have cost him brand deals and damaged his public image and career reputation.

In a recent episode of the Open Up podcast, the popular content creator revealed that many people, including top brands, have misunderstood him simply because of his name. These misconceptions, he said, have led to missed opportunities and unfair judgments.

How it all started: A joke that stuck  
The name “Oluwadolarz” didn’t come out of nowhere. It actually began as a harmless joke.

Back in 2010, when Olamide Ogunleye was still a stand-up comedian, he cracked a joke about the rise and fall of the U.S. dollar. That joke made an impression. From then on, people started calling him “Dolarz.”

“People forgot my real name because they remembered the joke,” he said.

A few years later, around 2014, he started replying to people who called him Dolarz by saying, “Oluwa is involved.” That phrase caught on, and soon enough, his full stage name became Oluwadolarz.

The unwanted consequences of a name  
While the name was meant to be fun and catchy, it brought unexpected problems. In Nigeria, the word “dollar” is often linked to internet fraud, especially when used by young men on social media.

As a result, some people began to assume he was involved in shady activities. This false image began to spread.

“Because of the name, a lot of people thought I was a Yahoo boy or a bad guy,” he said.



He made it clear during the podcast that this assumption is completely false. He has never been involved in any kind of fraud or illegal activity.

Losing brand deals because of misunderstanding  
Unfortunately, the misunderstanding didn’t just affect his reputation—it affected his income too.

Oluwadolarz explained that several brands have turned down collaborations with him because they fear negative public perception.

“Some brands don’t want to associate with me. They think I’m a Yahoo boy using comedy as a cover-up,” he said.

For a content creator whose livelihood depends on partnerships and visibility, this has been a serious setback. Despite his talent and growing fan base, he says he often gets passed over because of a name he picked more than a decade ago.

Public drama: Relationship trouble adds to pressure

Aside from his struggles with public image, Oluwadolarz has also been in the news for personal reasons.

His fiancée and the mother of his child, Ifeluv, recently announced their breakup. She accused him of cheating and not supporting her financially. The

announcement caused a stir on social media and added to the negative attention surrounding him.

While Oluwadolarz has not publicly responded to all the allegations, his focus during the podcast interview remained on his career and how he is often misunderstood.

Setting the record straight  
In the podcast, Oluwadolarz called for fairness and better understanding.

“The name is just a name. It doesn’t define who I am,” he said.

He urged people to look beyond his stage name and see the hardworking comedian behind it. He emphasized that he built his brand through dedication, creativity, and years of effort—not shortcuts or fraud.

Moving forward with focus and positivity

Despite the challenges, Oluwadolarz remains committed to his craft. He continues to entertain millions online with his relatable comedy skits.

While the past has not been easy, he’s hopeful that people—and brands—will start to understand his true story.

“I’m not asking for pity. I just want people to get the full picture,” he said.

# How Funke Akindele paid me just N90,000 after one month on set – Ijoba Lande reveals

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Comedian Ijoba Lande shares his disappointing experience working with Nollywood star Funke Akindele, revealing that he received a low payment for a month-long movie role.

## The shocking payment

In a heartfelt video posted on his social media, the comedian recounted how he worked for a full month on a movie set produced by Akindele at Amen Estate, only to receive a payment he considered shockingly low.

According to Lande, he was paid just ₦90,000 for his time and effort during the entire production period.

“There was a time Funke Akindele called me for a movie production at Amen Estate, and we spent one month there. I was shocked when she gave me ₦90,000 after spending one month,” he said.

The video quickly gained attention as fans and followers reacted to his story. Many expressed surprise, while others praised Lande for his honesty.

## Excitement turns into disappointment

Lande explained that he had initially been excited to get a role in a Funke Akindele project, given her popularity and reputation in the industry. He said he jumped at the opportunity without asking questions about the pay.

“I was too happy to even talk about payment. I just wanted to be part of the movie. I didn’t want to miss the chance to work with someone like her,” he said.

However, that excitement soon turned into disappointment when he saw his paycheck.

“I couldn’t believe it,” he said. “After one whole month on set, what I got was just ₦90k.”

## A valuable lesson learned

The comedian said the experience taught



him a valuable lesson about the film industry and how important it is to be clear about money before accepting any role—no matter who is involved.

