



FG to roll out extensive housing projects across geopolitical zones Pg 2

FAAC Allocation: Tinubu urges governors to deliver results Pg 4



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Super Falcons beat host nation Morocco to clinch 10th WAFCON title

Pg 26



Hamas rejects Trump's remarks on Gaza talks breakdown Pg 21



Starmer's EU deal set to increase cruise and ferry costs for UK holidaymakers Pg 22



Big Brother Naija season 10 kicks off with N150 million grand prize Pg 14

Hundreds of Nigerians pose as authors to enter UK through visa scheme Pg 25

FG to roll out extensive housing projects across geopolitical zones

By Friday Omosola



The Federal Government, FG, through the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, is actively pursuing a nationwide initiative to bridge Nigeria's housing deficit, with plans to construct thousands of affordable homes.

Currently, 250-unit 'Renewed Hope' housing estates are under construction in 12 states, spanning all six geopolitical zones across the country.

This development was announced by the Minister of Housing and Urban Development, Arc. Ahmed Dangiwa, yesterday in Kano, during an inspection of ongoing construction at the 'Renewed Hope City and Estate' in Lambu.

Minister Dangiwa also indicated that arrangements are nearing completion to launch similar 250-unit projects in the remaining 24 states, aiming to make affordable housing accessible to a broader segment of the Nigerian population.

Beyond the estates, the government is simultaneously developing seven larger 'Renewed Hope Cities', with one designated for each geopolitical zone and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

The projects in Kano, Lagos, and the FCT are reported to be in advanced stages, while plans for commencement in the North East, North Central, South South, and South East zones are imminent.

During his visit to Kano, Arc. Dangiwa expressed satisfaction with the progress of work on the Kano Renewed Hope Estate, despite acknowledged delays in payments to contractors.

He assured them that their outstanding dues would be settled promptly.

The Minister and his team also inspected the site of the Kano 2,000-unit Renewed Hope City, which is being developed under a Public-Private

Partnership (PPP) financing model.

Dangiwa commended the work pace and urged the developers to meet their delivery deadline by the end of August 2025.

"Housing provision is a top priority for this administration. President Bola Tinubu is determined to bridge the housing gap in Nigeria by ensuring housing is available and affordable for all categories of Nigerians," Minister Dangiwa emphasised.

Addressing the contractors' concerns about non-payments, he reiterated the government's commitment, stating, "I urge you not to despair, as all your payments would be made as soon as practicable."

The Minister was accompanied on the inspection by the Minister of State, Abdullahi Ata, and several directors from the ministry.

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FAAC Allocation: Tinubu urges governors to deliver results

By Oluwatosin Ologun



President Bola Tinubu has called on state governors to justify the unprecedented fiscal inflow with visible development results, following a total of ₦11.195 trillion disbursed to states and local governments through the Federation Accounts Allocation Committee (FAAC) in the past year.

The President, who spoke at the National Executive Committee (NEC) meeting of the All Progressives Congress (APC), charged the governors elected on the platform of the APC to redouble their efforts in delivering development at the grassroots, saying many

Nigerians were still dissatisfied with the pace of governance and the benefits of democracy.

Tinubu said, “We need to do more. Nigerians are still complaining at the grassroots. You, the governors, have to wet the ground and give more dividends of democracy at the grassroots.

“We must not rest. Our people need to feel the impact of government more directly.”

The Federal Government recently revealed that it collected a total of ₦14.27 trillion in tax revenues between January and June this year, a 43 per cent

increase from ₦9.98 trillion realised in the first half of 2024.

A compilation of FAAC disbursements between June 2024 and June 2025 showed that a total of ₦11.195 trillion was distributed among the States and local governments combined.

While the states got a total of ₦6.492 trillion, the local governments received ₦4.704 trillion.

Out of a total of ₦27 trillion shared in the period under review, the Federal Government got a total of ₦6.034 trillion.

Garba Shehu: Buhari declined UAE Emir's Jet, diamond watch to uphold integrity

By Friday Omosola



Former presidential spokesperson, Garba Shehu, has shed light on instances where ex-President Muhammadu Buhari reportedly declined highly extravagant personal gifts, including a customised diamond-studded wristwatch and a private aircraft.

Shehu, who served as Senior Special Assistant to the late president on media and publicity from 2015 to 2023, shared these revelations during an appearance on Channels Television's "Inside Sources with Laolu Akande" yesterday.

Shehu recounted two specific episodes that, he claims, underscore Buhari's unwavering commitment to integrity throughout his time in office.

One involved a distinguished Nigerian fashion designer with a global presence, who presented Buhari with a bespoke diamond wristwatch featuring the president's embossed image.

According to Shehu, Buhari unequivocally rejected the opulent gift.

"The president looked at it, and he said, 'Diamond wristwatch? I can't wear this. Please tell this young Nigerian that he's

doing well for himself.

"But the wristwatch—take it back to him. I can't use it," Shehu quoted Buhari as saying, highlighting the former leader's refusal to accept such a personal luxury item.

Shehu further revealed that Buhari's adherence to principle extended beyond Nigeria's borders.

During an official visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in 2016, the Emir of Abu Dhabi, effectively the country's president, made an extraordinary offer.

"The Emir of Abu Dhabi actually asked the president of the UAE, 'Which aircraft did he want? He offered him an aircraft,'" Shehu recalled.

However, Buhari's acceptance was contingent on the aircraft being for the Nigerian government, not for his personal use.

When clarified that the jet was intended for his private use, even after leaving office, Buhari declined.

"I don't need an aircraft when I leave the

office. In any case, I can't maintain it," Shehu quoted Buhari, bringing an end to the generous proposition.

This particular incident, Shehu noted, drew a stark contrast with a recent controversy in the United States involving a similar private jet offer to President Donald Trump from the same UAE.

Shehu emphasised that Buhari's "personal integrity is unimpeachable," asserting that as a spokesperson, he never had to contend with "embarrassing stories of your boss being involved in wrongdoing in any way."

The former spokesperson's reflections emerge as he promotes his recently published memoir, "According to the President," which offers an insider's perspective on his years serving as Buhari's official spokesperson and provides guidance for public communicators.

During the television discussion, Shehu also touched upon the persistent pressures he experienced from journalists during his tenure at the Villa, describing their tactics to challenge or provoke him.

FG may withdraw electricity subsidy if debts mount — Ex-NERC Chair

By New Daily Prime

The Federal Government may withdraw the subsidy to reduce the cost of electricity for consumers if it continues to incur debts, a former chairman of the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC), Sam Amadi, has said.

Amadi stated this when he appeared as a guest on Channels Television's Sunrise on Saturday.

"Yes, the Federal Government would likely do that [remove subsidy on electricity]. See, the Federal Government can become envious," he said.

"I mean, if some states are bragging that, 'Oh, our tariff is low, we are doing better'. Well, the Federal Government, as a fiscal authority, can say, 'You know what? Why should we be the ones looking bad owing?'" Amadi added.

He, however, said that it would not be a wise thing for the government to do now, as developed countries also make use of subsidised energy consumption for their citizens.

Amadi explained, "There's a big, emotive debate; most economists just take the ideological view that subsidy is bad. That's not true. You see, subsidy is always a part of a market. The question is: how do you provide a subsidy and where do you put it, and for what purpose?"

