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# Consultations are ongoing to find Ganduje's successor, says APC spokesman

By Friday Omosola

**T**he National Publicity Secretary of the All Progressives Congress (APC) has confirmed that consultations are ongoing to select the successor of its former National Chairman, Abdullahi Ganduje, who resigned last week.

Felix Morka, said this on Sunday while responding to questions Channels Television.

He noted the party was moving swiftly to fill the leadership vacancy left by Ganduje's exit.

"This is an extraordinary situation where the National Chairman of our party has resigned, and we will take steps immediately to fill that vacancy.

"The NEC meeting of our party will be convened imminently. No date has been set yet, but I believe that in the coming days we will determine that date and proceed to convene the meeting to initiate constitutional procedures and replace our National Chairman who has just resigned," Morka said.

Further asked how soon the process might be concluded, Morka replied, "Really soon. We've been consulting, and there are a lot of stakeholders required for NEC to convene.

"As we speak, that process has been triggered, and consultations are ongoing. We hope that in the coming days we will be at a point where we can identify a date agreeable to all of those who need to be there to make this happen. We will continue from



where Ganduje has stopped."

Responding to speculation that former Kano governor Rabiu Kwankwaso might be joining the APC, Morka stated that no discussion is in sight.

"The party I speak for has said nothing about Kwankwaso possibly joining. We have not made that determination and are not able to make it at the moment," he stated.

Morka also dismissed suggestions that there were internal issues affecting the party's operations.

"The party is running as it should run. People are entitled to have their moments, but that does not indicate dysfunction," he said.

Commenting on reports that President Bola Tinubu may have been unhappy with Ganduje before his resignation, the APC spokesman

said such claims were speculative.

"The President is at liberty to speak at any moment on any issue. He has not spoken, so people will speculate. But we cannot act based on speculation," he said.

Ganduje's resignation, which took effect immediately, was officially announced by Morka in a statement issued on Thursday, 27 June.

According to the party, Ganduje stepped down to attend to "urgent and important personal matters."

"In his letter of resignation addressed to the National Working Committee through the National Secretary, Ajibola Basiru, Ganduje expressed gratitude to the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Bola Tinubu, for the opportunity to serve the party at the highest level," the statement noted.

# THE NEW DAILY PRIME RATE CARD

## PUBLIC NOTICE COLOUR

## PRODUCT COLOUR

## EFFECTIVE FROM DECEMBER 1, 2024

SIZE	TOTAL RATE
FULL PAGE	372,500.00
HALF PAGE	213,000.00
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
4X2	29,333.50
3X3	28,000.00
3X2	17,400.00
2X2	13,000.00
2X1	8,600.00
1X1	4,400.00

SIZE	TOTAL RATE
FULL PAGE	329,868.50
HALF PAGE	192,500.00
QUARTER PAGE	100,000.00
14X2	109,500.00
10X6	242,500.00
10X5	237,500.00
10X4	192,500.00
10X3	171,000.00
9X6	232,500.00
9X5	206,000.00
9X4	177,500.00
9X3	150,000.00
8X6	216,000.00
8X3	98,500.00
7X4	164,002.00
6X4	94,010.50
6X3	78,500.00
6X2	47,500.00
5X5	100,000.00
5X4	61,500.00
5X3	57,819.00
5X2	40,379.50
4X4	55,000.00
4X3	31,000.00
4X2	22,003.50
3X2	17,260.00
2X2	12,945.00
2X1	8,630.00
1X1	4,315.00

## POLITICAL COLOUR

SIZE	RATE
CENTRESPREAD	1,200,000.00
DOUBLE SPREAD	885,000.00
FULL PAGE	420,000.00
HALF PAGE	213,250.00
QUARTER PAGE	115,012.50

## POLITICAL BLACK & WHITE

SIZE	RATE
CENTRESPREAD	1,050,000.00
DOUBLE SPREAD	745,000.00
FULL PAGE	315,777.50
HALF PAGE	184,700.00
QUARTER PAGE	95,222.50

## CORPORATE BLACK & WHITE

SIZE	TOTAL RATE
FULL PAGE	254,533.50
HALF PAGE	142,787.50
QUARTER PAGE	80,706.50
14X2	78,222.50
10X6	217,830.00
10X5	192,305.50
10X4	142,787.50
10X3	121,355.50
9X6	192,305.50
9X3	107,757.50
8X6	170,725.00
8X3	70,390.00
7X4	58,666.50
6X4	67,048.00
6X3	53,361.50
6X2	37,694.00
5X6	83,850.00
5X4	55,900.00
5X3	43,705.00
5X2	27,938.00
4X4	44,493.00
4X3	33,524.00
4X2	22,350.00
3X2	16,763.00
2X2	10,877.00
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## SPECIAL POSITIONS

2X6 FRONT PAGE	700,000.00
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10X6 FRONT PAGE	8,250,000.00
EARPIECE FRONT PAGE(1.5X2)	246,500.00
EARPIECE INSIDE PAGE(1.5X2)	117,875.00
EARPIECE BACK PAGE	236,796.50
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CENTRE SPREAD COLOUR (PRODUCT)	929,000.00
CENTRESPREAD B&W	800,000.00
CENTRE SPREAD HALF COLOUR	575,000.00
CENTRESPREAD STRIP COLOUR	191,668.50
DOUBLE SPREAD COLOUR	721,500.00
DOUBLE SPREAD HALF COLOUR	432,881.00
DOUBLE SPREAD STRIP COLOUR	144,294.00
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
FULL WRAP AROUND	15,000,000.00
HALF WRAP AROUND	8,500,000.00
HALF PAGE FRONT	5,500,000.00

## PUBLIC NOTICE BLACK & WHITE

SIZE	TOTAL RATE
FULL PAGE	280,690.00
HALF PAGE	164,178.00
QUARTER PAGE	84,641.50
10X6	228,000.00
10X5	201,600.00
10X4	149,440.00
10X3	127,108.00
9X6	201,600.00
9X5	169,050.00
9X4	137,875.00
9X3	112,875.00
8X6	179,368.00
8X5	143,500.00
8X4	93,500.00
8X3	82,434.50
7X4	111,173.50
6X4	82,434.50
6X3	59,250.00
6X2	40,000.00
5X6	98,749.50
5X4	65,833.00
5X3	49,375.00
5X2	32,916.50
4X4	52,666.50
4X3	39,499.50
4X2	26,333.50
3X2	19,750.00
2X2	13,000.00
2X1	6,500.00
1X1	3,292.00

## PRODUCT BLACK & WHITE

SIZE	TOTAL RATE
FULL PAGE	210,795.50
HALF PAGE	124,236.00
QUARTER PAGE	70,950.00
14X2	76,128.35
10X6	194,961.00
10X5	162,222.445
10X4	103,963.00
10X3	N/A
9X6	162,222.445
9X5	168,191.50
9X4	N/A
8X6	N/A
8X3	N/A
7X4	72,676.00
6X4	65,000.00
6X3	41,124.50
6X2	29,858.00
5X6	71,378.00
5X4	42,825.00
5X3	29,858.00
5X2	22,841.00
4x4	N/A
4X3	N/A
4X2	17,737.50
3x3	23,458.00
3X2	14,923.00
2X2	10,200.00
2X1	5,439.50
1X1	2,700.00

## ALLURE RATE

SIZE	RATE	TOTAL
CENTRESPREAD		967,500.00
DOUBLE SPREAD		806,250.00
ALLURE COVER		750,000.00
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(IFC) Inside Front Cover		430,000.00
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10X5		295,625.00
Half Page		225,000.00
EVENT		250,000.00

## PICTURE & CAPTION

SIZE	RATE	7.5% VAT	TOTAL
PHOTO NEWS PAGE 2	50,000.00	3,750.00	53,750.00
PHOTO NEWS (3X3)	30,000.00	2,250.00	32,250.00
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
FEATURES	200,000.00	15,000.00	215,000.00

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# Presidency clarifies Tinubu's Saint Lucia visit, cites ancestral ties, diplomatic imperatives

By Friday Omosola

The Presidency has moved to address what it termed 'misguided, mischievous, and uninformed comments' regarding President Bola Tinubu's ongoing state visit to Saint Lucia.

In a statement on Sunday, Bayo Onanuga, Special Adviser to the President on Information & Strategy, clarified the multifaceted objectives of the historic trip.

According to him, Saint Lucia views Mr Tinubu's visit as a crucial step towards rekindling ancestral bonds and ushering in a new era of diplomatic, cultural, and economic collaboration between the two nations.

Mr Onanuga highlighted that Saint Lucia, like many Caribbean countries, has a substantial population of African descent, including descendants of 19th-century Nigerian immigrants whose cultural and religious practices persist on the island.

He underscored the excitement among Saint Lucian citizens to strengthen ties with African nations sharing ancestral links.

He noted that Saint Lucia serves as the headquarters of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and a gateway to the 15-member CARICOM bloc, which collectively boasts a GDP exceeding \$130 billion – a significant figure for South-South trade discussions.

The visit he said is framed as imperative for deepening cooperation between continental Africa and the Caribbean, particularly in an era of global uncertainty.

