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2027: Atiku Abubakar formally resigns from PDP

By Gbenga Olaleye



Former Vice President of Nigeria, Atiku Abubakar, has formally resigned his membership from the People's Democratic Party (PDP), citing "irreconcilable differences" and a departure from the party's founding principles.

In a letter dated 14 July 2025 and addressed to the PDP Chairman of Jada 1 Ward, Adamawa State, Abubakar expressed his heartfelt gratitude for the opportunities the party afforded him, including his two terms as Vice President and two presidential candidacies. He described these experiences as "significant chapters" of his political life.

"It is indeed heartbreaking for me to make this decision," Abubakar stated, highlighting his role as one of the founding fathers of the PDP.

However, he explained that the party's current trajectory no longer aligns with its original values.

"I find it necessary to part ways due to the current trajectory the Party has taken, which I believe diverges from the foundational principles we stood for," he wrote.

Despite his resignation, the former Vice President extended best wishes to the PDP and its leadership.

"I wish the Party and its leadership all the best in the future. Thank you once again for the opportunities and support," he concluded.

The letter, signed by Abubakar, was officially received on the same day by the PDP Ward Secretary, Hammanadama Abubakar.

Atiku Abubakar, who served as Nigeria's Vice President from 1999 to 2007, remains one of the most prominent political figures in the country. His departure from the PDP is expected to send ripples through Nigeria's political landscape as the nation approaches another election

cycle.

Observers now await Abubakar's next political move, with speculation rife about whether he intends to align with another party or chart a new course independently.



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9X3	166,223.50
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8X3	106,934.50
7X4	180,173.50
6X4	100,434.50
6X3	82,750.00
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5X6	123,749.50
5X5	110,000.00
5X4	76,833.00
5X3	66,875.00
5X2	42,916.50
4X4	60,166.50
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9X5	206,000.00
9X4	177,500.00
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8X3	98,500.00
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6X3	78,500.00
6X2	47,500.00
5X5	100,000.00
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PUBLIC NOTICE BLACK & WHITE

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9X3	112,875.00
8X6	179,368.00
8X5	143,500.00
8X4	93,500.00
8X3	82,434.50
7X4	111,173.50
6X4	82,434.50
6X3	59,250.00
6X2	40,000.00
5X6	98,749.50
5X4	65,833.00
5X3	49,375.00
5X2	32,916.50
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PRODUCT BLACK & WHITE

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8X6	N/A
8X3	N/A
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6X3	41,124.50
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Controversial moments of Buhari: Twitter ban, #EndSARS shootings, others

By: Damilola Olufemi, Friday Omosola, Hellen Okechukwu

As the curtains drew on the life of former Head of State and Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari at the age of 82, his passing has prompted moments of reflection—leaving an unfading mark that spans from impactful legacy to controversial issues that sparked digital awareness.

The late Buhari assumed office as Head of State between 1984 and 1985, and later returned as a democratically elected President in 2015 and 2019; earning him two terms of eight years as the Grand Commander-in-Chief of the Nigerian Armed Forces.

As most Nigerians feel the weight of his dismissal, New Daily Prime writes on some digital moments of awareness that continue to evoke reflections.

‘Baba Go Slow’

The late Buhari earned the moniker ‘Baba Go Slow’ following his emergence as Nigeria’s president in 2015, the first opposition candidate in the country’s history to defeat an incumbent president.

Nigerians coined the nickname in reference to Buhari’s sluggish approach to governance, especially his six-month delay in appointing cabinet members, including ministers despite campaign promises to fight corruption, restore security, and revive the economy.

However, in 2019, during a town hall meeting with the Nigerian community in Dubai, Buhari defended the name.

He explained that he was deliberate in his slow pace, saying, “I don’t care if I’m called ‘Baba Go Slow’ as long as I’m not looting the treasury.” He added that his caution stemmed from lessons learnt during his time as a military head of state, when his hasty decisions eventually led to his imprisonment.

‘Lazy Nigerian youths’

One of the most contentious moments of



Buhari’s presidency occurred in 2018 at the Commonwealth Business Forum in London.

Speaking during a panel session with global leaders, Buhari described Nigerian youths as idle, claiming many wanted to ‘sit and do nothing’, relying on the country’s oil wealth.

According to him, over 60 per cent of Nigeria’s population was under the age of 30, and many had not attended school.

He alleged that these youths believed they were entitled to free housing, healthcare, and education simply because Nigeria is an oil-producing country.

The remarks sparked outrage on social media, with the hashtag ‘#LazyNigerianYouths’ trending. However, young Nigerians showcased their hard work and productivity in protest.

In a subsequent interview with Voice of America, Buhari attempted to clarify his comments, stating he was referring to ‘a lot of’ youths, not all.

He cited the high rates of school dropouts and unemployment in the North, adding that many youths were left idle due to a lack of opportunities.

Naira redesign policy

Ahead of the 2023 presidential election, Buhari’s administration introduced a controversial naira redesign policy, unveiling new banknotes in a move the government said was aimed at tackling vote-buying and flushing out illicit funds.

The redesigned notes, launched by Buhari before a Federal Executive Council (FEC) meeting, were said to contain enhanced security features to prevent counterfeiting.

However, the rollout was chaotic. Banks quickly ran out of cash, and many Nigerians were left unable to access money to buy food or meet basic needs.

**Continue reading
on next page**

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The crisis led to widespread hardship, with reports linking several deaths to the cash crunch. The situation persisted until the Supreme Court ruled that the policy was unconstitutional and extended the validity of the old naira notes, effectively restoring order.

I belong to everybody and belong to nobody

In his 2015 speech after he was sworn in, Buhari words of “I belong to everybody and I belong to nobody” was one of the controversial words of his while in office.

He made the statement over his commitment to serving Nigerians without external influence, adding that there would be “no paying off old scores”, laying to rest voiced fears that on coming back to office he would go after some persons.

“These fears are groundless... The past is prologue,” he said.

#EndSARS Lekki Toll Gate shootings

One of the most tragic and controversial events of Buhari’s presidency occurred on 20 October 2020, during the ‘#EndSARS’ protests against police brutality, extortion, and unlawful detentions.

The largely peaceful protest, led by Nigerian youths, with no particular individual as the leader, turned deadly when soldiers allegedly opened fire on unarmed demonstrators at the Lekki toll gate in Lagos.

Despite credible evidence, including live video footage, the Lagos State Government under Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu denied the occurrence of any killings. In his nationwide address, Buhari failed to acknowledge the incident, further fuelling public outrage.

His silence was widely criticised as insensitive and deepened mistrust between the government and its citizens. Several Nigerian artistes such as Chike, Burna Boy, and many more memorialised the event in their songs, yet the victims and their families are still awaiting justice.

Twitter ban

In June 2021, the Buhari government banned Twitter, now known as X, after the platform deleted one of the president’s tweets and restricted his account for violating its policies on abusive conduct.

The Nigerian government accused the American tech company of enabling activities that threatened the nation’s unity. The ban rendered the platform inaccessible to Nigerians, many of whom depended on it for business, communication, and activism.

Despite the economic and social disruptions, the government maintained that the action was necessary for national security. Critics, however, saw it as an attempt to silence dissent and control the narrative.

In January 2022, Buhari lifted the ban after Twitter agreed to certain conditions. The agreement followed months of negotiations led by a presidential committee and a 20-member technical team representing various government agencies.

The company resumed full operations after committing to local content regulations and compliance requirements.

Border closure policy

In a bid to tackle the smuggling of local agricultural products and curb associated corruption, the late President Buhari, in 2019, ordered the closure of Nigeria’s land borders, redirecting all importation to seaports monitored by customs officers. This policy affected traders and led to a spike in the cost of food items, leaving Nigerian citizens to bear the brunt.

Between 2019 and 2020, many Nigerians, unable to cope with the hunger brought about by the decision, vented their frustration on social media, highlighting inflation, border closure, and worsening economic conditions.

By 2020, following numerous dialogues,

Buhari lifted the ban on the Seme, Illela, Maigatari, and Mfun borders to facilitate free trade between Nigerian traders and neighbouring countries.

Buhari’s frequent health tourism trips During his eight-year tenure as president, Buhari’s frequent visits to London for medical treatment drew significant attention and criticism from Nigerians.

His repeated medical trips abroad raised concerns and reignited calls for the revitalisation of Nigeria’s healthcare system. Health professionals often pointed out that most public health facilities in Nigeria suffer from poor funding and a lack of qualified personnel.

‘My wife belongs to the kitchen, other room’

In 2016, responding to criticism from his wife, Aisha Buhari, about his administration, Buhari publicly remarked at a joint press conference with German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin:

“I don’t know which party my wife belongs to, but she belongs to my kitchen, my living room, and the other room.”

The statement sparked widespread digital backlash. Many Nigerians, especially women and feminist advocates, found it highly inappropriate and demeaning.

‘Jubril of Sudan’

In 2017, amid Buhari’s prolonged medical trips abroad, a rumour began circulating that the president had died and was secretly replaced by a body double—allegedly named Jubril from Sudan.

This widespread conspiracy ideology gained traction on various social media spaces, with many Nigerians buying into the claim.

In 2018, in response to the growing speculation, Buhari addressed the rumour at a gathering in Poland, firmly refuting it by declaring he was very much alive and not a clone.

Bandits have taken over my farm, says ADC's Bolaji Abdullahi

By Gbenga Olaleye



The Interim National Publicity Secretary of the African Democratic Congress (ADC), Bolaji Abdullahi, has decried the worsening security situation in Nigeria, revealing that bandits and kidnappers have taken over his farmland in Kwara State.

Speaking to journalists in Ilorin on Wednesday, Mr Abdullahi expressed deep concern about rising criminal activity in areas such as Patigi, Ifelodun, and Babanla, saying the threats have made it impossible for him to visit his farm.

“Kwara State used to be one of the most peaceful states in

Nigeria, but now, it’s no longer safe,” he said. “I have a farm in that area, and I can’t go there anymore because of insecurity.”

Mr Abdullahi, a former Minister of Youth and Sports and a prominent political voice in the North Central region, blamed the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) for what he called “policy failures” that have deepened the country’s problems.

He accused the APC-led federal government of creating conditions that have allowed poverty, hunger, and insecurity to spread, particularly in rural areas once considered peaceful.

“Nigerians are already suffering.

People know they can’t continue like this. The real work now is to convince them that we, in ADC, are truly different and can fix these problems,” he said.

