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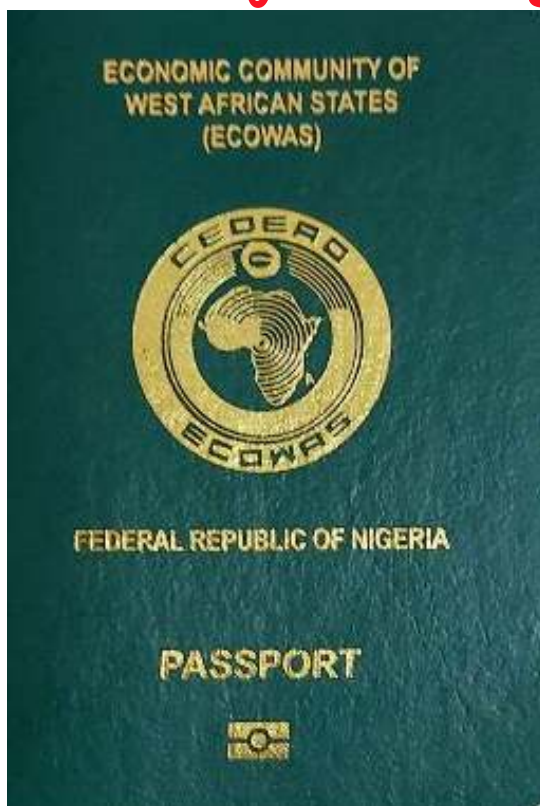
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# Presidency explains why US reduced visa validity for Nigerians

By Friday Omssola



**T**he Presidency has clarified the United States' decision to reduce visa validity for Nigerian citizens, citing two primary reasons.

In a statement on Tuesday, Bayo Onanuga, President Bola Tinubu's Special Adviser on Information and Strategy, reaffirmed the Federal Government's (FG) unwavering commitment to fostering strong diplomatic ties with both the United States and the United Arab Emirates.

He noted that recent adjustments to visa issuance policies affecting Nigerians by these two nations are receiving active attention from the FG.

Relevant Nigerian ministries, departments, and agencies are currently engaging in constructive discussions to address the concerns raised.

“The United States Government has officially communicated that its decision was based on two principal factors: the current rate of visa overstays by Nigerian nationals and the need for reliable access to their records.

“It further explained that the visa policy adjustment is part of its global visa reciprocity process, which is routinely reviewed and subject to change, including the number of permitted entries and validity durations”, he said.

Onanuga added that Tinubu directed all federal agencies to ensure full compliance with Nigeria's international obligations and to strengthen inter-governmental cooperation in authenticating the identities of individuals seeking consular services abroad.

The President urged all Nigerians to respect the immigration regulations of their host countries and uphold the integrity of the permits and privileges granted to them under those jurisdictions' laws.

“Regarding the new conditions for issuing UAE transit visas to Nigerian nationals, the Federal Government notes that it has not received any formal communication from the UAE authorities regarding a revised visa

policy. However, it is observed that visa issuance is currently progressing in a gradual and orderly manner.

“The President appreciates the continued cooperation of the Government of the United Arab Emirates, which has remained constructive and engaged with Nigerian authorities. Any genuine concerns raised are being addressed through the appropriate channels, in a spirit of mutual respect and collaboration.

“The President assures all Nigerians that his administration will continue to pursue the best possible outcomes for citizens abroad, ensuring that Nigerians can travel, work, and live with dignity and respect in any part of the world, in line with the Tinubu administration's 4-D Foreign Policy agenda and its Diaspora plank”, Onanuga added.

He reaffirmed the FG's commitment to deepening Nigeria's valued bilateral relations with the Governments of the United States and the United Arab Emirates.

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## PUBLIC NOTICE COLOUR

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SIZE	TOTAL RATE
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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
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10X6	242,500.00
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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
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10X4	142,787.50
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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
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8X6	N/A
8X3	N/A
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6X3	41,124.50
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# Tinubu, Shettima, foreign dignitaries present as Buhari laid to rest in Daura

By Friday Omosola

President Bola Tinubu, along with his vice, Kashim Shettima, and foreign dignitaries, bid the former president Muhammadu Buhari farewell in Daura, Katsina State, on Tuesday.

The funeral of the late former president was attended by other government officials, mourners, and sympathisers at his residence.

The remains of former President Muhammadu Buhari have arrived at his Daura residence, where he was laid to rest according to Islamic customs following a funeral prayer to be led by the Chief Imam of Katsina.

A crowd of mourners gathered outside the family compound in Daura to pay their last respects to the late Nigerian leader, whose passing on Sunday, July 13, 2025, in a London hospital, has drawn widespread condolences.

Buhari's body, flown from the United Kingdom earlier on Tuesday, was received at the Umaru Musa Yar'Adua International Airport in Katsina by President Bola Tinubu, who arrived from Abuja at 1:42 p.m. Shortly after inspecting a guard of honour, the Nigerian Air Force plane carrying Buhari's remains touched down at 1:51 p.m.

