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“No one is bigger than the PDP” – Wike faces expulsion over allegations

By Gbenga Olaleye



The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has confirmed that it is considering the expulsion of the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike, following a series of allegations relating to anti-party activities.

This was made known by the party's Deputy National Publicity Secretary, Ibrahim Abdullahi, during an interview on Arise News. Abdullahi disclosed that a committee has been set up to investigate and review numerous petitions submitted against the former Governor of Rivers State.

“The last time I checked, he [Wike] was still a member of the PDP. He hasn't come out to denounce his membership. But he is coming with certain disadvantages, as many have observed,” Abdullahi stated.

According to him, a growing sentiment within the party suggests

that the PDP may be better off without Wike.

“To be honest with you, those who stand against the chances of the PDP or who have been acting in ways that do not promote the party's interests are better off outside. Anyone who clogs the progress of the PDP is doing more harm than good,” he said.

He further stressed that no individual is bigger than the party, saying: “Certainly, if Nyesom Wike is no longer an asset to the PDP as many believe he can bid the party farewell. The PDP is not dependent on one person, and no single individual has the power to bring the party to shame.”

Abdullahi noted that disciplinary measures are being taken seriously, with the review committee currently assessing the petitions.

“We've set up a committee which is still reviewing the actions of those who have taken steps against the interest of the PDP. Wike is said to be one of them. Once the committee reaches its conclusion, if the recommendation is expulsion, then there will be nothing stopping us from doing so. We will get rid of them.”

The development comes at a time of growing internal tension within the PDP. Earlier this week, the party suffered another blow when former Vice President and two-time presidential candidate, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, announced his resignation from the party, citing irreconcilable differences and a lack of clear direction.

With these internal challenges mounting, the PDP appears to be entering a critical phase in its attempt to reposition itself ahead of future political contests.

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6X4	82,434.50
6X3	59,250.00
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Tinubu to attend eighth-day prayer for Awujale on Sunday

By New Daily Prime

President Bola Tinubu will attend the eighth-day prayer for the Awujale of Ijebuland, Oba Sikiru Adetona, on Sunday.

This was contained in a statement by the President's Special Adviser on Information and Strategy, Bayo Onanuga, on Friday.

According to the statement, Tinubu will depart Abuja on Sunday to attend the ceremony.

"The President will join Governor Dapo Abiodun and other dignitaries at the event, which will be held at the Dipo Dina Stadium in Ijebu-Ode," the statement read in part.

Oba Adetona passed away on July 13, 2025, at the age of 91.

The monarch's death came as the country was still reeling from the passing of former President Muhammadu Buhari on Sunday.



His remains were laid to rest at his private residence in the Government Reserved Area, Igbaba, Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State.

The Janazah (Islamic burial prayer) was led by the Chief Imam of Ijebuland, Miftaudeen Gbadegesin Ayanbadejo.

Dignitaries, traditional rulers, political leaders, and residents paid their final respects in Ijebu-Ode on Monday to the ruler who reigned for 65 years.

Markets across the town were also shut as directed by the Ijebu-Ode Local Government Area Chairman, Dare Alebiosu, in honour of the departed king.

"Deaths followed your visit" - Okpebholo tells Obi to stay away from Edo without clearance

By Friday Omosola

Edo State Governor, Monday Okpebholo, issued a stern warning on Friday to Peter Obi, the Labour Party's presidential candidate in the 2023 elections, advising him not to enter the state without obtaining prior security clearance.

The governor's admonition follows Obi's visit to Benin on July 7, during which he donated ₦15 million to St. Philomena Hospital School of Nursing Sciences for ongoing projects.

Okpebholo explicitly linked Obi's visit with a subsequent uptick in violence across the state.

"That man who says he has no 'shishi' came and dropped ₦15 million. Where did he get it from? After he left, three people were killed. For this reason, Obi must not come to Edo without security clearance," Okpebholo said.

He reiterated that Obi's visit coincided



with a resurgence of violence in the state and this will not be tolerated.

Speaking at the same event, Okpebholo celebrated the defection of Onobun to the All Progressives Congress (APC).

He described it as the decisive blow to the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in the state.

He proclaimed the APC's firm control over the state, confidently declaring that all vestiges of the opposition would be eradicated by the 2027 general elections.

"We are not lobbying anyone to join APC; they are coming because they see the results of our governance," Okpebholo stated.

He also guaranteed President Bola Tinubu 2.5 million votes from Edo in 2027.

The governor further levelled accusations of significant corruption and mismanagement against key opposition figures, alleging their culpability in the failure of national infrastructure projects and contributing to the nation's insecurity.

Buhari had a cabal he relied, says ex-chief of staff Gambari

By Damilola Olufemi



Ibrahim Gambari, who served as Chief of Staff to the late former President Muhammadu Buhari, has confirmed the existence of a “cabal” during Buhari’s time in office, clarifying that such inner circles are a standard feature of every presidency.

In a preview of an upcoming interview with Laolu Akande, former spokesperson to ex-Vice President Yemi Osinbajo, Gambari addressed the longstanding public debate around the influence of unelected figures in presidential decision-making.

“There was a cabal — yes,” Gambari admitted. “But every government has a cabal. That’s just what they’re called.”

He elaborated further: “Some refer to it as a ‘kitchen cabinet’, others call it a ‘think tank’. During Obasanjo’s tenure, he had his group—people like the Aboyades and others.”

Gambari refers to every president

According to Gambari, it is natural for any president to have a close circle of trusted advisers — both inside and outside official structures — with whom they can speak candidly and seek counsel.

“It’s the nature of the office. A president needs a small group of confidants they can open up to, whether or not they hold official positions. Some of these people may end up wielding more power than others, but make no mistake, every presidency has its version of a cabal,” he said.

The term “cabal” has been frequently used in Nigerian political discourse to refer to shadowy groups who operate behind the scenes, often influencing key policies, appointments, and decisions outside the purview of public accountability.

In 2018, Aisha Buhari, the former first

lady, publicly raised concerns about a handful of individuals she claimed were exercising disproportionate control over her husband’s administration. Her remarks sparked widespread debate, but President Buhari downplayed her worries at the time.

More recently, Solomon Dalung, who served as Minister of Youth and Sports under Buhari, claimed that the group surrounding President Bola Tinubu is even more formidable.

According to Dalung, Tinubu’s inner circle is “more dangerous, more ambitious, and more sophisticated” than Buhari’s. He argued that while Buhari’s advisers may have lacked political and administrative experience, those around Tinubu are far more educated and better versed in wielding influence.

“The cabal under Tinubu is the most dangerous this country has seen,” Dalung warned.

No divorce: Aisha with Buhari in March, says ex-aide Adesina

By Gbenga Olaleye



Femi Adesina, former Special Adviser on Media and Publicity to the late President Muhammadu Buhari, has disclosed that the former First Lady, Aisha Buhari, was with her husband as recently as March 2025 just weeks before his death in London.

Adesina, who served as Buhari's spokesperson throughout his presidency from 2015 to 2023, made the revelation in a heartfelt tribute to the late president.

His comments aim to quell growing speculation and rumours surrounding the state of Buhari's marriage in his final months.

"During Ramadan, I joined him for dinner. The former First Lady, Aisha, was around and offered me some roasted meat suya," Adesina wrote.

"Less than two weeks later, he travelled to London for what was said to be a routine medical trip. It lasted almost four months and he never returned, at least not alive."

The statement comes in direct response to

claims made by Professor Farooq Kperogi, a U.S.-based Nigerian academic and media scholar.

In an article published shortly after Buhari's passing, Kperogi alleged that Aisha Buhari had long separated from her husband, reverted to her maiden name, Halilu, and was no longer part of the former president's domestic life.

"Buhari was also alone when he later relocated to Kaduna, in fact, when he fell ill and it was suggested that Aisha travel to London to care for him, she reportedly hesitated because she was no longer his wife," Kperogi asserted.

The allegations sparked a wave of speculation across social media and the Nigerian press, prompting questions about the personal circumstances surrounding the late president's final days.

Reports of Aisha Buhari distancing herself from public functions and adopting the name "Aisha Halilu" added fuel to the fire.

However, Adesina's recent account suggests otherwise. He stated clearly that Aisha was with the former president in Kaduna the location of Buhari's final stay in Nigeria before his last journey to the United Kingdom for medical treatment.

This clarification comes as part of broader tributes and retrospectives following Buhari's death in June 2025. The former president passed away in London after a prolonged medical stay, aged 82.

His health had been a recurring concern during his tenure, with several extended medical trips to the UK during his presidency.

Aisha Buhari, who had served as Nigeria's First Lady from 2015 to 2023, has yet to publicly address the rumours or comment on her late husband's passing beyond an initial condolence statement released through her media office.

The couple, who married in 1989, have five children together and were seen as a political and religious power couple throughout Buhari's presidency.

Tinubu pays tribute to Dantata at condolence visit

By Gbenga Olaleye



President Bola Tinubu was in Kano State on Friday, where he paid a condolence visit to the family of late businessman Aminu Dantata, who died in June.

