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Eid-ul-Fitr: FG declares March 19, 20 public holidays

By Helen Okechukwu

The Federal Government (FG) has announced Thursday, 19 March, and Friday, 20 March, 2026, as public holidays in observance of Eid-ul-Fitr, marking the end of the Ramadan fast.

Minister of Interior, Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo in a statement signed by the Permanent Secretary, Magdalene Ajani, disclosed this on behalf of the government, congratulating Muslim faithful on the successful completion of the holy month.

In a statement released on Tuesday, the Minister urged adherents of Islam to continue embracing the values of love, generosity, peace, tolerance and sacrifice practised during Ramadan.

He also called on Nigerians to use the occasion to offer prayers for the nation's peace, unity and sustained development.

“The Federal Government of Nigeria has declared Thursday, 19th March, and



Friday, 20th March 2026, as public holidays to mark the celebration of Eid-ul-Fitr, which signifies the end of the holy month of Ramadan,” the statement read.

While wishing Muslims a joyful Eid celebration, Tunji-Ojo advised citizens to celebrate in moderation and remember

the less privileged through acts of kindness and charity.

The Federal Government reiterated its commitment to strengthening national unity and fostering peaceful coexistence across the country.

THE NEW DAILY PRIME RATE CARD

PUBLIC NOTICE COLOUR

PRODUCT COLOUR

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SIZE	TOTAL RATE
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QUARTER PAGE	106,500.00
14X2	118,000.00
10X6	261,585.50
10X5	255,238.00
10X4	206,890.50
10X3	179,608.00
9X6	254,977.00
9X5	225,738.00
9X4	193,500.00
9X3	166,223.50
8X6	225,368.50
8X3	106,934.50
7X4	180,173.50
6X4	100,434.50
6X3	82,750.00
6X2	52,499.50
5X6	123,749.50
5X5	110,000.00
5X4	76,833.00
5X3	66,875.00
5X2	42,916.50
4X4	60,166.50
4X3	36,499.50
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3X3	28,000.00
3X2	17,400.00
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8X6	216,000.00
8X3	98,500.00
7X4	164,002.00
6X4	94,010.50
6X3	78,500.00
6X2	47,500.00
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POLITICAL COLOUR

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POLITICAL BLACK & WHITE

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8X3	N/A
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EARPIECE FRONT PAGE(1.5X2)	246,500.00
EARPIECE INSIDE PAGE(1.5X2)	117,875.00
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CENTRE SPREAD COLOUR (PRODUCT)	929,000.00
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DOUBLE SPREAD HALF COLOUR	432,881.00
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CENTRE SPREAD B&W	835,000.00
CENTRE SPREAD HALF PAGE B & W	550,000.00
DOUBLE SPREAD B & W	725,000.00
DOUBLE SPREAD HALF B & W	425,000.00
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PHOTO NEWS (4X4)	53,333.30	4,250.00	57,583.30
PRESS RELEASE (4X4)	30,000.00	2,250.00	32,250.00
EVENT COVERAGE	100,000.00	7,500.00	107,500.00
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Tinubu departs for historic UK state visit, first in 37 years

By **Damilola Olufemi**

President Bola Tinubu on Tuesday departed Abuja for a state visit to the United Kingdom — the first by a Nigerian leader in 37 years.

The Airbus A330 conveying the President and the First Lady, Oluremi Tinubu, took off from the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport at about 10:00 a.m.

According to a statement issued on Monday by presidential spokesman Bayo Onanuga, the President and his wife will be hosted by King Charles III and Queen Camilla at Windsor Castle from March 18 to 19.

Tinubu is the first Nigerian leader to be received by a British monarch at Windsor Castle.

The presidency said the visit is aimed at strengthening bilateral relations and expanding cooperation in key areas, including immigration, trade, investment, and cultural exchange.

The New Daily Prime reported activities lined up for the visit include a state banquet hosted by the Royal Family and private talks between the Nigerian leader and the King. The President and First Lady will also tour a special Royal



Collection exhibition featuring Nigerian-related artefacts.

In addition, Tinubu will meet organisations involved in interfaith dialogue and hold high-level talks with British Prime Minister Keir Starmer at 10 Downing Street.

The bilateral meeting is expected to culminate in the signing of several Memoranda of Understanding covering trade, investment, defence, and cultural

cooperation.

A key highlight of the visit will be the signing of a £746 million financing agreement between UK Export Finance and Nigerian authorities to support the rehabilitation of the Lagos Port Complex (Apapa Quays) and Tin Can Island Port Complex.

The President is also scheduled to attend the Nigerian Modernism exhibition and a business reception with Nigerian and British investors, as well as members of the diaspora community.

Among those accompanying the President are Senate President Godswill Akpabio; Attorney General Lateef Fagbemi; Minister of Finance Wale Edun; Minister of Communications Bosun Tijani; and National Security Adviser Nuhu Ribadu, among others.

The last Nigerian state visit to the United Kingdom took place in 1989, when former military president Ibrahim Babangida visited during the reign of Queen Elizabeth II.

President Tinubu is expected to return to Nigeria at the end of the visit.

Soludo sworn in for second term

By **Ridwanullah Sakariyah**

Governor Chukwuma Soludo of Anambra State has been sworn in for a second term in office, marking the start of a fresh four-year mandate.

The ceremony took place on Tuesday at Dr Alex Ekwueme Square in Awka, drawing top political figures and dignitaries from across Nigeria and beyond.

Soludo arrived the venue at about 11:18 a.m. alongside notable personalities, including Vice President Kashim Shettima, former presidents Olusegun Obasanjo and Goodluck Jonathan, as well as elder statesman Emeka Anyaoku and the Ooni of Ife, Adeyeye Ogunwusi.

At exactly 11:50 a.m., the governor took the oath of allegiance, followed by the



oath of office, completing both within five minutes.

His wife, Nonye Soludo, stood beside him throughout the brief but symbolic process.

Moments later, at about 11:55 a.m., Soludo signed the oath documents before the Chief Judge of the state, as the crowd responded with applause.

The event officially signals the start of his second term, which will run until 2030.

Wike dismisses claims of banditry in Abuja

By Clement Abayomi

Federal Capital Territory Minister Nyesom Wike has stated that there is no banditry happening in Abuja.

He made this remark in a video on Channels TV, where he addressed concerns about security in Abuja.

According to Wike, the security challenges or issues in the country are everywhere.

He explained that every major city in the world, including developed places like the United States, deals with various forms of crime.

He noted that it is nearly impossible for any city to be completely free of criminal activities.

Wike said, "There's no where in this world, be it in America, . . . developed countries, that you would say there's no one form of crime."

Speaking on the specific situation in



Abuja, Wike said he does not believe that bandits are operating in the city.

He mentioned that there has been only one major incident. He also pointed out that people often ignore the work being done to reduce or stop these crimes.

He said, "The point is that we've only heard one incident but nobody has said we've been able to curb or reduce this. I

don't believe about banditry."

Wike suggested that a major city like Abuja is a target for different types of criminals.

He admitted that there are cases of kidnapping, which he said are carried out by people who come into the city specifically to commit such acts.

Kwankwaso Condemns Maiduguri Bombings as 23 Killed in Renewed Terror Attacks

By Gbenga Olaleye

Former Governor of Kano State, Rabiu Kwankwaso, has expressed deep sorrow following a series of suicide bombings in Maiduguri that reportedly killed 23 people and injured more than 100 others.

In a statement released on Tuesday, Kwankwaso described the coordinated attacks as "horrific" and warned that they represent a troubling setback to the relative peace the region has experienced in recent years. According to the Nigeria Police Force, the victims included innocent civilians caught in the explosions.

"I am deeply saddened by the horrific multiple suicide bombings... which claimed the lives of 23 innocent people and injured over 100 others," Kwankwaso stated, adding that the violence signals "a disturbing resurgence of senseless terrorism" in the North-East.