Joining Tinubu at the reception were Vice President Kashim Shettima, Chief of Staff Femi Gbajabiamila, and several members of the late president's family. Foreign dignitaries, including President Umaro Sissoco Embaló of Guinea-Bissau, Niger's Prime Minister Ali Lamine Zeine, former President of Niger Issoufou Mahamadou, and former Nigerian Vice President Yemi Osinbajo, were also present at the solemn ceremony.

First Lady Senator Oluremi Tinubu was seen welcoming and consoling Buhari's widow, Aisha Buhari, as the nation began its official farewell to the late leader.

A joint military pallbearer unit, made up of nine senior officers from the Army, Navy, and Air Force, handled the casket, which was draped in the national flag. The team included Major-Generals Mohammed Usman, Oluwafemi Williams, and Shuaibu Nudu; Rear Admirals Suleiman Dahun, Jonathan Ajodo, and Samuel



Ngatuwa; and Air Vice Marshals Adeniyi Herbert Amesinlola, Idi Sanni, and Obinna Obiabaka. Major General Mike Alechenu coordinated the detail.

As the hymn "God Be With You Till We Meet Again" played, the pallbearers solemnly wheeled the casket past a full military guard of honour made up of six officers and 96 soldiers from across the Armed Forces. President Tinubu and other dignitaries followed the procession behind the casket trolley in a silent tribute.

The body was then placed in a military hearse for the hour-long journey to Daura, where it will be interred following Janazah (Islamic funeral) prayers.

The funeral ceremony was marked by full military rites, including a 21-gun salute, as Nigeria paid its final respects to one of its longest-serving leaders.

Upon departure from London, the body left London, United Kingdom, at approximately 8:00 a.m. and was accompanied by Vice President Kashim Shettima, Chief of Staff to the President, Femi Gbajabiamila, and some family members of the late former president.

Muhammadu Buhari served as Nigeria's head of state twice — first as a military ruler from January 1984 to August 1985, and later as an elected civilian president from 2015 to 2023, making him the country's second-longest-serving leader.

He died in London at the age of 82 after receiving treatment for many weeks in London.

His spokesperson, Garba Shehu, announced the news of his death.

Born in Daura, Katsina State, Buhari first led Nigeria as a military ruler from January 1984 to August 1985. After the return to civilian rule in 1999, he ran for president three times unsuccessfully—in 2003, 2007, and 2011.

**Buhari in politics**

In 2013, his political party, the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), merged with other opposition parties—including Bola Tinubu's Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), factions of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), and the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA)—to form the All Progressives Congress (APC).

That coalition led to a landmark victory in the 2015 presidential election, with Buhari and his running mate Yemi Osinbajo defeating the incumbent, President Goodluck Jonathan. It was the first time an opposition party unseated a sitting president in Nigeria's Fourth Republic.

Buhari was re-elected in 2019 and served two full terms, eventually handing over power to President Tinubu and Vice President Shettima on May 29, 2023.



# Akpabio drags Natasha to court, appeals suspension verdict

By **Damilola Olufemi**

Senate President Godswill Akpabio has filed an appeal challenging a recent judgment by the Federal High Court that ordered the Senate to reverse the suspension of Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan, who represents Kogi Central.

The appeal, dated July 14, 2025, was submitted to the Court of Appeal in Abuja. Akpabio is contesting the July 4 ruling by Justice Binta Nyako, who declared the Senate's six-month suspension of Akpoti-Uduaghan as excessive and a violation of the rights of her constituents to adequate representation.

Although the judge affirmed the Senate's constitutional powers to discipline its members, she held that the nature and duration of the suspension went too far. Nyako also fined the senator ₦5 million for contempt of court, citing a satirical Facebook post she made while the case was ongoing, which the court considered a breach of an earlier restraining order.

Meanwhile, Akpoti-Uduaghan has also filed an appeal, disputing the contempt ruling. She argues that the alleged misconduct occurred outside the courtroom — a situation known legally as *ex facie curiae* — and, therefore, the trial court lacked jurisdiction to punish her for it.

Akpabio's legal team has filed a cross-appeal, asserting that the Federal High Court had no authority to intervene in what they describe as internal legislative matters. Citing Section 251 of the 1999 Constitution, the Senate President's lawyers argued that the court overstepped its bounds by meddling in the internal workings of



the legislature.

In his 11-point appeal, Akpabio faulted the trial court for ignoring his preliminary objection and issuing what he called intrusive declarations that infringe on the independence of the legislature as protected by the Legislative Houses (Powers and Privileges) Act.

His legal team insisted that issues such as suspensions, comments made during plenary sessions, and Senate resolutions fall squarely within the purview of legislative procedure and are not subject to court review. They further argued that Akpoti-Uduaghan jumped the gun by going to court without first exploring internal resolution mechanisms like the Senate Committee on Ethics, Privileges, and Public Petitions — a process clearly outlined in the Senate Standing Orders (2023, as amended).

Akpabio accuses judge of fair hearing denial

Akpabio also accused the judge of denying him a fair hearing, stating that the court decided on matters — particularly the proportionality of the suspension — that neither party had raised during arguments. He said this amounted to judicial overreach and undermined the principle of impartial adjudication.