“From now on, I will always ask how much I will be paid before I go to any location,” he stated firmly. “That experience was a wake-up call for me.”

## Advice to aspiring actors

Lande also used the moment to advise younger or upcoming actors in the industry. He urged them not to idolize anyone, no matter how big or famous they may be.

“Don’t see anybody as a god. Don’t assume you will be treated well just because someone is popular,” he warned. “Negotiate first. Know your worth. Always talk about your fees before you accept any job.”

## The bigger picture: Payment issues in Nollywood

Although he didn’t accuse Funke Akindele of wrongdoing, his story has opened up conversations around how much actors and crew members are paid in Nollywood, especially those who are not big stars yet.

In Nigeria’s booming film industry, many entertainers work long hours on set for



little pay, often with no formal contracts or agreements in place. Lande’s story shines a light on this ongoing issue and raises important questions about fairness and respect in the entertainment world.

## Funke Akindele yet to respond

So far, Funke Akindele has not responded to the claims. The actress, known for her roles in *Jenifa’s Diary* and several blockbuster movies, has a reputation for working with many rising stars and building young talent. Still, Lande’s experience suggests that not all collaborations go as expected.

## Reactions from the public

The video has since sparked debates online. Some social media users defended Akindele, saying Lande should have discussed his pay beforehand. Others sided with the comedian, arguing that no actor should be paid so little after a month of work.

## A lesson for the future

For Ijoba Lande, the lesson is clear. Excitement is good, but preparation is better.

“I have learned. Never again will I go anywhere without talking about payment first,” he said.

# Bollywood actor, Manoj Kumar passes away at 87

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

**B**ollywood legend Manoj Kumar, renowned for his iconic patriotic films that inspired generations, has passed away at the age of 87 in Mumbai.

His passing was confirmed by Dr. Santosh Shetty of Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital, where the actor had been receiving treatment.

His son, Kunal Goswami, also shared the sad news with ANI news agency. According to Dr. Shetty, Kumar died due to age-related health problems. Though his exact condition wasn't made public, the family had previously said he was facing health challenges.

From Punjab to stardom

Manoj Kumar was born as Harikrishan Goswami in 1937 in Abbottabad, Punjab, which is now part of Pakistan. After the Partition, his family moved to India, where he began his journey into the world of films.

Kumar rose to fame in the 1960s and 1970s, becoming one of Bollywood's most admired figures. His blend of emotional storytelling and national themes struck a deep chord with audiences.

A legacy of patriotic cinema

Known for his strong screen presence and directing skills, Kumar made his mark with unforgettable films like *Shaheed*, *Upkar*, *Roti Kapada Aur Makaan*, and *Kranti*. These movies were more than just entertainment—they carried powerful messages about unity, sacrifice, and national pride.

He often played roles that mirrored the everyday Indian—honest, brave, and deeply patriotic. Because of this, many



lovingly referred to him as the “Bharat” of Indian cinema.

Recognized for his contributions

In recognition of his impact on Indian cinema, Kumar received numerous awards throughout his career. The most notable was the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, India's highest honor in film, given to him for his lifetime achievements.

His ability to tell moving stories while staying rooted in Indian values made him a unique voice in the industry.

Tributes from Across the Nation

As news of his death spread, tributes poured in from fans, actors, filmmakers, and political leaders. Prime Minister Narendra Modi shared a heartfelt message on X (formerly Twitter). He wrote, “Manoj Ji was an icon of Indian cinema. His work sparked national pride and inspired generations.”

Many film personalities echoed this sentiment, remembering him as a



disciplined artist who remained committed to meaningful storytelling.

A timeless influence

Though he stepped away from the limelight years ago, Manoj Kumar's films are still widely watched and appreciated. His stories continue to inspire new generations with their timeless themes of honesty, sacrifice, and patriotism.

Critics often mention that his style and message left a lasting impression on Indian filmmaking. His work bridged the gap between entertainment and nation-building, making him a rare figure in the film world.

Final goodbye

Funeral details are expected to be released soon. In the meantime, fans across the country are mourning the loss of a true cinematic icon.

Manoj Kumar may be gone, but his spirit lives on. Through his films, he will continue to inspire hope, courage, and love for the nation for years to come.