"Look at Europe, look at the EU, look at all these countries. They are actually having strong subsidies for energy arising from the crisis in Russia or Ukraine, arising from the need to make a transition from energy source to another.

"Subsidy is always there. If you look at Canada, Ontario, when they were moving to renewable, there was so much subsidy to make sure the price was affordable. So the wrong economics that says a subsidy is bad is not true.

"But the question then is: the Federal Government can say, 'This is the amount of subsidy we can put, and this is how we can put it.'"

He also raised concerns about the nation's regulatory tools and corrupt practices.



"Again, we have not used our regulatory tools. If you look at the Electricity Act, it talks about the Power Consumer Assistance Fund. Now, that fund requires big desktop work, establishing who needs it," he said.

Amadi added, "You have to have good data. DisCos do subsidies. What they do is they can do energy efficiency, give some discount on energy. That's the subsidy. So, subsidies should be there. The question always is: we mask corruption in the name of subsidy when we balloon the number.

"And again, we put the monetary consequences as subsidy. For example, if we devalue your currency and then your debt used to be 100 billion, you moved to 700 billion. You now say you are paying a subsidy for 700 billion. That's not true."

₦1,949bn Subsidy Tariff Shortfall

The total gross electricity subsidy tariff shortfall incurred by the Federal Government in the power sector in 2024 amounted to ₦1,949 billion, according to data sourced from the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission's newly released 2024 Annual Report.

According to the data, the debt was incurred as a result of a lower-than-cost-reflective tariff as computed for the year

under review.

President Bola Tinubu had on Friday appealed to power generation companies (GenCos) to give the Federal Government more time to complete the verification and validation of longstanding debts owed to them.

During a meeting with members of the Association of Power Generation Companies, led by Col. Sani Bello (retd), at the Presidential Villa in Abuja, the President assured them of his administration's commitment to resolving the liquidity challenges in the power sector.

Tinubu acknowledged the historic liabilities inherited from previous administrations and pledged transparency and fairness in addressing them.

"I accept the assets and liabilities of my predecessors, and there is no question about that. But that acceptance must be on credible grounds. I need to wear the audit cap of verifiability, authenticity, and the fact that this inheritance is not a mere deodorant but a support structure for critical economic and industrial promotion," Tinubu said, according to a statement by presidential spokesman Bayo Onanuga.

Malnutrition in Nigeria killed 652 children in past six months, MSF says

By New Daily Prime



At least 652 children have died from malnutrition in the Nigerian state of Katsina in the first six months of 2025, according to Doctors Without Borders.

The charity, known by its French initials MSF, said in a statement on Friday that the deaths were caused by funding cuts from international donors, as Katsina, located in the country's north, continued to suffer from violence and insecurity.

"We are currently witnessing massive budget cuts, particularly from the United States, the United Kingdom, and the European Union, which are having real impact on the treatment of malnourished children," said MSF.

The NGO said by the end of June this year, nearly 70,000 children with malnutrition had already received medical care from the MSF teams in Katsina State, including nearly 10,000 who were hospitalised in serious condition.

It, however, stressed that the need for prevention and treatment of malnutrition is enormous in northern Nigeria, and that urgent mobilisation was required.

In the north of Nigeria, other factors

increasing malnutrition include disease outbreaks, which are pushed by low vaccine coverage, availability, and accessibility of basic health services, and other socioeconomic indices complicated by insecurity and violence.

MSF said the number of children in Katsina with the most severe form of malnutrition has risen by about 208 percent this year compared with the same period last year, and "unfortunately 652 children have already died in our facilities since the beginning of 2025."

Banditry is rife in Katsina, where insecurity has displaced many people, forcing them to abandon their farms. The government, alongside local civilian vigilante groups, has struggled to contain the activities of bandits.

WFP freezes aid

On Wednesday, the United Nations food agency said it will be forced to suspend food and nutrition aid for 1.3 million people in Nigeria's conflict-hit northeast by the end of July, because stocks had run out due to "critical funding shortfalls".

The World Food Programme's (WFP) regional head, Margot van der Velden,

said "we will face the heartbreaking reality of having to suspend humanitarian aid for the populations in areas devastated by conflict."

That means more than 1.3 million people in Nigeria will lose access to food and nutritional support, 150 nutrition clinics in the conflict-ridden Borno State in the northeast may close, 300,000 children will be at risk of severe malnutrition, and 700,000 displaced people "will be left with no means of survival", she said.

For years, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) had been the backbone of the humanitarian response in northeastern Nigeria, helping nongovernmental organisations provide food, shelter and healthcare to millions of people.

The Trump administration has slashed foreign assistance and dismantled USAID, accusing the agency of waste and fraud and supporting a liberal agenda. Other Western donors also have slashed international aid spending.

Nigeria has budgeted 200 billion naira (\$130m) this year to cushion the shortfall from the withdrawal of funding to the health sector by the US.

Class of '99 Govs urge Tinubu to prioritise cottage industries over palliatives

By Gbenga Olaleye



Former state governors who served between 1999 and 2007, under the banner of the Class of '99 Governors Forum, have called on President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to adopt a more sustainable economic strategy by establishing cottage industries across all local government areas in Nigeria. This, they argue, would be far more beneficial to the Nigerian people than the current policy of N5,000 cash palliatives.

The governors, who were Tinubu's contemporaries during his tenure as Governor of Lagos State, made this recommendation after a closed-door meeting with the President at the Presidential Villa in Abuja on Friday.

Speaking on behalf of the forum, former Governor of Edo State and Chairman of the Class of '99 Forum, Lucky Igbinedion, emphasised the urgent need for job creation and economic empowerment at the grassroots level, particularly in rural communities.

"People in rural areas are bearing the brunt of the harsh economic climate," Igbinedion said. "We advised Mr President that rather than handing out N5,000 palliatives that can barely sustain an individual for a day, there is a need to

establish cottage industries across the 774 local government areas in the country. These industries would create employment, empower families, and foster long-term economic growth."

READ ALSO: Tinubu pledges action on GenCo debts, urges patience amidst power sector liquidity crisis
Highlighting the limitations of the palliative scheme, he added: "If you give someone N5,000 today, what happens by lunchtime or dinner time? The money is not enough to sustain anyone meaningfully. Industries will provide a lasting solution."

Security was another key issue raised during the meeting. Igbinedion stressed that meaningful development cannot occur in the absence of peace and stability.

"First and foremost, there must be security. Without security, there can be no progress. We also discussed the importance of stabilising the economy, particularly the naira and foreign exchange rates, to improve affordability and business confidence," he stated.

The meeting also touched on matters concerning agriculture and broader economic reforms. According to

Igbinedion, President Tinubu received the governors warmly and listened attentively to their concerns and recommendations.

"We came to visit one of our own to deliberate on the state of the nation. Mr President expressed concern over the same issues we raised—security, the economy, and agriculture. He assured us that he is actively working on these fronts and welcomed our suggestions. It was a very fruitful engagement," Igbinedion said.

He concluded by expressing appreciation for the President's openness and willingness to engage in constructive dialogue. "He assured us that his doors remain open for more discussions on the way forward, and we look forward to contributing further ideas for national development."

The visit from the Class of '99 Governors adds to the growing chorus of voices urging the Federal Government to adopt policies that provide sustainable solutions to Nigeria's socio-economic challenges, especially amid rising inflation and increasing hardship faced by citizens across the country.