His appeal also criticised the court for collapsing interim applications and substantive claims into one ruling, which, according to his counsel, breaches standard legal procedures. They further argued that Akpoti-Uduaghan's suit should have been dismissed outright for failing to comply with Section 21 of the Legislative Houses Act, which requires that a three-month pre-litigation notice be served on the Clerk of the National Assembly.

Akpabio urged the appellate court to overturn the High Court's decision, validate the Senate's disciplinary action, and reinforce the autonomy of legislative proceedings.

# Buhari could not have lived up to 2025 if he'd used Nigerian hospital – Adesina

By **Damilola Olufemi**



**F**emi Adesina, a former presidential spokesman to late president Muhammadu Buhari, has stated that the former president could have died long dead for a long time if he had visited Nigerian hospitals.

Adesina urged critics of Buhari's death in a London hospital should know that the former president had been using London hospitals before he was elected president in May 2015.

He added that medical doctors in the United Kingdom were aware of his principal's medical history and there was no need to change them.

According to him, some hospitals in Nigeria are deficient in the facilities and professionalism needed for

Buhari's treatment.

"Buhari always had his medicals in London, even when he was not in the office. So it was not about the time he was president alone. He had always had it there.

"One has to be alive first to get certain things corrected or changed in the country. If Buhari had said he would do his medicals here as a show of patriotism or something, he could have long been dead because there may not be the expertise needed in the country," Adesina said while speaking on Channels Television on Tuesday.

Buhari's body leaves London

Meanwhile, ahead of a state burial in honour of Buhari, his remains has

left London, United Kingdom, for Daura, Katsina State.

Buhari's body was conveyed on a Nigerian Air Force (NAF) craft.

He died in London at the age of 82 on Sunday, July 13, 2025, after receiving treatment for many weeks in London.

His spokesperson, Garba Shehu, announced the news of his death.

Born in Daura, Katsina State, Buhari first led Nigeria as a military ruler from January 1984 to August 1985. After the return to civilian rule in 1999, he ran for president three times unsuccessfully—in 2003, 2007, and 2011.



# APGA urges Otti to return to party, calls it his true political home

By Gbenga Olaleye

The National Vice Chairman, South East, of the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA), Augustine Ehiemere, has called on Abia State Governor Alex Otti to return to APGA, describing it as his “true political home” and the most stable platform for delivering sustainable governance.

Ehiemere made the appeal during the Abia South Senatorial District APGA stakeholders’ meeting held last week in Abia State.

He warned Governor Otti against aligning with other political parties, which he described as unstable or in disarray.

“APGA remains the healthiest and most stable political party in Nigeria today, we are calling on Governor Alex Otti to return to his political home, APGA, where he started.

“Labour Party is presently a breeding ground for crisis. ADC is almost in disarray, APC is not a safe ground for him, and PDP has already diminished. APGA is the only platform that offers stability and ideological consistency for



him to continue his good works,” Ehiemere stated.

Ehiemere praised Governor Otti’s performance, particularly his efforts in security and welfare, and commended the collaboration between Otti and his Enugu State counterpart, Peter Mbah, as well as the establishment of the Abia State Security Trust Fund.

He also lauded the governor for prompt payment of salaries and pensions but

urged him to address outstanding gratuities owed to retired workers.

Further, Ehiemere called on APGA members across Abia South and the entire state to remain committed to the party’s ideals.

Governor Alex Otti was APGA’s governorship candidate in Abia State during the 2015 and 2019 elections. The party hopes to see his return to strengthen its position in the region.

## ‘Forgive my husband before we bury him’ – Aisha Buhari begs Nigerians

By Alade Adisa

Nigeria’s former First Lady, Aisha, has appealed to Nigerians to forgive her late husband, ex-President Muhammadu Buhari, for any mistakes he might have made while in office.

The former president, who led Nigeria from 2015 to 2023, died after a brief illness in London on Sunday, at the age of 82.

Speaking shortly after his passing, Aisha said the former president had, on several occasions, asked her to



deliver the heartfelt message to Nigerians should he die before her.

She said: “Since he left office, the

thing he would often tell me whenever we talked was that if he passed away before me, I should convey his message to Nigerians to forgive him for any mistakes he made during his tenure as a human being prone to errors.

“Therefore, for the sake of Allah, I beg everyone to forgive him before he is taken to his final resting place.”

Buhari is expected to be buried later on Tuesday in his hometown of Daura, Katsina State.

# Federal Capital Territory sees development boost under Wike

By Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi



As Nigeria intensifies its focus on urban renewal, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) has emerged as a prominent symbol of national transformation. Leading this resurgence is Barrister Ezenwo Nyesom Wike, the former governor of Rivers State, who now serves as Minister of the FCT under President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's administration.

