



Zone 2027 presidential ticket to South, Wike tells PDP **Pg 2**

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Zone 2027 presidential ticket to South, Wike tells PDP

By Damilola Olufemi

The Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike, has called on leaders and members of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) to ensure that the party's presidential ticket in the 2027 election is zoned to the southern region of Nigeria.

Wike made the appeal on Monday evening while presenting a communiqué on behalf of a group known as the "Concerned Stakeholders of the PDP," after their high-level meeting.

"In line with fairness, inclusivity, the principle of federal character, and adherence to our party's constitution, the PDP must clearly state that its presidential ticket for 2027 be zoned to the South, especially after years of northern presidency under Muhammadu Buhari," the communiqué stated.

Wike stands with Anyanwu

The document further asserted that only Senator Sam Anyanwu, recognised as the



party's National Secretary, has the legal authority to convene meetings of the party's key organs, including the National Convention, NEC, National Caucus, and NWC.

"Any notice or correspondence not issued by him, including those sent to INEC, is considered invalid and of no legal effect," the communiqué added.

Reaffirming their stance, Wike said the group stands firmly behind Anyanwu's position.

"To halt the steady decline threatening the party's survival, we urge immediate compliance with the Supreme Court's ruling. We reaffirm Senator Sam Anyanwu as the authentic and duly elected National Secretary of our great party," he said.

Dele Momodu: Unity key for PDP to oust Tinubu in 2027

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

Chieftain of the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, Dele Momodu, has said the Party cannot unseat President Bola Tinubu in 2027 if they remain disunited and fractured.

He emphasised that only a coalition of political parties would be capable of achieving such a feat.

Momodu shared his views on Tuesday during the monthly program of the Broadcasting Corporation of Oyo State.

According to him, "The APC is nervous about the PDP. They recognize that the PDP is the only opposition party capable



of challenging their dominance in 2027."

He further explained that one of the reasons behind the APC's internal strategies is to ensure the party remains

factionalized, thereby weakening its unity.

"Additionally, there are internal issues within the APC, with some members being used to undermine its stability and progress," he added.

Momodu stressed that a formidable coalition would be necessary to remove Tinubu from office in 2027.

"Also, whoever would contest favourably against the current president must come from the opposite direction in terms of regions in Nigeria," he said.

THE NEW DAILY PRIME RATE CARD

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8X6	225,368.50
8X3	106,934.50
7X4	180,173.50
6X4	100,434.50
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5X6	123,749.50
5X5	110,000.00
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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
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Tinubu unveils renovated International Conference Centre in Abuja

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye



President Bola Tinubu officially commissioned the newly renovated International Conference Centre in Abuja on Tuesday, following his return from Lagos, where he participated in the Eid al-Kabir festivities.

The renovation, which cost an impressive N39 billion, marks a significant

investment in the capital's infrastructure.

The commissioning ceremony took place as the President prepares for the upcoming Democracy Day anniversary, scheduled for June 12, 2025.

The event was filled with excitement, highlighted by the joyful presence of the

Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Nyesom Wike, who was seen dancing in celebration of the occasion.

This renovation is expected to enhance the capacity of the International Conference Centre, making it a pivotal venue for national and international events.

Tinubu returns to Abuja after two-week Lagos stay

By Friday Omosola

After a two-week working vacation in Lagos, President Bola Tinubu has returned to Abuja.

His time in the commercial capital included the Eid al-Adha festivities and a series of high-profile engagements.

Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu of Lagos State and other state officials were present at Murtala Mohammed International Airport to see President Tinubu off.

Since his arrival in Lagos on May 27, 2025, Mr Tinubu's schedule has been packed.



He notably took part in the 50th-anniversary commemoration of ECOWAS in Lagos State and joined fellow Muslims for Eid al-Adha prayers.

His stay also featured the commissioning of multiple projects and numerous

meetings with dignitaries at his home.

Among the significant events, the President inaugurated Phase 1, Section 1 of the Lagos-Calabar Coastal highway on May 31.

This was followed five days later by the groundbreaking for the Lekki Deep Seaport access road reconstruction, witnessed by leading industry figures and government representatives.

Following his return to Abuja, Mr Tinubu's agenda immediately included an inauguration event.

65% of Rivers residents see Fubara's suspension as illegal – survey

By Alade Adisa

Majority of Rivers Residents Oppose Federal Intervention in State Governance, Survey Reveals

Almost three months after a political crisis led to the disruption of governance in Rivers State, a new survey has revealed that more than 65% of residents view the federal government's actions as illegal.

The survey, conducted by the Centre for Journalism Innovation and Development (CJID), also shows that 92.7% of residents are aware of and oppose the federal government's declaration of a state of emergency in Rivers State, which many see as unconstitutional and politically motivated.

The findings were presented in Abuja on Tuesday by Mboho Eno, Deputy Director of CJID's Accountability Programme, who said the data reflects widespread public dissatisfaction.

"A striking 92.7% of the 400 respondents said they were aware of the state of emergency and the suspension of democratic institutions in Rivers," Eno stated.

Despite federal claims that emergency measures were needed due to security concerns, 86.7% of those surveyed reported that daily life continues normally, with no major disruptions—a finding that challenges the government's official narrative.

Public concern extends to the governance vacuum that has followed. More than 75% of respondents said they were unaware of the activities or plans of the newly appointed Sole Administrator, nearly two months after



the appointment was made. This has fuelled perceptions of undemocratic governance and lack of transparency.

The CJID report further noted that 65% of respondents believe the federal government's intervention in removing the Governor and dissolving the State House of Assembly was illegal.

Experts warn that this move could set a dangerous precedent, risking a constitutional crisis. Unlike previous states of emergency declared during periods of severe violence — such as in Plateau and Ekiti states under former President Obasanjo, or in the North East under President Jonathan — the current situation in Rivers State is largely political. Suspending elected institutions in this context could seriously damage public trust in democracy.

"This sentiment portrays a deep-rooted respect for electoral mandates and constitutional order among the Rivers populace," CJID added.

The report also warned that the ongoing

emergency rule could impact the upcoming 2027 general elections.

"There is a risk of voter suppression, reduced civil liberties, and manipulation of the electoral process, especially in a state with a history of election violence," it stated.

Across the state, residents are calling for the return of elected officials and a peaceful resolution to the political crisis.

"By suspending an elected Governor and Assembly and replacing them with an unelected administrator, the federal government may be undermining the very democratic institutions it claims to protect," the report concluded.

The survey collected responses from 400 people of different backgrounds, including youth, women, civil servants, business owners, and residents from both rural and urban areas across Rivers State's three senatorial districts. The findings reflect high public awareness and strong disapproval of the ongoing state of emergency.

Fayose defends Tinubu's economic reforms, cautions against expecting overnight miracles

By Friday Omosola



Former Ekiti State Governor Ayodele Fayose has lauded President Bola Tinubu's efforts in stabilizing Nigeria's economy.

He stated that a complete national turnaround won't happen instantaneously.

His remarks came after a personal visit to Mr Tinubu at his Lagos residence yesterday.

"My visit is purely personal, aimed at encouraging him to persist in his service to Nigerians," Mr Fayose, a Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) chieftain said.

He acknowledged the inherent difficulties but emphasized, 'No miracle can transform things overnight.'

Mr Fayose credited the President for the economy's stabilization, despite the challenging decisions implemented by the current administration.

"We must commend the President for the progress he has made," he stated.

He clarified that his praise for Mr Tinubu's

government stems from these demonstrable efforts, contrasting it with his past criticisms of previous administrations.

"I was once a critic of the last administration, but the current situation is incomparable," he explained.

"My presence here today is to both acknowledge his return home and to encourage him to do even more for Nigerians."

Mr Fayose reaffirmed his long-standing belief in Mr Tinubu's leadership capabilities, noting that his support predates Mr Tinubu's presidency, even during his own tenure as a PDP governor.

"Even when I was a sitting PDP governor, I always believed in his leadership and openly supported him even before he became President," he confirmed.

He underscored the collective responsibility of Nigerian leaders to bolster the President's efforts, helping the public comprehend the immense challenge of guiding a struggling economy towards stability.

Since taking office, Mr Tinubu has introduced significant policies, including the removal of fuel subsidies and the floating of the naira, which have faced widespread public outcry due to soaring living costs.

However, Mr Fayose expressed optimism regarding these reforms.

He stated, "There's a distinction between instant change and stabilizing an economy. There's no miracle for immediate transformation, but the President's courageous steps, which have stabilized the economy and the currency, instill hope for our collective future."

Addressing his political allegiance, he reiterated his unwavering commitment to the opposition PDP, stating his preference to leave politics entirely rather than defecting from the party.

"Let me first clarify this: Ayo Fayose will not move from PDP to any other political party, not even the APC," he declared. "I am 65 years old this year. It is a choice for those who opt to switch parties."

Lagos PDP denies structural collapse amid defections

By Friday Omosola

The Lagos State chapter of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has refuted claims that its political structure has crumbled following the recent defection of its former Publicity Secretary, Hakeem Amode, and others to the All Progressives Congress (APC).

The New Daily Prime reported that mass defection hit the party on Monday as prominent members joined APC following on the path of Abdul-Azeez Olajide Adediran, popularly known as Jandor, who was the party's 2023 governorship candidate.

Their defection, however, triggered speculations about a potential breakdown of PDP's framework in the state.

During the announcement of his switch, Amode claimed: "We have decided to collapse the entire PDP structure in Lagos State, from ward to the state level, to align with His Excellency, Handle to decamp en masse to the APC."

Meanwhile, in a statement released on Tuesday by State Secretary, Soji Orioye, the party maintained that despite the departure of some members, its foundation in Lagos remains firm and unshaken.

However, the PDP dismissed his comments as baseless, arguing that Amode had long disengaged from the party's internal activities and lacked the authority to speak on its structure.

Orioye noted, "The attention of the State Executive Committee has been drawn to social media videos and reports of the defection of Alhaji Hakeem Amode and others to the APC, where they were received by



Jide Adediran (Jandor).

"As much as politics is about interest and those involved have followed their interest to the APC, we wish them well in their sojourn. However, the claim by Amode that they have collapsed the PDP structure in the state is laughable and can only be described as a comic remark."

He added that Amode, who shifted his focus to campaign roles and neglected his duties as the party's Publicity Secretary, had not participated in official party activities for a long time.

"We wonder how someone who abandoned his office as state publicity secretary and became campaign publicity secretary and hasn't attended a meeting in a very long while understands the party restructuring, not to talk about collapsing the structure, you are no more part," Orioye stated.