The plane carrying Tinubu taxied into the Aminu Kano International Airport in Kano around three in the afternoon on Friday.

He was received by an entourage including officials of the Kano State Governor Abba Yusuf, government officials, among others.

On Thursday, Sunusi Bature, the spokesman to Governor Abba Yusuf, said the President would visit the North-West state to condole the Dantata family and the people of Kano State over the death of the late philanthropist.

Earlier, President Tinubu had described Dantata's death as a loss, saying the late elder statesman

touched the lives of countless Nigerians.

"With the death of Alhaji Dantata today, we lost a prominent business mogul, patriot, and elder statesman who contributed significantly to the growth and development of our nation," the president said in a statement by his spokesman, Bayo Onanuga.

"Alhaji Dantata will be remembered for his industry, diligence, steadfastness, and great commitment to national unity through his many business ventures and philanthropic activities that touched countless lives of Nigerians."

The visit comes about three weeks after the business icon died at the age of 94 in Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Dantata, an elder statesman, is the uncle of business mogul Aliko

Dangote.

Known for his investment in real estate and agriculture, among others, Dantata was also famous for his charitable works.

Last year, he donated N1.5bn to the victims of the Maduguri flooding in Borno State.

He was buried at the revered Baqiyya Cemetery in Madina, Saudi Arabia, in a ceremony attended by dignitaries drawn from the political, religious, and business circles, among others. Members of the Nigerian community in the Middle East country also attended the event.

Governor Yusuf led a high-powered delegation with his Jigawa State counterpart, Governor Umar Namadi, teaming up with hundreds of mourners for the Janaza (funeral prayer) held at the Holy Mosque.

Ortom defends G5's rebellion against PDP in 2023, Atiku, party hit back

By Friday Omosola

Former Benue State Governor, Samuel Ortom, has provided his rationale for why he and other members of the G5 Governors' Forum defied the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and its presidential candidate, Atiku Abubakar, during the 2023 general elections.

Ortom stated that the G5's actions were a stand for equity, fairness, and justice within the party.

Speaking on Arise TV, Ortom explained that their opposition stemmed from the PDP's refusal to adhere to the principle of power rotation.

He highlighted the G5's insistence that the presidency should shift to the South after eight years of Northern rule under President Muhammadu Buhari.

The PDP's decision to field Atiku, also a Northerner, directly contradicted this principle, according to Ortom.

"I acted as I did because we had expected the PDP to uphold equity, fairness, and justice, values I hold dear," Ortom stated.

"When the majority of PDP members supported a Northern candidate, we deemed it unjust. We've always stood for equity, fairness, and justice, and we felt the presidency should alternate between the North and South for eight years each."

Ortom, who chaired the PDP's zoning committee, revealed that while the committee recommended an open contest, he advocated for a Southern presidential candidate.

He also shed light on the role of Nyesom Wike, now Minister of the Federal Capital Territory in the crisis.

He said they fought for Wike to be the PDP's presidential candidate, but he didn't secure the nomination.

He said they also believed Wike should have been the running mate, noting that he was part of the 20-member committee tasked with selecting a running mate.

"16 of us supported Wike. However, the



candidate and the party leadership decided otherwise."

Defending their decision to support opposition candidates in 2023, Ortom maintained that politics is driven by interests.

"Politics revolves around interests. There's no permanent enemy or friend in politics. It's about protecting the interests of your community, your people, and yourself," he emphasised.

He likened their strategy to that of other PDP members who supported Peter Obi of the Labour Party or Bola Tinubu of the APC.

"Peter Obi wasn't in the PDP, but we agreed on a strategic partnership to demonstrate our influence. Some of us supported Peter Obi, others supported Tinubu, and we ended up with the current government. If God has given us President Bola Tinubu, why shouldn't we support him?"

Looking ahead to the 2027 elections, Ortom reaffirmed his commitment to backing a Southern presidential candidate, stressing the importance of respecting power rotation.

Atiku and PDP fire back

However, Ortom's explanations drew sharp rebukes as Atiku dismissed the G5 members as frustrated opportunists seeking relevance.

Atiku, through his Special Assistant on Public Communication, Phrank Shaibu, vehemently rejected the G5's narrative.

Atiku contended there was 'nothing noble' about the G5's rebellion, dismissing it as 'a gamble rooted in personal ambition, ego, and frustration over political miscalculations.'

Shaibu pointed out that Ortom himself chaired the PDP's zoning committee which recommended an open contest, a decision adopted by the party's National Executive Committee (NEC).

"To now feign surprise or outrage over a process one midwived is to play the ostrich," Shaibu asserted.

He also argued that Atiku's ambition transcended geographical lines, portraying him as a democratic bridge-builder.

Shaibu criticised Ortom's 'ideological hopscotch' in endorsing both Obi and supporting Tinubu, interpreting it as 'opportunistic drift in search of relevance.'

APC Youth: Adeleke's defection will boost party's 2027 chances

By Gbenga Olaleye



The APC Youth Liberation Movement, a faction within the Osun State chapter of the All Progressives Congress, has expressed strong optimism that Governor Ademola Adeleke's defection to the party would significantly enhance its chances of a landslide victory in the upcoming elections.

Operating under the party's Directorate of Youth Organisations, the group hailed the potential move as a major strategic advantage that would strengthen the APC ahead of the 2027 elections.

In a statement issued by the group's State Coordinator, Comrade Ajasa Oluwaseun, Adeleke's political clout and track record were highlighted as key assets.

Ajasa recalled Adeleke's impressive electoral performances, including his victory in nine out of ten local

government areas during the 2017 Osun West Senatorial bye-election and his strong showing in the 2018 gubernatorial race.

"By 2022, he returned even stronger, ultimately unseating the incumbent Governor Oyetola to become the sitting Governor of Osun State," Ajasa noted.

He emphasised that any move by Adeleke to join the APC should be welcomed and viewed as a positive development for the party.

Ajasa further stressed that it is the governor's constitutional right to affiliate with any political party and affirmed that the youth group believes his defection would be a valuable asset for the APC's future electoral ambitions.

The statement also condemned comments made by former Osun

Deputy Governor and ex-APC National Secretary, Senator Iyiola Omisore, who disparagingly referred to Adeleke as an "orphan."

The youth group criticised the remark as unfortunate, divisive, and unbecoming of a leader who should be fostering unity.

"At a time when all hands should be on deck to reposition the APC for future victories, Senator Omisore's words are not only distasteful but counterproductive," the statement read, urging leaders to prioritise party cohesion over petty politics.

The APC Youth Liberation Movement concluded by reaffirming its commitment to strengthening the party's chances in Osun State and nationwide as the 2027 elections approach.

Gambari: Buhari's inner circle smuggled memos behind me

By **Damilola Olufemi**



Former Chief of Staff to the late President Muhammadu Buhari, Professor Ibrahim Gambari, has revealed how influential figures within the former president's inner circle managed to sidestep him to deliver confidential memos directly to Buhari.

"They knew his vulnerable moments and exactly when to sneak in memos because they interacted with him informally," Gambari disclosed during an interview on Channels Television's Inside Sources aired Friday.

Gambari, a seasoned diplomat and former UN envoy, was appointed Chief of Staff in May 2020, shortly after the death of Abba Kyari. He remained in the role until the end of Buhari's administration in May 2023.

"When I took office, the president publicly declared that all memos should pass through the Chief of Staff before reaching him," he recalled. "Even the Vice President, to his credit, adhered to this. Many ministers did too. But some people still managed to bypass the process. They understood his soft spots and how to use — and he never really stopped them. Fortunately, many of those memos eventually found their way back

to me."

Gambari reflects on relationship with Buhari

Reflecting on his working relationship with Buhari, who passed away on July 13, 2025, Gambari described him as a kind and devoted leader who deeply cared about his appointees and the Nigerian people. That compassion, he said, often explained Buhari's resistance to firing underperforming ministers despite mounting pressure.

"He was loyal to those he appointed," Gambari said, adding that although some individuals around Buhari wielded considerable influence, "they knew the boundaries."

Gambari also spoke on the long-debated topic of the "cabal" in Buhari's presidency, admitting its existence while arguing that such groups are not unusual in governments.

"People say there was a cabal — and yes, there was," he said. "But every administration has one. Some call it a kitchen cabinet, others a think tank. Obasanjo had his trusted circle, like the Aboyades. It's a common feature of presidential leadership to have a few

trusted individuals, both within and outside government, with whom one can speak freely."

He emphasised that while some cabals exert more sway than others, "every government has a cabal, by one name or another."

Gambari also recounted that even during Buhari's first stint as military Head of State from 1984 to 1985, resentment had grown among fellow officers over the amount of advice he was taking from civilians, which may have contributed to his eventual ouster.

"I was a minister then, but not privy to all the reasons for his removal. However, I later learned that his fellow military leaders were uncomfortable with how much input he was receiving from outside the Supreme Military Council."