Wike's appointment in August 2023 sparked intense debate across political circles. While supporters hailed it as a strategic move to inject energy and efficiency into Abuja's development agenda, critics condemned it as a display of political opportunism. A long-time member of the opposition People's Democratic Party (PDP), Wike was accused of betraying party loyalty and undermining democratic norms by supporting Tinubu—then the candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC)—over his party's flagbearer, Atiku Abubakar, in the 2023 presidential election. However, Wike is widely recognized for his assertive leadership style and results-driven approach.

Wike is a politician who commands respect across party lines

During a lecture at Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), His Imperial Majesty Oba Adeyeye Ogunwusi, the Ooni of Ife, described Wike as "one politician that must be studied" in the context of Nigerian politics.

When Wike was the Governor of Rivers State, former vice president, Professor Yemi Osinbajo named him 'Mr Projects' after inspecting the various projects executed by the governor such as hundreds of kilometres of roads, bridges, flyovers, schools, and hospitals.

Similarly, Rabi'u Musa Kwankwaso, former Governor of Kano State and NNPP presidential candidate in 2023, commended Wike for his integrity and boldness. "Without putting on a red cap, you are a member of Kwankwasiyya anytime," Kwankwaso remarked, adding, "In Kano, many people respect you. Those who underestimate you do so at their peril."

Kwankwaso made the statement in November 2022 during a courtesy visit to Rivers State, where he inaugurated internal roads in Emohua Local Government Area.

Senate President Godswill Akpabio has

lauded Nyesom Wike, describing him as both a "miracle worker" and "a man of peace." Speaking at Wike's birthday book launch in Port Harcourt, Akpabio commended his remarkable achievements as Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), particularly in infrastructure development. He stated, "No one in their right senses would sustain a quarrel with Wike... His contributions to Nigeria's political landscape are indelible."

Wike's achievements as FCT Minister over two years

Wike's leadership style is defined by proactive decision-making, rapid infrastructure delivery, and a strong sense of accountability. His direct, hands-on approach is rare in Nigerian public administration but has proven highly effective. He is widely acknowledged for launching projects without delay, regularly conducting on-site inspections, and often delivering results ahead of schedule.

**Continue reading  
on next page**



# Cont from page 8

According to Mr. Gabriel, a resident of Gwagwalada, Abuja, “In less than two years, Wike has reshaped how the capital functions, delivering visible improvements in infrastructure, public services, and administrative transparency.” He added that rather than blaming his predecessors or waiting for federal allocations, Wike has adopted a “start now, adjust later” mentality.

According to a recent report by Punch, Minister Nyesom Wike has overseen the construction of no fewer than 150 kilometres of roads across the Federal Capital Territory’s (FCT) satellite towns between 2024 and 2025. Business Day Newspaper also highlighted several key achievements under Wike’s leadership during his first two years as FCT Minister.

Major projects include Arterial Road N16, which connects Maitama and Katampe districts; the 16-kilometer OSEX II service carriageway linking Apo and Wasa; and Arterial Road N5, extending from Lifecamp Junction to Ring Road III. Other significant developments encompass the renovation of the International Conference Centre (ICC) and the execution of the Greater Abuja Water Project.

Additional infrastructure upgrades feature newly constructed bus terminals in Kugbo and Mabushi, improvements to the Inner Northern Expressway from Idu to Kubwa, and the N20 Flyover along Onnex Kubwa Road. Road access has also been enhanced in areas such as Giri District, Kwali, and Bwari—projects scheduled for commissioning over a 19-day period,

President Tinubu also launched the Southern Parkway (renamed Bola Ahmed Tinubu Way), the rehabilitated Abuja Metro Line, and associated access roads and parking facilities. In addition, the President inaugurated the commercial operations of the Abuja Light Rail, multiple arterial roads in the Central Area, and infrastructure developments in both the Guzape and Diplomatic districts.

The administration resurfaced 189 roads spanning 57 kilometers within the city center and completed the long-abandoned Vice President’s official residence, inaugurated at a cost of ₦21 billion. The FCT Minister’s official residence in Life Camp also received a major facelift.

Wike’s influence extended well beyond the city center into the satellite towns. With strong backing from the Presidency and the Minister of State, Dr. Mariyam Mahmoud, several strategic road projects were initiated across all six Area Councils, as documented by BusinessDay newspaper.

Notable among these interventions is the 9-kilometer Paikon Kore–Ibwa road in Gwagwalada, the 7.2-kilometer Gaba–Tokulo road in Bwari, and the 11-kilometer Yangoji–Sukuku–Ebo road in Kwali. In addition, temporary access roads were constructed for Saburi 1 and 2 communities within the Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC), improving connectivity and easing local transportation challenges.

Security in the FCT has markedly improved. Upon assuming office, Wike addressed rising crime—including abductions and “one-chance” robberies—by engaging with key stakeholders and enhancing law enforcement mobility. The administration supplied 100 motorcycles for rural patrols and distributed 50 communication-equipped operational vehicles, contributing to a safer environment across the territory.

## Engaging the Diaspora

Wike has emphasized the importance of global partnerships and diaspora engagement. His administration has hosted town halls and investment forums aimed at making Abuja a global, investor-friendly city.