Cholera alert: Lagos sensitises vendors, waste workers

By Friday Omosola

In a proactive move to mitigate potential cholera outbreaks, particularly in its flood-prone regions, the Lagos State Environmental Protection Agency (LASEPA) partnered with the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) and the Government of Japan to host a critical public awareness seminar.

The event, held recently at the Lagos City Centre in Sura, Lagos Island, focused on sensitising informal food and water vendors, alongside waste workers, groups identified as crucial in the transmission cycle of the disease.

The seminar falls under UNIDO Project 240236, an initiative specifically titled: 'Emergency Capacity Building of Informal Food and Water Vendors and Waste Workers in Flood-Affected Lagos to Combat Cholera Outbreaks.'

Omobolaji Gaji, Permanent Secretary of the Office of Environmental Services, represented by Aina Falaye, emphasised the severe health risks associated with cholera during the event.

He outlined key symptoms such as profuse watery diarrhoea, vomiting, dehydration, and fatigue, cautioning that these can rapidly lead to death if not promptly addressed.

Gaji stressed that cholera is predominantly spread through contaminated food and water, highlighting the paramount importance of robust environmental sanitation, diligent personal hygiene, and safe practices in handling food and water.

His recommendations included boiling water before consumption, maintaining separation between cooked and raw foods, refrigerating perishable items, and



properly disposing of spoiled goods.

He further underscored the value of waste management, noting that properly processed waste can be transformed into useful organic fertiliser, thereby discouraging careless disposal.

Gaji also encouraged the youth present to become advocates for change within their communities and urged all attendees to serve as trainers in their respective areas.

He charged them with containing their waste responsibly and managing floodwaters effectively, warning that stagnant water bodies are fertile grounds for disease outbreaks and environmental degradation.

Also, Tunde Ajayi, General Manager of LASEPA, clarified that this sensitisation initiative is part of an international collaboration with UNIDO, funded by the Japanese government.

He explained that following last year's cholera outbreak, the state government sought UNIDO's assistance to bolster its prevention efforts, especially in areas susceptible to flooding.

Ajayi noted that food and water vendors were pinpointed as key players in cholera transmission due to instances of using contaminated water in their preparations.

He added that the awareness campaign

has already reached Ikorodu and Lagos Island, with plans to expand to other local government areas in the coming months.

More so, Fuka Furutani, Attaché for Development Cooperation at the Embassy of Japan in Nigeria, reaffirmed Japan's dedication to supporting health resilience and sustainable development in Nigeria.

Commending the leadership of UNIDO and LASEPA, Furutani cited data indicating that Lagos State alone accounted for approximately 43% of all suspected cholera cases in Nigeria in 2024, reiterating Japan's commitment to assisting vulnerable communities during health crises.

Charles Uzoma, UNIDO Field Coordinator, provided an overview of the project's scope and anticipated impact.

He highlighted that Lagos experiences annual cholera outbreaks, attributing these to factors such as recurring flooding, climate change impacts, inadequate sanitation, and limited access to clean water.

While acknowledging the Federal Government's introduction of oral cholera vaccines, Uzoma stressed that public awareness and hygiene education remain indispensable tools in the fight against the disease.

Tinubu, First Lady congratulate Super Falcons on WAFCON victory

By Oluwatosin Ologun

President Bola Tinubu on Saturday congratulated the Super Falcons of Nigeria on their victory at the 2024 Women's Africa Cup of Nations (WAFCON), and in the process, secured their record 10th continental title.

The Falcons made a phenomenal comeback to defeat host nation Morocco 3-2.

The president took to his official X account to say, "They chose to accept this mission. They understood the assignment."

"Our Superior Super Falcons delivered in true Nigerian fashion. Never say Never. They went. They saw."

"They have conquered again! 10-time champions of Africa. #MissionX: COMPLETE!"

Oluremi Tinubu celebrates Super Falcons' historic WAFCON win

In a similar vein, Oluremi Tinubu, the First Lady of Nigeria, commended



the Super Falcons for their significant achievement, attributing it to their resilient spirit.

"I celebrate you, our beautiful and lovely Super Falcons, for the landmark victory of your 10th Women's Africa Cup of Nations championship," a statement signed by her.

Your resounding 3-2 victory is indeed remarkable and commendable.

It is not just another trophy; it is a

testament to your hard work, consistency, and the indomitable Nigerian spirit. We thank God for this sweet victory.

"You have once again lifted the pride of our dear nation, Nigeria and cemented your place as Queens of African football."

"On behalf of Nigerian women and the entire nation, I thank you for making us proud. You have written your names in gold and inspired millions across the continent."



Lagos govt assures global investors of thriving business environment

By Friday Omosola

Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu has reaffirmed Lagos State's commitment to fostering a robust and welcoming environment for investors.

He emphasised the government's ongoing efforts to enhance business operations.

The governor spoke through his deputy, Obafemi Hamzat, during the visit of the Georgia House of Assembly, led by Almaz Dagash, to the Lagos House in Ikeja.

Highlighting the state's significant economic potential, Sanwo-Olu underscored Lagos's immense market size, its dynamic atmosphere, and vast human capacity.

He cited the state's estimated population of approximately 24 million people and a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of around \$259 billion, positioning it as a region brimming with opportunities.

Sanwo-Olu further noted that Nigeria now benefits from a federal government dedicated to reshaping economic narratives.

He pointed to measures such as efforts to stabilise the national currency, reforms in the subsidy regime, and a comprehensive tax reform initiative – the first of its kind in about six decades, which notably exempts lower-income earners from income tax.

While acknowledging the initial challenges these reforms present for citizens, the governor stressed that their ultimate aim is to liberalise and expand the national economy.

Regarding the state's specific contributions, Sanwo-Olu detailed



ongoing efforts to liberalise various sectors and automate governmental processes.

He mentioned the statewide broadband network rollout, designed to provide internet access to public schools and institutions, alongside a digital portal to facilitate greater public interaction and civic engagement with the government.

The governor reinforced Lagos's unique market appeal, despite its small geographical footprint.

He highlighted that the state occupies only 0.4% of Nigeria's landmass but accounts for 10% of the national population.

He also pointed out that Lagos's population exceeds the combined populations of a dozen African countries, and if it were a sovereign nation, it would rank as the sixth-largest economy on the continent.

Earlier, Dagash explained that their visit

was primarily aimed at fostering collaboration.

She stressed their ongoing commitment over the past eight years to providing training, mentorship, and access to funding for entrepreneurs within Lagos.

Dagash emphasised the critical role of the diaspora in harnessing knowledge, resources, and skills for the continent's development through mentorship, investment, and opening new avenues.

When asked about Nigeria's appeal, Dagash highlighted the nation's highly educated populace and remarkable achievements across various fields.

Despite acknowledged challenges, she affirmed that Nigerians consistently demonstrate exceptional performance and make significant contributions, not just within Africa but also in their adopted communities worldwide.

Kwara govt unveils new waste disposal equipment to tackle environmental challenges

By Friday Omosola

The Kwara State Government has bolstered its environmental protection and waste management capabilities with the introduction of 70 new large-capacity waste bins and five specialised waste disposal trucks.

This strategic acquisition, a key component of the Agro-Climatic Resilience in Semi-Arid Landscapes (ACReSAL) Project, aims to foster a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable environment across the state.

The new equipment was unveiled today at the State Ministry of Environment Office in GRA Ilorin.

Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq was represented by the Commissioner for Environment and Chairman of the State Steering Committee for ACReSAL, Hajia Musa-Buge.

He emphasised his administration's commitment to improving waste management systems.

He urged diligent maintenance of the new assets to ensure their long-term benefit for the populace.

"I congratulate everyone for witnessing this milestone. We will do more to improve our waste management system in the State," the governor stated through his representative.

The Ministry of Environment is set to immediately deploy the new fleet, which includes three dyno trucks and two compactor trucks, along with the roll-on-roll-off (roro) bins, to various communities across Kwara.

Hajia Musa-Buge expressed gratitude to AbdulRazaq for his engagement with the World Bank-supported ACReSAL Project and for approving the



procurement.

She highlighted that institutional strengthening is a core objective of ACReSAL, and these new bins and trucks will significantly enhance the Ministry's operational efficiency.

She also pointed out other recent ACReSAL initiatives in the state, such as the distribution of tractors and farm inputs to farmers and the comprehensive renovation of approximately five waterworks.

The Commissioner urged Kwara citizens to adopt a more responsible approach to waste disposal, stressing that environmental protection is a shared responsibility.

Ayinla Abubakar, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Environment, commended Governor AbdulRazaq's dedication to creating a cleaner and safer environment.

He recalled that Ilorin, the state capital, was recently ranked fourth nationally by StatiSense for cities with the best environment in Nigeria.

Ayinla expressed the Ministry's ambition to achieve the top position, buoyed by this latest addition to their operational resources.

The launch event saw the attendance of several key government officials, including Jide Aina, General Manager of the Kwara State Environmental Protection Agency (KWEPA); Muazu Muhammed, Senior Special Assistant on Environmental Protection; and Isiaka Agodi, Senior Special Assistant on Grassroots Sensitisation, among others. Alhaji Shamsideen Aregbe, the State Project Coordinator for Kwara ACReSAL, led members of the State Project Management Unit (SPMU) at the ceremony, reiterating his appreciation for the Governor's consistent support for the ACReSAL Project.

NGO donates wheelchairs to LASUTH in honour of late matriarch

By **Helen Okechukwu**



With the aim of easing mobility among patients who face challenges, the Adunni Olayiwola Foundation, a non-governmental organisation (NGO), has donated 14 wheelchairs to the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH).

While disclosing this on Saturday through the hospital's Facebook post, it was shared that the donated items were in honour of the matriarch, late Mrs Adunni Olayiwola.

Speaking at the event, Mr Seun Olayiwola, son of the deceased, explained that the gesture was part of their commitment to commemorating their mother's life through impactful community service.

"This is something we do to honour our late mum, by giving back to society and supporting lives in ways that reflect her legacy. Our focus is to ensure these wheelchairs reach those who truly need them and cannot afford them," he said.

Receiving the donation, the Chief Medical Director of LASUTH, Professor Adetokunbo Fabamwo, thanked the foundation for its support.

He emphasised that while the Lagos State Government continues to invest in healthcare, contributions from well-meaning individuals and organisations remain essential.

"Wheelchairs are indispensable to the smooth running of our hospital,

particularly for elderly or immobile patients. This kind of support greatly enhances our ability to provide efficient care," he remarked.

Other senior officials of the hospital were present at the ceremony, including Professor Adebawale O. Adekoya, Director of Clinical Services and Training; Mrs Olayinka Oye-Bamgbose, Director of Hospital Administration and Human Resources; Mrs Adebola Aina, Director of Nursing Services; and Dr Olayinka Olawoye, Deputy Chairman, Medical Advisory Committee (Clinical Services II).

The family representative expressed hope that the donation would make a meaningful impact on patient welfare at LASUTH.

Big Brother Naija season 10 kicks off with N150 million grand prize

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi



The highly anticipated 10th season of Big Brother Naija officially kicked off on Saturday, July 26, as organisers unveiled a fresh set of housemates across dedicated TV channels and digital platforms.

The show, known as the most-watched reality television programme in Africa, returned with even more excitement, drama, and twists.

This year's edition will run for 90 days, during which housemates will compete in tasks, build alliances, and entertain millions of viewers for a chance to win the largest prize in the show's history, a whopping ₦150 million.

The grand prize includes a combination of cash and other rewards from show sponsors, making it the biggest prize since the show began.

During the official launch, Dr. Busola Tejumola, Executive Head of Content and West Africa Channels at MultiChoice, described this season as a major milestone in the show's journey.

"This is not just a new season; it's the celebration of a legacy," she said. "Big Brother Naija has become a living, breathing part of our culture. We've redefined what it means to create homegrown content at scale."

Tejumola also hinted at surprises in the coming weeks. According to her, Season 10 promises more twists, higher expectations, and stronger viewer interaction as the organisers aim to take the show to new heights.

The launch is scheduled to span two days from Saturday, July 26, to Sunday, July 27 with the show

airing live on DSTV channel 198 and GOtv channel 49 throughout its 10-week run.

Fans across the continent have already begun to buzz with excitement as they meet the new housemates, each bringing their unique personality, background, and ambitions into the Big Brother house.

Viewers are encouraged to follow the show closely, as voting and daily highlights will be available across various platforms. As the stakes rise and the competition intensifies, fans can expect drama, friendship, rivalry, and possibly romance, all under the watchful eyes of Big Brother.

With a record-breaking prize and a decade of success behind it, Big Brother Naija Season 10 promises to deliver another unforgettable ride.

Mixed reactions trail Priscilla Ojo's pregnancy announcement months after wedding

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

It is no longer news that actress Iyabo Ojo's daughter, Priscilla, and her husband, Tanzanian singer Juma Jux, have announced they are expecting their first child.

What, however, appears to be new is the timing of the announcement, coming just three months after the couple held their traditional wedding ceremony in Lagos in April.

This followed their Muslim marriage in February and was completed with the final leg of the celebrations in Tanzania in May.

The pregnancy news, which attracted a flood of congratulatory messages from family, friends, and well-wishers, also sparked a wave of mixed reactions from fans and followers across social media platforms.

The New Daily Prime reported on the diverse reactions that trailed the announcement.

Reactions trail Priscilla pregnancy news
Following the pregnancy news, social media users shared a range of emotions. Some fans congratulated the couple and celebrated their growing family.

"Big Congratulations to @priscilla_ojo. This is the best news I've heard this year."
—@aro_shola

"Glory be to God... Congratulations." —
@ify0406

"The way I'm happy for Iyabo Ojo and Priscilla, eh, you'd think they were my family." —@AO_Maryam

Iyabo Ojo also shared her excitement, writing:

"Your joy is permanent, and your home is blessed in Jesus' name... Sexiest grandma loaded." —@iyaboojofespris

Also, reacting to this on Instagram, TikToker Peller sparked reactions with his comment under Priscilla's post. He wrote: "@realjadrolita do this for me, I swear u no go regret". Then Jarvis replied



with @peller089, then get married abi you see her do it out of wedlock"

Not everyone was convinced by the surprise announcement. One of Priscilla's close friends, Enioluwa Adeoluwa, posted on his X (formerly Twitter) handle, he wrote:

"Screaming!!!! God is so good!!!!" —
@enioluwaofficial

However, fans quickly challenged his reaction:

"Stop pretending like you didn't know all this while, Eni." —@ella_bosslady

"You denied it before... remember the interview." —@Tedtalkwith_JOS

The couple's relationship has remained in the spotlight since they met during a work trip in Rwanda. From romantic proposals to multiple wedding ceremonies and now a baby on the way, their journey has captured attention across Nigeria and Tanzania.