The attacks reportedly took place on Monday evening at about 7:02 p.m.,



when multiple improvised explosive devices detonated almost simultaneously at the bustling Monday Market and near a security post at the University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital. Eyewitnesses described scenes of panic and confusion, as residents fled for safety and emergency responders rushed to assist victims.

Confirming the incident, Mohammed Kafaran of the Federal Fire Service in Borno State said response teams were swiftly deployed to the affected areas to assess the situation and provide support.

Kwankwaso called on both federal and state authorities to take urgent and decisive measures to address the deteriorating security situation. He urged the government to adequately equip and support security forces, stressing that "now is not the time for defensiveness or complacency".

"Our gallant armed forces must be fully empowered to take proactive action against these enemies of Nigeria," he said.

He further extended his condolences to the victims, their families, and the government and people of Borno State, expressing solidarity during what he described as a profoundly difficult time.

Nigeria president arrives UK, begins first state visit in 37 years

By New Daily Prime

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, accompanied by First Lady Oluremi Tinubu, has arrived in the United Kingdom for a two-day state visit aimed at deepening bilateral ties between Nigeria and the UK.

The Special Adviser to the President on Media and Public Communication, Sunday Dare, disclosed on X that the President and the First Lady landed at London's Stansted Airport at precisely 3:23 p.m. local time.

President Tinubu and the First Lady arrive United Kingdom for historic visit

Dare described the visit as "historic," noting that it is a reset in relations between both countries and expected to deliver trade deals, security agreements, others.

The presidential aide also disclosed that, from the airport, the President and the First Lady began the drive to Windsor Castle.

Their flight took off from the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja, at about 10:00 am on Tuesday.

They were seen off at the airport by a delegation led by the President of the Senate, Godswill Akpabio; the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Nyesom Wike, the Chief of Staff to the President, Femi Gbajabiamila, and other government officials.

The state visit is the first by a Nigerian leader in 37 years. President Tinubu is also the first Nigerian leader to be hosted by the British monarch at Windsor Castle.

At Windsor Castle, the UK monarch would invite the President and his wife to view a special exhibition of items from the Royal Collection related to Nigeria.

'£746m Financing Deal'

King Charles and Tinubu will also hold private discussions and meet with organisations engaged in interfaith



dialogue, both nationally and internationally.

The Royal Family will host a state banquet in honour of the Nigerian guests.

"President Tinubu will also hold a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Keir Starmer at 10 Downing Street, which will lead to expanded bilateral engagement between senior officials of the two countries.

"The meeting will culminate in the signing of various Memoranda of Understanding and agreements, including those on trade, investment, defence, and cultural cooperation.

"President Tinubu will witness the signing of the landmark £746 million financing deal between the UK Export Finance (UKEF) and the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) and Federal Ministry of Finance to support the refurbishment of two of Nigeria's major national maritime infrastructure – the Lagos Port Complex (Apapa Quays) and the Tin Can Island Port Complex.

"The President will be the guest of honour at the Nigerian Modernism

exhibition, showcasing modern arts and culture, and will also attend a reception with Nigerian and British business leaders and the diaspora community," the presidency explained in a statement.

Members of the President's entourage include Akpabio; Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Lateef Fagbemi; Minister of Solid Minerals, Dele Alake; Minister of Information and National Orientation, Idris Mohammed, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Bianca Ojukwu; Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Wale Edun; and Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment, Jumoke Oduwole.

Others are Minister of Culture and Creative Economy, Hannatu Musawa; Minister of Communications and Digital Economy, Bosun Tijani; Minister of Defence, General Christopher Musa (retd.); National Security Adviser, Malam Nuhu Ribadu; and Director-General of the National Intelligence Agency, Mohammed Mohammed.

President Tinubu will return to the country at the conclusion of the state visit.

Shettima mourns Borno terror attack victims, condemns terrorism

By New Daily Prime

Ahead of his trip to Maiduguri, the Borno State capital, Vice President Kashim Shettima, has expressed grief over the death of 25 persons killed in the multiple explosions in different locations across Maiduguri, the Borno State capital on Monday.

VP Shettima, who spoke on Tuesday during the closing of the Annual Ramadan Tafsir at the State House Mosque, Abuja, prayed Almighty Allah to grant the souls of those killed in the terror attack in Maiduguri eternal rest, reward them with Aljannah firdaus and give their family the fortitude to bear the irreparable loss.

This was made known in a statement by his media aide, Stanley Nkwocha, who noted that the VP pointed out that no religion sanctions the killing of innocent lives, as the sanctity of human life remains a core tenet of major world faiths.

Praying Almighty Allah to also vanish all agents of terror from the surface of the earth, the VP said, “May the lives of innocent souls – 25 of them – that lost their lives in Maiduguri last evening rest in peace. May Allah grant their souls eternal rest and reward them with His Aljannah firdaus, and may Allah also grant their families the fortitude to bear the irreparable losses.

“May Allah bring this madness to an end. No religion sanctions the killing of the innocent. Whatever that is motivating them, may Allah either guide them on to the right path or May Allah vanish them from the surface of the earth.”

The Vice President emphasised the need for all Nigerians to continue to pray for the country across every sector, as well as pray that the Almighty should continue to grant President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and members of his team wisdom, courage, sincerity and equity in service.

He noted that each season of Ramadan reminds Muslims of a truth that power often tries to hide from man, and that no sit is permanent, just as no office is ultimate and no human being stands above his dependence on his creator.

VP Shettima said, “In the presence of Allah, the distance between the mighty and the unknown vanishes. What remains



is character, what remains is accountability, what remains is what we did with the trust placed in our hands.

“This is why gatherings such as this matters. They rescue public lives from arrogance; they retain soul to scale; they teach those entrusted with authority that the nation is not built by policy alone but by conscience; not by proclamation alone but by restraint; not by ambition alone but by fear of Allah.”

The VP called on the Muslim faithful to continue to live in the teachings and lessons of the month of Ramadan, as the final days of Ramadan begins to sleep through their fingers.

“The question before us is not whether Ramadan is ending. The question is whether its teachings will continue to live in us after the moon has changed.

“It is quite easy to cut the head when the atmosphere is charged with devotion. The harder task is to carry it into ordinary days, into the market, into the office, into the home, into the chamber of power, and into the private corners where only Allah sees what we are doing,” he noted.

While drawing from the lessons of Ramadan, the Vice President said the holy month had taught the Muslim faithful that

pity without mercy is noise and worship without service is incomplete.

“So, as we close this year’s Tafsir, let us not return to the habits that weaken our common lives; let us not go back to bitterness, to reckless speech, to indifference dressed as sophistication. A believer doesn’t spend the whole month learning only to become a captive again of anger, greed and division.

“Nigeria needs homes where children encounter good examples before good advice. Nigeria, indeed, needs leaders in every spare who understand that influence is a trust, not a license,” VP Shettima said.

He paid growing tribute to the Chief Imam of the State House Mosque, Sheikh Abdulwaheed Suleiman Abubakar, and his lieutenant for conducting the Tafsir with wisdom, calm hearts.

Earlier, the Chief Imam prayed for sustainable peace and development of Nigeria and the success of the Tinubu administration’s policies and programmes.

The cleric emphasised the need for leaders at all levels to continue to discharge their responsibilities with the fear of Allah for the process and development of the country.

Tinubu vows “No Safe Haven for Terrorists” after Maiduguri attacks

By Ismaeel Aleem

President Bola Tinubu has expressed profound sorrow over recent terrorist attacks in Maiduguri, Borno State, describing them as desperate acts by criminal elements facing intense pressure from Nigerian security forces.

In a statement released on 17 March 2026, the President commiserated with the people of Borno, mourning the lives lost, offering sympathies to the injured, and standing in solidarity with residents amid the ordeal.