Buhari, who was born on December 17, 1942, served as Nigeria's military ruler in the 1980s before returning as an elected president in 2015. He stepped down in 2023 after completing two terms, handing over to his party's candidate, Bola Tinubu.

South-West govs advocate for state police, fiscal federalism in constitutional review

By Friday Omosola

Governors from the South-West have championed the urgent need for a constitutional overhaul that would usher in true federalism and the establishment of state policing.

Governors Lucky Aiyedatiwa of Ondo, Ademola Adeleke of Osun, and Biodun Oyebanji of Ekiti made the call at the South-West Centre B Public Hearing of the House of Representatives Committee on Constitution Review in Akure.

The governors argued that the nation's current centralised police structure is proving unsustainable in the face of escalating insecurity.

Aiyedatiwa called for a constitutional amendment to permit the creation of state police forces.

He cited the demonstrable success of the Amotekun Corps in the state regarding community policing, crime deterrence, and intelligence gathering as evidence of its viability.

Beyond security, he also pressed for a revised revenue allocation formula, proposing that states should receive a minimum of 50% of the federation's revenue.

"Ondo State aligns with the progressive aspirations of the South-West Geopolitical Zone in advocating for true federalism that reflects socio-political, cultural and economic realities of the federating units," Aiyedatiwa stated.

He added that this shift would align with genuine fiscal federalism, granting states full autonomy over their resources and revenues, with a suggested remittance of around 40% to the Federal Government.

Furthermore, Aiyedatiwa proposed amending Section 44(3) of the Constitution to transfer control over minerals, mineral oils, and natural gas from the Exclusive Legislative List to the Concurrent Legislative List.



This change, he explained, would empower state governments to effectively harness their mineral wealth for local development, addressing current challenges where states suffer from mining activities (including illegal mining) due to limited oversight.

While the state supports the creation of new states where desired, Aiyedatiwa opposed any proposals to cede portions of Ondo territory to new or existing states.

He also advocated for the constitutional recognition of additional local governments within the state, drawing parallels with the proposed inclusion of Lagos State's Local Development Council Areas (LCDAs) as full-fledged Local Government Areas.

He called for the 33 functional LCDAs in Ondo State to be similarly recognised in the First Schedule of the Constitution.

Representing Adeleke, Osun State Deputy Governor Kolawole Adeusi presented the state's position paper, highlighting the critical need for comprehensive electoral reform.

He particularly emphasised the importance of reducing the exorbitant cost of conducting elections in Nigeria

and advocated strongly for the adoption of electronic voting.

"The cost of governance is too high. Make it less attractive so that it doesn't become a matter of life and death," Adeusi said, also stressing the significance of decentralising government functions.

Oyebanji, through his Attorney General Dayo Apata, echoed Ondo's call for the amendment of Section 44(3) to move control of mineral resources from the Exclusive to the Concurrent Legislative List, allowing states greater control over their natural endowments.

Earlier in the proceedings, James Faleke, Chairman of the South-West Centre B (Ondo, Osun, Ekiti) of the House of Representatives Committee on Constitution Review, assured attendees that the committee's next steps would fully align with the aspirations of the Nigerian people.

He pledged that all submitted position papers would be meticulously scrutinised for the ultimate betterment of the country.

The public hearing also saw various labour unions, paramilitary organisations, traditional institutions, and other stakeholders presenting their respective position papers to the committee.

Ekiti seeks N175.75bn NRDF grant to drive economic diversification

By Friday Omosola



The Ekiti State Government has begun the process of securing a N175.75 billion grant from the Natural Resources Development Fund (NRDF) to diversify the state's economy through strategic investment in agriculture, solid minerals, and tourism.

Governor Biodun Oyeibanji disclosed this yesterday during a meeting with officials of the Revenue Mobilisation Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC), led by Ambassador Desmond Akawor, in Ado-Ekiti.

The RMAFC team was in the state to conduct a feasibility assessment on the proposed projects under the NRDF grant application.

Represented by his Chief of Staff, Niyi Adebayo, Oyeibanji explained that the funding would support his administration's vision of building a self-sufficient and globally competitive economy.

He said the grant would help prioritise key government policies and

programmes aligned with President Bola Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda and Ekiti's Shared Prosperity vision.

"The plan is to position Ekiti as a hub of opportunity, peace, and progress, and to lay the foundation for a prosperous future," he said.

"This grant will enable us to expand our revenue base, attract foreign investments, and boost food security through commercial agriculture and value-chain development."

The governor also emphasised the state's potential in tourism and solid minerals, noting that Ekiti's unique landscape, cultural heritage, and natural attractions could be harnessed into a vibrant tourism economy.

"Ekiti is blessed with breathtaking terrain, caves, and historic landforms. The entire state is practically a tourist site. We are committed to transforming this potential into a sustainable revenue source," he added.

In his remarks, Akawor confirmed that the commission had received Ekiti's request for N175.75 billion and expressed optimism about the state's prospects.

He described tourism as a "gold mine" and urged the state to intensify its focus on the sector.

Akawor, who chairs RMAFC's Committee on Fiscal Efficiency and Budget, said the Federal Government (FG) had approved the allocation of 1.68% of national revenue for natural resource development to help states reduce reliance on oil and gas.

He explained that the NRDF provides subnational entities with funding opportunities to implement projects capable of generating sustainable revenue.

He commended Ekiti for its detailed proposals and assured the state of the committee's commitment to making favourable recommendations to the FG.

Kogi train 500 livestock farmers to address climate change

By Helen Okechukwu



The Kogi State Government has launched a ten-day intensive training programme to equip 500 livestock farmers and extension agents with climate-smart livestock production techniques across five key centres in the state—Ajaokuta, Okene, Kabba, Anyigba, and Idah.

The training is jointly organised by the Kogi State Agricultural Development Project (Kogi ADP) and the Livestock Productivity and Resilience Support Project (Kogi L-PRES) to address the growing impact of climate change on livestock production, says a report shared on Friday.

At the flag-off ceremony, the Commissioner for Agriculture and Food Security, Hon. Timothy Ojomah, restated the administration's resolve to strengthen the livestock sector through targeted partnerships and skill-building initiatives.

He commended Governor Ahmed Ododo for prioritising agricultural development, noting recent efforts including the sponsorship of young Kogites to undergo training in climate-resilient agriculture in Ogun State.

In a goodwill message delivered on behalf of the Ministry of Livestock Development, Elder Ali Peter, Director of Monogastric Animals, pointed out that climate change continues to disrupt livestock systems.

Read Also: Kogi govt urges residents in flood-prone settlement to relocate early
He urged the trainees to embrace the opportunity for peer learning and active participation, adding that knowledge sharing will be key to community-wide impact.

Managing Director of Kogi ADP, Dr Bello Ogirima, said the programme marks a crucial response to the realities of a changing climate.

He noted that building local capacity to adapt and respond effectively is necessary to safeguard food security and ensure long-term sustainability within the livestock value chain.

Mr Otaru Onoruoyiza, the State Project Coordinator of Kogi L-PRES, delivered the keynote address. He said the initiative is timely and aligns with broader efforts to promote resilience in agriculture.

He identified poultry, small ruminants, and cattle—particularly beef production—as the primary focus areas. The training, he added, is structured to pass down knowledge through a cascading “Train-the-Trainer” model, ensuring wider reach across Kogi's 21 local government areas.

Mr Otaru also revealed that recent data revalidation has confirmed over 20,000 livestock farmers within the state, with expectations for increased numbers as the project advances. He expressed optimism that the structured training approach will support commercialisation, productivity, and improved extension service delivery.

“The State Coordinator of the IFAD/Value Chain Development Programme (VCDP), Dr. Stella Adejo, lauded the initiative and stressed the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration in addressing climate-related challenges in agriculture,” the statement added.

“She expressed optimism that the training would empower farmers to adopt best practices and increased productivity across the sector.”

Plateau govt slams military over inaction in deadly Riyom attack

By Damilola Olufemi



The Plateau State Government has expressed strong disapproval of the Nigerian Army's failure to apprehend or neutralise the attackers who killed 27 farmers in the Tahoss community of Riyom Local Government Area on Monday.

Speaking on Channels Television's The Morning Brief on Friday, the state's Commissioner for Information, Joyce Ramnap, criticised the military for not making any arrests, despite reportedly making contact with the assailants during the attack.

"The checkpoint is barely 200 meters from where this incident happened," Ramnap stated. "The response we got was that none were arrested and none were captured. None of those killed were saved by all that happened."

She emphasised that the attacked community is not in a remote location and lies close to an access road that has existing military checkpoints.

"It's not like the community is hidden or inaccessible," she said. "We're not saying the entire Army compromised, but clearly, there is a need for a deeper

investigation."

Ramnap added that the Plateau State Governor, Caleb Mutfwang, had specifically called for arrests to be made. "If the soldiers were that close and reportedly engaged the attackers, then at the very least, there should be information on their escape route or some effort at pursuing them. But nothing so far," she said.

The commissioner condemned the attacks as senseless and brutal, highlighting the destruction of both lives and farmlands.