While some question the pace of events, others continue to celebrate with the couple using the hashtag #Jp2025.

Whatever the opinions, Priscilla and Jux appear committed to embracing this new chapter in full view of the public eye.



Background

Priscilla and Jux's wedding celebrations began with a Nikkah ceremony held on 8 and 9 February 2025 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

During the event, Priscilla adopted the Islamic name Hadiza Mkambala. However, the absence of her father at the ceremony stirred some early debate on social media.

Shortly afterwards, the couple hosted an engagement party in Lagos to coincide with Valentine's Day.

This was followed by their traditional and white wedding, which took place in Nigeria on 17 April.

The grand finale of their cross-border wedding festivities was held on 28 May at the Superdome in Tanzania, drawing guests from Kenya, Uganda, the United States, and Nigeria.

The lavish ceremonies were planned and organised with the support of Priscilla's mother, Nollywood actress Iyabo Ojo, who described the celebrations as "carnival-like."

According to reports, Priscilla personally funded as many as 16 wedding outfits, as Jux was unavailable for most of the planning process.

Popular actor, Odunlade Adekola loses father

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi



Nollywood actor Odunlade Adekola has announced the passing of his father, Pastor N.A. Adekola.

The popular actor shared the sad news with fans and followers on Instagram. In a simple but emotional post, he uploaded a photo of his late father with the caption, “Rest on my daddy.”

So far, the cause of Pastor Adekola’s death has not been revealed.

Since the announcement, tributes and words of comfort have continued to pour in from fans, friends, and colleagues across the entertainment industry.

Many flooded the actor’s comment section, expressing their sorrow and offering prayers for strength and peace.

Several of his colleagues, including

fellow actors and entertainers, have also taken to social media to show support. They described Pastor Adekola as a man of deep faith who lived a life of service to God and others.

Adekola’s fans react

Some fans recalled moments when the actor had shared stories about his father’s teachings, noting that his strong moral values were passed down.

“Your father raised a good man. May his soul rest in peace,” one fan commented.

Another wrote, “We pray God gives you and your family the strength to bear this loss.”

Others celebrated Pastor Adekola’s legacy as a pastor and community leader, noting that his work had touched many lives.

Odunlade Adekola, who is known for his roles in Yoruba-language films and blockbuster comedies, has always spoken with pride about his upbringing and the role his father played in shaping his life and career.

Though grieving, the actor has yet to share further details about funeral arrangements or how the family intends to honour his late father.

Fans continue to post messages of love and remembrance under his tribute post, with many noting that the elder Adekola’s impact will not be forgotten.

As tributes continue to pour in, one thing is clear Pastor N.A. Adekola was not only a father to one of Nollywood’s most respected actors but also a man whose faith and influence left a lasting mark on many.

Omauwumi counters Timaya's claim of Burna Boy's 'disrespect'

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigerian singer Omauwumi has firmly denied a claim made by fellow artiste Timaya, alleging that a young Burna Boy once ordered her and Waje out of a recording studio.

She described the story as entirely false and disrespectful.

In a recent interview with Naija FM, Lagos, Omauwumi expressed strong disapproval of the statement, which has sparked wide discussion on social media since it resurfaced.

The original claim was made by Timaya in a December 2023 interview, where he said Burna Boy had confidently predicted his future success and told both Omauwumi and Waje to leave the studio after they supposedly doubted him.

According to Timaya, Burna Boy's words at the time included a bold prediction: "One day, they will pay me to enter a private jet."

Omauwumi reacts

However, Omauwumi has now responded directly, saying the incident never occurred and that she is disappointed her name was used in what she considers an attempt to boost Burna Boy's image at her expense.

"That thing no happen," Omauwumi said, making her position clear. "What hurt me the most about it is that I've been friends with Timaya for a long time. He knows me. We've all been in this music industry for years, and one thing I've always stood for is respect."

She noted that Burna Boy himself has never made such a claim and has always shown respect whenever they meet.

"I'm very big on respect, and that's how I've built my brand. I don't talk down on my colleagues, and I expect the same from them. So, I found it irritating that Timaya brought my name into a story like that," she said.



According to Omauwumi, using her name in a negative or false light, especially in a bid to praise another artiste, crossed the line. She added that her disappointment stemmed from the fact that someone she considered a friend chose to involve her in a story that never happened, especially in a manner that could damage her reputation.

"Why mention me? Even if you want to praise Burna Boy, must you throw others under the bus? It's not fair," she said. "Timaya himself has had his share of awkward or embarrassing situations. But I've never brought those things to the public just to push my career. That's not how I operate."

Omauwumi further clarified that there has never been a moment in her career where Burna Boy acted in such a manner towards her or Waje. She recalled the only time they all shared a space.

"For context, the only time I've been with Burna Boy, Waje, and Timaya in the same room was in 2010. Waje was recording a song with Burna Boy and she invited us over. I was there briefly and left early because it was getting late. That's the only occasion I remember," she explained.

She said the story Timaya told could have long-lasting effects, especially as people now bring it up when her name is mentioned. "Whether he meant it in a good or bad way, it doesn't matter. The truth is, it never happened. And I don't appreciate being dragged into something just for headlines or internet clout."

Omauwumi emphasised the importance of protecting one's name in an industry where false stories often spread faster than the truth. She urged her colleagues to be more careful and responsible when speaking publicly, especially about others.

"This is a name I've worked almost 20 years to build," she said. "Timaya should have known better."

In closing, Omauwumi reaffirmed her respect for both Burna Boy and Waje, stating that they continue to maintain a cordial relationship. She made it clear that while she has no intention of creating conflict, she will not stay silent when her integrity is being questioned.

"Respect is not just about what you say when people are watching. It's about what you choose not to say when it could hurt others," she added.

10 controversial moments of lovers Juma Jux and Priscilla

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

The names Priscilla Ojo and Juma Jux are hardly unfamiliar, especially to anyone who followed the social media sensation #JP2025, which trended for weeks across various platforms.

Priscilla, daughter of actress Iyabo Ojo, and her Tanzanian husband, singer Juma Jux, remained among the most talked-about personalities from February through to May 2025 and continue to make headlines even now.

Their union not only captured public imagination but also placed them among the most Googled individuals in the first half of the year (2025 Q1).

Their highly publicised wedding unfolded in three phases: an Islamic ceremony in February, a traditional wedding in April in Lagos, and a grand finale in Tanzania in May. Each event attracted dignitaries from diverse sectors and drew widespread media attention.

Now, the couple is back in the spotlight with renewed fame, having announced on Thursday that they are expecting their first child together.

10 most talked about moments of Priscilla and Jux

In this article, The New Daily Prime highlights ten of the most controversial moments surrounding their wedding, both before and after the ceremonies.

1. Wedding drama and celebrity commentary

Shortly after the couple's wedding celebrations, Nigerian actress Lizzy Anjorin found herself at the centre of an online controversy.

Rumours began circulating that she was either envious of the wedding's success or had made disparaging remarks about it.

In a swift response, Lizzy addressed the claims on social media, firmly denying any personal grievance with the newlyweds and insisting she wished them no ill will.

The incident reignited discussions about envy within Nollywood and the persistent tendency to associate female celebrities with controversies in which they have no involvement.