He also accused the defectors of betraying the PDP during the last

general elections and described their return to the APC as a reunion with their political sponsors.

Despite recent developments, Orioye affirmed that the PDP remains active and fully engaged in preparations for the upcoming local government elections in Lagos, scheduled for 12 July 2025.

"One may ask, can a party whose structure has supposedly collapsed be fielding candidates across all levels for an election? The answer is clear," he said.

Orioye called on PDP members and supporters to stay committed, assuring them that the party's current leadership is working diligently to reposition and strengthen the organisation across the state.

While extending best wishes to those who left, he advised them to exercise discretion in their public statements regarding the PDP.

Tinubu urges Wike to disregard critics, focus on FCT transformation

By Friday Omosola



President Bola Tinubu has called on the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike, to ignore distractions from ‘busybodies and naysayers’ and remain committed to his mandate of transforming the nation’s capital.

Mr Tinubu’s advice came during the inauguration of the newly refurbished International Conference Centre in Abuja, which was renamed the ‘Bola Ahmed Tinubu International Conference Centre’ in his honour.

Speaking at the event, Mr Tinubu emphasised that the renovated centre is a testament to his administration’s ‘determined efforts to change the way we do things, to reflect us as people of quality, people of character, people of determination, people of great spirits, that’s what we are.’

He specifically lauded Minister Wike, stating, “I am glad, Nyesom Wike, you are reflecting that. Don’t pay attention to busybodies and the bystanders, and whatever they say. Continue with your

good work. You are a transformational leader. You have the vision, foresight and determination to succeed.”

He highlighted his administration’s understanding that robust modern infrastructure forms the foundation of economic prosperity.

He affirmed the ‘Renewed Hope Agenda’s’ commitment to revitalizing key sectors including transportation, healthcare, education, energy, and urban development, underscoring that ‘modern infrastructure is the backbone of a thriving economy in an inclusive and progressive society.’

The President also noted that the revitalized conference centre symbolizes Nigeria’s dedication to ‘regional diplomacy, continental trade discussions, global partnerships, and many more thoughtful, well-outlined goals that reflect our Nigerian first.’

In a humorous yet firm directive, Mr Tinubu informed his political allies, appointees, and government officials that

complimentary use of the conference centre would not be permitted for social or corporate events.

“You must obey what the landlord says. You want to use this place, you gonna pay for it,” Tinubu said, echoing the FCT minister’s earlier assertion that fees would be charged for the use of the halls.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by prominent figures including, Senate President Godswill Akpabio, Minister of Finance and Economy Wale Edun, and Minister of Justice Lateef Fagbemi, among others.

Wike, a leading figure in the opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and a two-time governor of Rivers State, joined Mr Tinubu’s All Progressives Congress (APC) cabinet in August 2023.

Notably, Bianca Odumegwu-Ojukwu, a member of the All Progressives Grand Alliance, also joined the APC-led government’s cabinet in October 2024 as Minister of State for Foreign Affairs.

Wike: PDP will survive, despite crisis

By **Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye**



The Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike, has reaffirmed that the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) will endure despite its internal challenges, stressing that unity and respect for the party's constitution are key to its revival.

Wike stated this on Monday evening when he hosted critical stakeholders of the party under the auspices of 'Concerned Stakeholders of the PDP.'

Speaking on Monday evening, Wike called for an end to impunity and urged members to prioritise the collective survival of the party over personal ambition.

Among those in attendance were former governors Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi

(Enugu), Samuel Ortom (Benue), and Okezie Ikpeazu (Abia), as well as PDP National Secretary Senator Samuel Anyanwu, former Senate Minority Leader Philip Aduda, serving and former lawmakers, and several zonal and state party executives.

"All of you here are those committed to the survival of our party—not just talking on television or in newspapers, but working at various levels," Wike stated.

He credited the controversial G5 Governors, of which he is a member, with helping to stabilise the country politically: "You may like us, you may hate us. The truth is, if the G5 had not taken the decision we took, this country would have been in crisis."

"It doesn't matter who the beneficiary was but the right thing had to be done and we still stand by that decision.

"If the party had listened to what we said, we won't have been where we are today and we have continued to sound it to the party, let the constitution of the party and of the country be respected.

"That, as an opposition party, we cannot continue to act with impunity. No opposition party acts with impunity. Ours is to continue to placate people and bring them together, not to say that they should go to hell.

"Let us not allow greed, let us not allow ego to kill our party," he said.

Taraba State govt donates N50M to Mokwa flood victims

By New Daily Prime

The Taraba State Government has extended its heartfelt condolences to the government and people of Niger State following the recent devastating flood in the Mokwa Local Government Area of the state.

The delegation led by the Senator representing Taraba Central, Manu Haruna, visited the Niger State Government House in Minna on Tuesday to commiserate with Governor Umaru Bago over the tragedy, which has been described as both a monumental loss and a national disaster.

During the visit, Senator Haruna conveyed the deep sympathies of the Taraba State Government, stating that the government shared in the grief of the people of Niger State, particularly those directly affected by the flood.

“As a sister state, we are deeply saddened by the unfortunate incident in Mokwa. It is not just a loss to Niger State, but to the



entire nation,” the Senator said.

He announced a donation of ₦50 million on behalf of the Taraba State Government as support for victims of the disaster.

In his response, Governor Bago expressed profound gratitude to the government and people of Taraba State

for their solidarity and generous contribution during what he described as a challenging time for the state.

Governor Bago noted that the gesture is a testament to the unity and compassion among Nigerian states, especially in times of adversity.

Court remands 34 suspects in jail for street trading in Lagos

By New Daily Prime

A Magistrate Court sitting in Bolade Oshodi on Tuesday remanded 34 persons in prison custody till July 22, 2025 for engaging in street trading along the median of the Alaba Road, Ojo, on the Lagos-Badagry Expressway.

The arraigned persons made up of 32 males and two females were arrested over the weekend in an operation by the operatives of the Kick Against Indiscipline (KAI) and the Lagos Waste Management Authority (LAWMA) to clear the median of the Alaba Road Ojo Road which has been taken over by different traders who erected illegal structures.

Some of those arrested include suspected miscreants who slept in makeshift sheds



erected on the median to perpetrate crime in that area.

While speaking on the development, the state Commissioner for the Environment and Water Resources, Tokunbo Wahab, reiterated the resolve of the present

administration to enforce the law on all those who exhibit deviant behaviours.

He urged all residents to exhibit the minimum standard of decency by contributing to a cleaner and sustainable Lagos.

Nigerian lecturers cry out: 'We can't survive this hardship'

By Damilola Olufemi



With the twin impact of fuel subsidy removal and the floating of the naira, no sector in Nigeria is spared from the biting economic realities. In the nation's tertiary institutions, lecturers—like their students—are struggling to survive.

Investigations by New Daily Prime across several campuses show that many lecturers can no longer afford to fuel or maintain their vehicles. Some have resorted to using their cars for ride-hailing or commuting passengers while heading to work.

Due to the cost of daily travel, lecturers who live far from campus now limit their physical presence to two or three days a week. This is especially true for those working in institutions with no staff accommodations.

Accommodation Woes at LASU
Lagos State University (LASU), Ojo, was designed as a non-residential institution during Nigeria's Second Republic. But that model has become outdated. Rents in

surrounding communities have become unaffordable, pushing some staff and students to convert offices into sleeping quarters.

The situation became so widespread that the university's Senate had to intervene.

"During its 311th statutory meeting held on Thursday, June 27, 2024, the Senate considered a report from the security unit and condemned the practice of sleeping in offices and classrooms," a statement from the Senate read. "This behaviour is not only unbecoming but also poses significant security risks and health concerns."

Lecturers commuting from Ijanikin, Agbara, and Ikorodu to the LASU campus say the daily journey is exhausting and costly.

LASUED Staff Demand Relocation Support

At the newly upgraded Lagos State University of Education (LASUED),

created from the merger of two colleges of education in Ijanikin and Epe, the situation is no better.

Lecturers stationed in Ijanikin are expected to teach at the Epe campus—a commute of several hours on poor roads. The staff recently raised concerns that the Lagos State government has not fulfilled its promise to provide relocation allowances. The bus designated to transport staff reportedly broke down, worsening the ordeal.

FUOYE Lecturers Lament Travel, Fuel Costs

Dr. Wole Jacob of the Federal University of Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE) said commuting from Ado-Ekiti to Oye daily is no longer feasible.

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"A professor earns under ₦600,000 monthly. After deductions, it's even less. Putting your car on the road from Ado to Oye is a major expense. The roads are bad, fuel is expensive, and fuel prices in Ekiti are higher than in Lagos due to freight costs," he explained.

UNIJOS: Public Transport Now a Necessity

Prof. Adediran Ademiju-Bepo of the Theatre and Film Arts Department at the University of Jos shared a similar sentiment.

"I live in Jos East and have to come to campus frequently. I now use public transport because it's cheaper. I lecture twice a week and only come in when necessary," he said.

EBSU: No Staff Quarters, Rising Transport Costs

Prof. Ikechuku Okorie Igwenyi, ASUU Chairman at Ebonyi State University (EBSU), said lecturers face unique hardship due to the lack of staff housing.

"There are no staff quarters. Many lecturers have parked their vehicles at home. Daily transport costs us ₦3,000. I appeal to the state government to provide on-campus accommodation and adjust salaries accordingly," he said.

AE-FUNAI: Salary Gone in Two Weeks

Dr. Louis Omenyi, ASUU Chairman at Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike Ikwo (AE-FUNAI), said lecturers spend half their monthly salary on transport within two weeks.

"There are no staff quarters. Many of us live in Abakaliki and travel to Ikwo. The salary barely lasts half the month," he lamented.

Akure Zone ASUU: Harsh Economy, Frustrated Lecturers

Prof. Adeola, Coordinator of the Akure Zone of ASUU, said many lecturers now limit their campus visits to two or three days a week.

"This government isn't listening. They ask for sacrifices while living lavishly. How do we spend ₦30,000 a week on fuel

when professors earn just over ₦500,000?"

UNIOSUN's Multi-Campus Dilemma

Dr. Taiwo Ayoola said lecturers at Osun State University (UNIOSUN), with campuses in Osogbo, Ikire, and Ilesa, find it tough to cope.

"Moving between campuses is a huge cost. Not all lecturers have official cars, and accommodations near campuses are student-style, often unsuitable. Some of us even live as far as Ibadan," he said.

Students Are Paying the Price

Former NANS President, Comrade Lucky Emonefe, noted that students bear the brunt.

"Students are already struggling. When lecturers are demotivated or absent, students miss out. Parents are also financially burdened, so it's a cascading crisis."