Mr Onanuga also detailed the strong historical and people-to-people links between Nigeria and the Caribbean, citing the prominent example of Sir Darnley Alexander, a Saint Lucian-born jurist who served as Chief Justice of Nigeria from 1975 to 1979.

Alexander's extensive career in Nigeria, beginning in 1957, included roles as legal draftsman, acting Director of Public Prosecutions, Solicitor General, and a judge, before ascending to the nation's highest judicial office.

Another Lucian, architect Neville Skeete, contributed to the design of the Central Bank of Nigeria's headquarters, and



Alexander's son, Michael, served as a medical doctor in the Nigerian Army during the civil war.

Mr Tinubu's visit aligns with Nigeria's 'Four D's' foreign policy framework: Democracy, Development, Diaspora, and Demography.

He also supports the African Union's 'Sixth Region' agenda, which recognizes the African diaspora as a vital development partner.

Mr Onanuga noted Nigeria's active promotion of cultural exchange, with Afrobeats, Nollywood, and Nigerian literature already making significant cultural impacts in Saint Lucia and the wider Caribbean, as evidenced by the dominance of Nigerian music at events like the Gros Islet Street Party.

Emphasising shared democratic values, he highlighted Saint Lucia's stability as a parliamentary democracy, making it a natural ally for Nigeria's 26 years of uninterrupted democratic governance.

A local commentator on the National Television Network (NTN) reportedly described President Tinubu as a 'fighter for democracy' during his arrival coverage, acknowledging his well-known pro-democracy record.

Regarding demography, he linked Nigeria's projected status as the world's third most populous country by 2050 to Mr Tinubu's emphasis on harnessing the youthful population for economic transformation through education, industrialization, and innovation.

His planned visit to the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College and the inclusion of Nigerian Technical Aid Corps (TAC) officials in his delegation underscore Nigeria's commitment to strengthening educational partnerships and knowledge exchange.

Furthermore, the visit will include a reception hosted by Saint Lucia's Prime Minister, offering members of the Nigerian community a unique opportunity to interact with Tinubu and his delegation, thereby reinforcing bilateral ties.

He stressed the historic significance of the visit, noting that Saint Lucia, since its independence in 1979, has hosted fewer than ten official state visits, with the last by an African Head of State being President Nelson Mandela in 1998.

Mr Tinubu's 2025 visit, 27 years later, is thus hailed as a major diplomatic milestone, culminating in his address to a special joint session of Saint Lucia's bi-cameral Parliament at the Sandals Grande Saint Lucian Conference Hall.



# SGF George Akume denies reports of resignation

By Gbenga Olaleye

The Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), Senator George Akume, has dismissed rumours claiming he has stepped down from his position.

The false reports, which circulated widely on social media late Saturday, alleged that Akume had been removed and replaced by Hadiza Bala Usman.

In a statement released by the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Akume branded the claims as baseless and deceptive.

The statement, signed by Segun Imohiosen, Director of Information & Public Relations, reaffirmed that Akume remains the SGF and continues to enjoy the full confidence of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu.



“The purported removal of the SGF from office is only a fabrication and a figment of the imagination of mischief makers,” the statement said, urging the public and media to verify information before sharing.

Senator Akume continues to play a pivotal role in formulating and implementing policies under the administration’s Renewed Hope Agenda.

# Gov. Mbah affirms loyalty to PDP

By Gbenga Olaleye

Governor Peter Mbah of Enugu State has firmly dismissed rumours suggesting he intends to leave the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), assuring that he remains committed to the party.

The governor addressed the speculation during an interactive session with members of the Nigeria Guild of Editors (NGE) on Saturday in Enugu. Displaying the PDP flag behind him, Mbah declared, “I am still in the PDP, as you can see, the flag behind me is that of the PDP.”

Acknowledging the challenges confronting the party, Governor Mbah maintained that the PDP is not alone in facing difficulties and expressed confidence that the party’s internal issues would be resolved in due course.

Speaking on the subject of independent candidacy, the governor highlighted that the Nigerian constitution does not



currently recognise such a provision.

“So you must still do the politics as you cannot completely shield yourself from it,” he said.

Governor Mbah emphasised his administration’s focus on governance, adding, “It is also clear from the people of Enugu State that we are in this to serve them. So we have focused largely on

governance. I believe that at the end of the day, the people would have to decide whether they want to renew our mandate or kick us out.”

In a notable development, Mbah revealed that his political rival from the 2023 governorship election, Mr Chijioke Edeoga, has returned to the PDP to collaborate with him in advancing Enugu State.

# SERAP challenges govs on security vote spending, demands EFCC/ICPC probe

By Friday Omosola

The Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) has issued a seven-day ultimatum to Nigeria's 36 state governors, demanding transparency and accountability in the expenditure of 'security votes.'

The civil society organisation has submitted Freedom of Information (FoI) requests, urging governors to publicly account for all security funds spent by their states since May 29, 2023.

In FoI requests dated June 28, 2025, and signed by SERAP Deputy Director Kolawole Oluwadare, the organisation also pressed the governors to immediately invite the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) for a joint investigation, tracking, and monitoring of these expenditures.

SERAP highlighted the urgency of its demand, citing the recent massacre in Benue State and the pervasive insecurity across numerous states, which it says is exacerbating poverty, hunger, and human rights violations.

The group emphasised that the Nigerian Constitution does not endorse opaque spending of public funds as security votes.

"Despite billions of naira annually allocated as security votes, many governors are demonstrably failing to safeguard the lives and property of their citizens, contrary to constitutional provisions," SERAP's requests stated.

The organisation underscored the constitutional obligation of governors to abolish corrupt practices and abuse of office, asserting their fundamental duty to account for how security votes are utilized.



SERAP pointed out that in 2021 alone, state governors and local government chairmen reportedly collected over N375 billion in security votes.

It stressed Nigerians' right to know how these public funds are being spent to ensure their safety.

While acknowledging the need for operational secrecy in national security, SERAP maintained there is no legal basis to withhold basic information on public spending.

The organisation warned that failure to comply within seven days would lead to 'appropriate legal actions' to compel adherence.

SERAP cited a landmark Supreme Court judgment that affirmed the applicability of the Freedom of Information Act to all public records across the Federation, effectively nullifying governors' previous claims of exemption.

This judgment, SERAP stated, mandates transparency and accountability in the spending of

security votes, aiming to foster an honest public discourse on security challenges and governmental responses.

SERAP lamented that years of secrecy and inadequate oversight have fueled large-scale corruption and hindered public accountability for constitutional duties.

The organisation reiterated that security votes should be used strictly for improving state security or returned to the public treasury, condemning any treatment of these funds as personal entitlements.

The FoI requests also referenced the World Bank's recent classification of Nigeria as an 'economy in fragile and conflict-affected situations (FCS),' alongside countries like Afghanistan and Mali.

The bank reportedly noted that insecurity is a significant driver of extreme poverty in Nigeria, contributing to acute food insecurity, and undermining human development due to weak state capacity and conflict-related disruptions.



# Insecurity created, sustained by elites – Governor Mutfwang

By New Daily Prime



**G**overnor Caleb Mutfwang of Plateau State has described Nigeria's lingering insecurity as a problem created and sustained by the country's elite.

Speaking at a stakeholder meeting themed 'Dialogue on Community Policing as a Panacea for Insecurity in Nigeria: The Case of Plateau State', Mutfwang said the elite have contributed to deepening communal divisions and must take responsibility for reversing the trend.

"My theory is that, more than anybody else, the challenges of insecurity in Nigeria are an elite-created problem. When the elite conspires to lead the people in the wrong direction, we will continue to have this perennial crisis," he said.

He noted that while the "poisoning of minds" may often start at the community level, the elite have the power to halt such narratives—if they

choose to.

"Many a time, you'll find that even when the poisoning of the mind begins in the community, when the elite take leadership and say it must stop, they'll address it adequately and it will stop.

"But when the elite fan the embers of hate, they are the people that do their analysis, that begin to spew knowledge, information, and poison the minds of ordinary people—then it will be sustained," he said.

Mutfwang urged Nigeria's elite to take greater responsibility in promoting unity and peaceful coexistence.

He reaffirmed his administration's commitment to dismantling "artificial barriers of faith and ethnicity," which he argued have long hindered development in Plateau.

"As I stand before you today, I want to reiterate that I came into government with a firm resolve to restore lasting peace to Plateau. That is why I have deliberately sought to bridge the divides we've built across religion and ethnicity," he stated.

Reflecting on his efforts, the governor claimed no administration in Plateau since Nigeria's return to democracy in 1999 had done more than his in fostering peace and unity.

"Yet, as recent as yesterday, I received reports of being labelled in certain influential circles. Still, I beat my chest and say, without fear of contradiction, that I have done more than any governor since 1999 in building peace and unity on the Plateau," he added.

His remarks come amid heightened insecurity in Plateau, Benue, and other northern states in recent months.

# Fubara denies authorising 2027 election materials

By Gbenga Olaleye

The suspended Governor of Rivers State, Sim Fubara, has distanced himself from recently circulated campaign materials for the 2027 general election, insisting that he neither authorised nor endorsed the production of campaign caps and shirts.