Mr Abdullahi explained that the ADC offers a viable alternative to the current political structure and pledged that the party is committed to pro-people policies that prioritise safety, economic development, and social justice.

As insecurity continues to impact agricultural activities in several states, his comments highlight a broader national crisis that threatens both food security and rural livelihoods.

Court exonerates Fayose in N6.9bn money laundering case

By Friday Omosola

The Federal High Court in Lagos has cleared former Ekiti State Governor, Ayodele Fayose, of all charges in a protracted money laundering and theft case totalling ₦6.9 billion.

Justice Chukwujekwu Aneke discharged Fayose after ruling in favour of his “no-case submission,” concluding that the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) failed to present sufficient evidence to warrant a continued defence.

The court’s decision highlighted that the EFCC could not establish a direct link between Fayose and the alleged crimes, nor did it build a prima facie case compelling him to further respond to the accusations.

The ruling comes after Justice Aneke reserved his decision on May 20, following extensive arguments from all legal teams involved.

Kanu Agabi, Senior Advocate of Nigeria, represented Fayose, while Olalekan Ojo, appeared for the second defendant, Spotless Investment Limited.

Rotimi Jacobs led the prosecution for the EFCC.

Fayose’s legal ordeal began with his initial arraignment in 2018 before Justice Mojisola Olatoregun, but the case was later transferred to Justice Aneke’s court.



He and his company, Spotless Investment Ltd, faced an 11-count amended charge that included allegations of money laundering and theft.

The prosecution’s case asserted that Fayose illegally obtained ₦1.2 billion for his 2014 gubernatorial campaign and received \$5 million in cash from former Minister of State for Defence, Musiliu Obanikoro, circumventing official financial channels.

Furthermore, he was accused of laundering various sums, retaining, and utilising over ₦1.6 billion to acquire properties through proxies and companies like De Privateer Ltd and Still Earth Ltd, in violation of the Money Laundering (Prohibition) Act, 2011.

These alleged offences reportedly occurred during Fayose’s governorship and involved funds

purportedly linked to the office of the former National Security Adviser.

During arguments for the no-case submission, Agabi contended that the prosecution had not established a foundational case against his client.

He pointed out that Abiodun Agbele, a key figure in the alleged transactions, was not jointly charged, which Agabi argued weakened the prosecution’s position.

“The predicate offences on which these charges are based do not hold water,” Agabi submitted, emphasising that charges like criminal breach of trust and conspiracy require co-conspirators to be charged alongside the defendant, which was not done in Fayose’s case.

He therefore urged the court to conclude that Fayose had no case to answer.

Obi explains absence from Buhari's burial, recalls 2022 conversation with late president

By Friday Omosola



The 2023 presidential candidate of the Labour Party, Peter Obi, has revealed that he made efforts to attend the burial of the late former President Muhammadu Buhari, but was unable to do so due to unforeseen logistical challenges beyond his control.

The New Daily Prime reported that Buhari died on Sunday in London and was laid to rest on Tuesday in his hometown of Daura, Katsina State.

In a statement posted on his X page on Wednesday following a condolence visit to the Buhari family, the former Anambra State governor explained that after he realised he could not be present at the burial, he sent a message to a member of the late president's family to express his regrets.

Obi, 63, added that the family member kindly acknowledged his message and assured him that his absence was understood.

He further stated that he had promised to pay a condolence visit to the family on Wednesday.

“Today, accompanied by Senators Ireti Kingibe, Okey Ezea, and Obidient National Coordinator Dr. Tanko Yunusa, I was in Daura with Vice President Shettima, Former Vice President Atiku, Senate President Godswill Akpabio, Governor Radda of Katsina, Governor Zulum of Borno State, and many other dignitaries, to pay our last respects to the late President Muhammadu Buhari and to console his family”, he said.

He also recounted what former Buhari said to him during his visit to the late president in 2022.

“I recall vividly meeting with President Buhari in 2022 during my campaign. He said to me: ‘Peter, you seem to be everywhere and loved by the people. And I wish you the best, please, if you win, do not forget the poor.’

“That moment has been the thought I have had since the news of his demise. His concern for the poor should remain a reminder to us all.

“May the Almighty God, who has called both our late President and the Awujale of Ijebuland to eternal rest, grant them peace, and comfort their families and indeed our dear nation, as their passing is a deep loss to Nigeria. May their legacies of service and dignity never be forgotten.”

Groups urges Diri to defect to APC, align Bayelsa with FG

By Gbenga Olaleye

he Concerned Bayelsa Stakeholders Forum (CBSF), a political pressure group, has called on Governor Diri to defect from the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) to the All Progressives Congress (APC), citing strategic benefits of aligning Bayelsa State with the ruling party at the federal level.

Speaking at a press briefing in Yenagoa on Tuesday, the group's convener, Mr Wisdom Ikuli, who also serves as Governor Diri's Technical Adviser on Print Media, urged political stakeholders and citizens to support what he described as a "necessary realignment" with the APC-led Federal Government.

Ikuli emphasised that the CBSF is a non-partisan platform comprising Bayelsans across party lines, as well as non-indigenes who share a common goal of ensuring the state's political and economic relevance.

"Bayelsa is now the only PDP-controlled state in the South-South. This isolation must end if we want development and political recognition. The governor's defection is not just necessary—it is non-negotiable and imperative," Ikuli declared.

He alleged that several PDP members had conspired to deny Bayelsa and the Ijaw people the presidency in 2015 and warned that internal conflicts and ongoing litigations within the PDP could be exploited to disqualify candidates in future elections.

Ikuli argued that aligning with the APC would help Bayelsa secure critical federal support, especially for major infrastructural projects. He cited the historical precedent set by prominent Ijaw leaders like Chiefs Harold Dappa-Biriye and Melford



Okilo, who advocated for aligning with the centre to overcome the Niger Delta's geographic and political isolation.

"When the PDP was at the centre, Bayelsa benefitted immensely—we produced both a Vice President and President in Dr Goodluck Jonathan. Today, the Ijaw nation is marginalised, lacking any real presence in the Presidency, Vice Presidency, or security leadership," he said.

Ikuli lamented that despite contributing over 65% of Nigeria's oil revenue, the Ijaw people have little federal influence, a situation he blamed on the state's continued loyalty to the opposition.

He praised President Bola Tinubu's administration for appointing several Ijaw sons and daughters into strategic national positions. These include Senator Heineken Lokpobiri as Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, Chief Samuel Ogbuku as Managing Director of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), Chief Ebitimi Amgbare as MD of the NDDBA, and Preye Aganaba as Executive Director at the South-South

Development Commission.

Ikuli also commended Tinubu for approving the second phase of the Nembe-Brass Road project, a long-awaited federal intervention aimed at linking Bayelsa to the Atlantic Ocean.

"President Tinubu has shown commitment to Bayelsa's progress. It's only right that Governor Diri reciprocates by joining his fellow southern APC governors in ensuring the South completes its eight-year turn in power," he added.

The CBSF announced plans to launch daily street rallies across Yenagoa in a bid to mobilise public support and pressure Governor Diri to reconsider his political allegiance.

Ikuli concluded by stressing the urgency of realignment, warning that without it, key projects like the Agge Seaport—considered vital for Bayelsa's economic transformation—might remain unrealised.

The PDP has yet to respond officially to the CBSF's call, and Governor Diri has not made any public comments regarding the suggestion.

Lagos govt partners with Diageo Nigeria to empower youth in hospitality, retail

By Friday Omosola



The Lagos State Government has entered into a strategic partnership with Diageo Nigeria to train over 250 young people in hospitality, entrepreneurship, and retail, in a move aimed at enhancing youth empowerment and tackling unemployment.

This collaborative effort forms part of Diageo's Learning for Life (L4L) initiative and highlights the state's ongoing commitment to fostering a skilled workforce through impactful public-private partnerships.

The programme was launched during the week at an event held on the 11th floor of The Wings Tower, Ozumba Mbadiwe Avenue, Victoria Island, Lagos.

Representing Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu at the launch, the Commissioner for Wealth Creation and Employment, Akinyemi Ajigbotafe, praised Diageo Nigeria for introducing the initiative in Lagos.

He described Learning for Life as 'a bold step towards sustainable youth development.'

He noted that it aligns with the administration's THEMES+ Agenda, particularly its focus on education, youth empowerment, and social inclusion.

"This partnership between Diageo Nigeria and the Lagos State Government stands as a model of effective public-private collaboration, with the potential to drive meaningful impact in

reducing unemployment and advancing skills acquisition," he stated.

The Learning for Life programme aims to equip participants with practical, industry-relevant skills in hospitality, bartending, retail, and entrepreneurship, sectors that continue to thrive amid Lagos's dynamic cultural landscape and growing tourism industry.

Through this initiative, the state government seeks not only to create employment opportunities but also to foster long-term, sustainable livelihoods that support broader economic development.

SEC investigates dozens of suspected ponzi schemes

By Friday Omosola



The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has launched investigations into 79 suspected Ponzi operations currently active within Nigeria.

In a statement issued yesterday, the Commission disclosed that its probe is ongoing and that the findings will be shared with the public upon conclusion.

“The commission is currently investigating 79 schemes and will make a statement on its findings at the conclusion of the investigation,” the SEC stated.

Among those under scrutiny is FF Tiffany, a company widely accused of orchestrating a fraudulent investment

operation.

The SEC noted that the firm has allegedly swindled thousands of Nigerians, including individuals living abroad.

Preliminary reports, according to the Commission, indicate that the scheme lured investors with unrealistic profit promises and has led to financial losses amounting to billions of naira.

The Commission expressed concern over the negative impact such schemes have on public trust in Nigeria’s financial sector.

It further assured Nigerians that it is collaborating with law enforcement and other

regulatory bodies to ensure all those responsible are held accountable.

“Those found culpable will be prosecuted in accordance with Investment and Securities Act and regulatory provisions,” the statement added.

In response to the growing threat of fraudulent investment offers, the SEC reiterated its previous warnings, urging the public to avoid participating in unregistered or deceptive schemes that offer guaranteed or excessive returns.

“These schemes are not registered with the SEC and do not offer investor protection under the law,” it stated.

Omokri to Obi: 'Arewa, remember who was not there'

By Gbenga Olaleye

Former presidential aide Reno Omokri and a prominent Northern youth leader known as Sarki have publicly criticised Labour Party chieftain Peter Obi for his absence at the state burial of late former President Muhammadu Buhari, held in Daura, Katsina State, on Tuesday.