Make Lecturers Happy, Parents Say

Alhaji Haruna Danjuma, NAPTAN National President, urged the government to prioritise lecturers' welfare.

"A happy lecturer is a productive one. We don't want more strikes. The government must meet its obligations to lecturers."

Government Intervention: A Work in Progress

To ease transport challenges, the federal government began distributing Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) buses to universities in 2023. However, there are concerns about durability and maintenance.

Some state governments, including Lagos, are partnering with private developers to provide accommodation for staff and students. LASU has already seen some hostels built, though rents remain high.

Additionally, a federal committee led by former Head of Service Yayale Ahmed has been tasked with renegotiating the 2009 agreement with ASUU, potentially resulting in new salary structures.

While that may benefit federal universities first, state university lecturers hope for similar adjustments.

Until then, the struggle continues.



How Japa syndrome is affecting training of doctors, nurses in Nigeria

By Alade Adisa



Recently, the Federal Government directed medical and nursing colleges across the country to increase their student intake. The goal is to double—or even triple—the number of medical doctors and nurses produced annually.

However, implementing this policy has proven difficult, largely due to the mass exodus of medical personnel, especially doctors and nurses, from Nigeria. This “japa” wave has not only created a shortage of professionals in hospitals but is now also threatening the pipeline for training future healthcare workers, investigations by New Daily Prime reveal.

Education Minister Dr. Tunji Alausa recently said that Nigeria currently needs over 330,000 doctors to meet demand.

Doctor and Nurse Availability: A National Crisis

According to the Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria (MDCN), there are around 55,000 licensed doctors currently practising in the country. This figure is

from a total pool of 85,000 to 90,000, with nearly 30,000 working abroad, mostly in the United States and the United Kingdom.

This shortage has left Nigeria far behind the World Health Organisation’s (WHO) recommended doctor-to-population ratio of 1:1,000. The country currently has one doctor for every 9,083 people.

Nigeria Lags Behind Other African Nations

When compared to other African countries, Nigeria falls short. At least seven African nations—including Cape Verde, Seychelles, Libya, Eswatini, Tunisia, Mauritius, and Algeria—have already met the WHO’s benchmark of 10 doctors per 10,000 people. The continental average is 2.6 doctors per 10,000, which still surpasses Nigeria’s ratio.

The Nursing Sector Is No Better

The nurse-to-population ratio in Nigeria stands at approximately 1.25 per 1,000—well below the global

recommendation of 2.5 nurses per 1,000 people. WHO recommends a minimum of 2.5 health workers (including doctors, nurses, and midwives) per 1,000 to provide adequate coverage for primary healthcare.

Surge in Emigration

In the last 20 years, about 19,000 Nigerian doctors have emigrated, with 3,974 leaving in 2024 alone. This has created a critical gap in rural healthcare and led to longer hospital wait times. Reasons for the mass exit include poor remuneration, limited facilities, substandard working conditions, and lack of career growth.

The National Association of Nigerian Nurses and Midwives (NANNM) reports that over 75,000 nurses and midwives have left the country in the past five years.

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Capacity of Medical Institutions

There are currently 48 government-approved medical schools in Nigeria. According to the MDCN, their combined annual admission capacity is just 3,530 students.

The Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria (NMCN) oversees 290 approved institutions, including schools of nursing, midwifery, and university nursing departments. Their total annual capacity is below 50,000 students.

Government's Response

Dr. Tunji Alausa said, "We've increased annual nursing admissions from 28,000 to over 100,000. It's a fivefold jump. But even this is just a drop in the ocean. We have a shortage of 330,000 doctors for a 220 million. By 2050, when Nigeria's population is projected to hit 400 million, the deficit will be staggering."

He added, "We're improving infrastructure—building simulation labs and investing ₦110 billion through TETFund to upgrade eight medical schools. Six new simulation centres are also being constructed for ₦40 billion."

A 19-member committee headed by renowned neurosurgeon Prof. Wale Sulaiman has been inaugurated to implement and monitor the initiative, which includes improving patient safety and increasing training capacity.

Provosts Speak: We're Ready, But We Need Support

Provost of the College of Medicine at David Umahi Federal University of Health Sciences (DUFUHS), Prof. Esther Uzoamaka

Ajuluchukwu, said the MDCN recently raised their quota from 100 to 150. "We are prepared to accommodate more students. As the university grows, further increases are possible."

At Alex Ekwueme Federal University (AE-FUNAI), Provost Prof. Paul Ezeonu said, "We are in good standing to admit more students."

Similarly, the University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital (UNTH) recently launched a College of Nursing Science, with its pioneer set of students starting in January 2025.

Concern Beyond Infrastructure: Where Are the Lecturers?

Heads of institutions agree that the bigger challenge is the shortage of teaching staff. Most specialist lecturers have joined the exodus abroad. The National Postgraduate Medical College of Nigeria, which trains doctors in specialised fields, is struggling to attract new candidates due to emigration.

Prof. Akin Osibogun, the college's immediate past executive officer, said, "We need to train and retain more professionals by improving their work conditions. The government must provide financial and non-financial incentives."

UI Provost: We Must Plan Strategically

Prof. Temidayo Ogundare, Provost of the College of Medicine, University of Ibadan, said the directive is a "significant challenge" but also an opportunity.

"We're assessing our facilities and planning for expansion. Clinical training environments are a top priority. We're also recruiting more lecturers and investing in faculty development," he explained.

On financial sustainability, he added, "We're engaging government bodies for additional funding and seeking partnerships with the private sector. Accessibility and affordability for students remain key."

Final Word from a Frontliner

Dr. Tolu Sonaike of P&G Medical Centre, Lagos, said infrastructure is important, but "we must prioritise finding expert trainers."

"There are aspects of medical education that can't be taught in books. Students need real-world guidance. Most of those experts are gone. Without them, simulators alone won't fix the system," he concluded.



I gave my first musical earnings to church, Ruger reveals

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigerian Afrobeats star Michael Adebayo Olayinka, known to fans as Ruger, has revealed that he gave his first-ever music earnings ₦500,000 entirely to his church.

According to the singer, that bold act of faith marked the beginning of a financial breakthrough that changed his life within a year.

In a recent interview with media personality VJ Adams, Ruger shared details about his early steps in the music industry, the impact of sudden wealth, and his aspirations for the future. The singer reflected on how he went from giving away his first paycheck to making millions, almost overnight.

“I gave everything to the church” – Ruger
“When I first started and got my first music payment of ₦500,000, I gave it all to the church,” Ruger said. “I didn’t use a single naira from it. I just felt it was the right thing to do.”

Ruger’s donation wasn’t just generous, it was total. He didn’t keep any of the money for himself, despite being new to the music business and still trying to find his feet. According to him, the act of giving was driven by gratitude and faith.

Shortly after, he received another payment, this time ₦1 million.

“I felt like I had arrived,” he admitted with a smile. “I went on a shopping spree. I bought things I had always wanted. But then more money kept coming. In just one year, I made several million.”

How money changed his outlook

With the money came a new perspective. Ruger acknowledged that success and financial freedom changed how he saw the world and himself.

“Money changed me in some ways,” he said. “To be honest, money changes



everyone. It changes how you talk, how you walk, and how you deal with situations. You start to see things differently.”

For Ruger, this transformation wasn’t just about material things. It was about mental peace. Having money gave him the chance to relax and focus on his music and goals.

“Some people don’t stress when they have money,” he explained. “I want to get to a point in my life where I don’t stress about anything anymore.”

Inspired by Jay-Z’s calm confidence

Ruger also opened up about the kind of success he dreams of—one that allows him to rise above drama and negativity.

He pointed to American rapper and mogul Jay-Z as an example.

“Look at Jay-Z,” he said. “He doesn’t respond when people insult him. Why? Because he knows he’s made it. That’s the level I want to get to. A level where nothing bothers me anymore. Where success speaks louder than words.”

Ruger’s comments reflect not just ambition but a deep desire for peace and long-term growth. He wants more than

fame; he wants a lifestyle that offers stability, respect, and confidence.

A journey of faith, hustle, and growth

Ruger’s story is one of faith and determination. From donating his first paycheck to chasing a stress-free life, he paints a picture of a young artist who is deeply grounded, yet hungry for more.

He is not just chasing hits or flashy headlines. He wants a career that lasts, and a life that means something beyond fame.

His story also shows the power of belief, discipline, and smart choices. Ruger’s journey so far suggests that success is not just about talent, but also about mindset and values.

Looking ahead

As Ruger continues to rise in the music industry, fans can expect more than catchy tunes. Behind the dark sunglasses and stylish outfits is an artist who’s thoughtful, strategic, and rooted in purpose.

With his eyes set on global success and his feet still planted in gratitude, Ruger is not just making music; he’s building a legacy.

Kizz Daniel regains master rights to 'New Era' debut album, hit singles

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Afrobeats singer and songwriter, Daniel Anidugbe, better known by his stage name, Kizz Daniel, has successfully regained ownership of the master recordings for his debut album, *New Era* and two hit singles, *Yeba* and *Sofa*.

The announcement, which came through his official X (formerly Twitter) account on Monday, marks a significant milestone in the singer's career.

A long-awaited victory for Kizz Daniel. In a heartfelt message to his fans, Kizz Daniel expressed deep gratitude and excitement over the achievement. "From long nights in the studio to several meditations, finally, I now own every song on the *New Era* album (2016) + *Yeba* & *Sofa* (singles). I got my master's back. This means more than words can explain. Thank you for riding with me," he wrote.

The statement was met with widespread support from fans and fellow artists, many of whom praised him for taking control of his creative work and career.

What it means to own masters

In the music industry, owning master recordings gives artists full rights to their original music. This means they can control how their songs are used, licensed, and monetised. For many musicians, regaining control of their masters is a sign of independence and long-term financial security.

For Kizz Daniel, the recovery of his masters represents more than just a business move. It is also a personal victory, especially given the challenges he faced in his early career.

The journey from "*New Era*" to now

Kizz Daniel released his debut album, *New Era*, on May 14, 2016, under G-Worldwide Entertainment. The album was a major success, featuring chart-topping hits like *Waju*, *Laye*, and *Mama*.



It helped establish him as one of the leading voices in the Afrobeats scene.

However, despite the album's success, the relationship between Kizz Daniel and G-Worldwide soon turned sour. In November 2017, the artist announced his exit from the label and went on to launch his imprint, Flyboy I.N.C.

Shortly after his departure, G-Worldwide filed a lawsuit against him, accusing him of breaching his contract. The legal battle between the parties was widely publicised. But in the end, the court ruled in favour of Kizz Daniel, clearing him of all allegations.