Speaking to his supporters in Port Harcourt on Saturday, Fubara expressed a strong desire for peace and stability in the state, emphasising that such an environment is essential for growth and progress.

His statement follows President Bola Tinubu's intervention to resolve the lingering political crisis in Rivers State.

The dispute, primarily between Fubara and the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, had led to the governor's six-month suspension and prompted the President to declare a state of emergency in the state.



The crisis appeared to have reached a turning point last week when President Tinubu convened a high-level meeting at the Presidential Villa in Abuja, leading to a resolution aimed at restoring calm and stability.

Reflecting on the recent controversy, Fubara said, "I was pissed off. Someone forwarded to me a video showing where they were producing campaign materials—caps and shirts—for the 2027 general elections. I am not aware of it, and I did not authorise or send anyone."

He urged all parties to recognise the efforts made so far and called for unity: "Every one of us should understand that we have done our best, and what we need now is this peace for us to grow."

Fubara's remarks underscore his commitment to moving beyond the political turbulence that has characterised Rivers State in recent months and highlight the crucial role of peace in enabling development.

## Rivers women celebrate Fubara-Wike reconciliation, anticipate peace

By New Daily Prime

It was a colorful and emotional scene at the Port Harcourt Ecumenical Centre as the Rivers Women Unite for Sim (RWUS) movement held a thanksgiving service in celebration of the recent reconciliation between Rivers State Governor, Siminalayi Fubara, and the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Nyesom Wike.

Draped in pink attire symbolizing unity and joy, the women sang, danced, and offered prayers of gratitude for what they described as a long-awaited return to peace in the state.

Speaking during the service, RWUS leaders said the reconciliation was a welcome development that signaled a turning point for the political stability of Rivers State. They thanked



President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, Governor Fubara, and Minister Wike for prioritizing the interest of the state.

One of the leaders of the group, Florence Itamunoala, a retired Director at the Ministry of Justice, stated that the group was fully aligned with Governor Fubara's call for peace and would support him through any political transition.

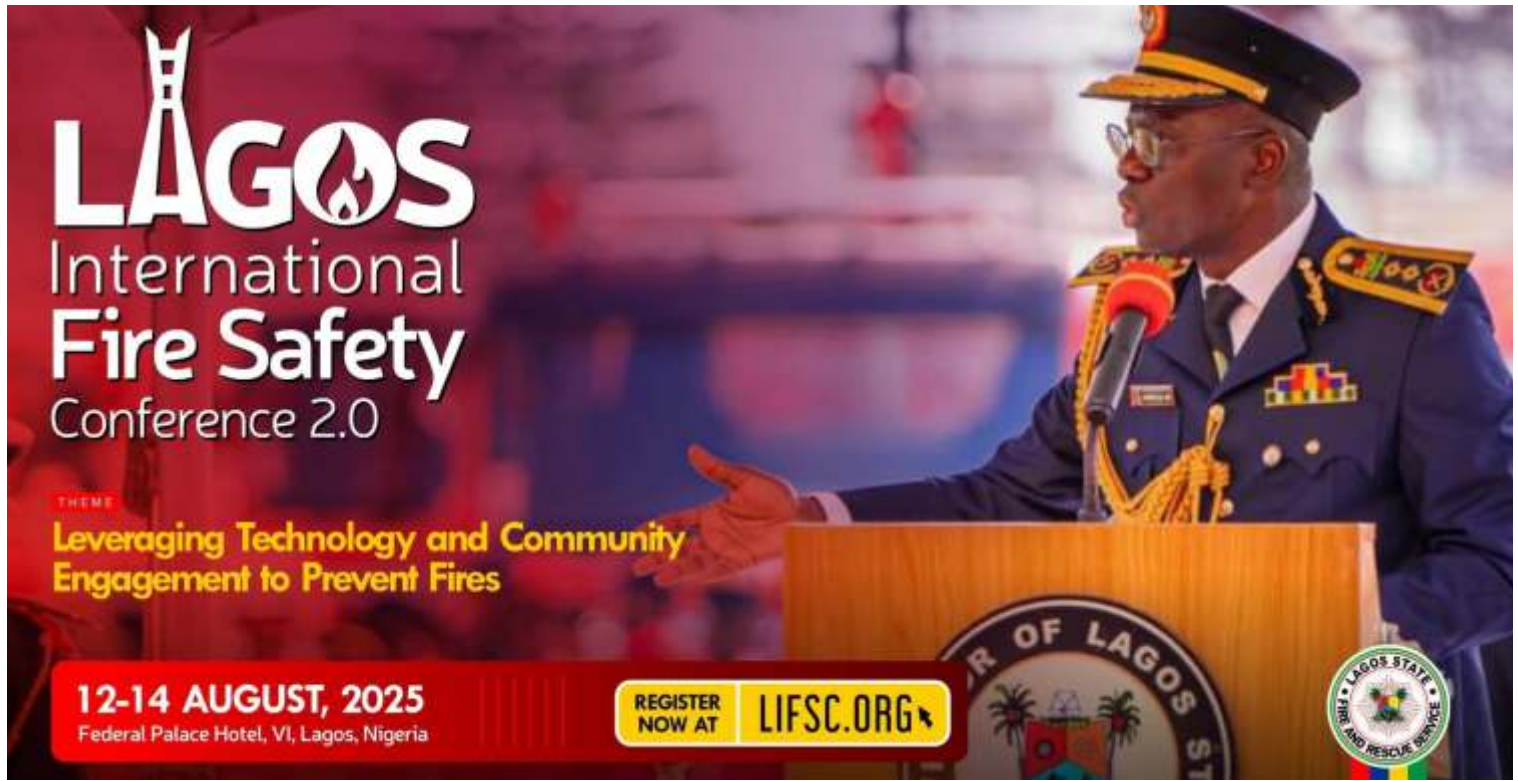
"He has asked us to embrace peace, and we will follow him anywhere," she said. "We believe in his leadership, and we know this reconciliation is for the good of the Rivers people."

The group's spiritual leader, Pastor Nancy Nwankwo, also led prayers for the Governor's return to office, expressing optimism that the political turbulence would soon be behind the state.



# Lagos set to host LIFSC 2.0, over 2,000 delegates expected

By Friday Omosola



The Lagos State Fire and Rescue Service, operating under the Ministry of Special Duties and Intergovernmental Relations, is preparing to host the second edition of the Lagos International Fire Safety Conference (LIFSC 2.0).

The three-day event, scheduled from August 12 to 14 at the Balmoral Convention Centre, Federal Palace Hotel, Victoria Island, is expected to draw over 2,000 participants.

Under the theme ‘Leveraging Technology and Community Engagement to Prevent Fires’, the conference will bring together a diverse group of attendees, including industry leaders, policymakers, emergency service personnel, market representatives, and community figures.

The primary objective is to tackle pressing fire safety challenges and promote a robust culture of prevention, preparedness, and mitigation, thereby enhancing resilience across Lagos, Nigeria’s commercial hub, and beyond.

Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu is slated to deliver the keynote address and

officially open the conference.

LIFSC 2.0’s agenda includes insightful workshops, expert panel discussions, and state-of-the-art exhibitions.

Topics will span disaster risk management, safe handling of dangerous goods, live demonstrations of fire suppression technologies, and a showcase of advanced fire safety equipment.

Gbenga Oyerinde, the state Commissioner for Special Duties and Intergovernmental Relations, emphasised that the conference underscores Mr Sanwo-Olu’s commitment to public order and safety, as outlined in his THEMES Plus Agenda.

“The Lagos International Fire Safety Conference 2.0 is a cornerstone of our proactive approach to safeguarding lives, property, and the environment,” Mr Oyerinde stated.

“By fostering collaboration among stakeholders and empowering communities with knowledge, we are building a safer, more resilient Lagos for

all.”

Sesan Ogundeko, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Special Duties and Intergovernmental Relations, highlighted the importance of the conference’s continuity in driving positive change within the state.

Director of the Lagos State Fire and Rescue Service, Margaret Adeseye, noted that this year’s event builds on the success of LIFSC 1.0 in 2024, which attracted over 1,800 delegates.

Ms Adeseye stressed the focus on mitigation, revealing that ‘Carelessness accounts for over 80% of fire and related emergency incidents in Lagos.’

She added, “LIFSC 2.0 is our platform to drive home the message that ‘The best fire fought is the one prevented’ by equipping residents and businesses with the tools to mitigate fire risk effectively.”

Organisations, individuals, and interested stakeholders are encouraged to register for the conference via the official website: [www.lifsc.org](http://www.lifsc.org).

# NDLEA intercepts large drug shipments, arrests ex-footballer, others

By Friday Omosola

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) has made significant breakthroughs in its fight against illicit drug trafficking, leading to the arrest of a former international football player, a businessman, and three other individuals.

They were arrested in connection with the seizure of 22.6 kilograms of cocaine and methamphetamine at the Murtala Muhammed International Airport (MMIA) in Lagos and the Akanu Ibiam International Airport (AIIA) in Enugu.