"These killings are unprovoked and wicked. Beyond taking lives, the attackers go further to destroy farmlands and crops," she lamented.

Governor Mutfwang, who visited Tahoss community on Wednesday, described the repeated assaults as genocidal. Ramnap echoed his concerns.

"As the governor noted, we do have courageous soldiers trying their best to protect Plateau, but unfortunately, there are still some bad elements in the

system," she said.

Ramnap explained that the attack came from three different directions. While one part of the community managed to repel the attackers, another area, where residents were taking refuge in a church, suffered the worst casualties.

"The pastor of that church fled when the violence escalated. His wife followed, but tragically, six people were killed in his house," she recounted.

Plateau faces incessant attacks

Plateau State has been repeatedly hit by violent attacks in recent years. In April 2025, over 100 people were killed in coordinated assaults on communities in Bokkos and Bassa LGAs. That incident drew both national and international condemnation and followed a deadly Christmas Eve massacre in 2023, where about 150 residents were killed in Bokkos.

Despite continued calls for decisive military and security responses, many residents say justice remains elusive.

Three suspects arrested in Rivers after police foil cult clash near varsity

By Helen Okechukwu



The Rivers State Command, through the Azikiwe Police Division and the Octopus Tactical Unit, foiled a suspected cult clash between rival groups near an undisclosed university campus in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

According to the police spokesperson, Grace Iringe-Koko, who confirmed the incident, said that the confrontation erupted along Azikiwe Street and Opobo Lane in the Mile 2 Diobu axis.

It was noted that the averted cult clash emanated when members of two rival cult groups—believed to be the Klu Klux Klans (KKK) and Vikings—ran into each other

while allegedly en route to the university's main campus for a retaliatory attack linked to supremacy and territorial disputes.

Gunfire reportedly broke out as the rival factions clashed, causing panic in the busy commercial area.

Sources within the area recounted scenes of chaos, with shop owners hastily shutting their businesses and residents fleeing the scene to avoid harm.

However, swift intervention by law enforcement officers helped contain the situation. Three suspected student cultists were apprehended during the operation, effectively dispersing

the rest of the armed groups.

Details from the Command spokesperson revealed that one of the arrested suspects is a final-year student at a university in Rivers State. Items recovered from the suspects included an English-made revolver pistol, one live round of ammunition, and three spent cartridges.

Confirming the incident, Iringe-Koko said: “Yes, I can confirm the incident.”

She further noted that investigation was underway with a view to arresting absconded members of the cult groups.

Over 20 suspects nabbed as Kwara launches major security operation

By Friday Omosola



More than 20 individuals, including suspected arms traffickers and their accomplices, have been arrested by the authorities in Kwara State.

The arrest followed the renewed security operation targeting criminal networks across several local government areas.

The coordinated operation, which began earlier this week, is being carried out in Ifelodun, Ekiti, Edu, and Patigi, as well as other border communities that have recently experienced security breaches.

Nearly 400 special security operatives have been deployed under the directive of the state government in collaboration with the office of the National Security Adviser.

According to an intelligence report during the week, the security sweep

already resulted in the recovery of ammunition and other supplies allegedly intended for criminal groups operating around Babanla in Ifelodun LGA.

“We’ve placed these local governments under lockdown. The operation is still in its early stages, but over 20 arrests have been made.

“Several suspects have provided valuable intelligence, and ten of them—along with weapons recovered—are being transferred to Abuja for further investigation,” the report stated.

The crackdown also led to the release of several abducted persons, as mounting pressure from the security forces forced criminal elements to abandon their captives.

A senior government source confirmed that the operation extends beyond Kwara, with security personnel in neighbouring

Kogi and Niger states engaged in coordinated efforts to block escape routes for fleeing suspects.

“The initial focus is on Ifelodun, but we are expanding into Edu and Patigi. The Eruku axis has already been sealed off to prevent cross-border movement into Kogi, while border communities near Niger are under close surveillance,” the official said.

The security offensive follows recent assurances by Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq that all necessary measures must be taken to flush out criminal elements hiding in forests and remote areas of the state.

Residents have been urged to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activities or unfamiliar individuals to the nearest security agency.

2027: Experts predict election crisis amid high-profile defection

By Fatimah Idera and Helen Okechukwu



Since the announcement of a coalition adopting the African Democratic Congress (ADC) as its platform to challenge President Bola Tinubu in the 2027 elections, Nigeria's political landscape has continued to experience significant shifts, with several prominent politicians defecting to align with the party.

The wave of defections gained national attention in recent weeks, with the exit of former Vice President Atiku Abubakar from the People's Democratic Party (PDP) earlier this week. Shortly after Atiku's departure, another former presidential aspirant of the PDP, Dele Momodu, also left for the ADC.

Beyond these high-profile exits, several influential politicians at the state level, particularly from Ondo, Yobe, Gombe, and Adamawa—are reportedly on the verge of cross-carpeting to the new ADC coalition.

However, this realignment of political loyalties has not gone without scrutiny, raising concerns over its implications on and future of the existing parties.

In an interview with The New Daily

Prime, political analysts expressed unease over the mass defections. They cautioned that if these movements are driven more by personal ambition than ideological conviction, they could undermine the integrity of the nation's democratic system.

Dr Bayo Fasunwon, an Associate Professor of Political Science at Adekunle Ajasin University, further warned that the continued movement of political actors without a firm commitment to party principles risks eroding the very foundations of the country's multi-party democracy.

He added that the democratic system is on the verge of collapsing if caution is not applied, predicting that the forthcoming general election might come with stark confusion, leaving the political system under pressure.

Dr Fasunwon issued a stark warning on Nigeria's political future, describing the current state of the nation's democracy as unstable and ideologically hollow—a dangerous trend he believes could derail the 2027 elections.

The professor says Nigeria's democracy

is collapsing into a “political quagmire” as parties lose identity, politicians chase power, and voters face growing confusion.

While giving a picture of what lies ahead, both political parties and the electorate, he accused the politicians of engaging in what he terms “political adultery”—a phenomenon where politicians hop from one party to another, not based on ideology, but on personal gain.

“They dump the party that brought them into prominence and join the ruling party for convenience and this shows clearly that these parties stand for nothing, no foundation, no ideology, no manifesto, no orientation.”

He attributes this behaviour to a lack of conviction and ideological alignment, arguing that true belief in a political cause would anchor politicians to specific parties.

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on next page**

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Dr Fasunwon traced the origins of the PDP from the PDM era, commending its past strength but lamenting its present state. "PDP has been the last standing structure since 1999," but it is now a house filled with people thirsty for power, not service," he explained.

He also condemned high-profile defections within the PDP, particularly pointing out Atiku, describing him as the most inconsistent member of the party.

He added that; "Atiku goes in and out of parties like someone changing shoes. Likewise, El-Rufai has benefited from both PDP and APC and now wants a fresh political platform. Peter Obi, too, has become ambiguous in his loyalty."

The analyst further warns that Nigeria is hurtling toward a de facto one-party system, as smaller parties and new coalitions are often personality-driven and ideologically hollow.

"These new parties may not survive the tide. Even if they win seats, their members will eventually decamp again. They don't want structure; they want control," he revealed

He believes that if PDP continues to weaken, and new parties fail to build lasting platforms, Nigeria risks losing any credible opposition, paving the way for unchecked dictatorship.

Forecasting ahead of the 2027 general elections, Dr Fasunwon paints a chaotic picture dominated by voter confusion, ideological collapse, and skyrocketing election costs.

"The biggest impact in 2027 will be confusion," he said. "Voters won't know whether to vote for parties or personalities."

He noted that many of the emerging political personalities have tainted records from corruption allegations to authoritarian tendencies and voters will face difficult choices between known devourers and new but unstable coalitions.

He used the Labour Party (LP) as a case study: "The Labour Party was built on Peter Obi's personality, but its structure

is now shaky. Even Obi is talking from both sides of his mouth."

The political analyst predicted internal conflicts in these new alliances over zoning, ticket allocations, and leadership roles, further destabilising the opposition and offering the ruling party a strategic advantage.

With new political parties entering the fray, Dr Fasunwon noted that the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) will face increased logistical and financial burdens.

"Adding more parties to the ballot will stretch the election budget. We're going to spend more and for what? Confusion."

He warned: "What we are witnessing is not democracy, it's a distortion. Unless we arrest this political decay, Nigeria is heading into deeper chaos. We are promoting dictatorship and undermining the democratic experiment."

He called for urgent political reorientation, ideological grounding, and institutional reforms, urging Nigerians to reflect deeply before the next electoral cycle.

Furthermore, Abdulateef Ahmed, another expert, said from a policy and political strategy standpoint, Atiku's departure from the PDP signals a seismic shift within Nigeria's opposition landscape.

"His exit hands over power to other key blocs most notably the faction led by Nyesom Wike following long-standing, irreconcilable differences that had plagued the PDP ahead of the 2023 presidential election."

He noted that the internal divisions within the party go beyond ideological disagreements, highlighting deep-rooted issues related to trust, power-sharing, and regional representation.