A surprising reconciliation

In a twist that surprised many industry observers, Kizz Daniel revealed in 2023 that he had appointed his former label boss, Emperor Geezy, as the new Chief Executive Officer of Flyboy I.N.C. The move sparked conversations about growth, maturity, and forgiveness in the entertainment world.

Fans applauded the gesture, noting that it showed a willingness to move past old disputes and focus on the future.

Looking ahead

Now that he has full control of his early music catalogue, Kizz Daniel is in a stronger position to manage his legacy

and revenue streams. With Afrobeats continuing to gain global recognition, owning master rights could open more doors for international licensing, film soundtracks, and brand partnerships.

In the years since launching Flyboy I.N.C., Kizz Daniel has remained a major force in the music scene. He has released several successful albums and singles, including *Buga*, *Cough* (Odo), and *Twe Twe*, which have earned millions of streams and topped music charts across Africa and beyond.

A message to artists

Kizz Daniel's journey is a reminder to young and upcoming artists about the importance of understanding contracts and retaining control over their work. His story reflects a broader movement within the music industry, where more artists are fighting to reclaim ownership and secure their creative rights.

As he celebrates this new chapter, Kizz Daniel remains grateful to his fans and supporters who stood by him through the ups and downs. His message is clear: patience, persistence, and belief in oneself can lead to victory, even after a long battle.

With his masters back in hand, Kizz Daniel is not just rewriting his story, he's reclaiming it.

2025 BET Awards: [Full List]:Ayra Starr, Kendrick Lamar, others win

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigerian singer Ayra Starr has made history by winning the 2025 BET awards, making it her first-ever.

On Monday night at the Peacock Arena in Los Angeles, she took home the prestigious Best International Act prize at the 2025 BET Awards.

This victory is a major milestone for Ayra Starr, especially after missing out in previous years. She beat tough competition, including popular stars like Rema from Nigeria and South Africa's Tyla, to claim the award. Her win highlights her rising influence in the global music scene.

Despite this success, Ayra Starr did not win in her other categories. She was nominated for Best New Artist but lost to American singer Leon Thomas. She was also up for Best Female R&B/Pop Artist, a category that went to SZA.

Nigerian singer Tems was another big name nominated at the event. She competed twice in the Best HER category but was edged out by American singer Summer Walker.

The biggest winner of the night was American rapper Kendrick Lamar. He took home five awards from ten nominations, dominating the ceremony with his powerful music and performances.

The 2025 BET Awards showcased a mix of international and American talent. For Nigerian artists like Ayra Starr and Tems, the event provided a global platform to reach new audiences. Ayra Starr's win as Best International Act is a sign of the growing recognition of African music worldwide.

Fans and critics alike celebrated her success. The award marks a new chapter in her career and promises even more achievements in the future.

Full list of winners of 2025 BET Awards



Album of the Year

GNX — Kendrick Lamar

Best Male R&B/Pop Artist

Chris Brown

Best Female R&B/Pop Artist

SZA

Best Group

Future & Metro Boomin

Best Collaboration

'Luther — Kendrick Lamar & SZA

Best Male Hip Hop Artist

Kendrick Lamar

Best Female Hip Hop Artist

Doechii

Video of the Year

'Not Like Us' — Kendrick Lamar

Video Director of the Year

Dave Free & Kendrick Lamar

Best New Artist

Leon Thomas

Dr. Bobby Jones Best Gospel/Inspirational Award



'Rain Down on Me' — GloRilla feat. Kirk Franklin, Maverick City Music

Viewer's Choice Award

'Residuals' — Chris Brown

BET Her

'Heart of a Woman' — Summer Walker

Best International Act

Ayra Starr

Best New International Act

TXC (South Africa)

Best Movie

Luther: Never Too Much

Best Actor

Denzel Washington

Best Actress

Cynthia Erivo

Young Stars Award

Blue Ivy Carter

Sportsman of the Year

Jalen Hurts

Sportswoman of the Year Award

Angel Reese

Tems to headline first FIFA Club World Cup halftime show

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Grammy-winning Nigerian singer Temilade Openiyi, widely known as Tems, is set to make history on the global stage.

She has been announced as one of the headline performers for the first-ever halftime show at the FIFA Club World Cup final.

On Monday, June 9, 2025, FIFA confirmed Tems will join American rapper Doja Cat and Colombian superstar J Balvin at the highly anticipated event. The final match will take place on July 13 at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey, United States.

This marks the first time FIFA is introducing a halftime performance for the Club World Cup final, and Tems will be a part of that historic debut.

Tems – a star on the rise

Tems continues to grow as an international star. Known for her soulful voice and powerful lyrics, she has already earned a Grammy Award and collaborated with global icons such as Beyoncé, Drake, and Future. Now, she's preparing to deliver another milestone performance on one of the world's biggest stages, the FIFA Club World Cup final.

"I'm excited to bring the world together for a beautiful moment," Tems said in a statement released by FIFA. "We'll celebrate football, feel the unity that music brings, and help improve the lives of millions of children through the FIFA Global Citizen Education Fund. I can't wait. See you at the Club World Cup final!"

Global citizen and Chris Martin curate show

The halftime show will be produced by Global Citizen, the international advocacy organisation known for its star-studded concerts that promote social change. Coldplay's frontman, Chris Martin, is curating the event, promising a show that blends music, football, and purpose.

Fans across the world will be able to



watch the performance live and free on DAZN.com, a global sports streaming platform. FIFA is aiming to bring entertainment and philanthropy together in a new way, using the power of music to unite fans and support educational causes.

Historic tournament for FIFA

The 2025 FIFA Club World Cup is already shaping up to be a landmark event. For the first time, the tournament will feature 32 clubs from different continents, expanding its format to mirror the men's World Cup.

Matches will be played across 12 stadiums in 11 cities throughout the United States. The tournament kicks off on June 14 and runs until the final on July 13. It is expected to draw large crowds and massive global viewership.

The expansion shows FIFA's commitment to growing the sport and reaching wider audiences. Adding a high-profile halftime show is part of that effort.

Uniting football and music

With Tems, Doja Cat, and J Balvin on the lineup, the show is expected to be a major highlight. These artists represent different cultures and styles, reflecting the global nature of football itself.

Tems brings the sound of Nigeria to the world stage, while Doja Cat delivers her bold, genre-bending energy. J Balvin, one of the most-streamed artists in Latin

America, adds vibrant reggaeton flavour to the mix.

The combination promises an unforgettable show that celebrates diversity, talent, and unity, values that lie at the heart of both football and music.

An opportunity to inspire

For Tems, this performance is more than just another gig. It's a chance to inspire millions, especially young fans watching from Nigeria and across Africa. Her presence at such a prestigious event signals how far African talent has come on the world stage.

It also reinforces FIFA's growing recognition of global music stars as a key part of its major events. Just as the Super Bowl halftime show has become a cultural moment in the United States, FIFA hopes its Club World Cup halftime performance will capture similar attention worldwide.

Looking ahead

As the countdown to July 13 begins, excitement is building. The final match will crown the world's best football club, but the halftime show will also be a moment to remember.

Tems is ready to make history. Football fans, music lovers, and viewers across the globe will be watching and cheering.

Nasboi alleges police officer demanded payment for Bets

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Popular comedian-turned-musician Nasboi has made a startling claim against a police officer. While on a nationwide tour, Nasboi said an unnamed officer stopped him and asked him to transfer money into a Sporty Bet account. The incident happened recently, and the musician shared the story on social media platform X.

Nationwide tour: Nasboi's 36-day kneeling journey

Nasboi is currently on a unique tour across Nigeria. Over a week ago, he began a 36-day kneeling tour, travelling through all the states in the country.

The purpose of this tour is to get a special verse from top Nigerian singer Davido. This bold and creative project has caught the attention of many Nigerians and fans alike.

The alleged encounter: Police request for money

While updating his fans about his tour and experiences, Nasboi revealed the disturbing incident with the police officer.

According to him, the officer stopped him and asked for money. When Nasboi said he had no cash on hand, the officer reportedly told him to transfer the money directly into his Sporty Bet account.

Nasboi shared the encounter in a tweet that quickly drew attention. He wrote: "The hell is wrong with the Nigeria police? What? I no get cash to give you, you say make I transfer to your sporty."

Fans react to Nasboi's allegations

The story quickly spread on social media, sparking reactions from fans and followers. Many expressed shock and disappointment over the officer's request. Some called it another example of the challenges and corruption faced by citizens when dealing with law enforcement.

Others praised Nasboi for speaking out and sharing his experience. Many urged him to take further action or report the matter to the police authorities to ensure it does not happen to others.

Sportybet: A popular betting platform in



Nigeria

Sporty Bet is a well-known online sports betting platform widely used in Nigeria. It allows users to place bets on various sports events. The fact that the officer allegedly asked for money to be transferred via this app adds an unusual twist to the story.

While it is common to hear about police officers asking for cash bribes, the use of an online betting account as a means to collect money is less common and raises new concerns about modern forms of corruption.

Context: Police and corruption in Nigeria

Corruption within the Nigerian police force has been a persistent issue for many years. Several reports and cases have highlighted how some officers abuse their power to demand bribes from ordinary citizens.

Many Nigerians have called for reform and accountability in the police force to restore public trust. The government has promised to address these problems, but incidents like Nasboi's continue to remind everyone of the challenges still faced.

Nasboi's tour continues amid challenges

Despite the disturbing encounter, Nasboi has remained focused on his tour. His mission to travel across Nigeria, kneeling in each state and seeking a collaboration with Davido, continues to inspire many people.

This creative approach to touring has

earned him respect from fans, who admire his dedication and unique style. Nasboi's ability to share both the joys and struggles of his journey connects him closely to his audience.

Calls for action and accountability

The musician's story has reignited calls for police reform and more responsible behaviour from law enforcement officials. Many Nigerians want to see officers held accountable for such actions and believe that technology and social media can help expose wrongdoing.

As Nasboi and others speak out, the hope is that more people will come forward with their experiences. This increased awareness may lead to stronger measures against corruption and unfair treatment by those in power.

Conclusion: A reflection on trust and integrity

Nasboi's allegation against the police officer serves as a reminder of the trust that needs rebuilding between Nigerian citizens and law enforcement. Simple acts like requesting money through a betting app may seem small, but they highlight larger issues of integrity and respect.

As the comedian and musician continues his journey, his story encourages conversations about fairness, justice, and the need for change. It also shines a light on the everyday challenges faced by Nigerians, even those in the public eye.