Among those apprehended is Segun George Hunkarin, an ex-international footballer, arrested alongside his business associate Ntoruka Emmanuel Chinedu.

Chinedu, a frequent traveler known for his Turkey-Nigeria trade, was initially detained upon his June 24 arrival at Lagos airport, where 37 wraps of cocaine (800 grams) were found concealed in his carry-on bag.

Investigations revealed Chinedu transited through Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, picking up the luggage from another individual before heading to Nigeria.

Hunkarin, who had spent years playing football in Brazil, was tracked and arrested at the airport carpark, reportedly waiting to collect the consignment.

In his statement, Hunkarin admitted to trafficking drugs twice from Brazil to Ethiopia during his football career but denied bringing any into Nigeria.

On Friday, June 27, NDLEA operatives at Lagos airport also arrested Amen Okoro Godstime, a Europe-based businessman, attempting to traffic 5,000 pills of Tramadol 225mg.

The drugs were disguised as common malaria medications like Lonart, Amatem, and Aluktem, bound for Spain.

Okoro, involved in freight and logistics between Europe and Nigeria, claimed he



intended to send the tramadol from France, where he resides, to Italy for retail.

Concurrently, at the Akanu Ibiam International Airport (AIIA) in Enugu on June 27, NDLEA agents intercepted Ezenwaka Chibuzor Emmanuel, a 38-year-old bar attendant based in Maputo, Mozambique.

A search of his luggage uncovered 17 cardboard parcels of methamphetamine weighing 17.500 kilograms and three parcels of cocaine totaling 3.050 kilograms.

Emmanuel was interdicted upon his arrival from Johannesburg, South Africa, via Addis Ababa, with the illicit substances concealed within bedsheets in his bags.

Also at the Enugu airport, Azu Follygan Kpodar, 54, arriving from Sao Paulo, Brazil, was intercepted on the same Ethiopian Airlines flight.

A liquid substance found in a plastic container marked YPE in his luggage tested positive for cocaine, weighing 1.250kg.

The suspect, a toy seller, claimed he purchased the substance while shopping for his wedding in Nigeria.

Further operations saw NDLEA operatives at the Seme border in Badagry, Lagos, on June 24, intercept Vode Jean-Luck, a 26-year-old Beninese, attempting to smuggle 69 balls (29.5kg) of skunk from Benin Republic into Nigeria.

In Kwara State, Mary Bolanle Oladele (alias Iya Nafi), a notorious drug dealer, was arrested on June 25 during a raid on her base in Omu-Aran, Irepodun Local Government Area, where quantities of skunk, tramadol, and flunitrazepam were recovered.

Additionally, a 72-year-old grandmother, Christy Ejaro, was arrested on June 24 in Warri, Delta State, with several sachets of retail-sized skunk.

Brig. Gen. Mohamed Buba Marwa (Rtd), Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of NDLEA, commended the agency's commands at MMIA, AIIA, Delta, Kwara, and Seme for their recent arrests and seizures.

He also lauded all commands nationwide for balancing drug supply reduction efforts with crucial drug demand reduction activities, including extensive WADA (War Against Drug Abuse) sensitization lectures delivered at various schools across the country.



# Davido, Bright Chimezie thrill fans at Abia concert

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

It was a night of music, dance, and excitement in Umuahia, the capital of Abia State, as top Nigerian music stars took the stage in a thrilling live concert.

The highly anticipated event featured superstar Davido, Afro-dancehall king Timaya, hitmaker KCEE, and legendary highlife singer Bright Chimezie.

Held on Friday night at the Umuahia Township Stadium, the concert was organised by Abia-born businessman and philanthropist, Lucky Igbokwe.

The event also marked the grand launch of his two newly established radio stations—Don 103.7 FM and Ikoro 93.3 FM.

Fans flock stadium for historic event

Thousands of music lovers gathered at the stadium, creating an electrifying atmosphere. The venue quickly became a hotspot of energy, rhythm, and celebration. From the moment the show kicked off, fans danced, sang, and cheered with unrestrained joy.

While every artist brought their unique flair to the stage, it was Davido and Bright Chimezie who stole the show. Their performances captivated the crowd and sparked wild reactions from every corner of the stadium.

Davido sends the crowd into Frenzy

Davido, known for his high-energy stage presence, did not disappoint. The crowd erupted the moment he stepped into the spotlight. With every song, the cheers grew louder. When he performed his hit track With You, the stadium roared in unison, singing along word-for-word.

Dressed in his signature flashy style, Davido danced across the stage, smiling as fans screamed his name. His performance connected deeply with the audience, many of whom had waited hours just to see him live.

Bright Chimezie brings classic highlife vibes

Next up was veteran musician Bright Chimezie, whose entrance brought a



fresh wave of excitement. The crowd, young and old, responded with thunderous applause as he opened with his timeless track Because of English.

With his trademark “zigima” dance moves and infectious energy, Chimezie kept fans on their feet. His performance was both nostalgic and powerful, bridging generations and genres in one sweeping set. Shouts of joy echoed through the stadium as he reminded everyone why he remains a legend in Nigerian music.

Synergy sparks calls for collaboration

The highlight of the night was the visible chemistry between Davido and Bright Chimezie. The two had been spotted together in Lagos weeks earlier, fueling speculation about a potential musical project. Their joint appearance in Umuahia reignited that excitement.

Inside the stadium, fans began chanting for a collaboration. Many called on Davido to feature Chimezie in a new track, seeing their combined presence as a symbol of unity between old-school highlife and modern Afrobeats.

In a playful but meaningful gesture, several fans affectionately hailed Davido as “our in-law.” The term refers to his marriage to Chioma, who hails from the Igbo ethnic group. This



connection made his performance in the southeastern state even more personal for many in the crowd.

Celebrating culture and community

Beyond the music, the event was a celebration of culture, unity, and community pride. Organiser Lucky Igbokwe received praise for bringing top talent to Umuahia and for investing in local media through his new radio stations.

“This is about giving back to the people,” he said in a brief address during the event. “Umuahia deserves this level of entertainment and exposure.”

A night to remember

As the concert wrapped up late into the night, fans lingered, still buzzing from the excitement. Many described it as one of the best live shows ever held in the region. With unforgettable performances and a strong sense of cultural pride, the night proved to be more than just a concert; it was a celebration of Nigerian music and identity.

From the roaring crowd to the star-studded lineup, Umuahia witnessed a night of magic that will be remembered for years to come.

# Lalude: We were paid N10,000 daily for Tinubu campaign

By Gbenga Olaleye



**V**eteran Nollywood actor Lalude has revealed that he and his colleagues were given only N10,000 daily for meals while campaigning for President Bola Tinubu during the 2023 general elections.

Lalude made this disclosure amid expressions of regret and frustration over the difficulties faced following Tinubu's victory.

In a widely shared interview on social media, the actor explained that he and his fellow campaigners worked for nearly two months without receiving any proper payment.

He lamented that they were merely paid N10,000 per day for feeding, and are yet to receive any

rewards or recognition for their efforts even after two years of Tinubu's administration.

"They were giving us N10,000 daily for feeding. It was supposed to be more, given the campaign commitments, but they insisted on N10,000. When they realised we were saving the money, they even reduced it, and sometimes went without paying us for two to three days," Lalude disclosed.

"After the entire campaign period of one month and three weeks, they refused to pay us. Those withholding our financial benefits for the campaign will not be fortunate for the rest of their lives," he added.

The actor's statement comes

shortly after his colleague, Alapini, also expressed regret over campaigning for Tinubu alongside hundreds of others.

This revelation arrives two years after the 2023 general elections, during which several Nigerian celebrities publicly endorsed Tinubu, including Saheed Balogun, Bimbo Akintola, Toyin Abraham, Eniola Badmus, Olaiya Igwe, and Seyi Law.

The development sparked controversy on social media, with many fans unfollowing the celebrities and criticising their support amid Nigeria's worsening economic hardship and insecurity under the Muhammadu Buhari-led All Progressives Congress (APC) government.



# ‘BBNaija Reunion: I’m good in bed’, says Wanni

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

**F**ormer Big Brother Naija Season 9 housemate, Wanni Danbaki, has opened up about her past relationship with fellow contestant Shaun, revealing that their time together left a lasting impression on him.

Wanni, who was a popular face during the recently concluded season, stated that although their romantic involvement has since ended, she is confident Shaun still holds her in high regard. According to her, their relationship was a complete and fulfilling experience for him.

“He got to experience a real woman”

During a recent episode of the reality show, Wanni gave a candid reflection on her time in the house and her brief relationship with Shaun. Speaking with confidence, she said Shaun had the chance to experience what it means to be with a “real woman.”

“He got to experience a real woman. Yes, he knows,” she stated. “I’m an A1. I’m a good cook. I know how to love, I know how to f\*\*k, I know how to do everything.”

Her bold remarks drew attention on social media, where fans reacted with a mix of admiration and surprise at her honesty.

Self-confidence and high ratings

Wanni didn’t hold back in describing herself as a complete package. She rated her own performance in the relationship a perfect score.

“I would say it was a 5 out of 5 for me,” she said with a smile. “I possess all the love languages: physical touch, words of affirmation, quality time, I’m good at all of them.”