He condemned the strikes as frantic attempts by terrorists to spread fear, insisting they reflect the group’s weakening position due to sustained operations by the armed forces and security agencies across multiple theatres.

Tinubu paid tribute to the bravery of Nigerian troops, who successfully repelled coordinated assaults on military positions in the state on Monday. He described the attacks as the work of “evil-



minded” groups, vowing that gallant military personnel and civilian task forces would continue to curtail and eliminate such threats.

The President revealed that, during a security meeting last weekend with leaders of intelligence and security agencies, he approved additional

equipment and operational support to bolster capabilities, with implementation already under way.

He has directed security chiefs to relocate to Maiduguri to assume direct oversight of the situation. Emergency agencies have also been instructed to ensure proper medical care for the wounded.

Emphasising resolve, Tinubu declared there would be no safe haven for terrorists in Nigeria. “We will locate them, confront them, and completely defeat them,” he stated, adding that the country would not succumb to fear.

The statement comes against a backdrop of escalating insurgent activity in Borno, where groups such as ISWAP and Boko Haram remnants have intensified attacks on military bases and communities in recent weeks, including coordinated strikes prompting military repels but causing casualties and injuries.

Nigeria clears pre-qualification stage in 2025 oil, gas round

By Iqrom Teslim

The Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC) has announced the completion of the pre-qualification stage of the 2025 oil and gas licensing round, marking a significant milestone in the country’s efforts to attract new investments into its upstream petroleum sector.

The Head of Media and Strategic Communications Eniola Akinkuoto on Tuesday in a signed statement disclosed that as of 16 March all successful applicants were formally notified.

Akinkuoto further revealed that successful applicants can proceed to lease data in preparation for the technical and commercial bid submissions.

According to the statement, only pre-qualified applicants will be allowed to access subsurface data required to prepare their bids.



The commission has mandated that these applicants lease data only from approved sources and upload evidence of payment as a prerequisite to submitting bids.

However, the move is aimed at ensuring

transparency and standardization in the bid process.

The 2025 oil and gas licensing round, launched in December 2025, offers 50 oil and gas blocks across several sedimentary basins, including the Niger Delta, Anambra Basin, Bida Basin, Benue Trough, and Chad Basin.

The exercise is expected to attract new investments into the country’s upstream petroleum sector, with the goal of increasing hydrocarbon reserves, ramping up production, and accelerating gas development.

The submission window for pre-qualification applications closed on February 27, 2026, and companies that passed the stage will now proceed to submit technical and commercial bids, which will be evaluated before the final award of oil blocks.

23 killed, 108 injured in triple IED blasts in Maiduguri

By Helen Okechukwu

No fewer than 23 persons have been confirmed dead, while 108 others sustained varying degrees of injuries following a series of coordinated improvised explosive device (IED) explosions in Maiduguri.

The incidents, which occurred at about 7:24 p.m. on Monday, targeted three busy locations, the Maiduguri Monday Market, the gate of the University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital (UMTH), and the Post Office Flyover area.

According to a press statement issued by the Borno State Police Command spokesperson, Nahum Daso preliminary investigations indicate that the attacks were carried out by suspected suicide bombers.

Emergency responders, including the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), swiftly evacuated victims to nearby medical facilities, where the injured are currently receiving treatment.

Security agencies, comprising Police Tactical Units, the military, and other joint operatives, were immediately deployed to the affected areas. The scenes were cordoned off and thoroughly swept by the Police Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Unit to ensure no additional explosive threats remained.



The Commissioner of Police in the state, Naziru Abdulmajid, visited the blast sites for an on-the-spot assessment. He expressed condolences to the victims and their families, assuring residents of the command's commitment to safeguarding lives and property.

The police stated that normalcy has since been restored across the affected areas, while security presence has been significantly heightened in Maiduguri and its environs to prevent further

attacks.

Authorities added that investigations are ongoing to unravel the circumstances surrounding the coordinated explosions and to bring those responsible to justice.

Residents have been urged to remain calm but vigilant, and to promptly report any suspicious movements or objects to security agencies.



Tinubu Directs political appointees seeking elective offices to resign by March 31

By New Daily Prime

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has directed all political appointees in his administration who intend to contest elective positions in the 2027 elections to resign from their posts on or before March 31.

The directive was announced on Tuesday by Dewan Goshit, Head of Information and Public Relations at the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (OSGF).

Goshit explained that the president's decision aligns with Section 88(1) of the Electoral Act 2026 and the timetable released by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) for party primaries ahead of the 2027 polls.

The order applies to all categories of presidential political appointees planning to participate in party primaries or seek nomination for elective positions.



Those affected include ministers, ministers of state, special advisers, senior special assistants, special assistants, personal assistants, as well as directors-general and chief executive officers of

federal agencies, commissions, parastatals, and government-owned companies.

According to Goshit, the officials are required to submit their resignation letters through the office of the SGF by the stipulated deadline.

“President Tinubu emphasised that the measure is necessary to ensure full compliance with electoral laws, uphold transparency in the political process, and promote a level playing field for all aspirants ahead of the elections,” the statement reads in part.

The president further urged all concerned officials to adhere strictly to the directive, noting that his administration remains committed to credible electoral processes and the strengthening of democratic institutions.

Lagos Court strikes out N20bn money laundering case against Taiwo Ibitola

By Gbenga Olaleye

A Federal High Court in Lagos on Monday struck out an alleged N20 billion money laundering charge brought against retired company director Taiwo Ibitola and her firm, Lexhan Investment Ltd.

The case, which had been filed by the police, involved four counts of conspiracy, fraud, conversion, and retention of proceeds of crime. Justice Akintoye Aluko struck out the charges following a request by the prosecution to withdraw the case in the interest of justice.

The matter first came before the court on 13 November 2025 for arraignment, but proceedings were stalled due to the absence of both the defendants and the prosecutor. The case was subsequently adjourned to 16 December 2025 and later rescheduled for 16 March 2026.

During Monday's proceedings, the prosecutor, M.Y. Bello, informed the court that an application dated 26 February 2026 had been filed to withdraw the charges. Bello requested that the defendants be discharged while allowing the prosecution the option to revisit the matter if necessary.



Counsel for the defendants, Prof Taiwo Osipitan, supported the withdrawal but urged the court to dismiss the case outright to prevent any future reopening. He argued that the alleged offences predated the enactment of the Money Laundering (Prevention and Prohibition) Act, 2022, and that the dispute concerned family inheritance and property rights rather than criminal wrongdoing.

Justice Aluko ruled that since the defendants had never appeared in court and the trial had not commenced, striking out the charge was appropriate. “The defendants have never appeared before the court. Upon the notice of withdrawal dated February 26, 2026, this charge is hereby struck out, and the defendants are discharged,” he held.

The charge, marked FHC/L/781/C/2025, alleged that Ibitola and her company had fraudulently converted shares and proceeds of assets bequeathed to Mrs Idowu Ashiru and others by their late father, valued at N20 billion. The prosecution claimed the offences contravened Section 21(a) of the Money Laundering (Prevention and Prohibition) Act, 2022, and Section 383(2)(b) of the Criminal Code Act.

With the case now struck out, Ibitola and Lexhan Investment Ltd have been formally cleared of the allegations, ending a matter that had drawn significant attention due to the substantial sum involved.

NANS raises student safety fears after Maiduguri blasts

By Helen Okechukwu

The National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) has expressed renewed anxiety over the security of students in the North-East after a series of coordinated explosions struck Maiduguri, leaving dozens dead and many others injured.

Reacting to the incident, the NANS Zone E (North-East) Coordinator, Muazu Hina, said the development highlights the fragile security situation in the region and the risks faced daily by students pursuing their education.

The attacks, which occurred on Monday night, targeted crowded locations including the popular Monday Market, the Post Office area, and a location close to the University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital.