Obi's no-show at the solemn event sparked reactions across political circles, particularly from Omokri and Sarki, who took to social media platform X (formerly Twitter) to voice their disapproval.

The burial of the former president drew the presence of high-ranking dignitaries, including President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, former Vice Presidents Atiku Abubakar and Yemi Osinbajo, as well as various state governors and national figures. Obi, however, was notably absent from the proceedings.

Reno Omokri, who served as a media aide to former President Goodluck Jonathan, questioned the former Anambra State governor's commitment to national unity, accusing him of harbouring sentiments contrary to the interests of the North.

"President Bola Ahmed Tinubu was in Daura from beginning to end, showing his personal devotion to General Muhammadu Buhari and his commitment to the North. Arewa, remember who was not there!" Omokri wrote on X.

He also referenced Obi's past comments about former military leader General Yakubu Gowon and Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) leader Nnamdi Kanu, suggesting a pattern of disregard for northern sensibilities.



"On October 19, 2024, during General Gowon's 90th birthday, Peter Obi called him 'an enemy' to be forgiven. And today, when General Buhari, the successor to Ahmadu Bello, was being buried, Peter Obi was nowhere to be found," Omokri stated.

"Meanwhile, last week, he said Nnamdi Kanu's trial 'makes no sense'. This is the same Nnamdi Kanu who says the vilest things about Arewa and lied that General Buhari died in 2017 and was replaced by a clone from Sudan named Jubril," he added.

Omokri concluded by warning that Obi's perceived lack of national inclusivity could undermine his prospects in the 2027 presidential race: "In 2027, Nigeria needs a truly Nigerian president in Aso Rock, not a pretender whose true allegiance lies elsewhere."

Echoing similar sentiments, Northern youth leader Sarki suggested Obi's absence may cost him support in the region, where electoral influence remains crucial.

"Peter Obi didn't attend President Muhammadu Buhari's burial. This is the same man who expects northerners to hand over Nigeria to him, let's see how he plans to become president without our votes," Sarki wrote on X.

Both Omokri and Sarki have been vocal critics of Obi in the past, frequently challenging his political statements and positioning. Their latest remarks come amid heightened political tension as Nigeria gradually approaches another election cycle.

Meanwhile, questions have also been raised about the federal government's decision to declare a public holiday on Tuesday in honour of Buhari. Human rights lawyer Maduabuchi Idam criticised the move, arguing that it sets a contentious precedent.

As the nation mourns the passing of its former leader, the political fallout surrounding his burial highlights deeper regional and ideological divisions that may shape the race to Aso Rock in 2027.

EFCC to appeal court verdict clearing Fayose of money laundering charges

By Damilola Olufemi



The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has announced plans to challenge a court decision that acquitted former Ekiti State Governor, Ayodele Fayose, of alleged money laundering and fraud charges.

Delivering judgment on Wednesday, Justice Chukwujekwu Aneke ruled in favour of a no-case submission filed by Fayose, declaring that the prosecution had not presented sufficient evidence to warrant the defendant entering a defence. "The prosecution failed to establish a prima facie case against the first defendant," the judge held.

Reacting to the verdict, EFCC lead counsel, Rotimi Jacobs (SAN), confirmed the agency's intention to appeal. He stated that the commission would obtain the certified true copy of the judgment and begin preparing the necessary legal grounds to contest the ruling.

Fayose and his company, Spotless Investment Limited, were re-arraigned by the EFCC on an 11-count charge of laundering ₦6.9 billion — alleged to have been misappropriated during his tenure as governor. The former governor was accused of receiving ₦1.2 billion for

his 2014 election campaign and accepting \$5 million in cash from former Minister Musiliu Obanikoro, without passing through a financial institution.

The charges also alleged that Fayose used proxies and companies such as De Privateer Ltd and Still Earth Ltd to launder and invest over ₦1.6 billion in properties, in breach of the Money Laundering (Prohibition) Act, 2011.

During the May 19 hearing, Fayose's lawyer, Kanu Agabi (SAN), argued that the EFCC's case lacked merit. He pointed out that a key figure in the transactions, Abiodun Agbele, was never charged alongside Fayose. "With due respect, the predicate offences do not hold water. Criminal breach of trust and conspiracy are distinct offences, and no co-conspirator was charged," Agabi told the court, insisting Fayose had no case to answer.

Similarly, Olalekan Ojo, representing the second defendant, submitted a separate no-case argument, challenging the reliability of the prosecution's evidence, particularly the testimony of the 13th witness, Obanikoro, who admitted that there was no direct communication between Fayose and then-National Security Adviser, Sambo Dasuki.

EFCC urged the court to reject the no-case submissions

In response, EFCC counsel Jacobs urged the court to reject the no-case submissions. He highlighted what he described as "suspicious financial activities," questioning why Fayose didn't use his accounts if the funds were legitimate. "If the money was clean, why not buy the properties in his name?" Jacobs asked.

He also referenced testimony from EFCC investigator Abubakar Madaki, who said that several associates used to acquire properties on Fayose's behalf, later denied ownership, even though Fayose had admitted the assets were his.

Jacobs maintained that Obanikoro's testimony confirmed Fayose had requested the funds in cash and introduced Agbele to collect them — conduct that, in his view, required explanation.

Despite these arguments, the court upheld the no-case submissions, effectively clearing Fayose and his co-defendant of all charges — a decision the EFCC now seeks to overturn on appeal.

Ekiti govt signs MoU with REA to boost rural electrification

By Friday Omosola



Governor Biodun Oyejide of Ekiti State on Wednesday disclosed that his administration has spent over N4 billion to improve electricity supply across the state.

He made this known while signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Rural Electrification Agency (REA) for the implementation of off-grid power projects.

The agreement, signed in Abuja during a state-focused roundtable with the REA, is aimed at accelerating energy access to unserved and underserved communities in Ekiti, with a focus on catalysing rural economic development through sustainable and reliable power supply.

Speaking at the event, Oyejide described the partnership as a ‘game changer’ that would help unlock private capital investment to support energy sufficiency in the state.

He noted that the electricity conversation goes beyond infrastructure, stating it is ultimately about powering homes, stimulating economic activity, and ensuring no community is left in the dark.

“Today’s event is not simply about

electricity or renewable energy; it’s about our people. It’s about lighting up homes, powering our economy, and creating a future where no community is left behind,” Oyejide said.

Highlighting his administration’s achievements in the energy sector, he revealed that over 40 towns have been reconnected to the national grid after years of blackout.

He said the state currently operates an Independent Power Project (IPP) supplying 2.6MW to government facilities and is also investing in solar energy for hospitals, primary healthcare centres, and schools.

Oyejide added that efforts to close the metering gap have resulted in the installation of prepaid meters in thousands of homes, reducing the gap by 80% and ending the era of estimated billing.

He reaffirmed his government’s target to achieve 120MW of electricity by 2030 through public-private partnerships and sustained investor support.

Managing Director of the REA, Abba Aliyu, lauded the Oyejide

administration for prioritising energy access and for creating an enabling policy environment that encourages sustainable development.

He said the partnership would significantly reshape the energy landscape in the state through off-grid solutions that target rural and underserved areas.

Also speaking, the state Commissioner for Infrastructure and Public Utilities, Mobolaji Aluko, hailed the MoU as a milestone in the state’s pursuit of universal electricity access.

He noted that the collaboration aligns with the government’s strategic infrastructure plan, which prioritises extending electricity to rural and economically active communities.

The signing ceremony was attended by several government officials including the Secretary to the State Government, Habibat Adubiaro; Technical Adviser on Power Infrastructure, Philip Atere; Executive Secretary of the State Electricity Regulatory Bureau, Dare Samson; and senior REA executives.

Salihu Lukman: Era of Buhari's popularity making politicians win elections is over

By Damilola Olufemi

Prominent member of the African Democratic Congress (ADC) and former Vice Chairman of All Progressives Congress, Salihu Lukman, has said the political era in which candidates relied heavily on the influence and popularity of former President Muhammadu Buhari is now over.

Buhari passed away on Sunday in a London clinic after a prolonged illness and was buried on Tuesday at his residence in Daura, Katsina State.

During an appearance on Arise Television on Wednesday, Lukman reflected on the late president's influence, saying his passing marks a turning point in Nigeria's political landscape. "Even before the late President Buhari died, the vacuum had already been created," Lukman stated. "It was quite doubtful, even before his passing, that he could influence electoral victory the way he used to."

Lukman, a former APC national vice-chairman (North-West), argued that many northern politicians had grown too dependent on Buhari's backing rather than engaging meaningfully with voters. "I know, being from the north, that many politicians looked forward to Buhari raising their hands," he said. "That gesture translated almost directly into victory in many places. And that, in a way, made politicians lazy."

He stressed that the current political reality demands a different approach, particularly for opposition parties. "We don't have anybody with that kind of intimidating profile anymore," Lukman said. "What that



means is that all leaders of the coalition need to be humble and acknowledge their dependence on one another. That's how to build the teamwork we need to succeed."

He added that defeating the ruling APC or President Bola Tinubu should not be the sole objective. "It's about building a new political platform that genuinely connects with citizens and offers a credible alternative," he said.

Lukman refers to Buhari as one of Northern popular politicians. In a separate interview on Politics Today on Channels Television, Lukman criticised politicians who, during Buhari's era, focused more on currying favour with the president than establishing real ties with the electorate. "They concentrated more on being in Buhari's good books, rather than building trust and

negotiating with citizens," he noted. "Now that Buhari is no longer in the picture, politicians must listen more, engage better, and fulfil their campaign promises."

He warned that entitlement and elite backing would no longer guarantee electoral success. "Except they want to rig, politicians must relate to citizens with a higher level of humility instead of the current arrogance," Lukman cautioned.

Describing Buhari as "one of the most popular politicians in northern Nigeria," Lukman acknowledged the late president's pivotal role in shaping modern Nigerian politics. "His popularity helped make the APC a reality," he said. "But that era is gone. Politicians must now do the hard work."

Nigeria's inflation drops to 22.22% in June

By Damilola Olufemi

Nigeria's headline inflation slowed to 22.22% in June 2025 from 22.97% in May, marking a 0.75 percentage point drop, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). The decline also represents a notable 11.97-point decrease from June 2024, when the rate stood at 34.19%.