She added that she believes these qualities made her stand out during her relationship with Shaun.

“I think he appreciated that about me,” she said. “That’s why I know he will always respect me. I gave him something real.”



No bad blood, says Shaun

Despite the end of their romantic connection, it appears there is no lingering hostility between the two former housemates.

During the same episode, the show’s host, Ebuka Obi-Uchendu, asked whether there was still tension between them.

“So, you guys are cool now?” he asked.

Shaun responded calmly: “No, no, no. There’s no problem. We are cool.”

While his tone remained neutral, fans were quick to point out that his response was brief, offering little insight into how he truly feels about the relationship or Wanni’s comments.

Viewers react to Wanni’s bold statements  
Wanni’s remarks quickly sparked conversations among viewers of the show, especially on social media platforms. Many praised her self-confidence and openness, while others criticised what they saw as oversharing.

Some fans felt her statements were empowering, with one user writing, “Wanni is a queen. She knows her worth and isn’t afraid to say it.” Others questioned the appropriateness of her comments, saying such personal details

should have remained private.

Still, the buzz around her words has only added to her growing popularity since leaving the Big Brother house.

Life after the show

Since her exit from the reality series, Wanni has continued to attract public attention, both for her charisma and her outspoken nature. She has hinted at plans to go into lifestyle content creation and women’s empowerment campaigns.

Shaun, on the other hand, has kept a relatively low profile since the show ended. While he remains active on social media, he has not made many public statements about his time on the show or his relationship with Wanni, until now.

Final thoughts

Wanni’s reflections offer a glimpse into the emotional highs and lows of relationships formed in the high-pressure environment of reality television. Whether or not viewers agree with her bold approach, one thing is certain: Wanni Danbaki is not afraid to speak her truth.

As the BBNaija Season 9 housemates adjust to life outside the house, fans will be watching to see what’s next for both Wanni and Shaun.

# ‘I wasn’t married to Segun Ogungbe’, Omowunmi Ajiboye reveals

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

**N**igerian actress Omowunmi Ajiboye has revealed new details about her past relationship with popular actor and filmmaker Segun Ogungbe.

In a recent interview, she stated clearly that they were never married and that Ogungbe never met her family during their time together.

This comes nearly two years after the two publicly parted ways in 2023. Their separation was followed by heavy criticism and online speculation, especially around the time of her mother’s burial.

## Controversy at mother’s burial

Following their split, Omowunmi faced harsh reactions online when she failed to acknowledge Segun Ogungbe’s presence at her late mother’s funeral. While fans expected to see signs of respect or mention of Ogungbe, she chose to publicly recognise Musiliu Akinsanya, popularly known as MC Oluomo, the Lagos NURTW Chairman, for attending the event.

Her gesture sparked rumours of a possible romantic link between her and MC Oluomo, with social media users accusing her of disrespecting Ogungbe, who is the father of her children.

## Denies dating MC Oluomo

In response to the growing rumours, Omowunmi took to her Instagram page to address the situation. She denied any romantic involvement with MC Oluomo and explained that his presence at the burial was simply an act of support.

Despite her clarification, the backlash did not stop. The actress soon took a break from the movie industry and reportedly relocated abroad, seeking to distance herself from the public drama.

## ‘Ogungbe Never Met My Family,’ Omowunmi

Now back in the spotlight, Omowunmi has spoken once again about her past. In a recent interview on Oyinmomo TV, she opened up about her relationship with Segun Ogungbe and offered clarity on what she called “misunderstood facts.”



She revealed that even though they share two children, Ogungbe was never formally introduced to her family.

“Let me just set the record straight,” she began. “Segun Ogungbe and I were never married or engaged. We just have kids together. Segun Ogungbe has never met with any of my family members, except a friend of my sibling who lives in Lagos. Segun himself can confirm this.”

Her statement challenges widely held beliefs about the nature of their relationship, especially since many fans assumed they were legally or traditionally married.

## Public reaction and online bullying

Over the years, Omowunmi has been subjected to intense online trolling. Many critics assumed that she broke up her home and turned her back on Ogungbe after achieving success in the movie industry. Others accused her of being ungrateful or chasing status by associating with powerful figures like MC Oluomo.

In her latest comments, she pleaded with the public to stop judging her unfairly. She insisted that the truth had been buried under false narratives for too long and that it was time to correct the record.

“I’m tired of being insulted for something that never existed. People think they know what happened, but

they don’t. My peace of mind is important,” she said.

## The relationship timeline

Omowunmi and Segun Ogungbe reportedly started working together in Nollywood several years ago. Their on-screen chemistry and off-screen closeness led many fans to believe they were a couple.

They later had two children together, which only added to the assumption that they were husband and wife. But according to Omowunmi, there was never a formal relationship or marriage, either under customary or legal terms.

## Calls for respect and privacy

As the controversy continues to stir conversation online, Omowunmi has urged fans and bloggers to respect her privacy and focus on facts rather than assumptions.

She noted that her priority now is raising her children in peace and rebuilding her life without the shadow of past events constantly looming over her.

With her return to public interviews, many are watching to see what direction her career and personal life will take next. But for now, the actress seems determined to set the record straight and move forward.



# Gospel singer 'New Jerusalem' dies at 53

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

**P**opular Benue-born gospel musician, Israel Terhamba Ikyereve, famously known by his stage name New Jerusalem, has passed away at the age of 53.

His death has sent shockwaves across the state, especially among the Christian faithful who admired his musical talent and spiritual devotion.

A musical voice that touched many

Ikyereve was celebrated for blending the traditional Tiv Swange rhythm with gospel messages, turning his music into a force for evangelism and hope. His songs were more than melodies; they were messages of faith, healing, and unity.

News of his death has triggered widespread mourning, with fans, colleagues, and community leaders paying tribute to the man many described as a spiritual anchor in the music world. His work was deeply rooted in the Christian faith, and his music was widely used in church services, crusades, and prayer meetings across Benue and beyond.

Tributes from leaders

Among those who have paid tribute is the former Governor of Benue State, Chief Samuel Ortom. The former governor visited the late singer's home in Makurdi to offer condolences, joined by members of the Brethren Prayer Group. During his visit, Ortom spoke fondly of Ikyereve, describing him as a true servant of Christ.

"His music touched me deeply," Ortom said. "As someone who loves Christ, I was drawn to his songs. That connection led me to build a personal relationship with him, and it became a bond with his entire family."

Ortom recalled seeing Ikyereve's music being played during a religious event in Australia. According to him, a Tiv man was leading a music class there with



New Jerusalem's songs playing in the background. Ortom said the moment confirmed the international reach and spiritual power of Ikyereve's ministry.

A Lasting Legacy

The former governor not only offered words of comfort but also assured the family of his continued support. He pledged not to abandon them after the funeral, promising to stand by both the family and the New Jerusalem Gospel Music Troupe.

Speaking on behalf of the Ikyereve family, Hon. Iorshagher Ikyereve, the elder brother of the late singer, thanked Ortom for his constant support. He revealed that one of Israel's sons was named "Ortom" to honour the former governor's kindness and strong presence in the family's life.

"Chief Ortom has been more than a leader; he's been family to us," Iorshagher said. "Even during my brother's illness, he stood by us."

Prayers and funeral arrangements

Also present during the condolence visit were Rev. Pastor Tor Ujah and Dr.

Joseph Antyo, both senior members of the Brethren Prayer Group. They led the gathering in prayers for comfort, healing, and strength for the bereaved family.

Israel Terhamba Ikyereve leaves behind his wife, gospel singer Deborah Msendoo Ikyereve, four children, and many extended family members and admirers. His influence, however, goes far beyond his household.

The gospel icon's final journey will take place on Saturday, July 5, 2025, at his hometown of Sati Agirigi, Mbamo, Shitile, in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State.

A voice that will echo on

Though Israel "New Jerusalem" Ikyereve has departed this world, his music continues to inspire and uplift souls. His life's work stands as a shining example of how art and faith can work hand in hand to create positive change.

Benue has not just lost a singer, it has lost a spiritual voice, a cultural torchbearer, and a gospel pioneer. But in every song he sang, his message lives on.

# Trump's tax and spending bill clears first senate vote

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



The US Senate, controlled by the Republican Party, has advanced President Donald Trump's massive tax and spending bill in a key procedural vote, increasing the likelihood of its passage in the coming days.

The 940-page "megabill", dubbed by Trump as his "big, beautiful bill", aims to extend the 2017 tax cuts, lower other taxes, and significantly boost funding for border security, immigration enforcement, and the military. It cleared its first hurdle late on Saturday with a narrow 51-49 vote, following hours of tense negotiations and internal party discord.

Two Republican senators, Thom Tillis and Rand Paul, broke ranks and voted against the bill. Initially joined by Senator Ron Johnson, the three held out for concessions before Johnson ultimately reversed his stance following late-night talks with Vice President JD Vance and other GOP leaders. Senators Rick Scott, Mike Lee, and Cynthia Lummis also pressed for deeper spending cuts before supporting the measure.

Trump celebrated the outcome on social media, calling it a "great victory" for his top legislative priority and praising the

bill as "great, big, and beautiful".