However, when New Daily Prime asked whether there are dedicated cultural or

tourism programs to attract diaspora families, a government spokesperson, Lere Olayinka, responded: “To be honest, I am not aware of any direct plan to create tourism attractions. However, ideas are coming in from Nigerians in the diaspora, and they are being considered.” This government has shown a willingness to listen to ideas from the diaspora.

## A Political Force with Lasting Influence

Nyesom Wike’s influence extends beyond Abuja. His high-profile defection from the PDP’s mainstream during the 2023 presidential elections, and his leadership of the G5 Governors, played a pivotal role in President Tinubu’s election.

But Wike’s assertive style has not been without criticism. In his home state of Rivers, political unrest continues amid a standoff between Wike and his successor, Governor Siminalayi Fubara, suggesting Wike is still an active force in state politics.

Some see him as a forceful figure unwilling to let go of power, while others regard him as a necessary disruptor of Nigeria’s slow and often inefficient bureaucracy. His style may divide opinion, but few can argue with the results.

As President Tinubu builds his legacy of national development, Wike’s work in the Federal Capital Territory stands out clearly. His reforms have brought real and visible changes. It is still uncertain if this pace will continue, but one thing is clear: Abuja is moving forward—and so is Nyesom Wike.



# Buhari's name will be written in gold for electoral reforms – Bode George

By Gbenga Olaleye



**A**chieftain of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Chief Bode George, has said that the late former President Muhammadu Buhari will be remembered favourably in Nigeria's history for laying the foundation of a modern electoral process.

Speaking during an interview on Channels Television on Tuesday, George acknowledged Buhari's role in introducing technological reforms to Nigeria's elections, saying his name "will remain golden" for that achievement.

"There are one or two areas that I would like to mention about my experiences with Buhari, He established and bought modern equipment for our electoral process. No matter how you write the history of this country, his name will remain golden in that line," George said.

However, he expressed deep disappointment over how the system was handled during the 2023 general elections, alleging that the integrity of the process was compromised.

"But what did we do with it again? We messed it up. Till the D-day, the 8th hour, it had a glitch. I never heard of any system that was robust having a glitch," George said, drawing from his background as a computer engineer.

Using an analogy from his naval career, George likened the failure to a warship's defence system crashing at the critical moment of an incoming missile strike. He suggested that the explanation given for the failure that the system experienced a "glitch" was unconvincing and possibly dishonest.

"The company that sold it said there

was no glitch; we were watching you online you switched off the system," he claimed.

George lamented the missed opportunity to build a credible electoral system, adding that Buhari's initiative, if sustained, could have ended the "shenanigans" that have long plagued Nigerian elections.

"In memory of Oga [Buhari], that would have helped the electoral process and removed the shenanigans we have been going through for years. That we will not forget," he said.

The remarks come as Nigerians continue to debate the legacy of the late president, whose tenure ended in 2023 amidst mixed reactions to his administration's reforms and policies.



# Adeleke blasts Aregbesola for leaving trail of debts, unfinished projects

By **Damilola Olufemi**

**O**sun State Governor, Ademola Adeleke, has criticised Rauf Aregbesola, accusing the former governor and now Interim National Secretary of the African Democratic Congress (ADC) of leaving a trail of debts and unfinished projects during his tenure.

Aregbesola, who led Osun from 2010 to 2018, had publicly maintained a cordial relationship with Adeleke since the latter assumed office in November 2022. However, tensions appear to have surfaced following Aregbesola's recent visit to Osogbo, where he rallied supporters and urged residents to embrace the ADC, claiming the party was set to reclaim Osun in 2026.

In a statement issued by his spokesperson, Olawale Rasheed, Governor Adeleke accused Aregbesola of threatening to influence the outcome of the 2026 governorship election. He slammed the former governor for leaving what he described as a legacy of financial recklessness and hardship.

"A man who left a legacy of huge state debt, half salary, scam learning tablets (Opon Imo), and several fanciful, inflated, uncompleted projects," Adeleke said. "Your tenure is the worst in Osun history. The empty boast of Mr Aregbesola about 2026 is a symptom of a troubled mind who sees the wrong vision, is battling his benefactor and is haunted by the pains and suffering he inflicted on millions of Osun people through his evil policies and programmes."

He added that rather than make threats, Aregbesola should be apologising for his years of what he termed "maladministration." According to Adeleke, his administration has been working to fix the damage left behind, including clearing arrears and resuming abandoned projects.



"Mr Aregbesola's wickedness against workers, public servants, and Osun people knows no bounds while he wielded state power," he said.

The governor further disclosed that he had paid off 28 months' worth of half salaries and nearly ₦60 billion in pension liabilities incurred under Aregbesola's administration. "Pensioners and workers generally are not praying for a return to the evil days of a bad administrator who left his state in ruin after eight years," he stated.

**Adeleke highlights his administration's performance**

Highlighting his administration's performance, Adeleke said that in under three years, more had been achieved than during Aregbesola's entire tenure, all without taking new loans. He claimed a 40% reduction in state debt and detailed several achievements.