The NBS explained in its latest Consumer Price Index (CPI) report released on Wednesday that the easing in the year-on-year figure reflects changes in the rebased index, now using 2024 as the new base year.

However, the surge on a month-to-month basis increased slightly, rising to 1.68% in June from 1.53% in May, highlighting ongoing price increases for essential goods and services. The CPI index rose from 121.4 in May to 123.4 in June, driven by persistent pressures in food, transportation, and housing.

"The Consumer Price Index rose to 123.4 in June 2025, reflecting a 2.0-point increase from the preceding month. In June, the headline inflation rate eased to 22.22% compared to May's 22.97%. On a year-on-year basis, it was 11.97 percentage points lower than the 34.19% recorded in June 2024," the report stated.

Food prices continue to drive inflation

Food price increase, a key driver of the overall index, dropped year-on-year to 21.97% in June from 40.87% a year ago — a sharp decline attributed largely to the new base year. But monthly food inflation surged to 3.25%, up from 2.19% in May, due to rising prices of items like tomatoes, dried peas, crayfish, meat, pepper, and plantain flour.

The average annual food increase rate for the 12 months ending in June 2025 fell to 28.28%, down from



35.3% in the previous year.

Urban price hike dipped year-on-year to 22.72% from 36.55% in June 2024. However, month-on-month, it climbed to 2.11% in June from 1.40% in May. The 12-month average urban inflation rate was 28.16%.

In rural areas, annual inflation eased to 20.85% from 32.09% a year earlier. But the month-on-month rate declined to 0.63% in June, from 1.83% in May. The rural 12-month average came in at 24.65%.

State-by-state breakdown

Borno posted the highest year-on-year inflation rate at 31.63%, followed by Abuja (26.79%) and Benue (25.91%). The lowest rates were in Zamfara (9.90%), Yobe (13.51%), and Sokoto (15.78%).

On a month-to-month basis, Ekiti (5.39%), Delta (5.15%), and Lagos (5.13%) recorded the biggest increases. Meanwhile, Zamfara (-6.89%), Niger (-5.35%), and Plateau (-4.01%) saw notable declines.

Borno also led in year-on-year food surge at 47.40%, followed by Ebonyi (30.62%) and Bayelsa (28.64%). Katsina (6.21%), Adamawa (10.90%), and Sokoto (15.25%) recorded the lowest rates.

For month-on-month food surge, Enugu (11.90%), Kwara (9.97%), and Rivers (9.88%) experienced the sharpest rises, while Borno (-7.63%), Sokoto (-6.43%), and Bayelsa (-6.34%) saw the steepest declines.

The categories contributing most to the overall inflation rate included food and non-alcoholic beverages, transportation, housing, electricity, gas, education, health, and clothing.

While the annual figures point to a gradual easing of inflationary pressures — likely reflecting policy adjustments and the effects of a rebased index — the uptick in monthly inflation signals that many Nigerian households are still grappling with rising living costs.

FETO still active in Nigeria, poses global threat - Turkish envoy warns

By Gbenga Olaleye

The Turkish government has raised fresh concerns over the continued presence and activities of a terrorist organisation, known as the Fethullah Terrorist Organisation (FETO), in Nigeria and across several other countries.

Speaking on Tuesday evening at a dinner event in Abuja to mark Türkiye's annual Democracy and National Unity Day, the Turkish Ambassador-designate to Nigeria, Mehmet Poroy, warned that the group's global network remains a serious national threat to any country in which it operates.

The dinner, hosted by the Turkish Embassy, commemorated the anniversary of the failed 15 July 2016 coup attempt in Türkiye, which the Turkish government blames on the FETO network.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the event is held annually in memory of the 251 people who died resisting the coup and in celebration of the Turkish people's defence of democracy.

According to Ambassador Poroy, members of the Gülen movement labelled by Türkiye as FETO are still being tracked, arrested, and prosecuted around the world. He said the group disguises its operations under sectors such as education, healthcare, and humanitarian aid, warning that its presence in Nigeria should be treated with serious concern.

"They are still being captured and arrested today. The presence of such an organisation poses a threat to every country in which it operates," Poroy said.

"Unfortunately, the FETO terrorist organisation still maintains its activities in Nigeria, particularly in the fields of education and healthcare. We consistently inform our Nigerian friends about the nature and dangers of this organisation, and urge them to remain vigilant and cautious."

The Turkish envoy added that his country, through international collaboration, has succeeded in dismantling numerous FETO cells and



has taken over various institutions affiliated with the group abroad, including schools and charitable foundations. Despite this, he admitted that the organisation's global infrastructure has not been fully dismantled.

"The fact that new investigations and arrests into the organisation continue to be launched demonstrates the need for this struggle to be pursued with unwavering determination.

"In several countries, including Nigeria, FETO continues to pump its operations under the guise of humanitarian aid, education, healthcare, and interfaith dialogue," Poroy continued. "You must not forget that behind this humanitarian appearance lies an organisation that seeks to infiltrate the political and bureaucratic institutions of host countries."

Founded in the late 1950s by Turkish Islamic scholar Fethullah Gülen, the Gülen movement also known in Turkish as Hizmet (Service) has been the subject of intense scrutiny and crackdowns by the Turkish government. Gülen, who died in October 2024 at age 83 while living in exile in Pennsylvania, United States, has been accused by Ankara of orchestrating the 2016 coup, a claim he and his supporters strongly deny.

Nonetheless, Türkiye has officially designated the movement as a terrorist organisation and has waged a years-long global campaign to dismantle its influence. The government has seized billions of dollars' worth of FETO-linked assets and taken over numerous institutions across various continents.

Several international bodies and countries—including the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Pakistan, and Northern Cyprus—have designated FETO as a terrorist organisation in alignment with Türkiye's position.

Ambassador Poroy's comments in Abuja come amid ongoing concerns about international extremist networks using non-governmental fronts to gain influence. His warning may renew scrutiny of foreign-linked institutions operating in Nigeria's educational and healthcare sectors.

While Nigerian authorities have not made any official statement in response to the warning, the Turkish government has reaffirmed its commitment to cooperation with Nigeria in tackling potential threats posed by FETO and other international extremist organisations.

Nigeria adopts FOPL to promote healthier food choices

By Damilola Olufemi



The Nigerian Government has adopted Front-of-Pack Labelling (FOPL) to help Nigerians make healthier food choices and reduce diet-related diseases.

This was announced during the inauguration of the National Technical Working Committee on FOPL on Wednesday in Abuja, News Agency of Nigeria (NAN).

The Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Ms Daju Kachollom, was represented by Dr Okara Dogara, Senior Technical Adviser.

Ms Kachollom described the move as a major step in implementing the National Policy on Food Safety and Quality and its 2023 Implementation Plan.

She said nearly 30% of deaths in Nigeria are caused by non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as heart disease, diabetes, cancer, and chronic respiratory conditions. She added that the risk of premature death from NCDs for Nigerians aged 30–69 is 22%.

FOPL uses symbols, colours, and short messages on food packages to help consumers quickly identify products high in salt, sugar, or unhealthy fats. The system supports earlier efforts like the sodium reduction guidelines launched in March and the 2022 trans-fat ban by NAFDAC.

WHO hails FOPL

The World Health Organisation (WHO) praised the initiative. Dr Pindar Wakawa, Technical Officer for Nutrition at WHO Nigeria, said FOPL

is one of the most effective ways to reduce diet-related illnesses.

According to the WHO, NCDs are responsible for 29% of all deaths in Nigeria. Cardiovascular disease accounts for 11%, and cancer for 4%.

Ms Joy Amafah-Isaac, In-Country Coordinator for Food Policy and Nutrition at the Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHAi), pledged N500 million in technical and financial support over six years to support the policy.

The FOPL Technical Working Committee has been tasked with developing national guidelines, recommending suitable labelling systems, reviewing international models, designing education campaigns, and monitoring progress during the pilot phase.

Davido's 'Timeless' earns silver certification in UK

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigerian music star David Adeleke, popularly known as Davido, has earned a Silver Certification in the United Kingdom for his 2023 album, *Timeless*.

The British Phonographic Industry (BPI) grants this certification to albums that sell over 60,000 physical copies or surpass 100,000 units through combined streams and downloads.

The news was confirmed by music analytics platform Chart Data, which reported that *Timeless* had exceeded 100,000 units in the UK. This marks a significant milestone in Davido's career, solidifying his global presence and reinforcing his position as one of Africa's top artists.

Since its release in March 2023, *Timeless* has broken multiple streaming records across various platforms. It became the most-streamed album in a day on Spotify Nigeria and reached new heights on Boomplay, Audiomack, and YouTube.

Fans across the world embraced the album's fresh sound, which blends Afrobeats with other global music styles. Songs like "Unavailable" and "Feel" quickly gained popularity and were featured on major playlists,



contributing to the album's growing reach.

Following the album's release, Davido launched the *Timeless* Tour, performing in major cities such as London, New York, and Paris. The tour drew thousands of fans and helped spread the influence of African music across continents.

The album also gained recognition in the award scene. Davido received a nomination for 'Song of the Year' at the Headies and earned two Grammy nominations, one for 'Best Global Album' and another for 'Best Global Music Performance'.

Timeless marks an important

moment not just for Davido but for the rise of Afrobeats worldwide. With its global appeal and chart success, the album reflects how Nigerian music continues to break boundaries and reach new audiences.

Davido speaks on his achievement

Speaking about the project, Davido called it one of his most personal and meaningful albums yet. "This album means everything to me," he said. "It's a new beginning."

With the UK Silver Certification, *Timeless* adds another historic achievement to Davido's growing list of successes, proving once again that African music is not just trending, it's timeless.

‘Stop asking where my man is’, Jumoke Odetola slams netizens

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Popular Nollywood actress, Jumoke Odetola, has issued a strong warning to social media users probing into her private life, especially her relationship status.

In a recent Instagram post, Odetola called out those who repeatedly question her about her romantic affairs. She expressed frustration over the constant inquiries from followers who feel entitled to know about her personal life.

Odetola, known for her powerful roles in Yoruba and English-language films, made it clear that her relationship matters are private and not open for public discussion. Her post came in response to the increasing number of comments from fans asking about her partner.

Over the past few weeks, the actress's comment section has been filled with one recurring question: “Where is your man?” or “Who is your man?”

Tired of the repeated pressure, she decided to break her silence. In her Instagram post, she wrote,

“Enough is enough. Stop asking where is my man, or who is your man. Stop asking personal questions that are none of your business! I keep saying this every time!”