# Trump should end, not merely manage, middle east's oldest conflicts

By New Daily Prime

IT IS becoming an odd tradition: America's secretaries of state use their final days to catalogue their failings in the Middle East. John Kerry did it in 2016. Antony Blinken took his turn on January 14th. In a speech at the Atlantic Council, a think-tank, he described a litany of problems in Gaza: the misery of civilians; the failure to find an alternative to Hamas; the lack of a broader peace plan. As a piece of analysis, it was spot-on; as a farewell from America's top diplomat, it was self-indictment.

Joe Biden never worked out how to exert American power to achieve his goals. For a year his aides begged Binyamin Netanyahu to moderate Israel's scorched-earth tactics in Gaza and to accept a ceasefire. Israel's prime minister faced no consequences for ignoring them. If allies did not fear Mr Biden, adversaries certainly did not. He wanted to force Iran into a new nuclear deal, yet failed to enforce the sanctions that were his main tool of pressure.

At other times, he did not even know his goals. Take his relationship with Saudi Arabia. Mr Biden promised to make the kingdom a "pariah". Then he begged it to pump more oil. Eventually he offered the Saudis a package of goodies to recognise Israel. He accomplished none of this.

He was not an aberration. America has not had a Middle East policy for almost two decades. George W. Bush was the last president with an ambitious regional agenda; unfortunately, the centrepiece was a disastrous invasion of Iraq. Since then, presidents have viewed the region as a headache, and their policy was an exercise in contradictions. They talked about disengaging but never actually did. They managed endless crises but rarely resolved them (and often made them worse).

Donald Trump's in-tray is already overflowing: fragile ceasefires in Gaza and Lebanon, a fraught transition in post-Assad Syria and an Iranian nuclear



programme that has advanced to record levels. If he is to tackle these crises, he should learn from his predecessors' mistakes.

First is to stop acting like an absentee hegemon. When Hamas attacked Israel on October 7th, no one was particularly interested in how Russia, China or the European Union would respond. Like it or not, America is still the only outside power with real influence in the Middle East.

It should behave accordingly. Under the past two administrations, key diplomatic posts often sat empty. Both Mr Biden and Mr Trump took more than a year to nominate ambassadors to Saudi Arabia. Advisers in the White House micromanaged their pet projects, while everything else was ignored. The goal was to keep the Middle East off the president's desk, which left America in reactive mode.

When events forced it onto their desks, presidents became enamoured of shortcuts. Barack Obama talked of Iran and Saudi Arabia needing to "share" the region: Arab states should accommodate the Islamic Republic and its network of proxies, because they were too strong to

confront. Then came Mr Trump, who saw Arab-Israeli normalisation as a magic wand that would isolate Iran and stabilise the Middle East. Mr Biden embraced that idea too.

The events of the past 15 months should dispel such illusions. Iran's "axis of resistance" was strong only because its enemies were weak: faced with a real challenge, it crumbled. At the same time, Israel's new Arab allies wanted no part of the regional war. They sat on the sidelines.

The path to regional stability is to end the region's oldest conflicts. It is fanciful to think that any American president could end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the next four years: circumstances are too bleak. But Mr Trump has unique freedom to break with Republican orthodoxy and present a fair-minded peace plan. That could offer a road map for future presidents, constrain Israel's far right and offer the Palestinians some needed hope.

# More than 60 Tory councillors defect to Reform UK

By New Daily Prime

**N**igel Farage's party stands to do well at county council elections after ex-Conservative candidates tear up membership cards

At least 60 of Reform UK's council candidates at the local elections next month have defected from the Conservatives.

New analysis shows dozens of former Tory activists, councillors or candidates have torn up their membership cards and are now standing for Reform.

Reform has surged in popularity in the nine months since the general election and overtook the Conservatives in the opinion polls at the start of this year.

It stands to perform well at the county council elections, while Kemi Badenoch has admitted her party faces "extremely difficult" local elections as it defends seats won at the height of Boris Johnson's post-pandemic popularity in 2021.

A dossier produced by Labour provided examples of 60 former Tories standing on a Reform ticket on May 1.

These include a dozen hopefuls in Kent who were previously Conservative candidates in the same county, as well as 10 defectors in Durham.