"At the core of these issues is party funding. Who pays the piper dictates the tune. While Atiku's departure is perceived as a major political victory for the Wike-led bloc, his rumoured

entry into the African Democratic Congress (ADC) introduces a fresh dynamic. It could significantly alter the internal balance of the ADC and upset the strategic calculations of existing contenders within that party.

"Notably, reports suggest that the ADC has already absorbed significant grassroots structures of the PDP in several states, creating a scenario in which the PDP's national influence is visibly diminishing. At this point, the PDP faces three major options ahead of the 2027 presidential election:

"If internal disintegration continues unchecked—with more defections and the erosion of state structures—the party risks becoming politically irrelevant. A merger or alliance with other political parties, including the ADC, could help consolidate the opposition and mount a credible challenge to the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC). However, this would require complex negotiations and power-sharing arrangements, which may prove difficult in light of recent betrayals and widespread mistrust.

"This would involve a complete overhaul of the party—presenting a fresh and credible presidential candidate, rebuilding national structures, and rallying disenchanted members. Such a reinvention would demand visionary leadership and renewed ideological clarity to present a convincing alternative to the APC."

Meanwhile, he noted that the ADC has already absorbed substantial PDP grassroots networks in several key states, further weakening the PDP's national standing and influence ahead of the 2027 general elections.

Ahmad noted that the ongoing political realignment reflects a significant shift in Nigeria's political landscape—one in which traditional party loyalties are losing their hold.

He stressed that performance, credibility, and the ability to build strategic alliances will increasingly define those who influence the nation's future.

Lagos govt launches survey on lead poisoning in children to tackle metal hazards

By Friday Omosola

The Lagos State Ministry of Health has commenced a crucial statewide survey to estimate children's blood lead levels and assess environmental health.

This marks a step in addressing growing concerns over heavy metal exposure among the youngest population.

This initiative is being driven by the Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG) on Lead Poisoning Elimination in Nigeria, with support from UNICEF and implementation by the African Field Epidemiology Network (AFENET).

The formal launch of preparatory activities for the survey took place during an advocacy visit by the IAWG delegation to the Ministry at Alausa Secretariat, Ikeja.

The survey aims to establish a replicable model for a national response to lead poisoning, particularly in light of reported heavy metal contamination incidents in various Nigerian communities.

Olusegun Ogboye, Permanent Secretary of the state Ministry of Health, welcomed the survey team.

He emphasised the importance of transparency, clear communication, and continuity.

He stressed that health studies must lead to actionable outcomes and fully integrate state involvement, moving beyond mere data collection.

Ogboye expressed satisfaction that the survey plan includes treatment and prevention strategies, reiterating the state's readiness to collaborate provided the process remains inclusive and ethically sound.

More so, Ganiyu Jamiyu, Chief Consultant Epidemiologist at the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and head of the delegation said the initiative follows a ministerial declaration identifying lead poisoning as a public health emergency.

The national objective, he revealed, is to eliminate lead poisoning in Nigeria by 2030.



"The plan is to begin with Lagos due to its population and environmental dynamics," Jamiyu stated.

He highlighted the particular vulnerability of children under five, noting that 'This survey, focused on their blood lead levels, will give us a baseline for exposure in both rural and urban settings.'

He added that the effort involves coordination with multiple ministries, including Environment, Mining, Agriculture, and Finance, and adheres to international standards.

While acknowledging well-documented outbreaks in Sokoto and Zamfara, Jamiyu stressed that 'Lagos represents a different but equally critical exposure landscape.'

Yunuss AbdulGaniyu, Director of Pollution Control at the Federal Ministry of Environment, provided insights into the various routes of lead exposure.

"From lead-based paints and battery recycling to artisanal mining and cosmetic products, the sources are numerous. Lagos, as a melting pot, carries the full weight of these challenges," he explained.

He disclosed that non-invasive tools, such as the X-Ray Fluorescence (XRF) scanner, would be used to measure lead

concentration in soil, and samples might also be taken from lactating mothers due to the risk of maternal-to-child lead transfer through breast milk.

He assured that the study design incorporates ethical protocols including consent, data confidentiality, and community protection, noting the state's early involvement in protocol development.

Patrick Nguku, AFENET's Regional Coordinator, reiterated that the project aligns with a 'whole-of-government and whole-of-society' approach to evidence-based interventions.

Fatima Cheshi, UNICEF's Health Specialist, affirmed UNICEF's involvement stems from its core mandate to protect child development, explaining Lagos's strategic selection as the pilot location due to its national representativeness.

Ismail Abdus-Salam, Director of Epidemiology, Biosecurity and Global Health in the state Ministry of Health, highlighted existing heavy metal contamination findings from the recent cholera outbreak.

"While searching for vibrios, we stumbled on cadmium and lead. This adds urgency to our need for collaboration," he stated.

‘Change your type of women’, BBNaija’s Uriel tells Don Jazzy

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Reality TV star and former Big Brother Naija housemate, Uriel Oputa, has shared her thoughts on the recent comments made by music executive Don Jazzy about his stance on romantic relationships.

Uriel responded during a chat on the Outside The Box podcast, where she suggested that the Mavin Records boss’s inability to stay sexually committed to one woman might be linked to the type of women he chooses to date.

Her reaction follows Don Jazzy’s public admission that he finds it difficult to remain sexually loyal to just one woman. The revelation sparked mixed reactions online, with many fans and celebrities weighing in on his honesty and relationship choices.

Uriel, known for her bold opinions and straightforward personality, said she believes Don Jazzy might change his views on monogamy if he dates women with more depth and character.

“I love Don Jazzy, I really do. He’s an amazing person, and I admire him a lot,” she said. “But when he said he can’t be sexually committed to one woman, I felt it had a lot to do with the kind of women he chooses.”

According to her, the problem lies not in Don Jazzy’s personality but in his preferences. She argued that dating based solely on physical appearance can lead to emotional dissatisfaction and make a long-term commitment difficult.

“If I ever get the chance to speak with him, I’ll definitely tell him to try dating a different kind of woman. Maybe someone who brings more to the table beyond just looks.”

Uriel didn’t stop at advising Don



Jazzy alone. She broadened the conversation by pointing out what she sees as a common pattern among Nigerian men choosing partners based on looks rather than substance.

“A lot of men in Nigeria don’t date for real substance. They focus on what they see the physical,” she said. “That’s why many of them struggle to stay with one woman. Because if it’s only about appearance, then of course, they’ll always find someone more attractive.”

She emphasised that true connection goes beyond physical attraction and urged men to look deeper into a woman’s mindset, values, and goals when considering relationships.

“When you date someone for her mindset, you build a different kind of bond. But when you only go after a nice body or a pretty face, it doesn’t last. There’ll always be someone who looks better.”

Uriel’s comments have opened up conversations around the pressures of modern dating, especially in the entertainment industry. With so much attention on image and public



perception, many celebrities like Don Jazzy are often judged for their personal choices.

Still, Uriel believes that a change in dating habits could be the key to finding lasting love. She noted that emotional and mental compatibility are just as important, if not more important, than physical attraction.

Her remarks have since gained traction on social media, with many agreeing that the culture of dating based on physical features has played a role in the rising cases of failed relationships and emotional dissatisfaction.

Following the release of the podcast episode, several users took to social media to applaud Uriel’s candid take. Some said her advice was not only valid for Don Jazzy but also relevant for many Nigerian men who struggle with commitment.

Others, however, defended Don Jazzy, arguing that everyone has the right to decide what works for them in a relationship. They praised his openness and honesty about his preferences.

‘Rihanna likes my music’, Ayra Starr claims

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigerian music sensation Ayra Starr has opened up about a life-changing moment in her career, meeting global superstar and fashion mogul Rihanna.

The “Rush” hitmaker described the experience as surreal, saying it still feels like a dream.

In a recent interview with ETalk TV, Ayra Starr shared how deeply meaningful the encounter was for her. She explained that not only did she meet the pop icon she’s always looked up to, but she also learned that the admiration was mutual.

“Meeting Rihanna felt unreal. She’s such an amazing person. Honestly, it still feels like a dream,” Starr said with a smile. “People often say, ‘Never meet your idols,’ but I’m glad I did. Rihanna was kind, warm, and everything I hoped she’d be.”

The most surprising moment for Starr came when Rihanna revealed that she’s a fan of her music. According to the rising Afro-pop star, Rihanna didn’t just recognise her, she listens to her.

“What shocked me the most was hearing that she actually loves my music,” Starr said. “It’s crazy to say out loud, but I’m my favourite artist’s favourite artist.”

She described the exchange as deeply emotional and said it gave her a renewed sense of purpose. “Knowing that someone like Rihanna listens to and appreciates my songs, that’s motivation on a different level.”

Starr didn’t hold back in praising the Barbadian singer, describing her as a powerful woman and an inspiration.

“Rihanna is not just a great artist.



She’s an amazing woman, a powerful businesswoman, and just a beautiful soul,” she said. “I know I made the right choice when I picked her as my role model.”