The near-simultaneous nature of the blasts sparked panic across the city, with emergency responders rushing to assist victims.

Hina described the incident as a tragic reminder of the persistent threat posed by insecurity in the North-East, noting that students remain among the most exposed groups in such crises. He warned that repeated attacks could disrupt academic



activities and deepen fear among young people in the region.

The student leader extended condolences to families who lost loved ones and acknowledged the distress of those still searching for missing relatives. He also wished those receiving treatment a quick recovery.

While condemning the attacks, NANS

urged security agencies to move swiftly in identifying those responsible and ensuring justice is served. Hina stressed that a credible and transparent investigation would be crucial in reassuring the public and preventing further violence.

He also called on the Federal Government to intensify its efforts in tackling insecurity, particularly in the North-East, where institutions continue to operate under challenging conditions. According to him, safeguarding students must be treated as a priority to prevent disruptions to education.

The association further recommended stronger intelligence operations and increased security deployment around schools and other public facilities frequently accessed by students.

In the aftermath of the explosions, residents of Maiduguri have been left grappling with grief and uncertainty, as families continue efforts to locate missing loved ones.

The incident has once again highlighted the far-reaching consequences of insecurity on both daily life and access to education in the region.

Engine detaches on Abuja-Kaduna train, 26 injured

By Ridwanullah Sakariyah

Passengers on the Abuja-Kaduna rail line were thrown into panic on Monday after a train developed a fault mid-journey, leaving 26 people injured.

The Managing Director of the Nigerian Railway Corporation, Kayode Opeifa, said the incident happened around 9:16 a.m. when part of the train engine detached and struck another section supplying power.

Speaking on Channels, Opeifa said, "At about 9:16 am, probably, there was a detachment of the attached engine, and it hit the power car, the one supplying electricity to the train, and that hit the lands coach SP-006 that was attached to it. That caused a shutdown."

He explained that the train was operating with one engine instead of the required two, according to their "protocol". To fix



this, the rear engine was moved to the front to continue the journey.

He explained, "When the train got to Ojere, the back of the engine was attached, and the train continued its movement towards Asham on its way to Idu."

The train later resumed movement after engineers removed the faulty locomotive. The delay lasted about 30 minutes.

"The 30 minutes were meant to remove the accidented train engine, that is the locomotive, and passengers were moved into the other five coaches at Kubwa, which was the next stop.

Passengers were rearranged into other coaches at Kubwa, the next stop. Those with serious injuries were taken to a hospital in Kubwa, while others continued to Idu.

He added, "The seriously injured or those who needed immediate medical attention were disembarked and taken to a hospital in Kubwa, while the rest of the passengers and some others injured were taken to Idu."

Northern govts call for unity after Maiduguri bomb blasts

By Ridwanullah Sakariyah



Northern governors have called for calm and unity after multiple bomb explosions struck parts of Maiduguri, Borno State, on Monday evening, killing several people and injuring many others.

The Chairman of the Northern States Governors' Forum and Governor of Gombe State, Inuwa Yahaya, said the attacks were aimed at creating fear and disrupting peace in the North-East.

The explosions occurred around 7:02 p.m. at three locations, the gate of the University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital, the Monday Market Roundabout, and the Post Office area, triggering panic across the city, especially around the busy market axis.

Emergency officials confirmed that response teams were quickly sent to the affected areas.

The Head of Operations of the Federal Fire Service in Borno, Mohammed Kafaran, said, "Yes, there was a bomb explosion at the Monday Market area around Elkanemi. We have deployed our team there to assess the situation and take reports. We will provide more details shortly."

Eyewitnesses reported that several victims were seen at the scene, while the injured were rushed to hospitals, including the State Specialist Hospital in Maiduguri.

Reacting to the incident, Yahaya described the attack as inhuman and dangerous.

He said, "This senseless act of

violence is not only reprehensible but a cruel attempt to instill fear and disrupt the fragile peace being restored in the North-East. It is an attack on our collective humanity and must be condemned in the strongest terms."

He expressed sympathy with families of those who died and wished the injured quick recovery.

The governor also praised first responders and security agencies for their quick action and urged residents to remain calm and support ongoing investigations.

He added, "Now, more than ever, we must stand united against forces of terror. Our resolve to secure our region remains unshaken, and together, we shall overcome these cowardly acts."

Discuss insecurity in UK, PDP Chieftain tells Tinubu

By Clement Abayomi

A Chieftain of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Segun Showunmi has urged President Bola Tinubu to make national security his main goal during his state visit to the United Kingdom.

Showunmi, in a statement shared on his Facebook page, stated that Tinubu needs to focus on stopping the violence affecting Nigerian communities.

He explained that many villages in Nigeria face constant attacks. Farmers are being chased from their lands, and innocent people are being killed.

Even though Nigeria has used its military to fight these criminals, the violence has not stopped. Showunmi noted that this is because there is a hidden network that provides money and weapons to these gunmen.

Showunmi maintained that the United Kingdom has a moral duty to help Nigeria,



because Britain played a major role in Nigeria's history and the 1914 merger of the country.

He explained that since Nigeria is a very important member of the Commonwealth, the UK should not just watch while the country struggles.

He also suggested that the UK has the

tools to help. They have great intelligence services and systems to track money.

According to him, Nigeria needs the UK to help find the people who fund these terrorists. They also need help to stop the flow of illegal weapons and to improve how Nigeria investigates these crimes.

Showunmi noted that trade and investment are good, but they cannot work if people are not safe. No business can grow if farmers cannot farm or if traders are afraid to travel.

He wrote, "Investment, trade agreements, and economic partnerships however attractive cannot substitute for the basic condition of national life: safety. No investment climate can flourish where farmers cannot farm, traders cannot travel, and rural communities live under constant threat of massacre."

He therefore urged Tinubu to tell British leaders that security must come first.

Outrage over man's alleged N1,000 lure of young hawker

By Ridwanullah Sakariyah

A viral video has sparked outrage after a man allegedly attempted to lure a young girl hawking avocados with N1,000 for sexual purposes.

Content creator LordZeus shared the clip on Instagram on Monday, showing the suspect confronting the girl and offering her money to follow him to a secluded spot. The girl refused and reported his actions to bystanders.

When questioned, the man claimed he was the girl's father, but she contradicted him, saying he asked her to "touch body" in exchange for the cash. Some onlookers defended the man, saying he was mentally unstable and had approached other children before.

One bystander said, "Leave him, he's not well."

LordZeus rejected this defence, stressing



that alleged mental illness does not justify targeting a minor. He also warned parents against letting underage girls hawk alone, urging them to accompany their children if necessary.

He wrote, "Parents please, no matter how hard life gets, do not allow your girl child

especially underage to hawk on the streets alone. Even if they must hawk, hawk alongside them.

"They are constantly at risk of sexual harassment, and many of them will never speak up. I've hawked before, so I know exactly what life on the street is like.

"Imagine if this man was able to manipulate the little girl with just 1,000 naira, this will be unimaginable."

The incident highlights the vulnerability of young girls on the streets and underscores the urgent need for parental vigilance and community protection.

With the case now struck out, Ibitola and Lexhan Investment Ltd have been formally cleared of the allegations, ending a matter that had drawn significant attention due to the substantial sum involved.

IGP visits Borno bombing victims, reassures residents on enhanced security

By New Daily Prime

The Inspector-General of Police, Olatunji Disu, has visited victims of the recent IED explosions receiving treatment at the University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital (UMTH) and conducted an on-the-spot assessment at the Maiduguri Monday Market bombing site.

As part of ongoing engagements, the IGP also visited the Borno State Government House and the State Police Command Headquarters to review security measures and strengthen coordinated response efforts.

IGP Disu commiserated with the victims and their families, expressing sympathy over the tragic incidents, while assuring residents of the Nigeria Police Force's commitment to dismantling all networks responsible for the attacks and preventing any recurrence.