Sarah Pochin, Reform's candidate at the Runcorn and Helsby by-election on the same day as the local elections, is also a former Tory councillor.

Other high-profile defectors to the Conservatives since the general election include Marco Longhi and Dame Andrea Jenkyns, two former Tory MPs, and Tim Montgomerie, a conservative commentator.

A Labour spokesman said: "A snake might shed its skin, but at the end of the day, it's still a snake. Is that why so many of Nigel Farage's council candidates are slithering away from their years serving the Tory party?"



"Farage claims to be a breath of political fresh air, but he just hoovered up 60 candidates who failed our country as card-carrying Conservatives.

"The truth is, we now know when you take the mask off a Reform candidate, you'll often find a tired old Tory trying to breathe life into a failed political career."

The party said a vote for Reform on May 1 "risks letting a Tory in by the back door", claiming only Labour could "bring real change to Britain".

Reform will field a total of 1,630 local election candidates next month, meaning it is contesting more than any other party and standing in all but 11 available council seats.

Labour will stand candidates in 1,540 seats, while there are 1,594 Tory candidates.

Mr Farage said next month's ballots represent the first time in modern history that a party other than Labour or the Tories has fielded the most candidates.

Nineteen out of the 23 councils up for election at the start of next month are currently run by the Conservatives, who are expected to suffer heavy losses.

Reform would have been likely to have performed even better if not for the cancellation of local elections for 5.5 million people as part of a local authority shake-up by Angela Rayner,

the Deputy Prime Minister.

In an updated preview of May 1's elections on Friday, Lord Hayward, a polling expert and Conservative peer, said that Labour seemed "fatalistic" about whether it could increase its number of councillors.

"The two by-election losses this week in St Helens and Lincoln do not bode well," he said.

"They ought to be increasing seat totals given the background to the last round of elections in 2021, but trends do not augur well."

Lord Hayward noted that Labour, the Tories and Reform were all looking to be the "leader of the pack", and said council by-election results in March had been "marginally favourable" for the Conservatives.

He noted it was one of the few months since the general election in which Reform had not gained a councillor through a by-election, saying it was "valid" to ask whether Mr Farage's party had peaked but adding that it would remain a "formidable" opponent.

A Reform UK spokesman said: "This is less than 4 per cent of all our 1,630 candidates.

"Is this the same Labour Party that accepted the defections of then-Conservative MPs Christian Wakeford and Natalie Elphicke?"



# How America could end up making China great again

By New Daily Prime

A big beautiful opportunity

AS DONALD TRUMP unleashes a volley of tariffs and his administration talks up the strength of its military alliances in Asia, you might think that these are anxious times in the country that America sees as its main adversary. In fact, our reporting from Beijing reveals a very different picture. MAGA is putting pressure on China's leaders to correct their worst economic errors. It is also creating opportunities to redraw the geopolitical map of Asia in China's favour.

China has come out badly from Mr Trump's Rose Garden rant. Counting the new levy of 34%, plus existing duties, the total rises to 65%—and slightly higher if you include the disruptive removal of a tariff exemption for small packages. Given that exports are still roughly 20% of GDP, as they were in 2017, this will hurt China's economy. China's tactic of rerouting its firms' manufacturing chains through countries such as Vietnam to bypass tariffs will work less well now that America is erecting barriers globally.

The trade war comes as China is still struggling with deflation, a housing bust and dismal demography. For the past five years the Communist Party has neglected weak consumption and embraced an unwise statism that has cramped the private sector. China has exported its overcapacity, swamping the world with goods, and fostered a spiky chauvinism that unsettles America's allies both in Asia and Europe.

Despite all this, China enters the new age of MAGA stronger than in Mr Trump's first term. President Xi Jinping has long argued that America is too polarised and overstretched to sustain its global role. One of his slogans warns of "great changes unseen in a century". His paranoid nationalism used to seem like dystopian hyperbole. Now that Mr Trump is committing such wanton self-harm and general destruction, it looks ahead of its time.

Mr Xi has been preparing for today's chaotic world ever since becoming China's leader in 2012. He has urged economic and technological self-sufficiency on his country. China has reduced its vulnerability to American chokeholds, such as sanctions and export controls. Although its banks still need access to dollars, it now makes most non-bank

international payments in yuan.