Her message was firm, direct, and filled with emotion. She revealed that while she had tried to ignore the comments for a long time, the continued intrusion into her personal life had become unbearable.

Odetola explains further. Odetola further explained that the constant questioning had gone beyond what she could tolerate. She noted that many of the comments disguised as jokes or casual curiosity came from a place of disrespect.

“It’s no longer funny,” she wrote. “But let me express myself today.”

By choosing to address the issue publicly, the actress hopes to set clear



boundaries between her personal life and her professional career. She emphasised that being in the spotlight does not mean she owes anyone details about her relationship status.

Jumoke Odetola's experience reflects a growing problem faced by many public figures: fans who overstep boundaries by demanding information about their personal lives.

While social media has brought celebrities and fans closer than ever, it has also blurred the lines between public and private matters. For many stars like Odetola, the pressure to share personal details can become overwhelming.

In recent years, several Nigerian celebrities have also spoken out against the invasion of privacy by fans and bloggers. From constant speculation about who they are dating to unwanted opinions about their marriages, public figures are often forced to defend their choices.

By speaking up, Odetola is sending a clear message, not just to her followers but to the general public. She wants people to understand that her personal decisions, especially those involving her love life, are not open to debate or speculation.

The actress's bold stance has drawn support from many fans who believe celebrities should be allowed to keep parts of their lives private.

Her message serves as a reminder that being in the limelight does not erase one's right to personal space and respect. Everyone, regardless of fame or status, deserves the freedom to make personal choices without facing public judgment.

Following her post, reactions poured in from both supporters and critics. Some fans applauded her for standing her ground and maintaining her privacy. Others, however, insisted they only asked because they cared.

Regardless of the mixed reactions, Odetola's words struck a chord with many. Her firm yet respectful approach is a lesson in how celebrities can draw the line when their privacy is under threat.

Jumoke Odetola's outburst is more than just a reaction to nosy questions. It is a call for respect, a plea for boundaries, and a reminder that fame does not make someone public property.

'I gave up my standard for Peller, now I'm paying the price', says Jarvis

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Popular Nigerian content creator and TikTok streamer, Jarvis, has spoken candidly about her troubled relationship with fellow streamer, Peller.

In an emotional live session with fellow content creator Sandra Benede, Jarvis revealed the emotional toll the relationship had taken on her, saying she had to give up her values and personal boundaries just to keep the relationship going.

She admitted that while she consistently tries to please Peller, it has come at a high personal cost. According to her, the relationship has forced her into situations that do not align with her brand, her beliefs, or her identity as a content creator.

During the live chat, Jarvis confessed that she often found herself doing things she disliked, just to make Peller happy. She said that even when she voiced her discomfort, Peller would plead with her, and out of love, she would eventually give in.

"In the beginning, it was difficult accepting his character," she said. "Now, I've tolerated so many things that do not suit my brand, things I don't like doing, things I've never done before. But I did them with him online."

She went on to say that, even when she disagreed with certain content they planned to post, she would reluctantly go along with it. "Before we post something online, I complain and say I don't like it. I suggest we try something else. But he'll beg me, and I'll agree, out of love. Then when he posts it, it leads to backlash—and I'm the one people drag."

Jarvis made it clear that despite all her sacrifices, she is the one suffering the consequences. The public criticism, according to her, seems to fall squarely on her shoulders, while Peller remains untouched by the controversy.

"Who is really losing value here?" she



asked. "Is it me or him? It's always the woman that ends up looking bad. A man can leave today, go back to his village, and marry someone from Ikorodu. Life goes on for him. But the woman, she's the one who gets disgraced."

Her tone was filled with pain and frustration as she questioned the double standards she faces. "It's as if my image, my brand, my worth, everything I built, is being chipped away slowly, just because I chose to love and support someone publicly."

Adding to her frustration, Jarvis also addressed claims from some online users who believe she's trying to compete with Peller. She said she finds it disturbing that people feel she should not be allowed to do similar content as him simply because she is a woman.

"They say I'm in competition with him," she said. "Why can't I do what he does? Just because I'm a woman? Why is it a problem when I try to grow or stand on my own?"

Jarvis's remarks reflect a broader conversation about gender roles in relationships, especially in the digital content creation space. Many female

creators face harsher scrutiny than their male counterparts, often being judged more harshly for similar actions.

Since the live session, fans have taken to social media to share their thoughts. While some praised Jarvis for speaking her truth, others criticised her for not setting firmer boundaries earlier in the relationship.

One fan wrote, "She's brave for talking about this, but I wish she had walked away sooner." Another commenter said, "Peller should also take responsibility. It takes two to create this kind of damage."

Although Jarvis did not confirm if the relationship is over, her words suggest she may be considering a major shift, either in her personal life or her content strategy. Her message was clear: she's tired of sacrificing her peace, values, and dignity for love that doesn't seem to give her the same in return.

As more fans rally around her, calling for self-care and healing, only time will tell what the next steps the streamer will take. For now, her story serves as a wake-up call about the cost of love when it comes at the expense of self-worth.

Seun Kuti: 'Buhari's death is injustice'

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Seun Kuti, the renowned Afrobeat musician and son of the legendary Fela Kuti, has opened up about the deep pain his family endured under the late former President Muhammadu Buhari.

In a heartfelt message shared on social media, Seun claimed that Buhari caused more harm to his family than to any other in Nigeria during his time in power.

Seun did not hold back in expressing how Buhari's leadership affected his family. He said the late president's actions "dealt with" and "damaged" his family deeply. According to him, no other family in Nigeria suffered as much under Buhari's rule as the Kuti family did.

In a video posted on his Instagram page, Seun said, "There's nobody Buhari has offended and damaged like my family. Buhari dealt with my family, but his death is not any type of justice or victory for my family."

While Buhari's death may have closed a painful chapter in Nigeria's history, Seun expressed regret that justice did not come while Buhari was alive. His sorrow is greater because his late father, Fela Kuti, and his two uncles, Koye and Beko, who were also victims of Buhari's policies and persecution, passed away long before Buhari himself.

Seun described his father and uncles as "better men" than Buhari. He lamented that they never lived to see the day Buhari died, suggesting that their suffering was left unresolved.

He added, "My only regret is that my dad Fela, and my uncles Koye and Beko died before him; all better men than him. The only solace I can take from his death is that the three of them will gang up against him in the afterlife if there's such a thing."



The Kuti family has long been known for standing up to oppression and injustice. Fela Kuti, Seun's father, was a powerful critic of military rule and corrupt governments in Nigeria. His uncles, Koye and Beko, also shared this legacy of resistance.

Seun's comments remind Nigerians of the turbulent years under Buhari's military regime in the 1980s and later his presidency from 2015 until his recent death. During Buhari's military rule, Fela Kuti and his family faced arrests, raids, and brutal crackdowns. These events left lasting wounds on the family and their supporters.

Muhammadu Buhari, who served as Nigeria's military Head of State from 1983 to 1985 and later as democratically elected President from 2015 to 2023, died on Sunday in a London clinic. His death marked the end of a long and controversial chapter in Nigeria's political history.

His remains were laid to rest in his hometown, Daura, in Katsina State,

on Tuesday. The burial was attended by dignitaries, family members, and supporters, bringing closure to a figure who had deeply divided opinions across the country.

Buhari's death sparked mixed feelings nationwide. While some mourned the loss of a former leader, others remembered the difficult years under his rule. Seun Kuti's statement reflects the pain many Nigerians felt, especially those who suffered persecution or injustice during Buhari's time in power.

As Nigeria moves forward, voices like Seun Kuti's urge the nation to remember its past honestly. The wounds left by political struggles and family tragedies like the Kuti's are a reminder of the cost of leadership and the need for justice.

Seun's message, shared with raw emotion, calls for reflection, not only on Buhari's legacy but also on the sacrifices made by those who dared to speak out.

May Edochie's lawyer quits divorce case over fan harassment

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Emeka Ugwuonye, the lawyer representing May Edochie in her ongoing divorce case with actor Yul Edochie, has officially stepped down from the case.

The legal expert, who led the charge through his firm, Due Process Advocate (DPA), said he was forced to quit due to what he described as intense harassment from May's online supporters.

The announcement was made on Monday via a statement shared on the official Facebook page of DPA. In the statement, Ugwuonye explained that the toxic behaviour of some fans within the group known as "May Nation" had made it impossible for him and his staff to continue.

According to Ugwuonye, the lawyer initially agreed to represent May to help her pursue justice after the collapse of her marriage.

However, the environment around the case soon turned hostile. He claimed that supporters who once hailed May began directing abuse toward his law firm, often in more severe ways than they had experienced from the camp of her estranged husband, Yul Edochie.

"My staff face daily abuse from May's supporters, having already endured similar attacks from Yul's supporters," the statement read. "The hostile environment fostered by certain individuals within the 'May Nation' group made it untenable for us to continue effective representation."

Ugwuonye stressed that while the legal team had been fully committed to May's cause, the growing hostility made it clear that their efforts were no longer welcome. He said the negative energy directed at his office by May's fans disrupted the ability of the team to work professionally and without fear.



He also stated that May's inability to control or speak against the toxic behaviour of her fanbase signalled a breakdown in the trust and coordination needed for an effective lawyer-client relationship.

"Queen May's inability to meaningfully influence this increasingly toxic faction of her supporters is incompatible with the level of investment required for our representation," the statement added.

Despite withdrawing from the case, Ugwuonye made it clear that he holds no grudge against May Edochie herself. On the contrary, he described her as a "remarkable woman" who has suffered betrayal and has been forced into a polygamous situation against her will.

The lawyer emphasised that the legal team had been passionate about defending her rights and supporting her through her public marital crisis. However, he added that no legal service can thrive in a space that is emotionally charged and hostile to the very people trying to help.

In his closing remarks, Ugwuonye assured that DPA would fully cooperate with any legal team that May chooses to

work with going forward. He also noted that all records and materials relevant to the case would be handed over without delay to ensure a smooth transition.

"DPA will work cooperatively with Queen May and her team to transition our work to any successor representatives she designates," he said.

May Edochie, the estranged wife of popular Nollywood actor Yul Edochie, has been in the middle of a public legal battle since her husband's decision to take actress Judy Austin as a second wife. The development sparked widespread controversy, as many Nigerians sympathised with May and praised her for maintaining a calm and dignified public image.