2. Feud with Tanzanian blogger Mange Kimambi

More so, controversial Tanzanian blogger Mange Kimambi aimed at the couple, criticising them for sharing what she described as "stupid things" on social media during a politically sensitive period in Tanzania.

She went further to allege that their lavish wedding was orchestrated to divert public attention from the country's elections, even insinuating that the Tanzanian government may have funded the event.

Ms Ojo swiftly refuted the claims, stating that her family covered all the wedding expenses and condemned the allegations as false and harmful.

3. Public display of cash

Additionally, a video of Juma Jux handing bundles of US dollars to Priscilla at an airport went viral, sparking mixed reactions across social media.

While some fans praised the gesture as romantic and lavish, many Nigerians and Tanzanians criticised it as excessive and performative.

Detractors questioned the need to film such a moment, arguing that it glorified materialism and was little more than an attempt to chase clout.

Others described the public display as insensitive, especially amid worsening economic conditions across Africa.

4. Rapid courtship and marriage

Also, the couple reportedly made their relationship public in late 2024 and tied the knot by April 2025. Their whirlwind six-month courtship sparked widespread speculation about the depth of their connection.

Fans and bloggers alike questioned whether the relationship was a genuine, long-term commitment or a publicity-driven romance.

Given the pair's high public profile, the rapid progression of their love story fuelled online debates about whether true love can genuinely flourish so quickly under intense media scrutiny.

5. Priscilla's religious conversion

Juma Jux disclosed that Priscilla embraced Islam, attributing her decision to "patience, prayer, and love."

While he commended her choice, the announcement sparked mixed reactions. Some praised her for taking the step, while others questioned whether she had been influenced by Jux or his family.

**Continue reading
on next page**

Cont from page 18

While he commended her choice, the announcement sparked mixed reactions. Some praised her for taking the step, while others questioned whether she had been influenced by Jux or his family.

Critics debated whether the conversion was a sincere spiritual decision or an attempt to assimilate into a new cultural and religious environment.

Priscilla's past with singer Lil Kesh

Speculation about a romantic relationship between Priscilla and Nigerian rapper Lil Kesh has lingered for years, fuelled by their numerous public appearances together.

In a recent interview, Priscilla addressed the rumours, revealing that she ended the relationship because, in her words, "I'm rich, I need someone richer."

The remark divided public opinion, drawing both support and criticism.

Juma Jux's ex-girlfriend's reaction Following the wedding, one of Juma Jux's former girlfriends, believed to be Tanzanian influencer Karen, shared a

series of cryptic posts online.

Although she did not mention the couple directly, many fans interpreted her messages as subtle jabs at Jux and Priscilla.

While some viewed the posts as expressions of jealousy, others felt they hinted at unresolved emotional ties. The incident reignited public interest in Jux's romantic history, particularly his long-term relationship with singer Vanessa Mdee.

Social media unfollow triggers speculation

Shortly after the wedding, Priscilla unfollowed Nigerian TikTok star John Merry, who had previously congratulated her.

The move quickly caught fans' attention, sparking rumours of personal tension or behind-the-scenes fallout.

Although neither party made a public comment, the unfollow generated buzz about changing loyalties within the influencer community and hinted at potential post-wedding drama.

Backlash over cultural disconnect

Several Tanzanian YouTubers and online commenters criticised Priscilla for appearing "disengaged" during traditional wedding ceremonies and "failing to learn enough Swahili."

The couple was accused of focusing too heavily on glamour and aesthetics while neglecting to meaningfully engage with Jux's cultural heritage. Some observers also felt that media coverage leaned too heavily towards the Nigerian narrative, marginalising Tanzanian traditions.

Lavish in-law reception

Videos from the in-law reception, hosted by Ms Ojo and her family, showcased an extravagant celebration featuring traditional dancers, luxury vehicles, ceremonial displays, and celebrity guests.

While many applauded the elaborate welcome given to the Tanzanian family, others, both in Nigeria and Tanzania, criticised it as ostentatious and unnecessarily extravagant, especially when compared to more modest wedding customs.

Jim Iyke clarifies birthday message to Kate Henshaw wasn't sexual

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nollywood actor Jim Iyke has spoken out in response to the backlash over his recent birthday message to fellow actor Kate Henshaw.

The controversial post, shared on Instagram, sparked mixed reactions due to its personal tone and suggestive language.

In the post, Iyke praised Henshaw, expressed past romantic interest, and reflected on their early days in Nollywood. One line in particular caught attention: "You knew all that time I wanted to hit that." Many Nigerians found the message inappropriate, especially on Henshaw's birthday.

Among those who criticised him was actor Gideon Okeke, who accused Iyke of crossing the line. Okeke argued that the post shared "too much information" and was disrespectful.



Jim Iyke clarifies

Following the backlash, Jim Iyke addressed the issue during an interview. He stood by his words and explained that the message was not meant to be taken sexually or disrespectfully.

"I meant every word I said," Iyke stated firmly. "I don't speak carelessly. I choose my words carefully. I've known Kate for

over 20 years. We've grown together as friends, like brother and sister."

He described the message as a "wordplay" born out of deep familiarity and emotional honesty. According to him, it was a private expression shared in a public space, something he believed Kate would understand.

"It was written from a place of comfort," he explained. "These are thoughts people usually keep in their heads. But sometimes, you decide to put it into words and let the world see how you truly feel about someone who has been part of your journey."

Iyke stressed that there was nothing sexual or romantic about the post. "It doesn't suggest I'm dating her. It was not about lust," he said. "It was a genuine message from a place of love and respect."

BBNaija Season 10: Ebuka introduces new Head of House rules

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi



The host of Big Brother Naija Season 10, Ebuka Obi-Uchendu, has revealed a major shake-up to the Head of House (HoH) system.

The new rules are set to change how the game is played and how housemates fight for power each week.

In previous seasons, housemates competed in HoH games to secure a coveted position that came with several benefits.

The winner of the game enjoyed immunity from eviction for that week and exclusive access to a special lounge, complete with better food, stylish furniture, and added comfort.

But this season, the game is evolving.

Ebuka announced that starting this week, the Head of House game will now take place every Sunday. This move marks a shift from the usual Monday competitions and adds more excitement to the weekend live shows.

However, that's not all. A new feature called the "Head of House Challenger Game" has been introduced. This fresh twist will happen every Monday and gives other housemates the chance to challenge the sitting HoH for the title.

Simply put, winning the HoH title on Sunday no longer guarantees safety throughout the week. The champion must now defend their crown just 24 hours later.

"This season is all about surprises," Ebuka said. "No one can afford to get too comfortable. You may be

Head of House today, but you'll have to prove yourself again tomorrow."

With this change, housemates will now face more pressure and uncertainty. It adds a new layer of strategy, as players must not only win but also hold their ground in a rapidly shifting game.

Ebuka also confirmed that the first HoH game will take place tomorrow, Saturday, July 27. All eyes will be on the housemates as they battle for the first power shot and prepare to defend it almost immediately.

As Big Brother Naija Season 10 heats up, fans can expect more drama, competition, and unexpected twists. With new rules in play, the fight for survival just got tougher, and a lot more thrilling.

Hamas rejects Trump's remarks on Gaza talks breakdown

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi



Hamas officials expressed surprise on Saturday at US President Donald Trump's accusation that the group "didn't really want" a ceasefire and hostage release deal for Gaza.