"If Aregbesola is to accuse Governor Adeleke of non-performance, we

await his review of the dualisation of palace to brewery junction at Ilesa, which he failed to achieve while in office," the statement added. "He should check out the flyover projects at Ile Ife and Osogbo and the dualisation projects ongoing at Iwo, among others."

Adeleke voiced confidence in the support of Osun residents ahead of the 2026 election, asserting that they would reject any attempt by Aregbesola to return to power.

"Our people are smart enough to know that the worst era for Osun State is that of Mr Aregbesola, under whom many pensioners lost their lives, thousands of lives were disrupted, and the state plunged into unsustainable debt, still hurting the state to date. No voter in Osun is ready for a return to the dark days," the governor stated.

He concluded by predicting that 2026 would serve as a reckoning for the former governor and the ADC, saying it would be a time when Osun people would "punish those who brought them suffering."

# Ogun teachers go on strike over pensions, other issues

By Alade Adisa



**T**eachers in public primary and secondary schools in Ogun State on Tuesday embarked on an indefinite strike over the inability of the state government to meet their demands regarding contributory pensions and other welfare issues.

The directive to go on strike was given by the leadership of the Ogun State Wing of the Nigeria Union of Teachers, NUT.

The memo directing the teachers to embark on industrial action was signed by the State Chairman of the NUT, Comrade Sewakanu Noah and the Principal Secretary, Comrade Oyelere Samson and was dated July 14, 2025.

It was titled “Notice of industrial action to all primary and secondary school teachers in Ogun State.”

It reads in part, “As a committed affiliate of the Nigeria Labour Congress, NLC, the Nigeria Union of Teachers is dedicated to securing a blissful future for its members. Therefore, in line with the decision of Organised Labour, through a joint workers parliament held on June 14, 2025, that all public and civil servants should withdraw their services to press home the demands of workers on the following:

“Stoppage of contributory pensions scheme; payment of new minimum wage different from wage award; payment of outstanding eight years leave allowance; immediate implementation of already approved 2023 and 2024 promotions that were staggered and consequential adjustment on minimum pension.

“After exhausting all avenues to

resolving all the issues to no avail, the leadership of the Ogun State Wing of the Nigeria Union of Teachers directs that all teachers in public primary and secondary schools withdraw their services from 12am on Tuesday, July 15, 2025.”

The union urged members to await further direction from their leaders on the next line of action.

Recall that workers in the employ of the Ogun State government have been at loggerheads with their employer over some welfare issues, and teachers have just taken their own step, a few days before the start of promotion examinations, and just as final year secondary school students are concluding their external examinations.



# 20 killed in fresh attack on Plateau state community

By Gbenga Olaleye



**A**t least 20 people were killed on Monday night following a brutal attack by suspected Fulani militias on the Bindi community in the Ta-Hoss district of Riyom Local Government Area, Plateau State. Several others sustained injuries as terrified residents fled into the surrounding bush for safety.

The incident, which occurred while many villagers had retired for the night, saw heavily armed assailants carry out a coordinated house-to-house massacre, targeting women, children, and the elderly — many of whom were unable to escape the onslaught.

A statement released on Tuesday by the Riyom chapter of the Coalition for the Protection of Democracy (COPDEM), signed by Chairman Gideon Manjal and Publicity Secretary Gadu Daniel Dong, described the attack as deliberate and systematic. Survivors identified the attackers as Fulani extremists who were reportedly armed with sophisticated weapons.

“The attackers, who were properly identified as Fulani extremists by

survivors, stormed the Bindi community in their regular pattern of assault, which is consistent with several previous attacks across Riyom and other parts of Plateau. They systematically slaughtered over 20 innocent people,” the statement read.

Homes were reportedly set ablaze, and many families displaced, despite the presence of security personnel and armoured military assets in the region. COPDEM strongly criticised the continued failure to prevent such attacks, despite repeated warnings and intelligence from local leaders.

“These attackers are not unknown. Their hideouts and base settlements in nearby enclaves have been repeatedly identified and reported. Yet, year after year, these known threats strike with impunity, often unchallenged,” the group said, calling into question the effectiveness and commitment of security forces on the ground.

COPDEM has demanded immediate federal intervention, urging President Bola Tinubu, the Plateau State Government, and relevant security

agencies to launch a decisive military operation to dismantle terrorist enclaves. They also called for the declaration of a state of emergency in affected areas, alongside humanitarian support for displaced residents and victims of trauma.

The group expressed frustration over what they described as hollow government gestures — condolence visits and press releases that fail to translate into meaningful action.

“Our people are being buried daily. We are tired of condolence visits and silence. We are tired of press statements that do not translate to protection,” they said.

“The community of Ta-Hoss, like Jol, Rim, Bachi, Wereng, Nding, and other previously hit areas, deserves more than sympathy. They deserve security, dignity, and justice.”

This latest attack adds to a long list of deadly assaults in Plateau State, where communities have frequently borne the brunt of violent conflict, often without sustained government protection or accountability.