Falz, the Bahd Guy, is revolutionizing the lace fashion for men in his new looks

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Not once, not twice, Falz has been styling these lace looks in different colours, and this raises concerns among netizens that the price of lace is about to go up. The No Less crooner is nowhere apologetic for wearing this look. Even in a recent video, he professed his newfound love for lace materials. We love how Falz consistently puts Yoruba culture at the forefront of his art.

Falz released his latest studio album, *The Feast*, on May 31, 2025, which included twelve songs featuring other artists like Majeeed, ODUMODUBLVCK, DOTTi The Deity, Qing Madi, D Smoke, and Oiza x Meyi. Each song is infused with an element of African cultural influence in every sound, making the entire album an impressive work.



Falz The Bahd Guy's "The Feast" album mixes a variety of musical styles. He's known for his "Wahzup music," which combines funny lyrics with modern hip-hop, often delivered in a mock Yoruba accent.

Specifically, "The Feast" draws from Afrobeat, hip-hop, and highlife, and also includes elements of rap, drill, and Amapiano. So, while his main style is generally Afropop and Hip-hop, "The Feast" really shows off his ability to experiment with different African and contemporary

sounds.



UK civil servants told to resign 'if you cannot support Gaza policy'

By Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi

Top UK civil servants have told Foreign Office staff they should consider resigning if they are unable to support the government's approach to the ongoing war in Gaza, in a response that has sparked anger and disappointment among hundreds of concerned employees.

More than 300 Foreign Office officials signed a letter to Foreign Secretary David Lammy last month, raising deep concerns about the UK's continued arms sales to Israel and what they described as a growing "disregard for international law" in Israel's conduct in Gaza.

The staff letter, seen by the BBC, also highlighted concerns about the UK's potential complicity in actions that could breach humanitarian law. In recent months, Israel's military campaign has resulted in a rising civilian death toll, restrictions on aid deliveries, and continued settler violence in the occupied West Bank.

Responding to the letter, Sir Oliver Robbins and Nick Dyer, the two most senior officials at the Foreign Office, acknowledged staff concerns but reminded them that their role was to support the elected government's policies. "If your disagreement with any aspect of government policy or action is profound, your ultimate recourse is to resign from the Civil Service. This is an honourable course," they wrote.

This blunt response has triggered outrage among some staff. Speaking anonymously, one official said: "There is frustration and a deep sense of disappointment that the space for challenge is being further shut down."

The staff letter is the fourth such document sent to ministers and Foreign Office leadership since late 2023. It reflects growing unease within the UK civil service as the situation in Gaza worsens. The letter noted: "The



reality of Israel's disregard for international law has become more stark." It cited the killing of 15 humanitarian workers by Israeli forces and the suspension of aid to Gaza in March — moves which some experts say may amount to the use of starvation as a weapon of war.

Officials also expressed concern that those tasked with implementing UK policies could one day be held legally accountable in future proceedings, given the gravity of the situation.

Although the UK government suspended around 30 arms export licences to Israel in September, staff argue that continued arms sales and diplomatic engagement risk further undermining global legal norms. The recent visit of Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar to London was cited as an example of the UK ignoring international concerns.

In their response, Robbins and Dyer said that the Foreign Office promotes healthy challenge and had established a Challenge Board and regular listening sessions. However, they emphasised that civil servants are bound to deliver government policy as set out in the Civil Service Code.

Former Foreign Office official Mark Smith, who resigned last year over arms sales to Israel, told the BBC: "I followed every formal process to raise my concerns and was ignored. We must speak out when policies risk breaching the law."

The UK maintains that Israel is "at risk" of breaching humanitarian law but denies UK complicity. A Foreign Office spokesperson said the government has rigorously applied international law and pointed to the suspension of some exports, including F-35 jet parts, and the categorical refusal to export bombs or ammunition that could be used in Gaza.

Earlier this year, the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for Israeli leaders and Hamas commanders over alleged war crimes in Gaza — charges Israel has rejected. The US has since imposed sanctions on ICC judges involved in the case.

As global legal pressure grows, UK civil servants now face a stark choice: support the government's Gaza policy or step aside — a decision that will undoubtedly fuel ongoing debate inside Whitehall.

Trump blacklists Ireland amid looming tariff deadline

By Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi



President Donald Trump has officially placed Ireland on the White House's trade 'blacklist', as transatlantic tensions mount ahead of a critical tariff deadline. Ireland now joins Switzerland and other long-standing US targets such as China, Japan, Germany, Vietnam, and South Korea on the US Treasury's Monitoring List of major trading partners with large trade surpluses.

The designation increases the risk that Ireland, whose economy is dominated by pharmaceutical and technology exports, could face new US tariffs and sanctions. President Trump has previously accused Ireland of harming the US economy through its trade practices, telling Irish Prime Minister Micheál Martin in March: "We do have a massive deficit with Ireland, because Ireland was very smart. They took our pharmaceutical companies away."

At one point, Trump even considered imposing a 200% tariff on US pharmaceutical imports from Ireland, though later softened his stance: "We don't want to do anything to hurt

Ireland. We do want fairness."

The latest US Treasury report advises Ireland to boost domestic economic activity and reduce its dependence on export-led multinationals. The advice follows a 49% surge in Irish goods exports to the US in the first quarter of 2025, as companies rushed to ship products ahead of any potential new tariffs — helping to fuel a 9.7% rise in Ireland's GDP.

But the risks are growing. Irish exporters now face Trump's threatened 50% tariff on EU goods, which could be imposed as soon as early July unless EU-US negotiations yield an agreement.

Europe's economic outlook is worsening. On Friday, the German central bank warned that failure to resolve the dispute could push Germany — the EU's largest economy — into recession until 2027. Latest German data shows factory output fell 1.4% in April, with exports to the US plunging 10.3% month on month as

early shipment activity tapers off.

EU and US negotiators met in Paris this week to seek a breakthrough. EU trade commissioner Maros Sefcovic reported that talks were "advancing in the right direction at pace," while US trade representative Jamieson Greer said he was "pleased that negotiations are advancing quickly."

But with just over four weeks remaining before Trump's 90-day pause on new tariffs expires on July 9, the clock is ticking. While Trump has frequently railed against EU trade policies, he struck a more measured tone after meeting German Chancellor Friedrich Merz in the Oval Office on Thursday.

"We'll end up hopefully with a trade deal," Trump told reporters. "I'm OK with the tariffs, or we make a deal with the trade."

For now, Ireland — and much of Europe — remains firmly in the US trade crosshairs.

Eurostar promises direct UK-Germany-Switzerland trains

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Eurostar has pledged to launch direct train services from the UK to Germany and Switzerland in the early 2030s, vowing to lead a “new golden age” of international sustainable travel, even as competition looms and space in London’s only cross-Channel train depot grows scarce.

In a bold statement of intent, Eurostar CEO Gwendoline Cazenave said she had “no doubt” the company would begin services to Frankfurt and Geneva within the next decade. The operator claims conditions are “finally right” to succeed where previous attempts to link London and Frankfurt have failed.

Direct journeys are expected to take about five hours to Frankfurt and around five hours and 20 minutes to Geneva. Eurostar points to high demand on those flight routes as evidence that many passengers, especially environmentally conscious business and leisure travelers, would prefer low-emission train travel.

However, Eurostar’s grand plans come amid growing pressure. The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) recently confirmed that only one more operator can be accommodated at the Temple Mills depot in east London, a critical facility for cross-Channel trains. The ORR has asked Eurostar and competing firms to submit proposals for depot access, with a final decision expected later this year.

Among the challengers are Virgin Trains, with Sir Richard Branson proposing a 12-train fleet, and Gemini Trains, a startup chaired by Labour peer Lord Berkeley. Italian state railway FS Italiane is also eyeing the market through a partnership with Spanish operator



Evolyn.

Eurostar has argued there is no remaining depot space if its expansion plans are approved and has suggested it may help fund a new depot. Still, it has urged the UK government to create a “clear national strategy” to support international rail growth.

While direct routes to new European destinations are still years away, Eurostar has been experiencing steady growth. In 2024, it recorded €2 billion (£1.7 billion) in revenue, up 2% from the previous year. Passenger numbers climbed 5% to 19.5 million across its services connecting the UK, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Germany.

Eurostar shares plans

Plans are also in motion to boost existing services. Following renovations at Amsterdam’s international terminal, Eurostar will increase its direct London-Amsterdam routes from three to five

daily round-trip flights. A fourth service begins on 9 September, with a fifth launching in mid-December.

To accommodate future growth, Eurostar is preparing to order up to 50 next-generation trains with an estimated price tag of €2 billion. While the manufacturer is yet to be selected, the new trains will be capable of operating across multiple rail systems, critical for longer and more complex European journeys.

Despite remaining logistical hurdles such as border control agreements, timetable integration, and station readiness, Eurostar remains optimistic. The recent UK-Switzerland memorandum of understanding on direct rail services adds a diplomatic nudge in the right direction.

“We have the willingness, from Eurostar, from passengers, and from governments,” said Cazenave. “The trains are coming. It’s just a matter of when, not if.”

Trump moves to restore order in LA with marines

By Fatimah Idera

Hundreds of U.S. Marines have arrived in Los Angeles under orders from President Donald Trump, escalating a federal response to recent protests sparked by sweeping immigration raids.

Despite largely peaceful demonstrations on Monday, Trump authorized the deployment of roughly 700 Marines and activated 4,000 National Guard troops, drawing sharp criticism from California Governor Gavin Newsom and other local leaders.

According to a U.S. official, around half of the Marines arrived late Monday, with the rest expected on Tuesday.

The Department of Defense has yet to comment publicly. U.S. Northern Command said the Marines, alongside National Guard forces, will help protect federal buildings and personnel. By Monday, approximately 1,700 Guard troops were already stationed in the greater Los Angeles area.

Recall that the protests began on Friday following a series of immigration raids by federal authorities. While early demonstrations included isolated incidents of looting, vandalism, and clashes with police, officials said Monday's protests were more restrained.

Meanwhile, more than 100 people were arrested, but Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass emphasized that the majority of demonstrators were peaceful.

Trump has defended the military deployment, characterizing the protests as a violent uprising. In a social media post on Tuesday morning, he claimed that without military intervention, Los Angeles would be "burning to the ground."

However, local and state officials have accused him of exaggerating the threat to justify an unnecessary show of force.

Governor Newsom called the move an illegal escalation, filing a lawsuit Monday challenging the deployment of Guard troops without his consent, the first such activation in decades without a



governor's request.

Newsom argued that the president's decision has complicated law enforcement efforts on the ground. "This isn't about public safety," he said on social media. "It's about stroking a dangerous President's ego."