The situation, however, appears to have taken a new turn with the resignation of her legal team, which had been vocal in its defense of her rights and dignity. As she continues her battle, it remains to be seen who will take over her legal representation and how the case will proceed.

With this development, May's fight for justice may face new challenges, but her supporters still hope for a fair outcome.

Actress Mary Njoku warns about spread of fake drugs in Nigeria

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Renowned Nollywood actress and producer, Mary Remmy Njoku, has voiced deep concerns about the quality of medicines sold in Nigeria.

Her outcry follows a recent health scare that occurred while she was working on a film set. The actress took to Instagram to share her experience with food poisoning and the troubling outcome that followed her use of locally purchased medication.

According to Njoku, she fell ill during filming and suffered symptoms of food poisoning, including severe stomach upset. In response, she asked a staff member to buy Imodium, a well-known anti-diarrheal medication, from a popular pharmacy chain in Nigeria. However, what should have brought quick relief only worsened her worry.

Despite taking the medication as instructed for three consecutive days, Njoku said her condition showed no sign of improvement. The symptoms lingered, making her question the effectiveness of the drug.

"I've used Imodium several times in the past, so I trusted it would work," she explained in her post. "But this time, nothing changed. I kept taking it, hoping I would feel better, but I didn't."

It wasn't until her husband intervened that she began to recover. He gave her a tablet of Imodium purchased abroad, and within five minutes of taking it, her symptoms reportedly subsided.

"The relief was almost immediate," Njoku noted. "Just one small tablet and my stomach calmed down. That's when I knew something wasn't right with the one I bought here."

The actress did not stop at simply narrating her experience. She called on the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) to step in and address what she described



as a serious public health threat.

"This isn't the first time I've noticed a difference in drugs bought locally versus those from abroad," she warned. "So I have to ask: what exactly are we being sold in Nigeria? What's happening to our drug supply?"

Njoku stressed that this issue goes beyond personal inconvenience; it puts lives at risk. She urged the agency to investigate thoroughly and ensure that only safe and authentic medications are available on Nigerian shelves.

Njoku's post has sparked wide attention online, with many Nigerians expressing similar experiences in the comment section. From painkillers to antibiotics, users complained about ineffective drugs purchased from pharmacies that are supposed to be reputable.

Health experts have long warned about the dangers of counterfeit or substandard medications in the country. Such drugs not only fail to treat conditions but can also lead to serious complications or even death.

The World Health Organization (WHO)

has listed Nigeria as one of the countries where fake and substandard drugs are a growing concern. From poor regulation to corruption in the supply chain, the problem remains difficult to control.

Mary Njoku's experience, though personal, reflects a much bigger issue, one that many Nigerians face silently every day. Her boldness in speaking out may be the push needed to draw attention back to the problem.

Njoku's message is clear: Nigerian lives matter, and the country must not treat drug quality with levity. She insists that NAFDAC must do more than respond with press releases it must act, investigate, and prosecute where necessary.

"This is a public health emergency," she emphasised. "NAFDAC must treat it like one. Our health and safety are on the line."

As her post continues to make rounds online, many hope the authorities will listen, not just to Njoku, but to the growing cries of a population tired of risking their lives with every dose.

Trump plans tariffs on drugs, semiconductors starting 1 August

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Donald Trump has announced plans to impose fresh tariffs on imported pharmaceutical products and semiconductors, marking a significant escalation in his administration's ongoing global trade war. The new levies could come into effect as early as 1 August, coinciding with the expiry of a temporary pause on so-called "reciprocal" tariffs first unveiled in April.

Speaking to reporters late on Tuesday, the US president said the tariffs on drug imports would be introduced with an initial low rate, before increasing steeply after giving pharmaceutical companies "a year or so to build" manufacturing capacity in the United States.

"We're going to start off with a low tariff and give the pharmaceutical companies a year or so to build, and then we're going to make it a very high tariff," Trump said. He signalled that semiconductors would follow a similar timeline, though he declined to offer further specifics, stating only that the chips were "less complicated" to target.

Earlier this month, Trump told his cabinet he expected to raise pharmaceutical tariffs to as high as 200% after a 12 to 18 month grace period. He also proposed a 50% tariff on imported copper in a bid to bolster domestic production of the metal.

The administration's legal basis for the new tariffs stems from ongoing investigations launched in April under section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962, which allows tariffs to be imposed on national security grounds.

If implemented, the pharmaceutical tariffs are expected to impact major drugmakers such as Pfizer, Eli Lilly, and Merck, which operate significant overseas production facilities. Critics warn the move could lead to higher medicine prices for American consumers. Tariffs on semiconductors are likely to affect global chipmakers as well as tech giants such as Apple and Samsung, whose devices rely heavily on imported chips.



The announcement comes just as international trading partners brace for the 1 August deadline, marking the end of a delay in the introduction of broader reciprocal tariffs. That extension had already been pushed back from an earlier date of 9 July.

In a related development, the White House has launched a new investigation into Brazil's trade practices. According to a statement from US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer, officials will examine Brazilian policies on digital trade, electronic payment services, tariffs, corruption, intellectual property, ethanol, and illegal deforestation. The inquiry comes amid claims that such practices are "unfair" and detrimental to US companies, workers, and tech innovators.

Greer pointed to "Brazil's attacks on American social media companies" as part of what the administration views as an assault on fair trading conditions.

Despite Brazil running a trade deficit with the US, Trump recently announced a 50% tariff on Brazilian imports, accusing the South American country of conducting a "witch-hunt" against its former president Jair Bolsonaro.

However, there were signs of progress elsewhere. Trump said on Tuesday that a

trade deal had been reached with Indonesia, following the country's agreement to purchase multibillion-dollar quantities of US energy, agricultural goods, and 50 Boeing aircraft. In return, Indonesian exports to the US will now face a reduced tariff rate of 19%, down from the previously threatened 32%.

Meanwhile, the EU remains locked in negotiations with Washington, after Trump threatened a 30% tariff on EU goods, a move the bloc has warned could effectively collapse transatlantic trade. EU trade commissioner Maroš Šefčovič said the bloc would use the time before 1 August to seek a diplomatic solution, noting that daily trade between the EU and US is worth approximately €4.4bn (£3.8bn).

Despite jibes that "Trump always chickens out" in trade disputes, a nickname sarcastically shortened to "Taco" his administration has thus far managed to avoid major retaliation from most trading partners. According to US Treasury data, the country raised \$64bn in customs revenue between April and June, a dramatic increase of \$47bn compared to the same period the previous year.

Only China and Canada have so far pledged retaliatory tariffs in response to the United States' increasingly aggressive trade stance.

Houthi-linked arms dealers trafficking weapons] on X and WhatsApp, report finds

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Arms dealers linked to Houthi militants in Yemen are using social media platforms X and WhatsApp to traffic weapons, including US-made arms, in apparent breach of both companies' policies, according to a new report.

The investigation, conducted by the Washington DC-based Tech Transparency Project (TTP), uncovered that more than 130 Yemen-based X accounts and 67 WhatsApp business accounts have been actively offering military-grade weapons, including high-powered rifles, grenade launchers, and US-manufactured firearms, for sale.

Some of the weapons displayed bore markings such as "Property of US Govt" and "Nato," raising alarm among experts and policymakers about how Western arms have ended up in Houthi-controlled areas.

The Houthis, an Iran-backed group designated as a terrorist organisation by the United States, Canada and other governments, have held significant portions of Yemen since 2014. The group's rise has coincided with the outbreak of Yemen's ongoing civil war, and its links to Tehran have further heightened geopolitical tensions across the region.

TTP's report highlights the alarming ease with which arms dealers have used Meta's WhatsApp and Elon Musk's X (formerly Twitter) to promote and sell weapons. Notably, many of these accounts have subscribed to premium services, X Premium and WhatsApp Business, despite platform rules prohibiting weapons sales and the use of services by designated terrorist groups.

"X and WhatsApp both have policies against weapons sales but they are allowing arms traders linked to a US-designated terrorist group to traffic weapons on their platforms," said Katie Paul, TTP's director. "In some cases these companies may be profiting off violations of their own policies that create risks for US national security."

More than half of the X accounts identified listed their location as Sana'a, the Houthi-controlled capital, and many frequently shared pro-Houthi propaganda. Some displayed weapons



inside containers marked with the Houthi slogan: "God is great, death to America, death to Israel, curse be upon the Jews, victory to Islam."

In one case, an arms dealer used X Premium's extended video feature to post an "unboxing" of an M249 SAW, a light machine gun used by US forces. Other accounts used X's tipping feature to collect donations, while several promoted weapons such as AR-15 rifles and Glock pistols in replies to posts by Elon Musk himself.

X declined to comment on the findings when contacted by The Guardian. Despite strict policies that prohibit the promotion of terrorist groups or their activities, advertising content was found beneath posts by arms dealers, including an ad for Tesla accessories beneath a post advertising an American-made handgun.

Since Elon Musk's 2022 acquisition of X, the platform has laid off the majority of its trust and safety team, significantly scaling back content moderation. TTP previously reported that over 200 accounts affiliated with terrorist or sanctioned groups had received blue ticks and access to premium features.

WhatsApp, also owned by Meta, similarly failed to prevent the use of its

platform by arms dealers. Several dealers used WhatsApp's "catalogue" feature to showcase firearms, including a Glock pistol decorated with images of the White House, Lincoln Memorial, and the phrase "Preserve, Protect, Defend."

A WhatsApp spokesperson stated, "If we identify or are made aware of US-designated terrorist organisations attempting to use our service, we will take appropriate action, including banning accounts, to comply with our legal obligations." Following The Guardian's report, two accounts were removed, but the company did not explain how they bypassed existing review mechanisms.

Meta has also faced criticism for its mass layoffs in recent years, many of which affected teams focused on platform safety and moderation. In January, the company announced a rollback in content moderation policies, a move widely interpreted as a concession to political pressure, particularly from critics of social media censorship such as US president Donald Trump.

TTP noted that the majority of accounts linked to arms trafficking were created after these layoffs.

US deports convicted migrants to Eswatini under new third-country policy

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



A deportation flight carrying migrants removed from the United States has landed in the Kingdom of Eswatini, according to an announcement by the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The operation follows a recent ruling by the US Supreme Court which lifted restrictions on deporting individuals to so-called "third countries."

In an online statement, DHS spokesperson Tricia McLaughlin confirmed that five individuals from Vietnam, Jamaica, Laos, Cuba, and Yemen were aboard the flight. All five had been convicted of serious crimes, including child rape and murder.