# Zic Saloma decries online bullying

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

**N**igerian skit maker and actor, Aloma Isaac Junior, popularly known as Zic Saloma, has spoken out strongly against the harsh criticisms he received on social media after posting a video featuring his elderly, cancer-battling mother.

The video, shared across his platforms, captured a touching moment between the comedian and his mother, who is over 70 years old. In it, Zic Saloma revealed that despite undergoing chemotherapy, his mother expressed a strong desire to attend the premiere of his new movie. He admitted that although he wasn't sure if she had enough strength, she had been responding well to treatment and appeared to be recovering.

However, instead of receiving encouragement or sympathy, the video attracted a wave of hateful comments. Many users made cruel remarks about his mother's appearance, with some targeting her facial features, including her nose, and even calling her "ugly."

Zic Saloma condemns attack on mom  
Zic Saloma did not stay silent. In a video response, he condemned those attacking his mother, describing the younger generation as a "finished" one for lacking empathy and common sense.

While he made it clear that he had developed thick skin and was personally unbothered by insults, he drew the line at attacks directed at his mother, a woman fighting a life-threatening illness.

"I saw some comments saying my mum's nose is big and asking why I didn't do surgery for her," he said. "Some people even called her ugly. Can you imagine saying this about a



70-year-old woman battling cancer?"

He continued, "I wish most of you insulting my mum would live to be 70 and look half as good as she does. Trust me, the comments don't hurt me. But this generation... I used to think it was bad, but now I know this generation is finished."

Zic Saloma expressed deep disappointment in the mindset of young adults today, both in Nigeria and abroad. He questioned how such people could be trusted with decisions on leadership, unity, and national growth.

"People who think like this, how can they vote for good leaders? How can we end tribalism or religious discrimination with this kind of thinking?" he asked.

According to him, the level of cruelty, especially from those who should know better, reflects a much deeper problem in society.

Despite the negativity, Zic Saloma

acknowledged that he also received many kind and supportive messages from fans. He appreciated those who offered words of encouragement, prayers, and love for his mother.

"I saw the sweet comments and I truly appreciate them," he said. "But unfortunately, the negative comments from young people, even those living abroad, were more than you can imagine."

The comedian's message struck a chord with many of his fans, sparking fresh conversations online about the increasing lack of empathy on social media, especially toward older people or those dealing with health challenges.

He urged Nigerians, especially the youths, to think more deeply about the consequences of their words and actions. "What kind of people are we becoming?" he asked. "If this is how we treat our elders and those who are suffering, what future are we building?"



# How Nigerian celebs react to Buhari's death

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigeria is in mourning following the death of former President Muhammadu Buhari, who passed away on Sunday, July 13, 2025, in a London hospital after a long illness.

His death has sparked a wave of reactions from political leaders, citizens, and several notable celebrities.

In response to Buhari's passing, the Federal Government declared a seven-day national mourning period. Flags are flying at half-mast across the country, and government officials have urged citizens to reflect on the legacy of the former president.

However, the declaration triggered mixed reactions. While some praised his contributions, others used the moment to criticise his leadership.

## Celebrities react

Nigerian celebrities have not held back in sharing their thoughts. Many took to social media to express their feelings about Buhari's death, offering everything from respectful tributes to sharp criticism.

Veteran rapper and activist Eedris Abdulkareem posted a reflective message on X (formerly Twitter). He hinted that the negative reactions surrounding Buhari's death were a result of the former leader's actions while alive.

"Your legacies after life are consequences of your deeds. Innalilahi wa innalilahi rajuhun," he wrote, using an Islamic phrase often said after someone passes.

## Sunday Igboho

Yoruba Nation agitator Sunday Igboho also reacted in a video posted to his Facebook page. He referenced a 2021 incident where he alleged that operatives of the Department of State Services (DSS) attacked his home at Buhari's behest.

"The man that sent DSS to come and kill me in the middle of the night on July 4, 2021, has died today," he said.

His words echoed long-standing tension



between the former president's government and pro-Yoruba self-determination advocates.

## Tacha

Reality TV star and influencer Tacha took a more balanced approach. In a post on X, she urged Nigerians not to let emotions cloud the reality of the former president's place in the country's historical record. "No matter your views, Muhammadu Buhari was a major part of Nigeria's story. RIP," she wrote.

## Kate Henshaw

Veteran actress Kate Henshaw offered a philosophical take, reminding her followers about the fleeting nature of life. "Nothing dey this life," she posted, suggesting that life is ultimately empty and short-lived.

Pere Egbi urges Tinubu to learn from Buhari's tenure

Actor and former Big Brother Naija housemate Pere Egbi shared a heartfelt message. He reflected on the deep pain that the former president's tenure left behind and called on President Bola Tinubu to learn from it.

"May his soul rest in peace until resurrection morning," he wrote. "President Tinubu, as you reflect on your predecessor's legacy, I appeal to your conscience: Nigeria is hurting. Millions are broken. Many have lost faith in political leaders because the pain left behind has fermented into bitterness and hate."

Portable sends message of caution

Controversial singer Portable added his voice in a video posted on Instagram. He reminded his followers of the importance of living rightly.