Los Angeles Police, Chief Jim McDonnell echoed concerns, saying the Marines' unexpected arrival posed logistical challenges for local authorities.

The top Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee, Senator Jack Reed expressed alarm over the use of active-duty military on U.S. soil. "Since our nation's founding, the American people have been perfectly clear: we do not want the military conducting law enforcement," he said.

The Marine deployment comes amid heightened tensions surrounding Trump's immigration crackdown. Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem vowed Monday to intensify operations targeting undocumented immigrants. Protesters and immigration advocates accuse the administration of tearing families apart and criminalizing immigrant communities, especially in sanctuary cities like Los Angeles.

On Monday, hundreds of demonstrators

gathered outside a federal detention center in downtown Los Angeles, waving Central American flags and chanting "free them all." National Guard troops formed a barrier to block entry to the building. Later in the evening, police dispersed the crowd using gas canisters and made arrests.

The protests continued into the night, with clashes erupting in the city's Little Tokyo district. Officers deployed flash-bang grenades and tear gas to scatter protesters, as bystanders watched from apartment balconies and hotel lobbies.

Similar protests erupted in Orange County, particularly at the Santa Ana Federal Building, and in at least nine other cities, including New York, San Francisco, and Philadelphia.

In Austin, Texas, police fired non-lethal munitions and detained several protesters after confrontations near the state capitol.

While the Marines are primarily trained for overseas conflicts, some units have riot-control experience and are being used here in a rare domestic role. Their deployment marks a significant escalation in the federal government's response to protests and has deepened the political divide over Trump's immigration and law enforcement policies.

UK MPs to debate ending criminal penalties for abortion

By Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi

Women in England and Wales may soon be protected from prosecution for ending their own pregnancies, under a landmark proposal to decriminalise abortion that will go before Parliament next week.

MPs are set to participate in a free vote — meaning they can vote according to their conscience rather than following party lines — on a key amendment to the Crime and Policing Bill. The change would remove the threat of police investigations and possible imprisonment for women who terminate pregnancies outside the strict boundaries of current law.

The debate has been reignited amid concern that more women are facing criminal charges for ending pregnancies illegally. In recent years, at least six women have appeared in court in England on such charges, raising fears about the fairness and relevance of abortion laws originally passed in the 19th century.

Abortion in England and Wales remains governed by the Offences Against the Person Act of 1861, which criminalises the procedure. However, under the 1967 Abortion Act, abortions are permitted up to 24 weeks in certain circumstances, provided that two doctors approve the procedure. Even in early stages of pregnancy, women must demonstrate that continuing the pregnancy would harm their mental or physical health.

The proposed amendment, brought forward by Labour MP Tonia Antoniazzi, seeks to decriminalise abortion at any stage if a woman is acting in relation to her own pregnancy. The existing framework for accessing abortions through healthcare settings would remain intact: procedures performed in hospitals or clinics would still require approval from two doctors and must comply with existing time limits.

“The police cannot be trusted with abortion law – nor can the CPS or the wider criminal justice system,” Antoniazzi stated. “My amendment will give us the urgent change we need to protect women.”

Her proposal comes just weeks after



Nicola Packer, a 45-year-old woman, was acquitted by a jury after being prosecuted for taking abortion pills at home during the COVID-19 lockdown in 2020. Packer was unaware that her pregnancy had exceeded the legal limit for home-administered abortion medication. Her case drew widespread criticism of current abortion laws, which many experts now describe as outdated and harmful.

The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) has joined a growing coalition of medical bodies, charities, and trade unions supporting Antoniazzi’s amendment. The proposal has already gained the backing of 136 MPs from across party lines, including Labour, Liberal Democrats, Greens, and a number of Conservatives.

However, a rival amendment by Labour MP Stella Creasy seeks to go even further, by establishing access to abortion as a human right and fully decriminalising abortions up to 24 weeks. Creasy’s proposal, backed by 101 MPs, would also remove potential prison sentences for late-term abortions outside the current legal framework.

Read Also: Ondo: Doctor, two others remanded to prison for procuring abortion, raping minor

Creasy argues that her amendment would align abortion laws in England and Wales with those in Northern Ireland, where abortion was decriminalised in 2019. But some leading abortion care providers have voiced concerns about the proposal being rushed through Parliament without sufficient scrutiny.

“MPs should not be asked to back a generational change after just three hours of debate,” said Rachael Clarke, head of advocacy at the British Pregnancy Advisory Service (BPAS), which supports Antoniazzi’s more measured amendment. The bill is expected to be opposed by pro-life groups and other Christian organisations.

With public attention focused on the issue, next week’s vote could mark a historic moment for women’s reproductive rights in England and Wales, shaping the legal and moral landscape for years to come.

U.S. justice department revives limited crackdown on foreign bribery

By Fatimah Idera



The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) is set to revive enforcement of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA), a decades-old law banning bribery of foreign officials by companies operating in the U.S., though with a more focused and less burdensome approach for businesses.

This shift was outlined in a memo from Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche and further explained by top DOJ official Matthew Galeotti during an anti-corruption conference in New York on Tuesday.

Under the revised strategy, DOJ enforcement will prioritise cases that directly impact U.S. interests, such as those that disadvantage American companies in global competition, involve critical infrastructure, or are connected to cartels or transnational criminal organisations.

“The through line in these guidelines is that they require the vindication of U.S. interests,” said Galeotti, head of the DOJ’s criminal division.

The FCPA has long been a central tool in the federal government’s fight against global corruption.

However, enforcement efforts slowed recently following a review initiated by former President Donald Trump.

The DOJ’s dedicated FCPA unit has also seen a decline in staffing in recent months.

Blanche’s memo signals a move toward more selective enforcement.

All new FCPA investigations are said to now require high-level approval. Some ongoing investigations have already been closed following a comprehensive

internal review.

Despite the scaled-back approach, Galeotti emphasised that tackling white-collar and corporate crime remains a critical DOJ priority.

He also highlighted other policy shifts, including a renewed focus on corporate cooperation. Companies that voluntarily disclose misconduct, cooperate with investigations, and implement corrective measures may avoid prosecution.

Additionally, the DOJ is finalising a review of its corporate monitorship policy, where external firms oversee compliance at companies resolving misconduct cases.

According to Galeotti, some monitorships will continue while others will be concluded. “Monitors are meant to be a temporary bridge,” he noted.

UK to invest over \$8 Billion in expanding submarine production capacity

By Fatimah Idera



Britain is set to invest more than £6 billion (\$8.13 billion) to expand its submarine-building capabilities, with major support directed towards defence giant BAE Systems and engineering firm Rolls-Royce.

The announcement was made on Tuesday by Finance Minister Rachel Reeves.

The investment is part of a broader push by Prime Minister Keir Starmer to significantly ramp up the UK's defence capabilities, responding in part to U.S.

President Donald Trump's calls for Europe to shoulder more responsibility for its own

security. Starmer has committed to the largest sustained increase in British defence spending since the Cold War.

As part of this initiative, the UK plans to grow its fleet of nuclear-powered attack submarines from seven to as many as 12.

The cost of this expansion was not initially disclosed, but Reeves will confirm that over £6 billion will be allocated during the current four-year spending review period to strengthen the UK's submarine industrial base.

This includes investments in both BAE Systems and Rolls-Royce Submarines.

According to the government,

the funding will enhance the capacity, capability, and productivity of submarine production, enabling industry to meet the increased demand announced last week.

Reeves is also expected to reveal a broader multi-year spending plan on Wednesday, which includes £4 billion in investment over the next decade for the Plymouth naval base.

Additional funds will go toward the redevelopment of a naval base in Scotland and support for Sheffield Forgemasters, a specialist steelmaker that supplies submarine components.

Tragedy at Graz: School shooting claims 10 lives, injures dozens

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



A deadly school shooting at BORG Dreierschützengasse in Graz has left at least 10 people dead and 28 others injured, sending shockwaves through Austria and prompting a national outpouring of grief and disbelief.

According to local media and statements from police, the gunman, believed to be the sole perpetrator, is among the dead. The shooting occurred Tuesday morning at the secondary school located in the northwest part of the city.

Police swiftly responded to reports of gunfire, evacuating the school and deploying emergency services, tactical units, and a helicopter to the scene. The area surrounding the school was cordoned off, and authorities urged the public to stay clear and obey emergency personnel.

While details remain limited, the

wounded, comprising both students and teachers, were initially treated at the nearby Helmut List Hall before being transported to area hospitals. The severity of the injuries has not been officially confirmed.

One adult is among the deceased, according to Graz Mayor Elke Kahr. The motive for the shooting has not yet been disclosed.

Chancellor Christian Stocker called the attack a “national tragedy” in a statement on X (formerly Twitter), expressing condolences to the bereaved families: “My thoughts are with the families and parents who lost their child.”

President Alexander Van der Bellen also released a statement, mourning the loss of young lives: “These were adolescents, who had their whole life ahead of them. This horror cannot be put into words.”

A crisis response center was quickly established for parents at the ASKÖ football stadium in Graz, and a tip platform has been set up by police for those with relevant information.

The Austrian Interior Ministry has not yet issued a formal comment, but a press conference with police officials is expected later today. Chancellor Stocker and other members of the government are reportedly en route to Graz.

This incident marks one of the deadliest school shootings in Austria’s recent history, and has deeply shaken a nation unaccustomed to such violence. With Graz being the country’s second-largest city, home to around 300,000 people, the tragedy has hit especially hard in a tight-knit community.

UK to scrap rough sleeping law as homelessness rises

By Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi

The UK Government has announced it will decriminalise rough sleeping, repealing a 200-year-old law that made it an offence to sleep on the streets — even as homelessness levels continue to rise sharply across England.

Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner confirmed that the historic Vagrancy Act of 1824, introduced to tackle mass homelessness in the wake of the Industrial Revolution, will be abolished by next spring. The move will mean it is no longer an offence to sleep on pavements or in public spaces, raising the possibility that homeless encampments could become more visible on city centre streets.

Announcing the policy shift, Ms Rayner said it was time to “draw a line under nearly two centuries of injustice towards some of the most vulnerable in society, who deserve dignity and support.”

However, with homelessness now at its highest levels in years, the decision has sparked debate about whether it will lead to more street encampments or simply give rough sleepers legal protection.

Labour is attempting to balance the policy by promising an additional £233 million for homelessness services this financial year, aimed at tackling the root causes of rough sleeping and providing safer alternatives. Ms Rayner also stressed that new laws would be introduced to protect the public from organised begging by gangs and trespassing with intent to commit a crime — two offences that will replace elements of the Vagrancy Act.