He emphasised that security across Maiduguri has been significantly tightened, with enhanced police deployments, increased surveillance, and robust joint operational measures in place to forestall further threats and ensure public safety.

On Tuesday, police authorities in Borno said 23 people were killed in the bomb blasts that rocked the state on Monday.

"Preliminary investigation reveals that the incidents were carried out by suspected suicide bombers. Regrettably, a total of twenty-three (23) persons lost their lives, while one hundred and eight (108) others sustained varying degrees of injuries," the spokesman of the Borno State Police Command, Nahum Kenneth-Daso, said.

A combined team of police tactical units, the military, and other joint security operatives has been deployed to the affected areas.



The victims have been evacuated by emergency responders, while those injured are receiving medical attention.

Security Chiefs Ordered To Maiduguri

Following the attack, the Nigerian government ordered security chiefs to relocate to Maiduguri, Borno State.

President Bola Tinubu, in condemning the incident, described it as part of the "desperate and frantic attempts by criminals and terrorist elements trying to instil and spread fear" among people owing to pressure from security forces.

He said the government is beefing up security across the country and has "directed security chiefs to move to Maiduguri to take charge of the situation.

"I have also directed the emergency agencies to provide proper care for the injured," Tinubu wrote in a statement on Tuesday.

Members of the Nigerian Red Cross

carry a body bag at a hospital in Maiduguri on March 16, 2026, following blasts in the city.

The president said the incident is "profoundly upsetting" but warned that "There is no place in Nigeria where terrorists will find safety.

"We will locate them, confront them, and completely defeat them."

"We will continue to intensify our efforts against all criminal elements, wherever they may be," Tinubu promised.

He lauded the "courage and fighting spirit of our patriotic troops" for their efforts in repelling the "coordinated attacks by these terrorists on military positions in the state".

Listing efforts by his administration to address insecurity, the ex-Lagos State governor said he recently "approved additional equipment and operational support to enhance their capabilities.

"This effort is already in progress," he said.

APC lawmaker rejects alleged endorsement of Fayose's son in Ekiti

By Gbenga Olaleye

Achieftain of the All Progressives Congress (APC) and member of the Ekiti State House of Assembly, Hakeem Jamiu, has dismissed reports claiming that he endorsed Boluwatife Fayose as the consensus candidate for the Irepodun/Ifelodun State Constituency II seat.

Jamiu, a former deputy speaker of the Assembly, insisted that the party had not approved any consensus arrangement for selecting candidates ahead of the 2027 state and National Assembly primaries. In a statement issued in Ado Ekiti on Monday, he denied being part of any endorsement during a constituency stakeholders' meeting held in Iworoko Ekiti on 14 March 2026.

Although he confirmed his attendance at the gathering, the lawmaker maintained that he neither participated in nor supported the alleged decision. He further urged his supporters to disregard reports linking him to the endorsement, stressing that consensus requires the agreement of all stakeholders.

"It is embarrassing for me as a sitting member of the House of Assembly to be invited to a meeting in my constituency



only to be conscripted by ambush into a pre-arranged consensus endorsement," Jamiu stated.

He explained that during a previous stakeholders' meeting at Jibowu Hall, Government House, Ado Ekiti, the party only approved consensus arrangements for chairmanship and councillorship positions, not legislative seats. According to him, no further meeting had

been held to extend such arrangements.

Jamiu described the reported endorsement as "premature and preposterous", noting that official guidelines for the primaries had yet to be released by the party's national leadership. He expressed confidence that the leadership would uphold internal democracy and ensure a level playing field for all aspirants.

The lawmaker also alleged that the meeting turned violent, claiming he was assaulted by a ward councillor who pushed and threatened him during the proceedings.

Meanwhile, local party leaders had reportedly presented Fayose—son of former Ekiti State Governor Ayodele Fayose—as a consensus candidate for the constituency, a move said to have been ratified by members present.

In his remarks at the event, Boluwatife Fayose thanked party members for their support and pledged inclusive leadership, while urging unity ahead of the forthcoming governorship election.

PDP blames APC for rising insecurity

By Gbenga Olaleye

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has blamed the All Progressives Congress (APC) for failing to protect Nigerians following recent bomb attacks in Maiduguri.

The party stated that the bombings, which led to the death of 23 people, leaving others injured, prove that the current government cannot handle the country's security problems.

In a statement by its National Publicity Secretary, Ini Ememobong, the PDP said the attacks show how weak Nigeria's security has become.

The party maintained that these violent acts have increased since President Bola Tinubu took office.

According to the PDP, the Maiduguri



bombings are clear evidence that the APC-led government is unable to stop the growing violence across the nation.

The PDP, for example, pointed out that 11

years ago, insecurity was mostly found in the North-East. But it has now spread to many regions.

The party noted, "Sadly, 11 years later, insecurity has not only increased significantly . . . it has spread almost uncontrollably to many other parts of the country."

The party expressed concern that the situation is now moving out of control and affecting the daily lives of many citizens.

The statement by the party suggested that the APC is prioritising its own political interests over the safety and lives of the Nigerian people.

The PDP urged the Federal Government to work with community leaders and local stakeholders to find a real solution.

Dickson says Nigerians 'hungry for change' as new party unveils digital platform

By Igbenga Olaleye



A former Governor of Bayelsa State and senator representing Bayelsa West, Seriake Dickson, has said growing frustration among Nigerians is fuelling a strong desire for political change ahead of the 2027 general elections.

Dickson made the remarks on Monday in Abuja during the unveiling of the digital membership registration portal of the Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC).

Describing the platform as a milestone for the party, he said it would enhance participation and strengthen its organisational structure nationwide. The unveiling ceremony was attended by key party figures, including National Chairman Cleopas Moses and National Secretary Ikenna Enekweizu, alongside other stakeholders.

Speaking on the country's political climate, Dickson said widespread dissatisfaction with current

conditions is becoming increasingly evident.

"Nigerians are angry with the status quo. Nigerians are not only angry, but they are also hungry, and they are hungry for change," he said. "The NDC is available as the tool for effecting the change Nigerians want."

He described the NDC as a fresh, crisis-free political movement focused on ideology and national development, positioning it as an alternative to existing parties. Drawing a biblical comparison, Dickson likened the emergence of the party to Noah's Ark, urging Nigerians seeking genuine transformation to join early.

"The NDC in Nigeria today, politically, is like Noah's family. Those who can see the signs should come on board early," he added.

On the newly launched e-membership system, the senator noted that

digitising the registration process would modernise party operations and encourage broader participation, particularly among Nigerians in the diaspora. He added that despite being only weeks old, the party has already begun attracting attention nationwide.

"We are a national party. We are a pan-Nigerian democratic movement. We are not a regional movement," Dickson emphasised.

Also speaking, Moses said the portal would make it easier for Nigerians to join and actively engage with the party, while promoting transparency, accountability and inclusiveness.

The launch comes shortly after Dickson's resignation from the Peoples Democratic Party, which he attributed to deepening internal crises and what he described as declining leadership within the once-dominant opposition party.

APC reaffirms zoning arrangement for 2026 national convention

By **Gbenga Olaleye**

The All Progressives Congress (APC) has confirmed that its existing zoning arrangement for National Working Committee (NWC) positions will remain in effect ahead of the party's 2026 National Convention.

In a statement issued on Monday in Abuja, the party's National Publicity Secretary, Felix Morka, emphasised that the decision is aimed at guiding aspirants and maintaining stability within the party as it prepares for key internal elections.

According to the statement, the zoning formula outlined in the published 2026 Schedule of Nationwide Congresses, National Convention and Related Activities remains valid and will be strictly applied throughout the convention process.

"The existing zoning arrangement for National Working Committee positions across states within the geo-political zones remains valid and applicable to the upcoming National Convention," the



statement said.