China's domestic economy has unrecognised strengths. Competition and an embrace of technology mean that its industrial firms thrash Western rivals in everything from electric vehicles to the "low-altitude economy", meaning drones and flying taxis. Viewed from China, Mr Trump's tariffs will condemn Detroit to 1970s-style obsolescence, just as his crusade against universities will set back innovation.

One example of China's promise is DeepSeek, which is taken as a sign that the country can innovate around America's semiconductor embargoes. The party is comfortable with home-grown AI, and this could allow the technology to diffuse through China faster than the West, boosting productivity. That, and signs Mr Xi may have grown more tolerant of entrepreneurs, help explain why the MSCI index of Chinese shares has risen by 15% in 2025, even as American stocks have slid.

Four years after the bubble burst, property is at last becoming less of a drag on growth. In some cities, including Shanghai and Nanjing, prices have even started to rise. The party has also belatedly taken steps to boost consumption. Local governments can refinance themselves with 6trn yuan (\$830bn) of new bonds over three years, and another 4.4trn of "special" bonds this year. Some extra money will go to households.

To grasp the full economic opportunities, the party needs to stop persecuting the private sector. Even China's Leninist autocrats realise the "common prosperity" crackdown on entrepreneurs that began in 2021 went too far. Although some zealous officials have yet to

get the message, Li Qiang, Mr Xi's deputy, used a speech on March 23rd to laud the "dragons" of Hangzhou, China's capital of innovation.

The economy will also need more stimulus to boost consumption, and more determined efforts to stabilise the property market, which still weighs on household confidence. Extra consumption would benefit Chinese relations abroad too, by helping absorb surplus capacity. As America puts up walls, China will have a chance to reset trade relations around the world by offering to invest in manufacturing in partner countries rather than flooding them with exports.

These economic opportunities sit alongside a geopolitical one. America's China policy is alarmingly unclear. Hawks in the administration insist that, by turning away from Europe, America is freeing up resources to contain China. However, Mr Trump admires Mr Xi and has sent an ally, Senator Steve Daines, to Beijing to put out feelers for a deal. In his first term, Mr Trump struck a trade agreement with China; now he wants to haggle over TikTok.

China is betting that MAGA talk of a "reverse Kissinger" deal, with America prising Russia away from China, is silly. And Trumpian protectionism, ally-abuse and indifference to human rights are a repudiation of American values: the beacon of the free world now seems capricious and dangerous. Mr Xi has no intention of filling the vacuum left by Uncle Sam, but he has a chance to expand China's influence, especially in the global south. If, as well as spreading clean technologies, China becomes bolder about cutting emissions at home, it could show leadership on climate change.





# UK approves expansion of London Luton Airport

By **Fatimah Idera**



Britain approved the expansion of London's Luton Airport giving the green light to the building of a new terminal which will allow passenger numbers at the capital's fourth busiest hub to jump by almost 80%.

Britain's Labour government, elected last July, has put speeding up the planning process to deliver new energy and transport projects at the heart of its growth agenda, and has already backed expansion at London's bigger Heathrow and Gatwick airports.

Luton, located 35 miles north of London, plans to add a terminal building, expand existing buildings and build new taxi-ways, as it looks to grow annual passenger numbers to 32 million by 2043, from about 18 million now.

Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander considers that there is a "compelling case" for approving the project, a planning decision document published by the government said.

Luton is mainly a leisure airport taking holidaymakers to European destinations, and is used by airlines including easyJet, Wizz Air and Jet2

The airport welcomed Alexander's decision and said it would create up to 11,000 jobs and an additional 1.5 billion pounds in output for the British economy each year.

Planning officials had recommended that Alexander block the development on environmental grounds but she overruled those concerns.

"Given the national need for the proposed development and the capacity it will deliver ... the Secretary of State does not believe that this is outweighed by the development's potential adverse impacts," the decision document said.

The government has previously said that airport expansions will not derail net zero targets because the use of sustainable aviation fuel is expected to grow further in the coming decade from currently low levels.

However, Luton is owned by the local government council and run by London Luton Airport Operations Ltd, which is 51% held by Spain's Aena alongside Australian investor AMP.