If passed, the legislation would permanently extend tax breaks from Trump's first term, introduce new tax relief, including eliminating taxes on service tips, and allocate \$350bn towards national security. A substantial portion of that would support Trump's proposed mass deportation agenda.

However, the bill has sparked fierce opposition, both inside and outside Washington. Billionaire entrepreneur and Trump donor Elon Musk publicly denounced the Senate draft on his social media platform, X, calling it "utterly insane and destructive". Musk warned the bill would "destroy millions of jobs" by penalising renewable energy industries through increased taxation, while favouring "industries of the past".

Democrats have condemned the proposal as a handout to the wealthy, citing analyses from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO). Under the House-passed version, top income-earners would receive tax cuts averaging \$12,000, while the poorest Americans could lose an average of \$1,600. The CBO also projected that 10.9 million more people could be left without healthcare, and 3 million fewer would

qualify for food assistance.

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer demanded that the entire bill be read aloud before debate, accusing Republicans of trying to force through a "radical" agenda without proper scrutiny.

Among the bill's more contentious provisions is a cut to the Medicaid provider tax, a tool many states use to secure federal funding for healthcare. After resistance from senators concerned about rural healthcare, the revised draft now delays the cuts and includes a \$25bn fund to support rural hospitals.

Despite the late-night victory, the bill remains a political and logistical challenge. Conservative lawmakers are pushing for even deeper spending reductions, citing the nation's \$36.2 trillion debt. Meanwhile, Trump, while urging swift passage, has reportedly sent mixed signals about the timeline.

The Senate is now expected to begin formal debate, with final passage uncertain as negotiations continue behind closed doors. The Ides of July deadline looms, as many provisions from Trump's first-term tax cuts are set to expire by year's end if no action is taken.



# Iran could resume uranium enrichment within months, says UN nuclear watchdog

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



Iran could be capable of producing enriched uranium again within months, despite recent strikes on its nuclear facilities by the United States and Israel, according to the head of the United Nations nuclear watchdog.

Speaking in an interview with CBS News, Rafael Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), said that although the damage inflicted was significant, Iran's nuclear capabilities had not been entirely dismantled.

"They can have, you know, in a matter of months, I would say, a few cascades of centrifuges spinning and producing enriched uranium, or less than that," Grossi stated in remarks released on Saturday.

Israel launched a bombing campaign against Iranian nuclear and military sites on 13 June, claiming the operation was aimed at preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon, an ambition Tehran has long denied. Days later, the United States conducted its own strikes, targeting three major facilities tied to

Iran's atomic programme.

Iran's foreign minister, Abbas Araghchi, confirmed that the damage to the sites was "serious," though precise details remain unclear. U.S. President Donald Trump claimed the attacks had "set Iran's nuclear programme back decades," a statement now being questioned in light of Grossi's assessment.

Crucial to international concerns is Iran's existing stockpile of highly enriched uranium, estimated at 408.6kg (900lbs), enriched to 60%. While this level exceeds what is typically used for civilian purposes, it falls short of weapons-grade. Still, experts note that if refined further, the material could be used to produce more than nine nuclear weapons.

The current whereabouts of this stockpile are unknown. "We don't know where this material could be," Grossi admitted. "So some could have been destroyed as part of the attack, but some could have been moved. So there has to be at some point a clarification.

Iranian lawmakers have since voted to suspend cooperation with the IAEA, and Tehran has denied Grossi's request to inspect the damaged sites, including Fordow, its primary uranium enrichment facility.

"We need to be in a position to ascertain, to confirm what is there, and where it is and what happened," said Grossi.

In a separate appearance on Fox News's Sunday Morning Futures, Trump said he did not believe Iran had relocated the stockpile before the strikes. "It's a very hard thing to do plus we didn't give much notice," he said. "They didn't move anything."

Meanwhile, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio expressed strong backing for the IAEA's mission, commending Grossi and his team for their "dedication and professionalism."

The full interview with Rafael Grossi is scheduled to air on Face the Nation with Margaret Brennan on Sunday.

# Reeves' tax policies force Britain middle-class exit for Southern Europe

By Fatimah Idera



**M**iddle-class families are increasingly seeking to leave Britain for southern Europe, as concerns grow over Labour's tax agenda under Chancellor Rachel Reeves. New data shows a surge in UK applications for so-called golden visa schemes in countries like Greece and Portugal, offering residency in exchange for property investment.

The trend has accelerated since Labour's election victory last summer, driven in part by fears of further tax hikes in the autumn as the government grapples with a £40 billion budget shortfall.

Greece has seen a near 50% rise in golden visa applications from UK nationals since last summer. In the 12 months to April, 626 British applicants were granted five-year residency permits under the scheme up from 427 the year before, according to data from the Greek government analysed by global immigration firm Astons. Portugal has reported a similar spike. UK applications to its golden visa scheme jumped 66% last year to 389, up from 234 in 2023. Both countries offer permanent residency and a route to EU citizenship for property investments as low as €250,000.

Alena Lesina of Astons said demand has shifted beyond the super-rich. "We've seen a clear uptick in interest from UK nationals, especially middle-

class families, digital professionals, and retirees," she said. "While high UK taxes are a factor, it's also about quality of life and long-term planning in an uncertain world."

Spain, whose golden visa scheme closed in April—also saw a sharp rise in UK interest before its closure, with 3,601 applications in 2023, a 70% increase in the previous year.

Outside Europe, the United Arab Emirates has seen a notable increase in British arrivals. Its tax-friendly environment and lower living costs have made it an appealing option amid the UK's rising tax burden, a trend that began under the Conservatives and has continued under Labour.

Andrew Griffith, Shadow Business Secretary, criticised Labour's approach.

"It's tragic to see the UK's young, ambitious talent looking abroad for a better future," he said. "Labour's tax raids are not only harming families—they risk shrinking the tax base and deepening the UK's fiscal crisis."

Last autumn, Rachel Reeves abolished the non-dom tax status and tightened inheritance tax reliefs in a bid to raise revenue. But facing mounting pressure, the Treasury is now reportedly exploring ways to soften some of these measures

after signs of capital flight among high earners.

A Treasury spokesperson defended the government's approach:

"Our tax system is fair, progressive, and keeps the UK attractive. Our capital gains tax is the lowest among G7 nations, and we've protected workers by freezing income tax and national insurance rates.

A recent report by Henley & Partners projected that the UK will lose more millionaires in 2025 than any other country, with an estimated 16,500 expected to leave—marking the largest such outflow in a decade.

In response, both Reform UK and the Conservative Party have proposed new incentives aimed at reversing the trend. Reform UK has floated a £250,000 "Britannia Card," offering a 10-year residency permit with exemptions from UK tax on foreign income. Meanwhile, the Tories are reportedly drafting plans for a golden visa scheme that would shield foreign wealth from Labour's inheritance tax rules.

As Labour braces for further backlash this autumn, pressure is mounting on Reeves to balance fiscal responsibility with policies that retain both capital and confidence at home.



# Starmer faces renewed MP revolt over farmers' inheritance tax plan

By Fatimah Idera

**S**ir Keir Starmer is under fresh pressure from within his party as Labour MPs prepare to rebel against plans to scale back inheritance tax relief for farmers measures critics warn could devastate family-run farms.

More than 40 MPs are weighing up amendments to dilute the policy, which they say could leave farming families saddled with unaffordable tax bills. Their defiance follows a successful revolt this week that forced the Prime Minister to U-turn on proposed welfare cuts the government's third major reversal in just two months.

These repeated U-turns on disability benefits, the winter fuel allowance, and a promised grooming gangs inquiry have only intensified concerns over the £40 billion fiscal gap that Chancellor Rachel Reeves must address in the next Budget.

Tensions are flaring among backbenchers, with rebellions now brewing not just over farming policy but also on immigration and the two-child benefit cap. One senior rebel MP said.

"It's clearly a government in crisis. The back benches feel shut out. The current strategy isn't working, and it's time for a change of direction."

Earlier this week, more than 100 MPs broke ranks over the government's disability benefits reform, prompting Downing Street to backtrack.

Now, Labour MPs are eyeing amendments to a forthcoming Bill that would shield smaller farms from harsh inheritance tax changes set to take effect in April 2026. Currently, agricultural estates can be passed down tax-free. Under the new rules, full tax relief will be limited to estates worth £1 million or less, with only 50% relief applying above that.

The so-called rural growth group of Labour MPs is pushing for a far more generous system: full relief for estates up to £10 million, 50% up to £20 million, and none beyond that. These changes, if adopted, would spare the vast majority of small farms from inheritance tax altogether.

Sam Rushworth, MP for Bishop Auckland and a member of the group, said they would prefer to avoid a direct confrontation but are prepared to act.

"I don't want it to get to that point," he said. "But we would like the government



to bring forward different recommendations."

Some Labour MPs have already broken ranks publicly. Markus Campbell-Savours, MP for Penrith and Solway, said last December he would vote against the plan, warning Parliament that the policy could ruin family farms.