Trump made the allegation on Friday, a day after Israel and the United States quit indirect negotiations with Hamas in Qatar that had lasted nearly three weeks.

"Trump's remarks are particularly surprising, especially as they come at a time when progress had been made on some of the negotiation files," Hamas official Taher al-Nunu told AFP.

"So far, we have not been informed of any issues regarding the files under discussion in the indirect ceasefire negotiations", he added

Nunu, who is close to Hamas's most senior political officials, said he was "surprised" that Israel and the United States had left the talks.

Announcing the recall of US mediators on Thursday, Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff accused Hamas of not "acting in good faith".

Though not part of the Hamas negotiating team, Hamas politburo member Izzat al-Rishq insisted the group had shown "flexibility" in the talks.

"The American statements deliberately ignore the real obstructionist to all agreements, Netanyahu's government, which continues to put obstacles, deceive and evade commitments," he said.

Both Hamas officials called on the United States to be more even-handed in its role as mediator in the quest for a ceasefire after more than 21 months of fighting.

"We call for an end to the US bias in favour of Netanyahu, who is obstructing any agreement", Nunu said.

Starmar's EU deal set to increase cruise and ferry costs for UK holidaymakers

By Fatimah Idera

British holidaymakers may face higher prices for cruises and ferry journeys to Europe as part of Sir Keir Starmer's new agreement with the EU, which will see the UK adopt Brussels' environmental rules for the maritime industry.

Ticket prices are expected to rise as passenger services adjust to the costs of joining the EU's emissions trading system (ETS), a move that will affect shipping operators, including cruise lines and ferry companies.

Industry insiders have warned that price hikes could mirror those seen in Europe, where fares on some routes have jumped by over 10%. For UK travellers, this could mean an extra £200 on the cost of a seven-day cruise, with luxury cabins already priced around £2,000.

The changes are scheduled to take effect in July 2025, just before the peak summer travel season, potentially impacting millions of British tourists heading to the continent.

The new measures are part of the government's push to expand the UK's net zero commitments. Under the revised rules, all maritime firms operating between UK ports will be required to participate in the UK's ETS. This scheme places a cap on carbon emissions and requires companies to buy permits for the greenhouse gases they emit. If a company exceeds its emissions allowance, it must purchase additional permits from others.

Over time, the emissions cap will be reduced, encouraging firms to invest in greener technologies but also driving up costs in the short term. These expenses are likely to be passed on to passengers.

Initially, the UK ETS will apply only to domestic routes, but ministers plan to extend it to international voyages, aligning more closely with EU regulations.

The European Commission has acknowledged that its own ETS expansion into shipping has led to fare increases. An official report found that surcharges were being added on short sea routes, with ticket prices rising between 3% and 11%. Freight costs rose by up to



5%, while average shipping costs increased by 3.7%.

Industry representatives say similar effects are expected in the UK. One cruise sector insider commented: "There's no doubt ferry operators and cruise lines will need to recoup these added costs that means higher prices for passengers."

Another added: "Inevitably, the cost burden on cruise lines will be passed on to consumers."

Some businesses have criticised the UK Government for rushing into alignment with the EU ahead of a forthcoming international agreement on maritime emissions, expected later this year. If global standards set by the International Maritime Organisation are less demanding, British firms could find themselves at a disadvantage compared to international competitors.

Andy Harmer, UK & Ireland Managing Director of the Cruise Lines International Association, warned that the policy could damage the UK's position in the global cruise market.

"The cruise industry contributes £5.8 billion to the UK economy and supports over 60,000 jobs," he said. "To grow sustainably, the UK's ETS must be in step

with international standards. Misalignment could harm our competitiveness."

The plan has also sparked alarm over the future of essential island ferry services, used by around 2.4 million people annually. Routes serving the Isle of Wight, the Isles of Scilly, and other remote areas are critical lifelines for communities who rely on them for medical care, education, and supplies.

The UK Chamber of Shipping has urged ministers to exempt these routes from the ETS, warning that fuel costs could rise by up to 30%, making many services economically unsustainable.

A spokesperson for the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero defended the plan, saying that linking with the EU's system will help British businesses avoid additional costs from Brussels' upcoming carbon border tax and reduce customs red tape.

They added: "These EU figures do not apply to the UK and don't reflect that costs can fall over time as emissions are reduced. Linking with the EU's scheme will make trade easier, protect consumers from long-term price shocks, and boost domestic economic growth."

World's most premature baby celebrates first birthday in Iowa

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



A toddler born at just 21 weeks' gestation has officially been recognised by Guinness World Records as the most premature baby to survive, after recently celebrating his first birthday.

Nash Keen, born on 5 July 2024 at the University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital, arrived 133 days before his due date, making his survival an extraordinary feat in modern neonatal medicine. Weighing just 10 ounces (approximately 283 grams), about the size of a bar of soap, Nash spent six months in the hospital's neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) under constant medical supervision.

His mother, Mollie Keen, described her son as "very determined, curious ... and he's just all smiles all the time."

His father, Randall Keen, echoed the sentiment in an interview published by Guinness on Wednesday: "Nash is going to be able to say, 'You know what? I came into this world fighting, and I'm going to leave fighting.'"

Nash's journey to the record books came

two years after tragedy struck the Keen family, when their daughter, McKinley, was born prematurely at nearly 18 weeks and did not survive. Understandably, the couple were cautious during Mollie's pregnancy with Nash.

"We were so excited, but also very nervous," Mollie said. "We didn't get our hopes up."

Despite the extremely premature birth, Nash defied the odds. Dr Amy Stanford, a neonatologist who cared for him in the NICU, detailed the fragile beginnings and his remarkable progress.

"He underwent highly specialised care, constant surveillance and frequent monitoring," Dr Stanford told Guinness. "But after those first few extremely delicate weeks, he began to make steady progress, which was truly extraordinary to witness."

Nash's story is part of a broader trend, illustrating how advancements in neonatal care are enabling more extremely premature babies to survive and thrive.

Now just over a year old, Nash remains on oxygen support and relies on a feeding tube, though his parents have begun preparing to introduce puréed foods. His doctors are optimistic that a minor heart defect will correct itself with time. While he has not yet started crawling, he has begun rolling over and expressing a vibrant personality.

"Whenever you call him 'Nash potato', or you cheer him on when he's trying to pull himself up ... he just hams it up," said Randall. "It makes him want to succeed and do more."

A small gathering of close friends and family marked Nash's first birthday with gifts including educational toys, outfits, and of course, the official Guinness World Record certificate. Nash edged out the previous record holder, born in Alabama in 2020, by just one day.

For Mollie and Randall, Nash's survival has brought profound joy.

"I love waking up to him," Mollie said. "He's truly the best thing that could have happened to us."

Starmer: UK to evacuate children from Gaza

By **Fatimah Idera**



Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer has announced that Britain will begin evacuating critically ill children from the Gaza Strip for urgent medical treatment in the UK, as aid agencies warn of severe famine and a collapsing humanitarian situation in the region.

Speaking, Sir Keir described the starvation facing Palestinians as absolutely horrifying and said the UK is taking immediate steps to assist the most vulnerable.

“We are urgently accelerating efforts to evacuate children from Gaza who need critical medical assistance in bringing more Palestinian children to the UK for specialist medical treatment,” he said. “The British people are sickened by what is happening. The images of starvation and desperation in Gaza are utterly horrifying.”