The Mavin Records star also shared how being in Rihanna’s presence makes her nervous in the best way.

“When I’m around her, I don’t always know how to act,” she admitted. “I get nervous and start making unnecessary jokes just to deal with how excited I am. But it’s all love.”

Looking ahead, Ayra Starr expressed hope for a musical collaboration with Rihanna. Though nothing has been confirmed, she made it clear that working with the global superstar is high on her list of dreams.

“I would love to work with her,” she said. “That would be another dream come true.”

Fans of both artists have already begun speculating about what a collaboration between the two women might sound like. With Ayra Starr’s soulful voice and Rihanna’s

genre-bending style, it’s easy to imagine a powerful hit emerging from the partnership.

Ayra Starr has been on a fast rise to international stardom since breaking out with her hit song “Away” and her critically acclaimed album 19 & Dangerous. Known for her unique blend of Afrobeats, pop, and soul, she’s become a leading voice in the new wave of African music.

Her music has been streamed millions of times across platforms, and she continues to build a loyal global fan base. Meeting Rihanna and earning her admiration is just another major step forward for the young star.

For Ayra Starr, the moment with Rihanna was more than just a celebrity encounter; it was personal validation. She didn’t just meet her idol; she connected with someone who sees and respects her artistry.

As she continues to grow her brand and reach new heights, fans around the world are watching closely and hoping that her dream of a Rihanna collaboration becomes a reality.

'I regret my words', Angela Okorie apologises to Mercy Johnson, Ned Nwoko

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nollywood actress Angela Okorie has publicly apologised to fellow actress Mercy Johnson-Okojie and Senator Ned Nwoko following days of deep personal reflection and mounting social media backlash.

In a heartfelt statement posted on her official social media pages, Okorie acknowledged that her previous comments were made in anger and pain.

She took full responsibility for her words and the hurt they may have caused, expressing a strong desire to make peace and move forward.

Angela began by addressing her fallout with Mercy Johnson, admitting that her emotional state influenced her behaviour. She revealed that her words, though unfiltered and honest, were ultimately harmful.

"I am human, and when my emotions take over, I speak from the heart, saying things exactly as they come to me. But I now realise that whether those words came from pain or not, they caused damage," she wrote.

She went on to express her remorse directly to Mercy, especially regarding how her words may have affected Mercy's emotional well-being.

"Your mental health matters a lot. I deeply regret anything I said that may have hurt you or your family. That's never been my nature, and you know it. Please find it in your heart to forgive me," she said.

Angela also opened up about her experience of being misrepresented online. She accused bloggers and content creators of twisting her words and editing videos to portray her in a negative light.

"I've been targeted by lies, betrayal, and deliberate misinformation. Some bloggers have gone as far as posting false stories and manipulated videos just to destroy my image," she explained.



Despite this, she emphasised that she chooses forgiveness over revenge.

"I forgive everyone who's hurt me. I leave them to deal with their conscience. I am focused on peace, not retaliation," she added.

In another part of her statement, Angela Okorie issued an apology to Senator Ned Nwoko. She admitted that her previous outburst against the senator was not only misdirected but also a result of responding to unprovoked online attacks.

"I understand that my anger and frustration were wrongly channelled. I responded harshly, and I now see how inappropriate that was," she wrote.

Angela acknowledged her past support for Nwoko's political campaign and her attendance at his family's children's events, saying those shared memories should have reminded her of their cordial relationship.

"I've been part of your journey. I was there during your campaign. I've danced and smiled at your children's carnival. Remembering all that now, I see that peace is far better than conflict. I am truly sorry," she added.

Angela Okorie's message marks a

noticeable shift in tone from her previous public stance. She spoke with humility, urging all parties involved to embrace healing over hostility.

"Life is too short for bitterness. I want to move on in peace. I want healing, not just for myself but for everyone affected," she said.

She made it clear that she hopes this public apology will help rebuild broken bridges and restore damaged relationships.

As her emotional statement continues to circulate online, many fans and celebrities have commended Angela for taking responsibility and showing maturity. However, others are waiting to see how Mercy Johnson and Senator Ned Nwoko will respond to her apology.

So far, neither Mercy nor Senator Nwoko has made a public statement regarding the matter.

Angela Okorie's apology appears to be a genuine attempt to turn the page. Whether or not it will lead to full reconciliation remains to be seen, but her plea has certainly started a new conversation about forgiveness, growth, and public accountability in Nollywood.

Again, Lizzy Anjorin accuses Iyabo Ojo

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nollywood actress Lizzy Anjorin has made fresh and startling accusations against fellow actress Iyabo Ojo, claiming she deliberately tried to destroy her marriage and tarnish her public image.

Anjorin made the allegations in a lengthy Instagram post shared to mark her fifth wedding anniversary. In the emotional statement, she recounted a series of events which, according to her, point to a sustained campaign of malice from Iyabo Ojo.

According to Anjorin, Ojo went as far as hiring someone to secretly record her husband. She also alleged that Ojo forged a death certificate in a bid to solicit public donations and used gossip blogs to circulate harmful stories.

“Dear Iyabo Ojo, marriage is about kindness and loyalty,” Anjorin wrote. “It’s not about destruction but about building together.”

She stressed that a healthy marriage should be built on love, trust, and second chances, not deceit and betrayal. Her post, which has since gone viral, included a heartfelt message to her husband as they celebrated five years together.

“Happy 5th wedding anniversary to me and my crown,” she began, before turning her focus to Ojo and their history.

Anjorin accused Ojo of manipulating the public for sympathy and personal gain, allegedly using false narratives to appear as a victim while inflicting harm on others.

She also claimed that her children have suffered emotional distress as a result of the drama. Although she didn’t go into specific details about how the children were affected, she suggested that Ojo’s actions had crossed a line.



“You created lies and made up stories just to hurt me and my family,” Anjorin said in the post. “Even children are not spared in your games.”

One of the most eye-catching parts of Anjorin’s message was a reference to a supposed diamond ring.

She recalled how, shortly after her wedding, Ojo allegedly called her to claim that Senator Dino Melaye had given her a diamond wedding ring. According to Anjorin, she later discovered that the story was false.

“I never knew it was a lie,” she wrote. “Why did you cook up stories about getting a diamond ring? To do what again? Gangan.”

Anjorin suggested the motive was to provoke envy or create tension in her new marriage.

The feud between the two actresses has been ongoing for months, with both sides exchanging accusations through social media and legal channels.

Iyabo Ojo petitions Anjorin

Earlier, Iyabo Ojo filed a lawsuit against Anjorin, accusing her of making defamatory statements online. Ojo demanded ₦1 billion in damages, claiming the accusations had caused her significant harm.

However, the case was recently dismissed by the court. Rather than grant Ojo’s request for damages, the court ruled in Anjorin’s favour and awarded her ₦500,000 in legal costs.

Despite the court’s decision, the public feud appears far from over. Anjorin’s latest message has reignited public attention, drawing reactions from fans and colleagues across the entertainment industry.

Some have called for the two actresses to settle their differences privately, while others have taken sides in the conflict.

As of now, Iyabo Ojo has not publicly responded to the renewed accusations. However, given the history of public exchanges between both parties, many believe another response may be on the way.

In her closing statement, Anjorin called for a change in values within relationships and society.

“Marriage is not for destruction. It’s for growth, support, and love,” she wrote.

While the full truth behind the accusations remains a matter of public speculation, the drama continues to captivate Nollywood fans and social media followers alike.

Trump administration ask court to release Jeffrey Epstein grand jury files

By New Daily Prime

Amidst pressure from President Donald Trump's own supporters, his administration on Friday asked a federal court to unseal secret documents related to Jeffrey Epstein's case in an effort to put to rest for good a political crisis largely of its own making.

But even if those records become public, it's far from certain they will appease critics enraged over the administration's unfulfilled promises of full transparency about evidence against the wealthy financier. Meanwhile, the administration remains dogged by questions about its refusal to release other records in its possession after stoking conspiracy theories and pledging to uncover government secrets of the "deep state."

Here's a look at the ongoing Epstein files controversy and what may happen next:

Trump is desperately trying to turn the page on a crisis that has consumed his administration since the Justice Department announced last week that it would not release any more evidence about the sex trafficking investigation into Epstein, who killed himself behind bars while awaiting trial in 2019.

The latest development came Thursday when the Wall Street Journal described a sexually suggestive letter that the newspaper says bore Trump's name and was included in a 2003 album for Epstein's 50th birthday. Trump denied writing the letter, calling it "false, malicious, and defamatory."

Shortly after the story was published, Trump said he had directed Attorney General Pam Bondi to "produce any and all pertinent Grand Jury testimony, subject to Court approval."

"This SCAM, perpetuated by the Democrats, should end, right now!" the president wrote on social media.

Bondi then announced that the Justice Department would move Friday to ask the court to unseal the grand jury transcripts. Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche filed the motion urging the court to release the transcripts.

Grand juries decide whether there is



enough evidence to bring an indictment, or a formal criminal charge, and their proceedings are secret to protect the reputations of people who end up not being charged and to encourage reluctant witnesses to testify.