# UK finance industry slow to hire women to top roles, report finds

By Fatimah Idera

**B**ritain's financial industry has made little progress in recruiting more women to top positions, a new report from the UK finance ministry, a pace of change the head of British insurer Aviva called "unacceptable".

Further progress may be harder as financial firms and other companies try to balance promises they have made with U.S. President Donald Trump's drive to crack down on diversity and inclusion-related goals.

Women working in finance held 36% of senior positions last year, up from 35% in 2023 and 34% in 2022. The slow progress was attributed to restructuring, low turnover in senior management and hiring freezes, according to the latest report from the HM Treasury Women in Finance Charter, compiled by think tank New Financial.

"However, we must accept that this progress is not happening quickly enough and the annual improvements are too gradual," Blanc said in a statement attached to the report.



The charter, signed by around 450 firms and launched in 2016, aims at getting City businesses to promise to increase female representation at top company echelons. Each firm sets its own goals and timeline.

For 2025, 44% of these firms with targets due this year say they will not meet their goals or reaching them would take "effort", the report said.

Trump's crackdown on DEI goals has spurred some to abandon public commitments to diversity goals. Swiss bank UBS dropped its diversity targets from its annual report last month.

A third of the 60 firms with a deadline in 2024 failed to meet

their targets, according to the report.

Germany's Commerzbank had just over a fifth of women in leadership roles by July 2024, short of its 25% target. It blamed hiring limitations and fewer management positions.

Natixis' London branch their senior women cohort to 28.4% from 16.7% in the last five years, but it postponed its 30% target to September 2026, the report said.

The report also found that 95% of signatories had shifted to some form of hybrid-working model, which it said benefits women with care-giving responsibilities in particular. That was up from a quarter of signatories in 2019.

# UK stocks tumble as Trump's tariffs stir economic growth fears

By Fatimah Idera

London shares plunged on Thursday, as investors avoided risky assets after U.S. President Donald Trump's reciprocal tariffs amplified global trade war and recession worries.

The blue-chip FTSE 100 touched a two-month low, closing down 1.6%, posting its largest daily drop since August 2024. The midcap FTSE 250 index fell 2.2%, hitting a one-year low.

Recall, Trump's new tariffs announced on Wednesday set a baseline of 10% for all imports and higher duties on some of the biggest trading partners of the U.S., crystallizing the global markets' fears of economic stagflation.

However, London said a trade deal with the U.S. is close, aiming to reduce the impact of new levies that could lead to a global trade war and harm its economy.

On Wednesday, the UK published a 400-page list of U.S. goods it could include in any possible retaliatory tariff response to Trump's tariffs on British imports.

Investors added to bets on Bank of England interest rate cuts with government bond yields falling



sharply after the tariffs announcement.

UK banks' shares fell 7.6%, tracking losses of European peers, as tariff concerns stoked worries about economic growth of the world's largest economy.

HSBC Holdings and Barclays were among the top losers on the blue-chip index, falling 8.9% and 8.7% respectively.

Meanwhile, sterling hit a six-month high against the dollar, making the export-heavy index less attractive and adding to the losses.

Personal goods led the sectoral declines, down 10.6%, touching the lowest in six months Burberry and Watches of Switzerland Group slipped 10% and 13.5% respectively, mirroring losses in European companies after Trump's new tariffs impacted key

luxury markets in the EU and Switzerland.

Industrial metal miners stocks were down 5.3% as base metals fell and copper hit a one-month low on fears the new U.S. levies would affect industrial demand for metals.

On the flip side, utilities shares, often traded as a bond proxy owing to their stable income regardless of economic situation, touched a near six-month high, gaining 4.2%.

Pharma stocks were up 1.6% as they survived a market rout on temporary tariff exemption of pharmaceutical products.

Among individual stocks, Currys (CURY.L) jumped 14.9% after the electricals retailer raised the annual profit forecast



# Prince William Earthshot Prize awards to be held in Brazil

By Fatimah Idera

Britain's Prince William was joined by celebrities and soccer stars to announce on Friday that he would take the annual awards ceremony for his multi-million dollar environmental prize to Brazil this year.

The heir-to-the throne launched the Earthshot Prize in 2020, with the aim of making huge strides towards fixing environmental problems within a decade.