"A safe third country deportation flight to Eswatini in Southern Africa has landed. This flight took individuals so uniquely barbaric that their home countries refused to take them back," McLaughlin said on Tuesday evening.

The deportation marks one of several carried out by the Trump administration since the Supreme Court ruling in late June. The decision enabled US immigration officials to resume deportations to countries other than a migrant's country of origin, without requiring prior proof of potential harm in the receiving nation.

On 4 July, the US completed another controversial deportation involving eight migrants sent to South Sudan, a country still mired in conflict. Originally placed on a flight in May, the men were diverted to a military base in Djibouti, where they were held in a converted shipping container.

When asked about the fate of the deported individuals, US Border Czar Tom Homan said last week, "If we removed somebody to Sudan, they could stay there a week and leave, I don't know."

A memo released earlier this month by the acting director of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Todd Lyons, revealed that under new policy guidelines, migrants may be deported to third countries with as little as six hours' notice in "exigent circumstances". Ordinarily, the notice period stands at 24 hours.

The memo also stated that the US may deport migrants to countries that have provided assurances against persecution or torture without requiring further legal processes. Critics argue that such assurances are often insufficient or unenforceable, particularly in regions with poor human rights records.

Eswatini, formerly known as Swaziland, is the last absolute monarchy on the African continent. Led by King Mswati

III since 1986, the country has been frequently criticised for human rights violations and the extravagant lifestyle of its ruler. Landlocked between South Africa and Mozambique, Eswatini has limited infrastructure and capacity to receive foreign deportees.

Human rights organisations have condemned the expanding scope of US deportation efforts, citing violations of due process, legal transparency, and international norms.

"The Trump administration is pushing the boundaries of both morality and legality," said one international legal analyst. "Sending vulnerable individuals to unstable or authoritarian countries without sufficient oversight is not just reckless, it's potentially life-threatening."

Despite the backlash, the White House has continued to defend the measures as vital to enhancing domestic security and maintaining immigration control.

As deportations to third countries accelerate, attention now turns to how receiving nations, such as Eswatini, will manage the legal, ethical, and social implications of harbouring individuals expelled from the United States under increasingly controversial circumstances.

Johnson urges DOJ to release Epstein files, defying Trump

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

In a rare show of defiance towards Donald Trump, Speaker of the House Mike Johnson has publicly called on the US Department of Justice to release all documents related to disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein, whose 2019 death in federal custody has long fuelled conspiracy theories across the political spectrum, particularly among Trump's rightwing base.

Speaking to conservative podcaster Benny Johnson in an interview released on Tuesday, the House Speaker broke ranks with the president by advocating for full transparency on the Epstein case, which continues to stir controversy.

"It's a very delicate subject, but we should put everything out there and let the people decide it," Johnson said. "I agree with the sentiment that we need to put it out there."

His remarks follow last week's announcement from the Justice Department that reaffirmed Epstein's death as a suicide and confirmed that no client list would be made public, nor would further disclosures be forthcoming. The statement reignited anger among Trump's conservative supporters, many of whom believed the president had promised to uncover the full truth about Epstein's alleged network of wealthy and powerful abusers.

Attorney General Pam Bondi, a close Trump ally, has come under particular scrutiny. In February, Bondi told Fox News that Epstein's client list was "sitting on my desk right now to review". Referencing the remark, Johnson said: "She needs to come forward and explain that to everybody. We need the DoJ focusing on the major priorities. So let's get this thing resolved."

Earlier in the day, House Republicans blocked a Democratic effort to attach language to pending legislation that would have required the Justice



Department to disclose all files relating to Epstein. Despite this, Democrats on the House Judiciary Committee have demanded that its Republican chair, Trump loyalist Jim Jordan, convene hearings involving Bondi, her deputy, and FBI leadership to provide public answers.

Trump, who has faced increasing pressure from his Maga base over the issue, attempted to quell the growing discontent over the weekend. Writing on Truth Social, he said: "One year ago our Country was DEAD, now it's the 'HOTTEST' Country anywhere in the World. Let's keep it that way, and not waste Time and Energy on Jeffrey Epstein, somebody that nobody cares about."

On Tuesday, before departing for Pittsburgh, Trump briefly defended Bondi and hinted at the possibility of future disclosures. "She's handled it very well, and it's going to be up to her. Whatever she thinks is credible, she should release," he said.

Bondi, however, remained evasive when pressed by NBC News about the

mounting frustration from Trump's supporters. "We're going to fight to keep America safe again," she said, pivoting to the administration's focus on drug enforcement and trafficking. "We've got a war on drugs. We've got a war on human trafficking. We've got cartels in this country ... and we've got foreign adversaries around this world as well."

When asked specifically about Trump's remarks encouraging her to release "credible" files, she responded tersely: "Today, our memo speaks for itself. We'll get back to you on anything else. I haven't seen all of his statements today."

At a press conference earlier that day on fentanyl overdoses, Bondi refused to answer questions relating to Epstein. "Today is about fentanyl overdoses throughout our country and people who have lost loved ones to fentanyl," she said. "That's the message that we're here to send today. Not Epstein. Not going to talk about Epstein."

UK inflation surges to 18-month high as food prices rise again

By Damilola Olufemi



UK inflation rose unexpectedly in June, reaching its highest level in a year and a half, according to data released on Wednesday. The development has intensified pressure on the British government and highlighted growing economic challenges.

Figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) showed the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) climbed to 3.6% in June, up from 3.4% in May. This marks the highest inflation rate since January 2024, driven largely by persistent increases in fuel and food costs. Most economists had anticipated inflation would remain steady, making the rise a surprise.

The news comes on the heels of

other troubling economic indicators, including data showing that the UK economy contracted unexpectedly for a second consecutive month in May. The economic slump, coupled with concerns over new U.S. tariffs, has added to the political and financial pressures facing Prime Minister Keir Starmer's administration.

Food inflation increases

"Inflation ticked up in June, driven mainly by motor fuel prices, which fell only slightly, compared with a much larger decrease at this time last year," said Richard Heys, acting chief economist at the ONS. "Food price inflation has increased for the third month to its highest annual rate since February 2024," he noted.

In response to the latest figures, Chancellor Rachel Reeves acknowledged the continued strain on households, saying, "There is more to do" to assist those "struggling with the cost of living."

Despite the uptick in inflation, some analysts believe the Bank of England may still proceed with a rate cut in August to support the flagging economy.

"The unexpected rise in CPI inflation... may not prevent the Bank of England from cutting interest rates by 25 basis points in August," said Ruth Gregory, deputy chief UK economist at Capital Economics. "But it will add to the pressure on the Bank to continue to cut rates at a gradual pace," she added.

Nurse who offered \$3,000 to mutilate her ex-lover banned for four years

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



Anurse who offered \$3,000 to a patient to mutilate her ex-lover and disfigure him with acid has been banned from practising for just four years and could return to treating patients once that period elapses.

Karenjeet Kaur Warburton, a former nurse in Queensland, Australia, orchestrated a chilling plot to have her ex-partner, senior police inspector Don McKay, horrifically attacked. She instructed a patient, whom she believed “might be up for it”, to carry out the act, handing over cash, photos of McKay, and details of his home between April and October 2021.

According to a ruling published last week by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT), Warburton directed the would-be assailant to cut off Insp McKay’s penis and tongue, burn his face with acid, sever his spine with a knife to cause paralysis, or break every bone in his

body so that he could “no longer walk or talk”.

Tribunal member Julie Dick described the plot as a “significant and deliberate” attempt to cause grievous harm. Warburton only ceased her efforts when she was arrested.

She later pleaded guilty to one count of attempting to procure grievous bodily harm and one count of attempting to procure a malicious act with intent. She was sentenced to five years’ imprisonment, suspended after 16 months.

Despite the severity of her crimes, QCAT ruled that Warburton’s ban from working in healthcare would last only four years, a period that includes time already served behind bars. The tribunal acknowledged that she would have to reapply for registration, face questions of recency of practice, and potentially complete further requirements before returning to the profession.

“It is unfortunate that this serious behaviour has led to the respondent being in the difficult circumstances in which she now finds herself,” Ms Dick wrote.

Warburton did not contest that she had committed professional misconduct by soliciting a patient to carry out the attack.

The patient, Andrew Bown, was also convicted for his role in the plot. In November 2022, he was sentenced by Cairns District Court to three-and-a-half years’ imprisonment for attempting to procure grievous bodily harm, committing arson, and possessing a dangerous item intended for criminal use.

The case has sparked widespread outrage and renewed debate around professional accountability and the fitness to practise of individuals convicted of violent crimes.

Awoniyi returns to training after injury layoff

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

Super Eagles striker Taiwo Awoniyi has returned to full training with Nottingham Forest, giving the Premier League side a major boost ahead of the 2025/26 season. The 27-year-old had been sidelined since May due to a serious abdominal injury that required a complex two-stage surgical procedure.

Awoniyi's injury came at a crucial point during the final stretch of the 2024/25 Premier League campaign, leaving Forest without one of their most reliable attacking outlets. The forward had been enjoying a steady season before the setback, contributing vital goals and assists that helped the club maintain its top-flight status.

Nottingham Forest confirmed on Tuesday that Awoniyi participated in a full training session with the first team — his first since undergoing surgery. The session marks a significant step in his recovery, as the medical team continues to monitor his fitness levels and gradually reintegrates him into matchday action.

Road to Recovery

Awoniyi's return has been long-awaited by both fans and club officials. Following his surgery in May, he was briefly hospitalised and then began an extended rehabilitation program supervised by the club's medical and fitness departments. His dedication to recovery, combined with medical support, has allowed him to return slightly ahead of schedule.

During his absence, Forest's attack struggled for consistency, often lacking the physical presence and pressing ability that Awoniyi brings to the frontline. His strength, movement, and experience make him a unique asset in the squad, especially as Forest gear up for what is expected to be



another competitive season.

Though back in training, club sources say the Nigerian international will be eased back into action to avoid any setbacks. His match fitness will be assessed over the coming weeks, with the possibility of featuring in upcoming pre-season friendlies depending on his physical response.

Read also: 'I felt the love, I'm grateful to be here', Awoniyi says after surgery
Taiwo Awoniyi has become a fan favourite since joining Forest in 2022 from Union Berlin. His strong performances, including crucial goals in big fixtures, have played a major part in the club's efforts to remain in the Premier League over the past two seasons.