Grand jury transcripts — which could show the testimony of witnesses and other evidence presented by prosecutors — are rarely released by courts, unless they need to be disclosed in connection with a judicial proceeding. In fact, grand jury secrecy is such a sacrosanct principle under the law that government officials who improperly disclose testimony are subject to prosecution. Witnesses are not bound by those rules.

Even with the Justice Department endorsement, it could take weeks or months of legal wrangling to decide what can be released and how to protect witnesses and other sensitive victim information.

And it's unlikely the transcripts would shed any light on a major fascination of conspiracy theorists obsessed with Epstein's case: the financier's connections to other powerful figures whom some believe were involved in Epstein's sex trafficking scheme.

Court have blocked the release of grand jury materials in other high-profile investigations. House Democrats in 2019

sought grand jury testimony from special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation while Congress was conducting its impeachment inquiry into Trump. But the Justice Department successfully fought for years to keep the material secret.

The Justice Department's decision to seek grand jury transcripts gives the administration a reason to point to the courts to explain why more material hasn't yet been released. But the uproar over the Epstein files was never about the grand jury transcripts — it was about the thousands of other pages in the government's possession that the administration now says it won't release.

Facing outrage after the first release of Epstein files flopped in February, Bondi said officials were poring over a "truckload" of previously withheld evidence she said had been handed over by the FBI. But after a monthslong review of evidence in the government's possession, the Justice Department determined that no "further disclosure would be appropriate or warranted."

The Justice Department has yet to fully explain why none of that material could be released. It noted in its memo earlier this month that much of the material was placed under seal by a court to protect victims and "only a fraction" of it "would have been aired publicly had Epstein gone to trial."

Starmer to launch new anti-corruption watchdog

By **Fatimah Idera**

Sir Keir Starmer is preparing to unveil Labour's long-promised Ethics and Integrity Commission within days, in a move aimed at restoring public trust in politics and tackling the legacy of Conservative era sleaze.

The announcement is likely to come before Parliament rises for the summer recess on Tuesday.

The new independent watchdog will be tasked with upholding standards across public life, overseeing lobbying rules for former government officials, and enforcing a legal duty of candour for public authorities, a key component of the forthcoming Hillsborough law.

The Ethics and Integrity Commission will assume responsibilities currently spread across several existing bodies. These include:

The Advisory Committee on Business Appointments (Acoba), which advises former ministers and civil servants on post-government jobs to avoid lobbying conflicts. Acoba will be folded into the new watchdog, although it remains unclear whether the commission will be granted stronger enforcement powers.

The Committee on Standards in Public Life, which has traditionally advised the Prime Minister on ethical conduct, will also be absorbed.

By contrast, other existing oversight institutions, such as the Parliamentary Standards Commissioner, the Independent Adviser on Ministerial Interests, the Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme, and the Electoral Commission will continue to operate independently.

The planned duty of candour, which the new watchdog will oversee, is part of Labour's pledge to create a culture of transparency and accountability. It will place a legal and ethical obligation on



public officials to act with honesty, openness, and integrity, a reform influenced by the state's mishandling of the 1989 Hillsborough disaster.

A Delayed Labour Pledge

Labour first announced plans for the commission in 2021, using it as a central plank in its campaign to end what it described as years of Tory sleaze and cronyism. The plan was formally included in the party's 2024 general election manifesto.

That manifesto pledged:

"Labour will restore confidence in government and ensure ministers are held to the highest standards. We will establish a new independent Ethics and Integrity Commission, with its own independent chair, to ensure probity in government."

Despite its prominence during the election, public mention of the commission has been scarce since July 2024, raising questions about whether the proposal had been shelved. However, insiders now say its structure and responsibilities are finalised and ready for imminent announcement.

While the move signals a clear shift towards institutional reform, some observers may question whether the commission represents meaningful change or simply a rebranding of toothless predecessors. Acoba, for example, has long faced criticism for its

lack of enforcement power and without stronger legal authority, critics may accuse the new body of continuing that trend.

The government has yet to confirm the final details. A spokesperson said:

"This is speculation. This government is committed to establishing the right structures to uphold the highest standards in public life. We have already taken steps to improve probity and transparency."

Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner, a key architect of the commission, previously said the reforms were essential to prevent further erosion of public trust.

"The current system does not work," she said. "Our democracy cannot hinge on gentlemen's agreements. It needs independent and robust protection from Conservative corruption."

While the official unveiling is expected before Tuesday, the announcement could still be delayed by competing government priorities or breaking news developments.

Nonetheless, the commission's launch would mark an early test of Labour's promise to raise ethical standards and a signal that the Starmer government intends to make public integrity a defining pillar of its leadership.

Children trafficked from UK to France in reverse channel crossings

By **Fatimah Idera**

A major London-based smuggling gang has been dismantled after it was found trafficking migrants including children as young as five from Britain to France in refrigerated lorries, in a rare case of reverse Channel crossings.

The gang, led by 41-year-old Algerian national Azize Benaniba, orchestrated at least 20 smuggling trips between February and October 2023, packing men, women, and children into dangerous and often airtight vehicles travelling from Dover to Calais.

While most migrant smuggling routes traditionally flow into the UK, this operation marks a disturbing shift, exposing how criminal networks exploit vulnerable migrants regardless of direction. French authorities recorded 93 illegal crossings from Britain to France in 2024, underlining the unusual but persistent nature of this trend.

The victims, mostly from French-speaking North African countries, initially entered the UK on tourist visas allowing stays of up to six months. Once in Britain, they were funneled into the gang's network and loaded into lorries while some refrigerated, others airtight for the perilous journey back across the Channel.

Each migrant was charged £1,200 for the crossing, with the gang showing little regard for their wellbeing. In one attempt on September 6, 2023, 39 migrants, including women and children, were discovered crammed into a refrigerated lorry in Sandwich, Kent. Several required immediate medical attention, including a child.

One phone video recovered by authorities showed terrified migrants screaming and banging on the sides of a lorry trailer, desperate to escape.

The network was exposed after French border police intercepted 58 migrants hidden in a lorry arriving in Calais from the UK on February 21, 2023. This



prompted a joint investigation by the UK's National Crime Agency (NCA) and international partners, who tracked the gang's movements and rescued multiple groups of migrants before they crossed the border.

The gang's key players were arrested during coordinated dawn raids in North London on March 20, 2024. Those convicted at Isleworth Crown Court on July 17 included:

Azize Benaniba – 12 years, 11 months, Mohamed Bechkit, 36 – 10 years, 4 months, Mahmoud Haidous, 53 – 13 years, 6 months, Abed Karouz, 40 – 8 years, 10 months, Amor Ghabbari, 32 – 9 years, Mohamed Abdelhadi, 50 – 7 years, 3 months, Mohamed Bouriche, 43 – 7 years, 6 months

Bouriche was in charge of transporting migrants to staging areas near the UK border. The others handled recruitment, logistics, and lorry hire.

The NCA's senior investigating officer, John Turner, condemned the gang's reckless disregard for human safety.

"These smugglers had no care for the safety or wellbeing of the people they crammed into lorry trailers, their only concern was making money.

We've seen the fatal consequences of this crime. Our investigation protected hundreds of lives and has taken down a prolific people smuggling network."

Turner added that such gangs frequently engage in both inbound and outbound trafficking and that tackling organised immigration crime remains a top priority for the NCA.

Janine Baugh, a specialist prosecutor for the Crown Prosecution Service, said the gang's actions were both dangerous and deliberate:

"This was a highly organised group which tried to smuggle migrants to France more than 20 times.

They put lives at risk in inhumane conditions for profit. A video showing people screaming inside a trailer was key in demonstrating just how dire those conditions were."

Baugh added that the CPS will continue to play a central role in the UK's new Border Security Command, working with international partners to prosecute organised immigration crime.

While reverse smuggling from Britain is rare, investigators believe many of the migrants opted for France over the UK due to cultural and linguistic familiarity.

Lib Dem council faces backlash from drivers over double parking fines

By **Fatimah Idera**

Bournemouth has become the first town in the UK to trial doubling parking fines in an effort to crack down on illegal parking during the busy summer season, a move that has sparked a heated debate between the Lib Dem-led council and local motorists.

The scheme, approved by the Department for Transport, will see parking fines rise to £70, or £140 if not paid within 14 days aligning them with London's penalty rates.

The trial will run throughout August, Bournemouth's busiest holiday month, when thousands of tourists descend on the seaside resort.

The initiative comes in response to widespread incidents of illegal parking, including cars left on double yellow lines, pavements, verges, roundabouts, and across private driveways. According to Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council, over 4,000 parking fines have already been issued during three recent heatwave weekends.

Previously, the standard fine was £35 only marginally more than the cost of a full day's legal parking, which can exceed £20. The council believes that the low penalty has failed to deter illegal parking, particularly among tourists willing to risk a fine for convenience.

The announcement comes just weeks after BCP Council backtracked on plans to introduce £70 residents' parking permits, following a backlash from locals who described the move as unfair.