A nod to former U.S. President John F. Kennedy's "moonshot" project which led to the 1969 lunar landing, its goal is to find innovations to combat climate and other green issues, and awards five winners 1 million pounds (\$1.3 million) each to drive their projects.

Prince William's annual environmental awards will take place in Rio de Janeiro in November – the same month in which Brazil hosts the Cop30 UN climate change summit.

"I'm pleased to announce we're going to be in Brazil in 2025," William said in a video to accompany the announcement.



"We need urgent optimism now more than ever, and I think Brazil epitomises that, and I can't believe we are at the halfway point of 10 years."

Previous awards ceremonies have been held in London, Boston, Singapore, and Cape Town, backed by global organisations and philanthropists.

Among the famous faces who also featured in the Earthshot video were actress Cate Blanchett, model Heidi Klum, Brazil's most capped soccer player and World Cup winner Cafu, and former England soccer captain David Beckham.

"I'm so, so excited ... (Brazil)

– where nature and culture go hand in hand," Beckham said.

To mark the announcement, Prince William said: "2025 marks the midway point of the Earthshot decade, and each year we've witnessed the remarkable power of human ingenuity in addressing our planet's most pressing challenges.

"As we bring the Earthshot Prize to Brazil, a nation rich in biodiversity and environmental innovation, we are seeing fresh momentum for new ideas to create healthier and safer ways to live our lives. It is an honour to profile the people making our world a better place for us and for our children."

# Kevin De Bruyne to leave Manchester City at end of season

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

Manchester City's midfield maestro Kevin De Bruyne has announced he will leave the club when his contract expires at the end of the current season, bringing an iconic decade-long spell at the Etihad to a close.

The 33-year-old Belgian international, who joined City from Wolfsburg in 2015 for £55m, has been instrumental in the club's most successful era, lifting 16 major trophies, including six Premier League titles and a historic Champions League in 2023.

De Bruyne made the emotional announcement on social media, stating, "Every story comes to an end, but this has definitely been the best chapter. This city. This club. These people gave me everything. I had no choice but to give everything back."

In 413 appearances across all competitions, De Bruyne has scored 106 goals and provided a record-breaking 117 assists in the Premier League — the most since he joined the league in 2015. His playmaking brilliance also saw him equal Thierry Henry's record of 20 assists in a single season.

City boss Pep Guardiola, who



arrived a year after De Bruyne, was instrumental in transforming him from an attacking midfielder into one of the world's most complete central players. Together, they built a City dynasty that dominated English football and peaked with their European triumph in Istanbul two years ago.

However, the past two seasons have seen the Belgian captain hampered by injuries. He missed nearly five months of this campaign due to a thigh problem and has started just 19 matches this season. De Bruyne had previously paused contract extension talks, suggesting he was open to new opportunities, including a potential move to Saudi Arabia.

While his departure will mark the end of an era, his impact on City is etched in history. De Bruyne holds

the second-most assists in Premier League history (117), only behind Manchester United legend Ryan Giggs (162). He also shares the most Premier League Playmaker of the Season awards (three) and is tied for the most Player of the Season awards with Cristiano Ronaldo and Thierry Henry (two).

In a heartfelt farewell, De Bruyne added, "This will always be our home. We cannot thank the city, club, staff, team-mates, friends, and family enough for this 10-year ride."

As Manchester City brace for life after their creative talisman, fans across the world will remember Kevin De Bruyne not just as a world-class midfielder, but as the beating heart of one of the greatest teams in Premier League history.



# Everton condemns death threats to Tarkowski after tackle

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

Everton Football Club has strongly condemned death threats made towards defender James Tarkowski and his family following his controversial challenge on Liverpool's Alexis Mac Allister during Wednesday's Merseyside derby.

The tackle, which occurred in the 11th minute at Anfield, saw Tarkowski win the ball but catch Mac Allister high on the leg. Though he received a yellow card, the Premier League's refereeing body, PGMOL, later admitted the incident met the threshold for a red card and said an on-field review should have been recommended by VAR.

In a statement, Everton said:

"Such behaviour is completely unacceptable and has no place in football or society. The club is liaising with James



and his wife Samantha, and stands ready to engage with social media companies and assist police investigations."