Aspirants seeking national offices have been advised to comply fully with the zoning framework when obtaining and submitting their Expression of Interest and Nomination Forms. Morka stressed, "Accordingly, aspirants are advised to be STRICTLY GUIDED by the existing

zoning arrangement."

The APC explained that adhering to the zoning structure is intended to ensure fairness, balance, and orderliness in the conduct of the party's internal processes ahead of the convention, reducing potential conflicts and promoting inclusivity among members across the nation.

The reaffirmation comes at a time when political aspirants are actively positioning themselves for key roles in the party, highlighting the importance the APC places on transparency and structured internal democracy as it prepares for one of its most significant national gatherings in recent years.

By maintaining the zoning arrangement, the party aims to foster unity among its members and provide a clear framework that aligns with established practices, ensuring that the 2026 National Convention proceeds smoothly and equitably.

Lagos APC rejects Momodu's claims over 2027 election

By **Clement Abayomi**

The Lagos State chapter of the All Progressives Congress (APC) has dismissed claims by Dele Momodu, saying his predictions about the 2027 election are "baseless".

According to a statement by the party's spokesman, Hon. Seye Oladejo, Momodu's ideas that President Bola Tinubu will lose the next election is just a "political gamble" with no facts to support it.

The statement read, "We wish to state clearly that such comments remain speculative, premature, and completely unsupported by the realities on ground. There is absolutely nothing to justify such a wild speculation or political gamble."

The party noted that Momodu had suggested that the Tinubu would lose if Atiku Abubakar ran for office alongside Peter Obi or Rotimi Amaechi.

In response, the Lagos APC said these comments are premature. The party stated that current political realities actually point to a sure victory for Tinubu.

The Lagos APC noted that the people being mentioned as challengers are currently facing serious problems and lack of trust within their own political groups.

The party further explained that some of these individuals have even been rejected by their own political bases, making the idea of their winning unrealistic.

According to the statement, Tinubu is focused on bold reforms to fix the Nigerian economy and improve security.

The party said the "Renewed Hope Agenda" is already solving "long-standing" problems and putting the



country on the path to progress.

The Lagos APC added that Nigerians can recognise good leadership and will not be fooled by media talk.

The party also criticised the opposition for being disorganised and lacking a clear direction, urging political commentators to stop making guesses about the future and instead support policies that help the welfare of all Nigerians.

Portable cries out over low streaming income

By **Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi**

Nigerian singer Habeeb Okikiola Badmus, popularly known as Portable, has expressed frustration over what he described as poor earnings from music streaming platforms.

In a recent video, the 'Zazu' crooner lamented that despite consistently releasing new songs, his revenue from Apple Music remains very low.

Read Also: Portable plans returning to school

According to Portable, he uploads music almost every month and believes his global fanbase should translate into higher income.

"I am in pain, I have been putting my song on Apple Music every month but the money I am generating is too low," he said.

The singer also questioned claims that low payouts are due to the value of Nigerian streams, insisting that he has listeners outside the country.



"They said it is because Nigerian streams are cheap but I also have fans in America and all over the world. Where is the revenue from those foreign streams?" he asked.

Portable appealed to renowned music executive Don Jazzy for guidance on how to maximise earnings from streaming

platforms.

"Don Jazzy, please, help me and teach me how to generate more money from music streams," he said.

He further complained about how his earnings are shared, suggesting that multiple deductions or splits significantly reduce what he receives.

"The revenue that I receive is very low. They divide my earnings into 17. Please, come and teach me how to fetch music money," he added.

Portable concluded by expressing confidence that with the right knowledge, he could significantly grow his income and compete at the highest level in the Nigerian music industry.

"If Don Jazzy teaches me how to generate more money from streaming platforms, I would be bigger than all artistes in Nigeria," he said.

Comedians richer than musicians — Shank boasts

By **Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi**

Nigerian skit maker and streamer Shank Comics has sparked debate online after claiming that comedians earn more money than music artists.

Speaking during a recent livestream, Shank argued that the perception that musicians are wealthier is largely influenced by their flashy lifestyles and public display of luxury.

Read Also: Comedian Shank relocates, says 'Nigeria too toxic'

According to him, many comedians prefer to invest their earnings rather than spend heavily on expensive items like cars, making them financially stronger in the long run.

"I think there is more money in comedy than music," he said.

Shank specifically mentioned top Nigerian comedians Bovi Ugboma and Bright Okpocha, claiming they are wealthier than some of the biggest



Afrobeats stars.

He listed artists such as Asake, Wizkid, and Burna Boy, suggesting that despite their global fame, they may not match the financial standing of some comedians.

"Bovi and Basketmouth are far richer than Asake, Wizkid, Burna Boy, and

other musicians, but they prefer to invest rather than buy cars," he claimed.

Shank further explained that comedians tend to be more future-oriented, focusing on investments and long-term financial stability rather than lavish spending.

"Comedians are very conscious of the future, so they invest more than they spend, and they don't spend lavishly on luxuries," he added.

He also noted that many comedians have the financial capacity to afford the same luxury lifestyle often associated with musicians but deliberately choose not to.

His comments have since triggered mixed reactions on social media, with fans debating the earning power of comedians versus musicians and the different financial habits within both industries.

Mother's Day: Churchill replies fan over snub of wife, ex-wife Tonto Dikeh

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Celebrity businessman Olakunle Churchill has responded to a social media user who questioned his decision not to celebrate his wife, Rosy Meurer, and ex-wife, Tonto Dikeh, on Mother's Day.

The annual celebration, held on March 15, 2026, saw many Nigerians, including celebrities, take to social media to honour mothers, wives, and daughters. However, Churchill's tribute focused solely on his mother, leaving out both Meurer and Dikeh.

The omission quickly sparked reactions online, with some users linking it to ongoing speculation about a possible marital crisis between him and Meurer.

The rumours had earlier gained traction following Churchill's reported reconciliation with Tonto Dikeh in January.

Reacting to the situation, a social media user, identified as @victory_onyibless, questioned his decision, asking why he did not celebrate both women.

Faithia Williams returns to set after mother's burial

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nollywood actress Faithia Williams has announced her return to work following the burial of her mother, as she shifts focus to promoting her debut cinema project, Efunroye: The Unicorn.

The film, scheduled to premiere on May 1, 2026, tells the story of Efunroye Tinubu, a prominent historical figure known for her influence in trade and politics in pre-colonial Nigeria.

In a post shared on Instagram, Williams expressed appreciation to fans, friends, and colleagues who supported her and her family during their period of mourning.

"I am officially returning to work as we begin the journey of promoting my debut cinema project as a producer, EFUNROYE – The Unicorn. This film is very special to me, and I am excited to start sharing this powerful story with the world," she wrote.

The actress described the past few weeks as emotionally challenging following the loss of her mother, who has now been laid to rest.

She extended heartfelt gratitude to those



In a brief response, Churchill urged the user to do so on his behalf.

"Help me celebrate them," he replied.

Churchill had earlier confirmed that he and Tonto Dikeh had reconciled, and the pair have since been seen together in

several photos and videos, further fuelling public interest in their relationship.

Despite the online speculation, neither Churchill nor Meurer has publicly addressed the status of their marriage following the Mother's Day controversy.



who reached out with prayers, messages, and support during the difficult time.

"The past weeks have been deeply emotional for my family and me following the passing of my beloved mother. She has now been laid to rest, and I want to thank everyone... Your love and kindness meant so much to us," she added.

Williams also revealed that while her family

has conducted a peaceful burial, they plan to hold a larger celebration of her mother's life and legacy next year.

"While we have given her a peaceful burial, we have decided to shift the major celebration of my mother's life and legacy to next year," she said.

For now, the actress noted that she is channeling her energy into her work, particularly the promotion of her film.

She also expressed openness to collaborations and partnerships as she prepares to bring the project to a wider audience.