The reversal has added to perceptions among some that the council is waging a war on motorists.

While labour MP for Bournemouth East, Tom Hayes welcomed the move, noting that the penalty cap had not been reviewed in two decades, public reaction has been divided.



"The hope is by having such a significant increase in parking fines it can really have a deterrent effect," Hayes said.

Many residents agree with stricter enforcement particularly in light of growing congestion and safety risks but others argue that the council is profiting at the expense of locals and visitors alike.

Jim James, a local resident, supported the change, saying: "Finally, about time. Let's see their faces when they realise it's not a measly £30 any longer." But others were more critical.

"As much as locals think this is brilliant, it isn't. We will all be stung as a result," one resident said.

"This is all about BCP making money. We should be welcoming visitors, not penalising them. Car parks are being sold off, and there are no decent park and ride options. Local businesses will suffer."

Cllr Millie Earl, leader of BCP Council, defended the decision, insisting the aim is not to punish but to encourage safe and legal parking.

"We welcome the fact the Government has recognised the problem we

experience with illegal and irresponsible parking. We've been asking for this power for over six years. Even during our busiest weekends, there were still parking spaces available within a short walk of the seafront."

She added that the increase in fines reflects the true cost of enforcement and patrols, and that the measure is designed to protect residents and responsible visitors alike.

"We want people to enjoy our beautiful coastline, but they must park responsibly. This isn't just about fines it's about safety and fairness."

The Bournemouth trial could set a precedent for other tourist hotspots struggling with the same issues. If successful, it may lead to wider implementation of higher parking penalties across the country especially in areas overwhelmed by seasonal surges in visitors.

In the meantime, the debate in Bournemouth continues, as the town balances hospitality with order and residents watch closely to see whether higher fines will bring relief or resentment.

Pope, Netanyahu speak by phone after Gaza church strike

By New Daily Prime



Pope Leo XIV emphasised the importance of protecting places of worship in a call on July 18 with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu following Israel's deadly strike on Gaza's only Catholic Church, the Vatican said.

The pontiff also renewed his appeal for negotiations, a ceasefire and the end of the war, while reiterating his concern for the "dramatic humanitarian situation" in the Palestinian territory, it said in a statement.

The Vatican said Mr Netanyahu initiated the call early on July

18, the day after Israeli fire on the Holy Family Church in Gaza City killed three people and provoked international condemnation.

"During the conversation, the Holy Father renewed his appeal to revive negotiations and reach a ceasefire and the end of the war," the Vatican said in a statement, noting that Pope Leo was at his summer residence in Castel Gandolfo, south of Rome.

"He once again expressed his concern for the dramatic humanitarian situation of the population in Gaza, whose heartbreaking toll is borne

particularly by children, the elderly and the sick," it added.

"Finally, the Holy Father reiterated the urgency of protecting places of worship and especially the faithful and all people in Palestine and Israel."

Mr Netanyahu has said Israel "deeply regrets" the strike, and blamed a "stray round".

He repeated this regret in the conversation with the Pope, which was "friendly", a spokesman for Mr Netanyahu said, adding that the two men agreed to meet soon. AFP

WAFCON 2024: Super Falcons crush Zambia 5-0, storm into semifinals

By New Daily Prime

Nigeria cruised into the semi-finals of the 2024 Women's Africa Cup of Nations with a statement 5-0 victory over Zambia in Casablanca.

The Copper Queens had been expected to pose a tough challenge for the record nine-time champions, but were blown away by a stunning performance which was underlined by clinical finishing.

The West Africans never looked back after centre-back Osinachi Ohale was left unmarked at a free-kick in the second minute and headed past Petronella Musole.

Grace Chanda missed a glorious chance to equalise on the half hour mark and three minutes later Nigeria doubled their lead through a fine finish from the impressive Esther Okoronkwo.

Chinwendu Ihezuo capitalised on hesitancy in the Zambia defence to make it 3-0 to the Super Falcons on the stroke of half-time with a composed finish.

Oluwatosin Demehin nodded in the fourth from another pinpoint free-kick delivery midway through the second half at the Larbi Zaouli Stadium, and Folashade Ijamulusi rounded off the scoring in the first minute of stoppage time.

Zambia had beaten Nigeria to finish third at the 2022 finals, yet their formidable strike partnership of Barbra Banda and Racheal Kundananji – who had scored three goals apiece in the group stage – failed to register a shot on target between them.

Nigeria, who are still yet to concede a



goal at this year's finals, will face either defending champions South Africa or Senegal in the semi-finals on Tuesday (16:00 GMT).

Those two sides meet in the last eight in Oujda on Saturday at 19:00 GMT.

Nigeria capitalise on perfect start

Nigeria had only found the back of the net once in their final two Group B games and coach Justin Madugu made six changes from the 0-0 draw with Algeria on Sunday, including handing Okoronkwo her first start of the tournament.

The striker made an instant impact as she floated in a ball from deep which Ohale met 12 yards out and guided inside the right-hand upright with Musole rooted to the spot, and Nigeria's purposeful start left their opponents on the back foot.

The Copper Queens were let down by both their set-piece delivery and their crossing from open play, with Super Falcons keeper Chiamaka Nnadozie also prowling outside her area to clear

any danger.

Banda created Zambia's only opening of the first half, breezing past a defender on the left and cutting back to Chanda, who could not connect from 12 yards.

It proved to be a costly miss as Okoronkwo scored a brilliant second, controlling Rasheedat Ajibade's cross on her chest before keeping her balance and firing into the bottom left-hand corner.

Ihezuo's third goal of the tournament effectively wrapped the game up at the break, as the Pachuca frontwoman latched on to a long ball from Nnadozie which Zambia failed to clear and then side-footed past Musole.

A demoralised Zambia offered little after the break and Okoronkwo was the provider again when Demehin converted her inswinging free-kick from the right flank and Ijamulusi tapped in Ajibade's cross at the back post to cap off a memorable afternoon for the Super Falcons.

Man Utd seal £65m deal for Bryan Mbeumo

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

Manchester United have reached an agreement with Brentford to sign Bryan Mbeumo in a deal worth £65 million, potentially rising to £70m with add-ons. The move makes Mbeumo the most expensive player sold in Brentford's history and continues a summer of bold spending under new manager Ruben Amorim.

The Cameroon international is expected to undergo his medical in the coming days ahead of United's pre-season tour of the United States, which begins Tuesday. The 25-year-old will become United's third signing of the summer, following the arrivals of Brazilian forward Matheus Cunha and Spanish left-back Diego Leon.

United had previously seen offers of £55m and £62.5m rejected by the Bees, but their persistence paid off as Brentford accepted a third bid of £65m, with a further £5m in performance-based bonuses.

Mbeumo joined Brentford from Troyes in 2019 and has since developed into one of the Premier League's most dynamic forwards. His 2024–25 campaign was his most productive to date, recording personal bests in goals, assists, and chances created.

Notably, Mbeumo's shot conversion rate stood at an impressive 23.53%, behind only Liverpool's Mohamed Salah and Newcastle's Alexander Isak. His explosive carries and direct goal involvements underline his attacking threat — he led the league with nine goal-creating carries over five metres, a stat that sets him apart.

Mbeumo's defensive contribution has also been lauded. He recovered the ball 32 times in the final third last season — the third-highest tally among all Premier League players. His combination of creativity, pressing



intelligence, and end product has made him a standout in Brentford's rise.

Sutton speaks on Mbeumo's move
Former England striker Chris Sutton weighed in on the transfer, warning that Mbeumo will need to adjust quickly to the pressures at Old Trafford.

"He's done well at Brentford, but playing for Manchester United is very different," Sutton said. "There's no hiding. At Brentford, the expectations are lower. At United, he'll need to perform immediately."

Nevertheless, Sutton believes Mbeumo brings a level of consistency and versatility that United's current options — including Alejandro Garnacho and Antony — have lacked. "He's experienced, a strong finisher, and capable of playing both centrally and on the wing," Sutton noted. "United are looking for reliable output in those wide areas, and Mbeumo fits the profile."

For United manager Ruben Amorim, Mbeumo's tactical intelligence and high work rate appear to be critical factors. Amorim's system — which often involves a high pressing back three — demands players who are

technically gifted and mentally sharp both in and out of possession. Mbeumo's proven Premier League pedigree makes him an ideal fit.

United's attacking frailties were exposed last season, with inconsistent performances in the final third a key issue. Mbeumo's arrival signals a clear intent to address that. His ability to carry the ball at pace, press from the front, and convert chances gives United a more rounded attacking threat.

However, questions remain about whether one standout season can be replicated on the biggest stage. With a hefty price tag and the weight of expectation, Mbeumo will be under immediate pressure to justify United's investment.

Still, in Mbeumo, United are not just signing a player in form — they are securing a forward approaching his peak, with six years of English football experience and a profile built for Amorim's high-octane football.

If he hits the ground running, Bryan Mbeumo could become one of the signings of the summer — and perhaps, a key figure in Manchester United's push back to the top of English football.