Samantha Tarkowski voiced her anger on Instagram, describing the online abuse as "beyond disgusting."

"People forget he is more than just a footballer... Football is a sport, but the

way some so-called fans behave is disgraceful," she said.

After the game, Tarkowski admitted the challenge was poor.

"I spoke to [Mac Allister] and apologised... I expected a 50-50 but he pulled out. As I lunged, I caught him high. He accepted my apology," said the defender.

Liverpool boss Arne Slot acknowledged PGMOL's admission, while Everton manager David Moyes condemned the online abuse, saying:

"It is not acceptable for anybody in any walk of life... It could have been a red, but that doesn't justify threats."

The incident highlights growing concerns about the abuse footballers face online, particularly in high-stakes rivalries.

## Calls for gender-specific football pitches amid injury rise

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

As ACL injuries continue to sideline high-profile stars in women's football, questions are being raised about the very ground they play on.

England captain Leah Williamson, Arsenal's Vivianne Miedema, Beth Mead, and Chelsea's Sam Kerr are just a few top names who've suffered serious knee injuries, prompting renewed debate: are current football pitches—designed primarily for men—suitable for female players?

Brighton CEO Paul Barber has reignited the discussion, suggesting women's physiology and injury patterns could warrant a different type of playing surface. With plans underway to build a purpose-built stadium for Brighton Women by 2027-28, the club is keen to investigate whether hybrid surfaces—typically 95% sand and reinforced with synthetic



fibres—are part of the problem.

Currently, most Women's Super League (WSL) matches are played on hybrid or natural grass pitches shared with men's teams. But some experts believe overuse and poor maintenance, rather than pitch type alone, could be increasing injury risks.

"We've always just designed football

pitches," said Neil Rodger of STRI Group, a leading surface consultancy. "But more usage means more wear and tear, and that impacts pitch quality."

West Ham boss Rehanne Skinner emphasized the need for better pitch management. "TV can mask poor pitch conditions," she said. "When you stand on them, it's a different story."

Former England defender Claire Rafferty, who suffered multiple ACL injuries, said the idea of gender-specific pitches is "interesting," but warned it could limit access to facilities, especially at grassroots level.

Meanwhile, Jen Beattie and Ellen White called for greater focus on research into women's health, conditioning, and the menstrual cycle's effect on ligaments. "Women are just different," said White. "It's not just the pitch—it's strength,



# Mourinho, Buruk clash as Fenerbahce slam Gala boss

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi



**F**enerbahce have launched a blistering attack on Galatasaray head coach Okan Buruk, accusing him of theatrics following a heated confrontation with Jose Mourinho in Wednesday's Turkish Cup derby.

In a statement released after Galatasaray's 2-1 victory, Fenerbahce claimed Buruk behaved "as if he had been shot" when Mourinho allegedly grabbed his nose during post-match chaos.

The clash unfolded at the final whistle, with both managers engaging with match officials in the centre circle. Mourinho, recently appointed Fenerbahce boss, was filmed touching Buruk's face, prompting the Galatasaray coach to fall to the ground, drawing police and stewards into the fray.

Fenerbahce described Buruk's reaction as "planned provocation," stating:

"This individual acted as if he had been shot and fell to the ground in a professional manner... This absurd behaviour is clearly visible in video footage."

The club continued by mocking Buruk's playing days, saying his tendency to go to ground "has carried over into his coaching career."

Buruk, however, attempted to de-escalate matters in his post-match press conference, calling the incident "nothing," though Galatasaray later stirred controversy by posting a video mocking Mourinho in the style of the cartoon South Park.

The fiery atmosphere also saw three players sent off — Fenerbahce's Mert

Yandas and Galatasaray's Kerem Demirbay and Baris Yilmaz — after a melee broke out between the benches during stoppage time.

This latest drama adds to a growing list of controversies between the two Turkish giants. In February, Galatasaray accused Mourinho of making racist remarks after a league match, leading to a four-game suspension and a fine of £35,000. Mourinho responded by filing a lawsuit against the club for defamation.

With tensions between the Istanbul clubs at boiling point, the fallout from Wednesday's derby is unlikely to end soon — especially with both managers now firmly entrenched in a war of words and gestures.