Starmer is also facing discontent over his recently announced immigration policies. While many of the changes such as new visa rules can be implemented without parliamentary approval, a proposed levy on international student fees will require MPs' backing.

One Labour rebel urged the government to use the summer recess to adopt an evidence-based approach and consult more widely.

"Backbench MPs were completely bypassed," another added. "That has to change."

Refugee charities have also voiced concern, reporting that requests to meet Home Secretary Yvette Cooper were ignored.

Tensions escalated further this week after Starmer apologised for calling Britain an island of strangers in his immigration speech. He blamed emotional distress following an arson attack on his family home for not reviewing the speech properly before delivery. While he acknowledged the mistake in language, he gave no indication that immigration policy itself would change.

Nigel Farage, leader of Reform UK, seized on the apology, branding it Starmer's biggest mistake to date.

"This proves he has no principles. The public wanted change and they're getting more mass immigration and border chaos."

Some on Labour's Right were stunned by the Prime Minister's climbdown. One MP said, "That row-back was the most staggering of all. It'll further undermine discipline."

Labour is also bracing for a possible confrontation in the autumn over the two-child benefit cap, which many MPs want to see abolished. Though the Prime Minister has reportedly committed to scrapping it, no official decision has been announced.

In a speech next week, Business Secretary Kemi Badenoch is expected to mock the growing list of policy reversals.

"Labour said the adults were back in charge but this is amateur hour," she is expected to say. "The Prime Minister can't stick to a decision."

A senior Labour figure privately admitted that discipline inside the party is eroding fast.

"This is beyond the welfare bill it's spreading. Loyal, moderate MPs who defended tough decisions for months now feel abandoned. The frustration is real and it's aimed at both Rachel and No.10."

# France bans smoking on beaches and in parks to protect children

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



Smoking on beaches and in public parks across France has been officially banned from Sunday, under sweeping new rules designed to shield children from the dangers of passive smoking.

The legislation, which also applies to bus shelters and areas within 10 metres of schools, libraries, and swimming pools, was published in the official government gazette on Saturday and came into immediate effect, one day ahead of schedule. The move is part of a broader national effort to create a “tobacco-free generation” by 2032.

The timing of the ban, rolled out just one week before France’s school holidays begin, is no coincidence. Health and Family Minister Catherine Vautrin emphasised the aim is to “immediately protect children” in leisure areas. “A park, a beach, a school, these are places to play, learn, and breathe. Not for smoking,” she said.

Violators of the new ban risk fines of up to €135, which can rise to €700 for repeated or serious offences. The health ministry has said it will soon unveil official signage to indicate designated

no-smoking zones.

While many anti-smoking campaigners have welcomed the new restrictions, some have expressed frustration that smoking is still permitted on bar and restaurant terraces, a common setting for smoking in France. The rules also fall short of including e-cigarettes, which critics argue are increasingly used to target young people through appealing flavours.

Yves Martinet, a pulmonologist and president of the National Committee Against Smoking (CNCT), said the changes are “a step in the right direction, but remain insufficient”. “Children also go to the terraces,” he noted, expressing disappointment that these popular outdoor venues remain exempt.

The hospitality industry has defended the decision to keep terraces open to smokers. Frank Delvau, president of the Union of Hotel Trades and Industries (UMIH) for the Paris region, said banning smoking in such areas “would only shift the problem”, with smokers simply moving to nearby pavements.

Similarly, Franck Trouet of the Hotels

and Restaurants of France (GHR) argued that “smokers and non-smokers can coexist” in terraces, calling them “the last places of conviviality and freedom”.

France’s efforts come amid encouraging signs of a gradual decline in smoking rates. According to the French Observatory for Drugs and Drug Addiction (OFDT), fewer than one in four adults aged 18 to 75 reported daily smoking in 2023, the lowest level since 2000.

Nonetheless, the toll remains high. Tobacco is responsible for around 75,000 deaths annually in France, with passive smoking alone contributing to an estimated 3,000 to 5,000 deaths each year. The social and economic cost of tobacco use is staggering, estimated at €156 billion per year when accounting for lost lives, healthcare, law enforcement, prevention, and reduced productivity.

A recent opinion poll revealed that 62% of French people support a wider ban on smoking in public spaces, suggesting the government’s latest move is in step with public sentiment, even if some believe it does not go far enough.



# Lib Dem council scraps £70 parking charges after public backlash

By Fatimah Idera



A Lib Dem-led council has scrapped plans to introduce £70 parking permits for residents following a wave of public backlash. The proposal by Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council would have required householders in key seafront adjacent suburbs to pay for the right to park outside their own homes.

The plan, designed to tackle wild west parking behaviour by summer tourists, sparked what one campaigner described as a tsunami of objections from locals. On hot days, visitors have been known to leave cars on double-yellow lines, pavements, driveways, verges, and even roundabouts due to a lack of available parking near the beach.

To address the chaos, the council had proposed installing parking meters on streets within a 0.6 mile radius of the seafront covering residential

areas such as Sandbanks, Canford Cliffs, Branksome Chine, Westcliff, Boscombe, and Southbourne. The revenue would have funded more tow trucks to remove illegally parked vehicles.

However, under the now-abandoned scheme, residents themselves would have been charged £70 per vehicle to park on affected streets.

Council leader Millie Earl announced the U-turn just days after the plan was made public. "We have listened and I want to give some assurance that we will not be supporting these draft proposals," she said. "They are too big, cover too many roads, and we understand that paid for parking through residents' permits is not a solution people want."

Campaigners welcomed the decision. Mark Davison of BCP & Dorset Motorists said: "They've

admitted defeat and run up the white flag. The public was furious."

Mayor of Bournemouth George Farquhar, who had opposed the charges, also praised the reversal. "I'm very pleased the administration will not be supporting paid-for parking in the massive areas proposed. Penalising the offenders is far better than asking residents to pay to park outside their homes."

Ms Earl reiterated her calls for the Government to raise the £35 cap on parking fines, arguing that current penalties are too low to deter illegal parking. "We want a simple solution to the parking chaos and that is to properly fine and deter those who think it's okay to block pavements and driveways, and park on roundabouts and verges," she said.

During the past weekend alone, more than 1,000 cars were issued parking tickets in Bournemouth, with 10 vehicles towed.

# Uganda: After 39 years in power, 80-year-old Museveni to seek re-election

By New Daily Prime



**U**gandan President, Yoweri Museveni, has announced his intention to run in the country's next presidential election, extending a rule that began nearly four decades ago.

In a post on the X platform late Saturday, Museveni said he had "expressed my interest in running for... the position of presidential flag bearer," for his ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) party.

The 80-year-old leader has governed Uganda since 1986 after seizing power following a

five-year guerrilla war. Under his leadership, the ruling NRM has twice amended the constitution, allowing him to remain in office beyond term and age limits.

According to Reuters, right groups have long accused Museveni of deploying security forces and leveraging patronage to hold onto power, an allegation he denies.

Explaining his decision to seek reelection, Museveni said he aims to grow Uganda's economy to a "\$500 billion economy in the next five years." According to the finance ministry, the

country's GDP currently stands at about \$66 billion.

Uganda is set to hold presidential and parliamentary elections in January next year. Museveni's main challenger is expected to be opposition figure and pop star-turned-politician Bobi Wine, who came second in the 2021 election and has declared his intention to contest again in 2026.

Wine, whose real name is Robert Kyagulanyi, rejected the 2021 results, alleging his victory had been stolen through "ballot stuffing, intimidation by security forces and other irregularities."



# 'Netanyahu must go', Israel's ex-PM calls leadership 'catastrophic'

By New Daily Prime



**N**aftali Bennett, Israel's former Prime Minister, stated in a televised interview that current Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu must leave office.

Bennett refrained from saying whether he plans to challenge the longest-serving leader in the country in an upcoming election.

In an interview with Israel's Channel 12 that aired on Saturday, Bennett commented, "Netanyahu has been in power for 20 years... that's too much; it's not healthy."

He called attention to Netanyahu's "heavy responsibility for the divisions in Israeli society," highlighting the growing rifts that have emerged under Netanyahu's leadership, especially regarding his handling of the Gaza war since October 2023.

Bennett, a right-wing leader who joined forces with Netanyahu's critics

to form a coalition that ousted him from office after 12 consecutive years, insisted that "Netanyahu must go."

However, the fragile coalition government Bennett led, along with current opposition leader Yair Lapid, collapsed after about a year. This led to snap elections, resulting in Netanyahu regaining the premiership with support from far-right and ultra-Orthodox Jewish parties.

Although Bennett has taken time away from politics, there are rumors of a potential comeback, with public opinion polls indicating he may have enough support to defeat Netanyahu again. Currently, no elections are scheduled before late 2026, but early elections are common in Israel.

In his Saturday interview, Bennett claimed credit for laying the groundwork for Israel's bombardment campaign earlier this month against Iranian nuclear and military sites.

The decision to launch attacks against the Islamic Republic "was very good" and "needed," said Bennett, claiming that the offensive would not have been possible without the work of his short-lived government.

In Gaza, where Israel has waged war since Hamas's October 2023 attack, Bennett said the military has displayed "exceptional" performance, but "the political management of the country" was "a catastrophe, a disaster".