“No one should ever be criminalised simply for sleeping rough,” Ms Rayner said. “By scrapping this cruel and outdated law, we are making sure that can never happen again.”

The Vagrancy Act, originally designed to punish “idle and disorderly persons, rogues and vagabonds”, has long been criticised by homelessness charities as stigmatising some of the UK’s most vulnerable people. While most sections of the Act have been repealed, key provisions allowing police to move on rough sleepers and tackle begging remained in force in England and Wales.

Homelessness charities say the law has had a chilling effect, pushing people into dangerous situations or deterring them from seeking help. Matt Downie, chief executive of Crisis, called the repeal “a landmark moment that will change lives



and prevent thousands of people from being pushed into the shadows, away from safety.”

The decision comes at a time when homelessness is surging across England. Recent figures from Shelter estimate that 326,000 people, including 161,500 children, are currently homeless — a 14% increase on the previous year.

In London, the problem is particularly acute. The number of rough sleepers recorded in the capital has risen by 38% year on year — from 511 to 706 — while total rough sleeping rose 8% in the first quarter of this year, from 4,118 to 4,427. High-profile encampments have appeared even in affluent districts such as Park Lane, where last September 24 tents were pitched near properties worth up to £16.5 million.

By contrast, the UK’s approach diverges sharply from that of the United States, where a Supreme Court ruling last summer allowed cities to crack down on homeless encampments, even if people had nowhere else to go. US cities like San Francisco now enforce strict anti-camping laws that require constant relocation and ban camping altogether.

The UK Government says it is committed to a different path, focused on prevention and support. Amendments to the Government’s Crime and Policing Bill will introduce two new offences: facilitating begging for gain and trespassing with intent to commit a crime — both designed to close gaps left by repealing the Vagrancy Act.

Homelessness Minister Rushanara Ali described the repeal as a vital part of the

Government’s mission to tackle homelessness. “Scrapping the Vagrancy Act for good is another step forward in our mission to tackle homelessness in all its forms, by focusing our efforts on its root causes,” she said.

In addition to the £233 million extra funding this year, the Government said total investment in homelessness and rough sleeping services for 2025-26 would approach £1 billion.

The decision also comes amid broader efforts to address the issue. Last year, the Prince of Wales launched a five-year programme aimed at eradicating homelessness, and has been personally involved in raising awareness — even selling the Big Issue on the streets.

While the move to repeal the Vagrancy Act has been widely welcomed, some warn of challenges ahead. Emma Haddad, chief executive of St Mungo’s, said the repeal “cannot come soon enough” but urged a focus on “health, housing and wider societal issues that are causing homelessness.”

Youth homelessness charity Centrepunt cautioned that the new offences must be carefully crafted to avoid punishing vulnerable people instead of supporting them.

As the UK prepares to consign the Vagrancy Act to history, the Government faces a delicate balancing act — ensuring the protection and dignity of rough sleepers while maintaining public safety and community standards in the country’s cities.

Missiles thrown at officers in North Ireland following protest over alleged sexual assault

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



Tensions flared in Ballymena on Monday evening as public disorder broke out near the scene of an alleged sexual assault, leading to property damage and attacks on police officers.

According to a statement from the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), crowds gathered on Clonavon Road following a protest connected to the recent charging of two teenage boys in relation to a serious sexual assault on a teenage girl. The alleged incident occurred on Clonavon Terrace, a residential street in the town, which lies roughly 30 minutes north of Belfast.

As night fell, the protest devolved into violence. Missiles and masonry were reportedly hurled at police officers, and at least one

police vehicle sustained damage, its windows shattered in the chaos. Individuals with their faces masked were seen among the disorderly crowd, according to local media.

Police confirmed that damage had been done to multiple properties in the area. Officers have since established a continued presence on Clonavon Road, urging the public to stay away while they work to restore order.

Chief Superintendent Sue Steen issued a public plea for calm:

“We are urging everyone to remain calm and to act responsibly. Violence and disorder will only place people at greater risk. Our priority is to keep the community safe, and I would appeal to everyone to work with us to bring

calm to the area as quickly as possible.”

The unrest was sparked after news broke over the weekend that two teenage boys had been charged in connection with a serious sexual assault on a teenage girl. The PSNI confirmed the charges in a statement on Sunday.

The charged individuals have already appeared in court, prompting the protest and subsequent unrest. The community, clearly shaken by the alleged crime, is now grappling with the fallout of both the incident itself and the violent response that followed.

Authorities continue to monitor the situation closely, and investigations are ongoing.

U.S. arrests second Chinese researcher over alleged biological smuggling

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



U.S. authorities have arrested a Chinese doctoral student accused of illegally smuggling biological material into the United States, marking the second such case involving Chinese nationals in less than a week.

The FBI filed a criminal complaint against Chengxuan Han, a researcher from the Huazhong University of Science and Technology in Wuhan. Han, who planned to spend a year at the University of Michigan for a research project, was arrested on Sunday upon her arrival at Detroit Metropolitan Airport.

According to the complaint, Han allegedly concealed biological samples, including roundworm material, in multiple shipments from China to the United States, sometimes hiding the samples between the pages of a book. The shipments were addressed to staff members at a University of Michigan lab, though the university has not commented on the incident.

Federal officials say Han failed to declare the biological contents and gave false information when questioned by customs agents upon her arrival from Shanghai.

Additionally, investigators allege Han wiped her electronic device just three days before entering the U.S., a move she claimed was intended to “start fresh.”

The biological material she allegedly smuggled requires a U.S. government permit due to potential biosecurity risks. The complaint does not state whether the material posed a confirmed threat, but experts say it underscores the importance of regulatory oversight.

Victor Galea, a professor of plant pathology at the University of Queensland, explained the potential danger of such material.

“These roundworms could be damaging to crops or the environment or they may be benign. But you can’t determine that unless this is thoroughly investigated,” he said.

Han remains in federal custody ahead of a bond hearing scheduled for Wednesday.

This arrest comes just days after two other Chinese nationals were charged in a separate smuggling case involving *Fusarium graminearum*, a toxic fungus

associated with wheat blight. One of those individuals, a University of Michigan researcher, is in custody; the second was denied entry to the U.S. last year and remains at large.

In a statement following last week’s case, the University of Michigan said it was fully cooperating with federal authorities and condemned any actions “that seek to cause harm, threaten national security, or undermine the university’s critical public mission.”

The Chinese Embassy in Washington has not yet responded to inquiries regarding Han’s case. When questioned about the earlier arrests, a spokesperson for China’s Foreign Affairs Ministry said he was unaware of the situation but emphasized that Chinese citizens abroad are expected to follow local laws while also having their rights protected.

As investigations continue, federal authorities stress that strict controls and international agreements must govern the transfer of biological research materials across borders to prevent ecological or agricultural threats.

Guardiola's Gaza plea: 'so scared' by war's human toll

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola delivered an emotional and deeply personal address on Monday as he received an honorary doctorate from the University of Manchester, speaking of his fear and heartbreak over the ongoing war in Gaza.

In a powerful speech at the university's Whitworth Hall, Guardiola, 54, said he was "so scared" and "hurt" by the suffering of innocent people, particularly children, amid the continued Israeli military campaign in the Gaza Strip.

The conflict began after the 7 October 2023 Hamas-led cross-border attack on Israel, which killed about 1,200 people and saw more than 250 others taken hostage. In response, Israel launched a campaign in Gaza which, according to the Hamas-run health ministry, has since resulted in over 54,000 deaths.

Guardiola, known for his political openness, said:

"It's so painful what we see in Gaza. It hurts my whole body. It's not about ideology. It's about the love of life, about caring for your neighbour."

Fighting back emotion, he added:

"Maybe we see four-year-old children dying in hospitals that no longer function, and we think it's not our business. But be careful. The next children could be ours. When I see the kids in Gaza every morning, I see Maria, Marius and Valentina—my own children. I'm so scared."

The City manager's speech quickly went viral, widely shared across social media for its raw emotional depth and universal appeal to empathy. He implored the audience not to become numb to suffering simply because it feels distant.



His address was not limited to the Israel-Gaza war. Guardiola also expressed his concern about conflicts in Sudan and Ukraine, urging a collective moral awakening.

To underscore his point, Guardiola told a fable:

"A forest is on fire. All the animals are terrified. A small bird flies to the sea, carries drops of water in its beak, and drops them on the fire. A snake laughs, saying it's pointless. The bird replies, 'I know I can't put it out, but I'm doing my part.'"

Guardiola concluded with a call to action:

"In a world that says we are too small to matter, that story reminds me it's not about scale. It's about choosing to care, to show up, to refuse silence."

The honorary degree celebrates Guardiola's success with Manchester City—winning 18 trophies in nine years—as well as the humanitarian work of his Guardiola Sala Foundation, which supports disadvantaged communities.

Guardiola has a history of activism. In 2018, he was fined £20,000 by the

Football Association for wearing a yellow ribbon in support of Catalan political prisoners. A year earlier, he joined large pro-independence protests in Barcelona.

His latest comments place him among a handful of high-profile figures in football to speak out on the Gaza conflict. Liverpool star Mohamed Salah called for world leaders to act back in October 2023, while Dutch winger Anwar El Ghazi lost his contract at Mainz for a perceived pro-Palestine post, later donating €500,000 to aid children in Gaza.

The Football Association, meanwhile, faced criticism last year for not illuminating Wembley Stadium's arch during England's friendly against Australia—a perceived silence on the issue.

Guardiola's words come at a time when many in sport are navigating the intersection of politics, morality, and responsibility. His appeal for empathy, courage, and small acts of humanity is a reminder that football's biggest names can still be powerful voices for global justice.

Senegal stun England 3-1 in Tuchel's first defeat

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi



England's preparations for the 2026 World Cup took a serious knock on Tuesday night as they slumped to a 3-1 defeat against Senegal at the City Ground. In a game labelled as a friendly but played with ferocity and intensity by the visitors, Thomas Tuchel suffered his first loss as England manager—one that raised big questions about direction, leadership, and tactical identity.

Harry Kane's early strike had given England the lead in just the 7th minute, latching onto a clever ball and firing home confidently past Senegal keeper Edouard Mendy. It was Kane's fourth goal in as many games under Tuchel, but any early optimism quickly faded.

Ismaïla Sarr equalised just before the break in the 40th minute, slotting home after a perfectly timed through-ball from Nicolas Jackson. The Lions of Teranga went into half-time deservedly level after unsettling England with their pace, strength and pressing.