"As we begin promoting EFUNROYE – The Unicorn, I am also open to collaborations, partnerships, and engagements as we take this beautiful project to audiences everywhere," she wrote.

Williams concluded by thanking her supporters once again for their patience and unwavering encouragement during her period of grief.

7 painful signs they like you but are not ready for you

Weekly Love Story Column by Olayinka Owolabi-Ajayi



One of the most emotionally confusing experiences in modern life is realizing that they like you but are not ready for you. The attention is there. The conversations are engaging. The attraction feels real. But beneath all of that, something essential is missing. And that is **READINESS**.

1. They Like You but Are Not Ready for You

Many people struggle to distinguish between genuine interest and genuine capacity. They interpret affection as intention and chemistry as commitment. Unfortunately, these are not the same.

2. Liking vs Readiness

Liking someone is often spontaneous. It grows from shared moments, engaging conversations, physical attraction, or emotional excitement. It is a response to how a person makes you feel in the present. Readiness, however, is far more deliberate. It reflects a person's emotional availability, their willingness to be accountable, and their preparedness to integrate another person into their real life not just their ideal/perfect one.

3. Attraction Without Structure

People rarely get into complicated

situations because there was no attraction. More often, it's because they like you but are not ready for you, and that difference is not clearly understood. They get in because attraction was present without clarity. Attraction created momentum, but structure never followed. And without structure, even the most exciting connection eventually becomes unstable.

4. Inconsistency Over Intensity

Someone who likes you may show enthusiasm in bursts. They may call often when they feel lonely, make promises they sincerely believe in at the time, or express deep feelings in emotionally heightened moments. Yet readiness reveals itself in consistency rather than intensity.

5. What Readiness Looks Like

They like you but are not ready for you — consistency in relationships
Consistency over intensity shows true readiness

It shows up in practical ways defining the relationship, making long-term considerations, introducing you into meaningful parts of their life, their goals and aspiration, and demonstrating reliability even when the excitement fades.

6. Culture and Emotional Avoidance

This distinction is particularly important in a culture that celebrates emotional highs but often avoids emotional responsibility. Social narratives frequently encourage people to “follow the vibe” or “see where things go.” Emotional safety begins when intentions are communicated and expectations are aligned.

7. The Real Goal

They like you but are not ready for you — building a strong emotional foundation
“Being met by someone ready to build a strong foundation.”

Ultimately, the goal is not merely to be liked. Being liked satisfies the ego but does not necessarily secure the future. Being met by someone who is ready, emotionally, mentally, and practically creates the foundation for a relationship that can withstand ordinary pressures and unexpected storms.

Sometimes the hardest realization in relationships is understanding that they like you but are not ready for you. Recognizing this early protects your emotional well-being and helps you choose connections built on both affection and readiness.

Trump attacks NATO allies as Iran war exposes deep Western divide

By Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi

Donald Trump has launched a blistering attack on Nato allies, declaring the United States no longer needs their support, as divisions over the war with Iran deepen and threaten to fracture Western unity.

In a post on Truth Social, the US president said several allied nations had refused to assist American efforts in the Gulf, particularly in securing the Strait of Hormuz, a critical artery for global oil supplies.

“We no longer ‘need,’ or desire, the Nato countries’ assistance — WE NEVER DID!” Trump wrote.

The remarks underscore a growing rift between Washington and its traditional partners after a number of European countries declined requests to help safeguard shipping through the strategic waterway, which carries about a fifth of the world’s oil.

The dispute comes at a volatile moment in the conflict, with attacks on energy infrastructure and shipping raising fears of a broader regional war and a potential global energy shock.

Tensions were further heightened by the resignation of Joe Kent, director of the US National Counterterrorism Center, who stepped down in protest over the war.

In a sharply worded resignation letter, Kent said he could not “in good conscience support the ongoing war in Iran,” arguing that Tehran posed no immediate threat to the United States.

“Iran posed no imminent threat to our nation,” he wrote. “It is clear that we started this war due to pressure from Israel and its powerful American lobby.”

Kent, a combat veteran whose wife was killed in action, warned that the conflict risked repeating past mistakes in the Middle East.

“I cannot support sending the next generation off to fight and die in a war that serves no benefit to the American people nor justifies the cost,” he said.

The crisis has exposed sharp divisions



across Europe, where leaders have been reluctant to join US-led military operations.

British Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer has resisted calls to participate in the offensive, insisting that any deployment of British forces must be based on a clear legal mandate and the national interest.

Trump openly criticised the British leader, questioning his effectiveness during a meeting with Irish Prime Minister Micheál Martin.

“I like him. He’s a nice man... but he doesn’t produce,” Trump said.

Germany’s Chancellor Friedrich Merz has also distanced Berlin from the conflict, saying it is “not Nato’s war,” while European Union officials have emphasised the need for diplomacy over military escalation.

The Strait of Hormuz has emerged as the central flashpoint, with escalating threats to shipping pushing oil prices higher and raising concerns about supply disruptions.

Washington has pressed allies to

contribute naval support to secure the route, but many governments remain wary of being drawn into a widening conflict with Iran.

Trump has increasingly tied America’s commitment to Nato to burden-sharing, reviving long-standing grievances that European countries rely too heavily on US military protection.

While some analysts see his rhetoric as negotiating tactics, others warn that sustained tensions, combined with rising energy prices, could strain the alliance at a critical moment.

Former British prime minister Sir Tony Blair said allies should stand with Washington in times of crisis.

“When the Americans ask for help, they are your ally and an indispensable cornerstone for your security,” he said. “You had better show up.”

With no clear path to de-escalation, the war in Iran is testing not only military strategy but the resilience of the Western alliance itself, and raising the prospect of a deeper geopolitical rupture.

After 37 years, Nigerian president returns to UK for historic state visit

By **Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi**

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu arrived in the United Kingdom today, 17 March 2026, the first official visit by a Nigerian leader in nearly 40 years, as both countries seek to deepen economic ties and strategic cooperation.

King Charles III and Queen Camilla will host Tinubu and First Lady Oluremi Tinubu at Windsor Castle from Wednesday to Thursday in what is regarded as Britain's highest level of diplomatic engagement. The last such visit by a Nigerian leader took place in 1989, when then-military ruler General Ibrahim Babangida met Queen Elizabeth II.

Analysts say the visit carries both symbolic and practical significance, marking the first time a democratically elected Nigerian president has been accorded a state visit since Nigeria's return to civilian rule in 1999.

"It underscores the importance of Nigeria as a key partner to the UK," said Ikenna Okonkwo of SBM Intelligence. "But beyond the symbolism, the real focus will be on economic cooperation."

Trade between the two countries exceeded £8 billion in the year to October, with both sides signing an Enhanced Trade and Investment Partnership in 2024 aimed at expanding opportunities in sectors such as energy, infrastructure and services.

Officials in Abuja are framing the visit as a turning point in bilateral relations, with Tinubu expected to promote his administration's economic reform agenda and attract foreign investment into critical sectors, including mining, energy and the creative industries.

However, the visit comes against a backdrop of mounting domestic challenges in Nigeria, where sweeping economic reforms, including the removal of fuel subsidies and currency devaluation, have pushed up inflation and increased the cost of living for millions.

"The country is under pressure from multiple fronts," Okonkwo said. "Economic reforms have stabilised some indicators but have also created hardship for many Nigerians."

Security concerns remain acute, with armed groups and banditry affecting



several regions, while instability across the Sahel continues to spill over into West Africa.

Among Nigeria's diaspora in the UK, reactions to the visit are mixed. Some have welcomed the potential for stronger economic ties, while others question whether the trip will deliver tangible benefits.

"What is he coming here for? He needs to fix things at home," said Monica, a London-based Nigerian business owner who declined to give her surname. "The economy is still very difficult."

Policy experts say discussions during the visit are likely to cover trade expansion, security cooperation, migration policy and climate financing, as both countries look to strengthen their strategic partnership in a post-Brexit context.