On the international stage, Awoniyi is also a valuable member of the Super Eagles. His return to fitness is timely, with Nigeria looking ahead to crucial 2026 World Cup qualifiers and the latter stages of the 2025 AFCON qualifiers.

Nigeria manager Finidi George will be closely monitoring his recovery, hoping the striker can regain full fitness in time for selection. Awoniyi's ability to combine physicality with

goal-scoring instinct makes him a unique option in the national team's attacking plans.

Pre-season preparations continue

Forest began their pre-season campaign last weekend with a 0-0 draw against Chesterfield, highlighting the need for greater attacking sharpness. Manager Nuno Espírito Santo has been working to strengthen the squad and is expected to welcome Awoniyi's return as part of his tactical setup.

The club is set to play several more warm-up matches over the coming weeks, including tougher tests against Championship and European opposition. Whether or not Awoniyi features in those fixtures remains uncertain, but his return to training is a clear signal that he could be ready in time for the Premier League opener next month.

As Forest continue to build toward the new season, Awoniyi's return is a timely morale boost for both players and fans. If he can return to full match fitness without setbacks, the Nigerian forward could once again prove pivotal in Forest's bid to climb the table and avoid another relegation scrap.

Ajibade, Plumptre make WAFCON 2024 best XI

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi



Nigeria's Super Falcons have been given a major boost at the 2024 Women's Africa Cup of Nations (WAFCON) with two of their key players, Rasheedat Ajibade and Ashleigh Plumptre, named in the Group Stage Best XI. The team for the tournament so far was selected by the Confederation of African Football (CAF) Technical Study Group (TSG) following an intense and exciting group phase.

Both players have been instrumental in Nigeria's journey to the knockout rounds, standing out with consistent performances and showing the experience and quality that have made them mainstays in the national team.

Plumptre: Defensive Rock

Ashleigh Plumptre has anchored the Falcons' backline with composure, timing, and tactical discipline. Operating primarily on the left side of defence, Plumptre's ability to read the game and deliver precise tackles has been a cornerstone of Nigeria's defensive setup. Her calmness under pressure and leadership have not gone unnoticed, with fans and analysts alike praising her as one of the tournament's standout defenders.

Plumptre was joined in the Best XI's back four by South African duo Bambanani Mbane and Fikile Magama, as well as Zambia's commanding centre-back Lushomo Mweemba. The defensive quartet combined grit, athleticism, and

intelligence — key traits needed to survive the competitive WAFCON group stages.

Ajibade: Engine of the Falcons' Midfield

Meanwhile, Rasheedat Ajibade has lit up the tournament with her creative flair, work rate, and attacking runs from midfield. The 24-year-old, formerly of Atletico Madrid, has been the heartbeat of Nigeria's transition play, seamlessly connecting defence to attack with her precise passing and clever positioning.

Ajibade's standout performance came in Nigeria's crucial second group game against Botswana's Mares, where she was named Woman of the Match. Her technical quality, tactical awareness, and ability to beat defenders made her a nightmare for opposition defences.

She is joined in the tournament's midfield trio by Morocco's Ghizlane Chebbak and South Africa's captain Refiloe Jane, both of whom have also led their teams with distinction.

Attack Powered by Zambian Duo

The attacking trio in the Best XI is dominated by Zambia, whose duo Racheal Kundananji and Barbra Banda have been electric. Their speed, strength, and eye for goal played a crucial role in Zambia's progression to the knockout stages. Completing the front line is Senegal's Nguenar Ndiaye, who impressed with her intelligent movement

and finishing ability.

This front three brings a mix of explosive pace and clinical finishing — the kind of quality that makes them a constant threat to any defence in Africa.

Best Coach: Desiree Ellis

South Africa's head coach, Desiree Ellis, was named Best Coach of the Group Stage, recognising her leadership in guiding Banyana Banyana through a tough group with poise and tactical acumen. Ellis, a three-time CAF Women's Coach of the Year, continues to show why she is one of the continent's most respected figures in women's football.

Recognition for Nigeria

The inclusion of Ajibade and Plumptre is a source of pride for the Super Falcons and a signal of the team's strength going into the knockout rounds. It's also a testament to the growing influence of Nigerian players in the women's game globally.

With momentum behind them, Nigeria will now aim to build on this recognition and push for an eleventh continental crown.

As the tournament heads into its most decisive phase, all eyes will be on the players who have already left their mark — and Ajibade and Plumptre are certainly among those leading the charge.

Petrovic joins Bournemouth in £25m deal from Chelsea

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

In a significant move to bolster their squad ahead of the new Premier League season, AFC Bournemouth have confirmed the £25 million signing of Serbian international goalkeeper Djordje Petrovic from Chelsea.

The 25-year-old arrives at the Vitality Stadium on a five-year contract, becoming the club's third major signing of the summer. Petrovic, who impressed on loan at French side Strasbourg last season, is expected to be the new number one under manager Andoni Iraola following the departure of Kepa Arrizabalaga.

Petrovic's move to the South Coast comes after a standout season in Ligue 1, where he was named Strasbourg's Player of the Season. His performances were instrumental in helping the club secure a seventh-place finish and a coveted spot in the Europa Conference League.

Originally signed by Chelsea from MLS side New England Revolution for £14 million in 2023, Petrovic found first-team opportunities limited at Stamford Bridge. However, he featured in 23 Premier League matches across two seasons and gained valuable experience at the top level.

Read also: Palmer shines as Chelsea crush PSG to win Club World Cup

Speaking after the move was confirmed, Petrovic expressed his excitement about joining the Cherries:

"I came to Bournemouth because I want to grow and I want to play at the best level. Together with this club, with these facilities, I think we can achieve it. I want to help the team get results, improve every day and become a better player."

The arrival of Petrovic signals a clear change in Bournemouth's goalkeeping department following the departure of



Kepa Arrizabalaga. The Spanish international spent the 2024/25 season on loan at Bournemouth, playing a key role in their top-flight survival. However, with Chelsea not interested in extending the loan, Kepa has since moved to Arsenal in a permanent £5 million deal.

Petrovic's arrival ensures continuity and strengthens Iraola's options at the back. The Serbian brings both shot-stopping prowess and composure on the ball — qualities that fit the club's evolving style under the Spanish head coach.

Petrovic's signing follows a busy transfer window for Bournemouth, who have been active in strengthening the squad after a mid-table finish last season. He joins other new arrivals as part of a clear strategy to push the club forward.

Technical director Richard Hughes praised the signing, noting: "Djordje is a player we've tracked for some time. His development across MLS, the Premier League, and Ligue 1 speaks volumes. He's hungry, ambitious, and

fits our long-term vision."

Petrovic's seven caps for Serbia since his international debut in 2021 underscore his growing reputation in European football. Known for his reflexes, command of the area, and leadership at the back, he now has the platform to make his mark in the Premier League as a regular starter.

Petrovic's expectations

While Petrovic is expected to start as Bournemouth's first-choice goalkeeper, he will face competition from experienced backup Neto and promising young keeper Will Dennis. However, the Serbian's £25 million price tag — a record fee for a Bournemouth goalkeeper — suggests he is the clear frontrunner.

As Bournemouth aim for a top-half finish in the 2025/26 season, Petrovic's presence between the posts could prove pivotal. With pre-season underway and fans eager to see the team's new-look spine in action, all eyes will be on the Serbian to deliver from day one.

Forest threaten legal action over Spurs' move for Gibbs-White

By Oluwatosin Ologun

Nottingham Forest are threatening legal action against Tottenham Hotspur amid growing tensions surrounding the potential transfer of midfielder Morgan Gibbs-White. The Premier League side is investigating whether Spurs have breached a confidentiality clause in the player's contract, specifically tied to his £60 million release clause.

Sources close to the matter have told BBC Sport that Forest are furious with Tottenham's approach and suspect a serious breach of protocol. The club believes Spurs' interest became public prematurely due to a violation of a confidentiality agreement, and they are now consulting legal experts to consider their next move.

According to Premier League regulations, clubs are prohibited from speaking to players under contract at other clubs unless they have been granted formal permission. Forest maintain they did not give such permission to Spurs, making any contact between Tottenham and the player potentially unlawful.

The issue escalated after reports emerged on Thursday that Gibbs-White was scheduled for a medical with Tottenham on Friday, suggesting that Spurs are preparing to trigger his release clause. Forest believe that this development should not have been made public and are concerned that such revelations could destabilise the player and their squad.

The Midlands club is understood to be adamant in its stance and is ready to go to significant lengths to block the deal. They reportedly see this not just as a potential loss of a key player, but as an affront to their integrity and standing in the league.

Tottenham, on their part, are aware of Forest's concerns but remain confident that a deal can still be struck. Club insiders suggest they view the triggering of the release clause as a



legitimate route to sign the 24-year-old and are hopeful they can conclude the move, especially as Gibbs-White is believed to be open to the transfer.

The midfielder joined Forest from Wolverhampton Wanderers in August 2022 in a deal worth up to £42.5 million. Since his arrival, Gibbs-White has been an instrumental figure in Forest's midfield. Over the past three seasons, he has racked up 118 appearances, contributing 18 goals and 28 assists — a return that has made him one of the club's most valuable assets.

His performances have not gone unnoticed at the national level either. Gibbs-White made his England debut last September in a Nations League match against the Republic of Ireland under interim boss Lee Carsley. He also featured in a friendly against Senegal at the City Ground, coming off the bench during the 3-1 loss under new national team manager Thomas Tuchel.

This latest transfer saga comes amid a busy window for Tottenham, who have already secured the services of Ghana international Mohammed Kudus from West Ham in a £55 million deal. Spurs

are clearly intent on strengthening their attacking options ahead of the new campaign, and Gibbs-White has been a top target for new manager Ange Postecoglou.

Meanwhile, another Forest player, Anthony Elanga, is reportedly on the verge of joining Newcastle United in a £55 million deal. The departure of both Elanga and Gibbs-White would represent a major reshuffle for Forest's frontline.

As things stand, the situation surrounding Gibbs-White remains tense. While Spurs hope to complete the signing swiftly, Forest's insistence on legal action and claims of improper conduct have the potential to drag the case into a long and complex dispute — one that could test the Premier League's governance rules and set a precedent for future transfer dealings.

Whether the transfer is completed or blocked, the implications of this dispute could ripple beyond the current window, especially if Forest decide to pursue legal recourse in earnest.