The second half brought more misery for the home side. Habib Diarra put Senegal ahead in the 62nd minute after Kalidou Koulibaly's brilliant interception and forward surge opened up England's midfield. Despite England showing some urgency late in the match—highlighted by a disallowed Jude Bellingham equaliser—Senegal killed the game in

added time, with Cheikh Sabaly calmly finishing off a Lamine Camara assist in the 93rd minute.

The result not only marked England's first-ever defeat to an African nation in 22 matches, but also highlighted the growing uncertainty under Tuchel's reign. While only a friendly, the lack of cohesion, structure, and energy was stark—echoing similar criticisms from the end of Gareth Southgate's tenure.

Post-match, Tuchel admitted the team "felt frozen" for long periods and lamented the "very easy goals" conceded. "We were more fluid and aggressive when we went behind," he said, but acknowledged that England had failed to defend properly or find the right rhythm throughout most of the game.

His decision to make ten changes to the lineup—viewed by some as a necessary experiment—was lambasted by critics and fans alike. Former England midfielder Leon Osman argued on BBC Radio 5 Live that "tweaking the system" would've been better than "changing everything."

Roy Keane, never one to hold back, said the England squad didn't look "like a happy group," and accused them of "waiting for something to happen" rather than taking control. Ian Wright echoed

similar concerns, noting a lack of leadership and responsibility on the pitch.

Kane was blunt in his post-match comments: "Not good enough. We've lost that aggressive nature we used to have." He also disagreed with the handball call that disallowed Bellingham's goal, calling it a key moment that might have changed the outcome.

Meanwhile, Senegal captain Koulibaly was full of pride. "We made history tonight," he said. "We showed we can play at this level. We want to keep writing the story of Senegal."

With the World Cup just a year away, England remain top of their qualifying group, but this result is a sobering reminder of the work still ahead. A September double-header against Andorra and Serbia now takes on added importance.

Tuchel has time, but not forever. This friendly was supposed to build momentum. Instead, it's triggered fresh doubts and fan unrest—both about his tactics and the squad's mentality.

If England are to contend in Canada, Mexico and the U.S., performances like this must become a distant memory. And fast.

Cherki seals £30m move to Man City in 'dream' transfer

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

Manchester City have completed the signing of French midfielder Rayan Cherki from Lyon in a £30.45m deal, marking their third signing in just 48 hours as Pep Guardiola reshapes his squad ahead of the Club World Cup.

The 21-year-old attacking midfielder has penned a five-year contract until 2030 and will immediately join up with the City squad heading to the United States for the tournament, which kicks off on 14 June. With nearly 200 senior appearances already to his name, Cherki arrives with considerable experience despite his young age.

"This is a dream for me," said Cherki in his first interview as a City player. "Honestly, to be joining a club like Manchester City and have the opportunity to make the next step in my career here is something very, very special."

Born in Lyon and a product of the club's famed academy, Cherki made his senior debut at just 16 and has since amassed 29 goals and 45 assists in 185 appearances. He leaves as one of the most technically gifted talents to emerge from French football in recent years.

He also made headlines last week during the Nations League semi-final, scoring and assisting after coming off the bench against Spain in a dramatic 5-4 loss. He started the third-place match days later, helping France defeat Germany 2-0.

Cherki's arrival follows Monday's £31m signing of Algerian left-back Rayan Ait-Nouri from Wolves and Tuesday morning's acquisition of back-up goalkeeper Marcus Bettinelli from Chelsea. The 33-year-old Bettinelli replaces Scott Carson and is expected to play a similar mentoring role.



City's director of football Hugo Viana spoke highly of Cherki's potential. "There's no doubt he's now in the best place possible to develop under Pep's guidance. We really believe he can become a world-class player with our support."

Cherki himself seemed focused on development and success: "I have worked so hard for this all my life. I love this sport, and I can't wait to develop further here in Manchester with Pep and his backroom staff. The responsibility to help the team continue winning is something I want to embrace."

He added, "I would only leave Lyon for a project I really believe in, and everything at City suggests I can develop my game and help the team be successful in the future."

Cherki's move is being seen as a statement of intent from City, with Guardiola keen to refresh a squad that has already won every major honour under his reign. With Kevin De

Bruyne approaching the twilight of his career and Bernardo Silva perennially linked with a move away, Cherki offers creativity, flair, and long-term value.

French football journalist Loic Tanzi of L'Équipe offered a cautious but optimistic outlook. "He's just 21 years old and it's a big step. He may need time to adapt to a new environment and a demanding coach, but he is a clever player and knows Guardiola has a specific plan for him. I think he will succeed in the end."

Cherki is expected to feature during the Club World Cup as City bid to win the trophy for the first time in the club's history. His debut could come as early as 15 June, depending on fitness and integration into the squad.

With the summer transfer window only just beginning, Cherki's move is already one of the more eye-catching stories—and Manchester City may not be done yet.

Dortmund reject Chelsea's £42m bid for Jamie Gittens

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

Chelsea have had a £42m bid rejected by Borussia Dortmund for England Under-21 winger Jamie Gittens, as the London club look to bolster their wide options ahead of the upcoming Club World Cup.

The 20-year-old is understood to be open to a move back to England and already has a long-term contract proposal from Chelsea on the table. Despite Gittens' interest, negotiations between the two clubs have stalled over valuation.

Gittens, who started his youth career in the Chelsea academy before moving to Manchester City and later Dortmund, is under contract until 2028. He made his Bundesliga debut in 2022 and has since become a regular fixture in the Dortmund squad, scoring eight goals in 32 league games last season.

While new Dortmund manager Niko Kovac reportedly does not see Gittens as a key part of his tactical plans, the club remain reluctant to let him go without a substantial offer. Dortmund's rejection of Chelsea's bid reflects their high valuation of Gittens' potential, especially as the German side continues to invest in young English talent, having just secured Jobe Bellingham from Sunderland in a £31m deal.

Sources close to the deal suggest that Dortmund want closer to £55m for Gittens, while Chelsea are unwilling to meet that price. With the first Club World Cup transfer deadline looming on Tuesday evening, time is running out for a resolution to be reached if Gittens is to join the Blues in time for the tournament.

Chelsea have not yet given up hope of landing the winger. The club is expected to revisit talks with Dortmund either later this week or after the World Cup deadline. If a deal cannot be struck for Gittens, Chelsea have alternative targets, including Manchester United's Alejandro



Garnacho and West Ham's Mohammed Kudus — both of whom are also highly valued and have attracted interest from other top clubs.

Gittens' potential return to England comes at a time when Chelsea are looking to rebuild after another underwhelming season. His pace, directness, and eye for goal could make him an ideal addition to the flanks, which have lacked consistency over the past campaign. Despite being just 20, he's been praised for his maturity and adaptability, traits that Chelsea manager Enzo Maresca values in his young squad.

Gittens' situation also reflects the broader challenges Chelsea face this summer. The club has struggled to meet the asking prices of several targets. A move for AC Milan goalkeeper Mike Maignan also collapsed this week, with Milan asking for £25m despite the France international having only one year left on his contract. Chelsea reportedly value the 29-year-old at about half that figure and have walked away from the deal.

Chelsea's sporting director Laurence Stewart is expected to continue targeting young, high-upside players, particularly those with resale value or long-term development potential. Gittens, who joined Dortmund from Manchester City in 2020, fits this profile perfectly.

The Blues' recruitment strategy remains aggressive but financially cautious, with a focus on long-term planning. However, as the Club World Cup draws near and fans await new signings, the pressure is mounting on the club's hierarchy to deliver top-quality reinforcements — especially in key areas like the wings and goalkeeping.

Whether Gittens becomes part of that rebuild remains uncertain, but one thing is clear: Chelsea are not alone in recognising his talent. As transfer talks continue behind closed doors, all eyes will be on Stamford Bridge to see if the Blues can get their man — or if another club swoops in first.

Jobe Bellingham joins Dortmund but aims to forge own path

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

Jobe Bellingham has completed a high-profile move to Bundesliga giants Borussia Dortmund in a deal worth up to £31m, marking the next step in a career path that mirrors that of his older brother, Jude. But the 19-year-old insists he is determined to carve out his own identity.

Jobe joins Dortmund from Sunderland after a standout season in the Championship, where he helped the Black Cats secure promotion to the Premier League. Despite that success, he opted for a move abroad, penning a five-year deal with the German club that previously helped launch Jude Bellingham into global stardom.

The similarities are striking. Like Jude, Jobe came through Birmingham City's academy, impressed in England's second tier, and is now making the leap to Dortmund. But Jobe wants to be known on his own terms.

"He doesn't want to live off the back of his brother's name," said former Sunderland boss Tony Mowbray. "He wants to be the footballer he is and show people what he can do. He's trying to create his own identity."

That message was made clear during Jobe's unveiling in Dortmund, where he stated firmly, "I'm not following in anyone's footsteps." The choice to have "Jobe" on the back of his shirt instead of his surname speaks volumes about his desire to step out of Jude's shadow.

While Jude flourished as a creative No. 10 and now stars for Real Madrid, Jobe offers a different skillset. A versatile midfielder, he has been deployed in several positions — even briefly as a striker — but prefers a box-to-box role.

"I know playing box-to-box is what I enjoy the most," Jobe said in an interview. "You can get stuck in and



drive forward. I can show more of what I'm capable of in that position."

In the 2024-25 season, Jobe made 43 appearances for Sunderland, scoring four goals and providing three assists. Sunderland head coach Regis Le Bris praised his versatility and drive: "He can express his power, his ability to press and link defence with attack. I like him as a number eight."

The move makes Jobe Dortmund's second-most expensive signing ever, behind only Ousmane Dembélé, and sets a new transfer record for Sunderland. It also raises the prospect of a Bellingham brothers showdown at the upcoming Club World Cup in the United States.

Dortmund and Real Madrid are in separate groups, but if both win their respective groups and last-16 matches, they could meet in the quarter-finals on 5 July — potentially the first time the brothers face off in a competitive match.

Despite the comparisons and media

attention, Jude has been nothing but supportive. Speaking on his YouTube channel last year, the Real Madrid midfielder said, "To play with my brother for England... that would be the biggest dream of my life."

Jobe, who has four England U21 caps and is part of the squad for this summer's European Under-21 Championship, could one day fulfil that dream. For now, though, the focus is on settling into life in Germany.

"It was a bit of a surprise when he came to Sunderland," said former Black Cats striker Marco Gabbiadini. "He's been very good for us. Is he as good as his brother? Not from what I've seen so far — but even if he's 80%, he'll be a top player."

With a major tournament on the horizon and a new challenge at one of Europe's elite clubs, Jobe Bellingham stands at a crossroads — one already taken by his brother, but with every intention of turning it into his own journey.