"The UK is seeking deeper commercial access to Africa's largest market, while Nigeria needs investment and security support to stabilise its economy," said Kabir Adamu, head of Beacon Security and Intelligence in Abuja.

However, analysts caution that while foreign investment could provide short-term relief, it is unlikely to address deeper structural issues within Nigeria's economy, including unreliable power supply, weak infrastructure and limited diversification beyond oil.

Despite recent improvements, including a stabilising currency and renewed investor interest, poverty levels remain high, food insecurity is rising and small businesses continue to face high borrowing costs.

Tinubu's foreign policy, characterised by frequent international engagements and high-profile diplomacy, has drawn both praise and criticism. While it has elevated Nigeria's global profile, questions remain about whether it has translated into meaningful improvements in living standards at home.

Security cooperation is also expected to feature prominently in talks, with Nigeria grappling with insurgency in the northeast and widespread criminality in other regions. The country ranks among the most affected by terrorism globally.

For Britain, the visit offers an opportunity to reinforce ties with a key Commonwealth partner and one of Africa's largest economies. For Tinubu, it is a chance to secure investment and reaffirm Nigeria's position on the global stage.

Whether the visit delivers concrete outcomes, or remains largely symbolic — will be closely watched both in Abuja and among Nigerians at home and abroad.

UK defence plan delays raise concerns over armed forces equipment

By **Eniola Amadu**

Members of Parliament have been informed that the government has yet to finalise plans to procure equipment for the UK's armed forces.

Following the delay, the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Defence (MoD), Jeremy Pocklington, told the House of Commons: "We are working hard to deliver it," adding, "We will publish it as soon as we can."

The MP representing Barrow and Furness, Michelle Scrogam, noted that delays are forcing arms suppliers to reduce staff and postpone investments.

She questioned the MoD permanent secretary about whether he was aware of the effect of the delay.

In response, the Ministry's permanent secretary said there is value in giving suppliers a clear signal but stressed the importance of finalising the plan correctly.

He added that no publication date could be provided, noting that officials are working to reach agreement on the plan across government.



Meanwhile, the UK's National Armaments Director, Rupert Pearce, apologised to the committee for previously stating in December that the plan would be ready in a matter of "days now, not weeks or months."

He said he was new to the role and had not fully understood the complexity of the issues involved.

He told MPs: "I got it wrong. I felt that

was where we were," adding that "things drop away" over Christmas and New Year, but work was now under way "in earnest."

Labour MP Tan Dhesi, who chairs the committee, stated that the plan may be postponed until after the May elections, describing the current situation as a "mess."

MI5 issues apology, compensates woman over abuse by agent

By **Eniola Amadu**

The United Kingdom's domestic intelligence agency, MI5 has rendered an apology to a woman who alleged she was attacked and abused by one of its agents.

The victim, known as Beth was in an affair with a man who used his rank as an MI5 agent to inflict abuse and intimidate her into silence

Following her complaints to the investigatory Powers Tribunal, the agency has made a public apology and compensated her.

MI5's director general, Sir Ken McCallum, in a statement wrote: "We sincerely apologise to Beth for the distress she has suffered because of MI5 mistakes in this litigation.

"We relied on incorrect evidence and our



record keeping fell well short of the standard of professionalism that we expect, and to which Beth was entitled.

We profoundly regret that our mistakes prolonged the litigation and caused additional suffering for Beth.

He added: "MI5 has settled Beth's claim and we have apologised to Beth directly. Prompted in part by Beth's case, MI5 has embarked on a programme of work to reinforce the highest standards of record keeping and information management."

Read also on New Daily Prime: Starmer urges Trump to negotiate as Iran fires missiles across Gulf

Meanwhile, Beth in response to the MI5: "I am grateful for the compensation I've received, but it can never do anything to repair what I went through at the hands of [agent] X. I'd pay that money so as not to have to experience even a minute of what I had to experience of the worst of his abuse.

CAF Strips Senegal Of 2025 AFCON Title, Crowns Morocco Champions

By **Boluwatife Kehinde**

The Confédération Africaine de Football (CAF) Appeal Board has confirmed that Senegal forfeited the AFCON 2025 final, awarding Morocco a 3–0 victory and officially crowning them champions of the tournament.

CAF explained that the decision followed an investigation which determined that Senegal breached key regulations, particularly Articles 82 and 84. As a result, Morocco's appeal was fully upheld, and the earlier ruling by the Disciplinary Board was overturned.

Read also on New Daily Prime: Morocco seeks up to two-year jail terms for Senegal fans over AFCON final disorder

Morocco seeks up to two-year jail terms for Senegal fans over AFCON final disorder

Despite being awarded the title, Morocco also faced sanctions for incidents that occurred during the match. The federation was fined for issues involving ball boys, crowd-related misconduct



such as laser use, and interference around the VAR review area. While some fines were reduced, the penalty for VAR interference remained at \$100,000.

\$100,000 fine was cancelled.

In addition, Ismaël Saibari was found guilty of misconduct. His punishment was reduced to a two-match suspension, with one match suspended, and his initial

Overall, the ruling brings a dramatic and controversial conclusion to the AFCON 2025 tournament, confirming Morocco as champions while highlighting disciplinary breaches on both sides.

D'Tigress fall to Germany as Ogoke bows out

By **Boluwatife Kehinde**

Nigeria's senior women's basketball team wrapped up their campaign at the FIBA Women's World Cup Qualifying Tournament in Lyon, France, with an 81–73 loss to Germany.

The game started as a tight contest, with Nigeria trailing 17–14 after the first quarter and 18–17 in the second, heading into halftime within touching distance.

After the break, the team showed resilience, narrowly winning the third quarter 21–19 to stay in contention. However, the final quarter proved decisive as Germany stepped up their performance at both ends, outscoring Nigeria 27–21 to seal the victory.

Read also on New Daily Prime: D'Tigress beat Senegal to reach AfroBasket final again



Despite the loss, Nigeria displayed moments of quality throughout the tournament. They recorded an impressive 101–84 win over the Philippines but also faced challenges, including a 77–60 defeat to South Korea and a hard-fought loss to France, where a late comeback attempt fell short.

The match also marked an emotional moment for Sarah Ogoke, who made her final appearance for the national team. She played limited minutes against Germany, scoring three points in her farewell game.

NFF to appeal as FIFA rejects petition against DR Congo over ineligible players

By Damilola Olufemi

The Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) has announced that FIFA has dismissed its petition against the Democratic Republic of the Congo over the alleged use of ineligible players during the November 2025 World Cup playoffs.

In a statement issued on Tuesday, the General Secretary of the NFF, Mohammed Sanusi, said the federation is dissatisfied with the ruling and has already initiated an appeal.

“We have received the decision of the FIFA Disciplinary Committee on our petition, but we are not satisfied with the decision, which rejected our petition. I want to assure Nigerians that the NFF has immediately commenced the process of appealing the decision,” the NFF secretary said.

DR Congo had edged Super Eagles on penalties to secure Africa’s sole ticket to the intercontinental playoffs for the World Cup.

Following that match, the NFF submitted a petition to FIFA in December, accusing the Congolese football authorities of misrepresentation in clearing certain players whose eligibility allegedly conflicted with the country’s citizenship laws.

The federation maintained that several of the players in question featured in the



playoff final against Nigeria.

FIFA’s latest decision brings an end to months of anticipation over the outcome of the case. However, the NFF now has a 10-day window to file a formal appeal before FIFA’s Appeal Committee.

Should the federation remain dissatisfied after the appeal process, the matter could

be escalated to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS).

Meanwhile, the intercontinental playoffs are scheduled to take place between March 26 and 31. DR Congo will face the winner of the tie between Jamaica and New Caledonia, with the victor earning one of the final qualification spots for the World Cup.