The announcement follows warnings from the World Food Programme (WFP), which reported that one in three Gazans have gone without food for days.

Malnutrition is rising rapidly, with 90,000 women and children in urgent need of care, according to the agency.

As the crisis deepens, France, Germany, and the UK have called on Israel to lift its restrictions on humanitarian aid entering the enclave. A group of 100 NGOs echoed those demands, describing a situation in which Palestinians are “wasting away” and even collapsing in the streets from hunger.

25% of children, pregnant women in Gaza now malnourished
Doctors Without Borders (Médecins Sans Frontières) has accused Israel of using starvation as a weapon in its military campaign, launched after the October 7 Hamas attacks. The group said that 25% of children and pregnant women in Gaza are now malnourished, and condemned the distribution efforts by the US- and Israel-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation.

Dr Mohammed Abu Mughaisib, MSF’s deputy medical coordinator in Gaza,

warned: “Those who go to the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation’s food distributions know that they have the same chance of receiving a sack of flour as they do of leaving with a bullet in their head.”

According to the United Nations, over 1,000 people have been killed by Israeli forces near designated aid distribution sites. The Israeli military has denied intentionally targeting civilians and says it is investigating the reported deaths.

Sir Keir also reiterated calls for the immediate release of hostages held by Hamas and renewed his support for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including formal UK recognition of a Palestinian state.

“The denial of humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people as well as children and babies is completely unjustifiable. So is the continued captivity of the hostages. And so is Israel’s disproportionate military escalation in Gaza,” the Prime Minister wrote.

Hundreds of Nigerians pose as authors to enter UK through visa scheme

By Fatimah Idera

Hundreds of Nigerian nationals have entered the UK by applying through a specialist visa scheme designed to attract exceptional literary talent.

The Global Talent visa, a route aimed at individuals with proven excellence in fields such as music, theatre, dance, and literature, has seen more applications from Nigerians in the literary category than from any other nationality. The scheme includes writers, poets, spoken word artists, oral storytellers, and graphic novelists.

Applicants must receive an endorsement from Arts Council England (ACE), a government-funded body empowered to assess and approve applications based on artistic merit. Once endorsed, successful applicants can bring dependents to the UK and stay for up to five years, subject to final Home Office approval.

However, over the past five years Nigerian applicants have submitted 125 applications under the literature category and more than twice the 61 submitted by U.S. citizens and significantly more than applications from Australia, Canada, and New Zealand combined.

Of these Nigerian applications, 54 received endorsements, the highest number of successful endorsements for any nationality. However, 70 were rejected, indicating a 59% success rate and one of the lowest, ahead only of Ghana.

The increase in applications reflects a broader trend: since 2019, submissions from Nigeria for all arts-related Global Talent categories (including music, theatre, dance, and visual arts) have risen by 2,225%, from just 12 applications in 2019 to



279 in 2024. In total, Nigerians have made 729 such applications second only to the U.S. (977).

The spike in applications comes as the Labour Government faces mounting pressure to reduce legal and illegal immigration. Critics argue that visa routes such as the Global Talent scheme are being exploited, while others point out that Nigeria has produced globally recognized authors, including Ben Okri, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, and Ayòbámi Adébáyò. Chinua Achebe's classic novel *Things Fall Apart* remains widely taught in UK schools.

Still, the apparent surge in applications under the literary category has raised eyebrows. Arts Council England has endorsed more than 3,600 applications across all nationalities since 2019, out of over 5,000 total submissions. But the Home Office does not publicly disclose how many endorsed applicants were ultimately granted visas.

Other countries with high application rates include Russia (725), China

(492), Australia (233), and India (160).

The report also comes amid debate over the UK's shortage occupation list, a tool used to prioritize visa approvals for roles deemed hard to fill. Currently, that list includes creative professions like "poet," "blogger," and other writing roles, all falling under the broader category of "authors, writers, and translators." The list is scheduled for review in December 2026.

A 2022 report by the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre found that the median income for a self-employed writer in the UK was just £7,000, below the £12,570 tax-free personal allowance raising further questions about the economic impact of applicants using the route.

Despite these concerns, the government has pledged to protect skilled worker routes for those with specialist skills, including roles related to diversity and inclusion, as part of its broader immigration strategy.

Super Falcons beat host nation Morocco to clinch 10th WAFCON title

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



Nigeria's Super Falcons pulled off a remarkable comeback to defeat host nation Morocco 3-2 in a thrilling final on Saturday, securing their historic 10th Women's Africa Cup of Nations (WAFCON) title.

The win was a sweet redemption for Justin Madugu's squad, who had been knocked out by the North Africans in the semi-finals of the previous edition.

Despite a dominant start by Nigeria, Morocco took the lead in the 13th minute after a scramble in the box left Ghizlane Chebbak, the tournament's leading scorer, with enough space to rifle a powerful shot past goalkeeper Chiamaka Nnadozie.

Ijamilusi Folashade tried to spark a response but saw her tame shot easily gathered by Moroccan keeper Khadija Er-Rmichi.

Morocco doubled their advantage in the 28th minute when Mssoudy collected the ball on the left edge of the penalty area and fired a low, driven shot into the bottom corner, sending the home crowd at the Prince Moulay Abdellah Stadium into a frenzy.

The North Africans went into halftime with a 2-0 lead, appearing in control of the encounter.

But the second half saw a revitalized Super Falcons emerge, applying coordinated pressing and sharper passing. Their efforts nearly paid off early when a defensive mix-up between Er-Rmichi and teammate Rabbah almost gifted Nigeria a goal, but the Moroccan defence scrambled to clear the danger.

The breakthrough eventually came in the 63rd minute when Ijamilusi's lofted cross struck the outstretched arm of Nouhaila Benzina in the box. Chinwendu Okoronkwo stepped up and confidently converted the resulting penalty to reduce the deficit.

Just eight minutes later, Okoronkwo turned provider, racing down the right flank and squaring the ball across the face of goal for Ijamilusi, who slotted home with composure to level the score.

With momentum on their side, the Super Falcons completed the dramatic turnaround in the 88th minute. A deep free kick found Jennifer Echegini at the far post, and she stretched to poke the ball past Er-Rmichi, sealing an unforgettable 3-2 win.

Tinubu, Remi hail Super Falcons

President Bola Tinubu was among the first to congratulate the team, praising their never-give-up spirit.

Taking to his official X account, Tinubu

wrote: "They chose to accept this mission. They understood the assignment. Our Superior Super Falcons delivered in true Nigerian fashion. Never say never. They went. They saw. They have conquered again! 10-time champions of Africa. #MissionX: COMPLETE!"

First Lady Oluremi Tinubu also commended the players for their exceptional achievement, celebrating the resilience and pride they brought to Nigeria.

"I celebrate you, our beautiful and lovely Super Falcons, for the landmark victory of your 10th Women's Africa Cup of Nations championship," she said in a statement.

"Your resounding 3-2 victory is indeed remarkable and commendable. It is not just another trophy; it is a testament to your hard work, consistency, and the indomitable Nigerian spirit. We thank God for this sweet victory."

"You have once again lifted the pride of our dear nation and cemented your place as Queens of African football," she added. "On behalf of Nigerian women and the entire nation, I thank you for making us proud. You have written your names in gold and inspired millions across the continent."