Criticising the Netanyahu government's "inability to decide," the former prime minister called for an immediate "comprehensive" agreement that would see all remaining hostages freed from Gaza.

"Leave the task of eliminating Hamas to a future government," said Bennett, who also evaded several questions about whether he intends to run for office.

# PSG progress with 4-0 win over Inter Miami

By Gbenga Olaleye

Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) emphatically ended Inter Miami's run in the 2025 FIFA Club World Cup with a commanding 4-0 victory in the Round of 16 on Sunday.

The European champions entered the clash as clear favourites and swiftly demonstrated their superiority. PSG took the lead as early as the 6th minute when Joao Neves expertly headed in a free-kick delivered by Vitinha at the back post.

Neves was again at the heart of PSG's attacking prowess as he finished off a well-coordinated team move to double the Ligue 1 side's advantage against the Major League Soccer visitors.

The visitors' defence then suffered a blow when Tomas Aviles inadvertently turned the ball into his own net, handing PSG a 3-0 lead. Shortly afterwards, Achraf Hakimi capitalised on a rebound to make it 4-0 before the break.

The second half remained goalless as PSG maintained control to secure their place in the quarter-finals. They will next face a tough opponent, awaiting the winner between Bayern Munich and Flamengo.

PSG's clinical display highlighted their intent to lift the Club World Cup trophy and underscored their status as one of the leading football clubs globally.

Fans react

"This match is a humiliation ritual for Messi," one fan wrote on X.



"Messi is just walking around," another complained, while others shared clips of PSG stars Nuno Mendes and Neves brushing him off the ball.

"Looks like PSG came with a point to prove - payback for all that trash talk when he left the club. This one's personal!" a third supporter noted.

On the other hand, others shared a clip of Messi producing a magical pass for Suarez, which he managed not to score from to deny the playmaker a stunning assist.

Speaking in the build-up to the match, PSG boss Enrique paid tribute to Messi and made it clear that his players couldn't take victory for granted.

"Anyone who relaxes for 10 seconds in football already knows where they are. It's not like there's no doubt they have the level and the quality, because they haven't lost that," he

said.

"I've seen all three of Inter Miami's games and some previous ones, and they have that quality. If we're not able to press them, it will be difficult to pressure them," Luis Enrique told reporters on Saturday.

"If we're not able to take the ball away from them, things don't look good because Busquets is still the same; Leo Messi is unique on the ball. Luis Suárez, you saw the last goal he scored, what a skill for managing, Jordi Alba coming in deep, he's still the same.

"We all know Leo's pass to Jordi in the world of football, but it happens again and continues to happen every game, and if they have a coach like Mascherano, it's clear that either we give a great performance and maintain the necessary level of intensity, or they'll win the game, easy, there's no doubt about that."



# Kane shines as Bayern sink Flamengo in Club World Cup

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

**H**arry Kane scored twice as Bayern Munich cruised into the quarter-finals of the FIFA Club World Cup with a 4-2 victory over Flamengo at the Hard Rock Stadium in Miami.

The England captain delivered a masterclass in clinical finishing, netting once in each half to ensure the German champions outclassed the Brazilian giants in a thrilling Last 16 encounter witnessed by over 60,000 spectators.

It took Bayern just six minutes to get on the scoresheet, though it came through an unfortunate moment for Flamengo's Erick Pulgar, who diverted the ball into his own net following a cross from the right.

The Bundesliga giants doubled their lead moments later, this time through their talisman. Dayot Upamecano charged forward from the back and picked out Kane with a low cross. The striker did the rest, calmly slotting past Agustin Rossi for 2-0.

Despite the early shock, Flamengo refused to back down. Gerson brought them back into the contest in the 33rd minute with a smart finish following a through ball from Giorgian de Arrascaeta, sparking celebrations among the sea of red-clad Brazilian supporters.

However, Bayern struck a crucial blow just before the interval. Leon Goretzka was left unmarked on the edge of the box and rifled a right-footed shot beyond Rossi to restore the two-goal cushion at halftime.

The second half saw Flamengo emerge with renewed intensity, and they were rewarded when Jorginho converted a 55th-minute penalty after Matheus Franca was brought down in the box.



At 3-2, the game hung in the balance.

But it was Kane again who doused the flames of a potential comeback. In the 73rd minute, Joshua Kimmich delivered an inch-perfect pass over the top, and Kane controlled with sublime precision before firing into the far corner for his second of the night — and Bayern's fourth.

With the score at 4-2 and time ticking away, Flamengo threw on attacking substitutes including Bruno Henrique and Nicolas de la Cruz, but Bayern's defence held firm. Thomas Müller came on in the dying moments, likely making one of his final appearances in a Bayern shirt, as the Germans professionally managed the closing stages.

Even a seven-minute injury time spell couldn't change the outcome, with Neuer commanding his box and Leroy Sané coming close to adding a fifth. A late yellow card for Kane — earned while tracking back to stop a Flamengo counter — showed his full-hearted commitment to the cause.

This win sets up a mouth-watering quarter-final clash between Bayern Munich and Paris Saint-Germain, two of Europe's most prolific attacking sides. With both clubs in top scoring form, fans can expect another spectacle.

As for Flamengo, their hopes of lifting a global title were dashed once again. Despite some spirited moments and passionate support in the stands, they were ultimately undone by Bayern's precision and Kane's ruthlessness in front of goal.

Kane, who has often faced criticism for chasing trophies outside England, reminded the world why Bayern Munich brought him to Bavaria. Two goals, relentless pressing, and a yellow card earned deep in his own half — the complete performance from one of the game's best number nines.

With this form, Bayern Munich will believe they can go all the way in the expanded 2025 Club World Cup, and Kane's dream of lifting silverware on the global stage is well and truly alive.

# Klopp slams Club World Cup as 'worst idea ever'

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

Former Liverpool manager Jürgen Klopp has launched a scathing attack on the expanded FIFA Club World Cup, calling it “the worst idea ever implemented in football” and warning of dangerous consequences for player welfare.

Now head of global football at Red Bull, Klopp's criticism comes just days after one of Red Bull's teams, RB Salzburg, was eliminated in the group stage of the newly expanded 32-team tournament in the United States.

In an interview with *Welt am Sonntag*, the 58-year-old German doubled down on long-held concerns over fixture congestion, player fatigue, and the governing bodies' failure to prioritize recovery time.

“It's all about the game and not the surrounding events – and that's why the Club World Cup is the worst idea ever implemented in football,” Klopp said.

He went on to accuse football's decision-makers of being out of touch, saying: “People who have never had or do not have anything to do with the day-to-day business anymore are coming up with something.”

## Growing Concerns Over Player Welfare

Klopp's remarks echo a growing chorus of voices raising concerns about the relentless football calendar. Global players' union FIFPro recently released a report urging governing bodies to guarantee a four-week off-season for players. Meanwhile, top players such as Manchester City's Rodri and Manuel Akanji have publicly warned that the current schedule is unsustainable.

Rodri even said in September that players were “close to striking” over the increasingly crowded calendar, while Akanji admitted he might be forced to retire by age 30 due to the lack of rest.

Klopp believes the expanded Club World Cup only exacerbates the issue, especially when added to other major international competitions.

“Last year it was the Copa [America] and the European Championship, this year it's the Club World Cup, and next year the



World Cup,” he said. “That means no real recovery for the players involved – neither physically nor mentally.”

## FIFA Defends the Competition

Senior FIFA sources responded to the backlash, telling BBC Sport that player protection is central to the organization's decisions. They pointed to new initiatives like concussion substitutes, additional in-game subs, and a player welfare fund.

Furthermore, FIFA has argued that the Club World Cup has not significantly added to the fixture congestion. Only two teams, they point out, will play a maximum of seven games, replacing the former Confederations Cup slot in the calendar.

Still, Klopp remains unconvinced.

“We constantly expect players to go into every game as if it were their last. We tell them that 70 or 75 times a year. But it can't go on like this,” he warned.

“If players don't get breaks, they won't be able to deliver top performances. And if they can't achieve that anymore, the entire product loses value.”

## Liverpool, Wirtz & the Market Shift

In the same interview, Klopp commented on his former club Liverpool's record-breaking £116 million signing of Florian

Wirtz from Bayer Leverkusen. While acknowledging the price was “insane,” he admitted it reflects the evolving transfer market.

“The world keeps changing. If you want to play at the top level, you can't train all your players yourself. Sometimes you need to get hold of players from somewhere else,” he said.

Though Klopp declined to speculate on where Wirtz would best fit under new Liverpool manager Arne Slot, he praised the 22-year-old's versatility and talent: “He's an outstanding player who can give any club something great.”

## No Coaching Return

Despite ongoing speculation, Klopp reaffirmed that he has no intention of returning to the dugout — not even temporarily. “My gut feeling tells me: No,” he said.

Now focused on mentoring and strategy at Red Bull, Klopp emphasized he was not brought in to interfere with club coaching decisions. “I'm supposed to pass on my experience and help younger colleagues develop,” he added.

For Klopp, the passion for football remains — but his view on its current direction, especially the Club World Cup, remains sharply critical.