"Make sure you do good," he said. "It's Buhari that offends us, not Tinubu. Buhari died in London. May God rest his soul."

## KWAM 1 pays musical tribute

Veteran Fuji musician KWAM 1 (also known as K1 De Ultimate) offered his respects through a musical tribute. In a video shared on his Instagram page, he sang in Buhari's honour and wished him eternal rest.

"Sleep well," he said at the end of his performance.

The former president, who served as Nigeria's president from 2015 to 2023, was a controversial figure. While some hailed his anti-corruption stance and infrastructure projects, others criticised his handling of the economy, insecurity, and human rights.

His death has reignited public debate about his time in office, with many Nigerians, both prominent and ordinary, using this moment to reflect, critique, or reconcile with his legacy.

As the nation observes the official mourning period, one thing is clear: Muhammadu Buhari left behind a legacy that continues to divide opinion, stir emotions, and shape conversations about Nigeria's political journey.

# ‘Many musicians struggle in marriage’, says Baba Fryo

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

**N**igerian music veteran, Baba Fryo, has opened up about the difficulties many musicians face when it comes to marriage.

In a recent interview, the singer revealed that a large number of music artists are not enjoying their marriages, largely due to misunderstandings between them and their spouses.

Speaking on The Honest Bunch podcast, Baba Fryo said most musicians experience a drop in their careers once they get married. According to him, marriage often becomes a burden instead of a blessing for many in the entertainment industry.

“Most musicians don’t enjoy marriage, except they are pretending,” he said. “Their spouses don’t understand their profession. You can go and verify what I’m saying.”

Baba Fryo, known for his 1990s hit *Dem Go Dey Pose*, argued that the lifestyle of musicians clashes with traditional ideas of marriage. He noted that most musicians work odd hours, travel frequently, and attract attention from fans, especially women, which creates tension in relationships.

“Musicians are always in the public eye,” he explained. “They perform at nightclubs, attend shows, and meet different people. Many partners don’t understand this life and feel insecure.”

According to Fryo, these misunderstandings often lead to emotional distance, conflicts, and sometimes separation. He emphasized that this problem is widespread in the industry, even though many celebrities try to hide it.

Despite his concerns, the singer was quick to acknowledge that not all music marriages end badly. He admitted that a few musicians continue to thrive in both their careers and their personal lives. He credited this success to having partners who are understanding, tolerant, and supportive.

“It’s just a few of them who are still



thriving after marriage,” Fryo said. “Maybe because their spouses already knew and accepted them for who they are.”

He added that in such cases, these relationships are often built on friendship, mutual respect, and a deep understanding of the musician’s world. According to him, these are rare but not impossible.

Baba Fryo speaks on how he handles female attention

During the podcast episode, Baba Fryo also addressed how he handles female attention as a celebrity. He said he tries not to take the interest of women too seriously because he believes most of them are attracted to his fame, not his real self.

“I thank God I’m able to manage women,” he stated. “It takes wisdom to handle them. Many of them were drawn to me because of my fame, not because of who I truly am.”

He explained that being aware of this reality helped him avoid many emotional problems. Fryo also advised other celebrities, especially young male artists, to stay grounded and not let fame mislead them into thinking every admirer has pure intentions.

Now in his 50s, Baba Fryo believes that

experience has taught him how to deal with both personal and professional challenges. He urged fellow musicians to be careful when choosing life partners and to avoid rushing into marriage just because of pressure or public expectations.

“Marriage is good,” he said, “but only when both people understand each other’s lives. If you marry someone who doesn’t understand your job, it can destroy everything you’ve worked for.”

Baba Fryo’s remarks have sparked discussions online, with fans and commentators weighing in on the reality of celebrity marriages. While some agreed with his viewpoint, others argued that with good communication and mutual respect, musicians can enjoy successful marriages.

Regardless of public opinion, his comments shed light on a side of the music industry that is rarely discussed: the emotional and personal cost of fame. And for Fryo, honesty remains the first step toward healing and balance.

“Let’s stop pretending,” he said. “Marriage isn’t working for many musicians, and we need to talk about why.”



# Trump says Club World Cup Trophy will stay in Oval Office

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



**D**onald Trump has declared that the Club World Cup trophy, which has become a regular feature in the Oval Office, will remain there permanently, following FIFA's decision to create a duplicate version for Chelsea after their tournament win on Sunday.

The president, now in his second term, attended the final match alongside several members of his cabinet and FIFA President Gianni Infantino. Trump and Infantino jointly presented the trophy to Chelsea captain Reece James, though Trump's prominent role in the ceremony reportedly left several players bewildered and Infantino visibly uncomfortable.

Trump speaks on Club World Cup Speaking to DAZN, the official broadcaster of the Club World Cup, Trump claimed that FIFA had offered to let him keep the trophy indefinitely. "I said, When are you going to pick up the trophy? [They

said] 'We're never going to pick it up. You can have it forever in the Oval Office. We're making a new one,'" he said. "And they made a new one. So that was quite exciting, but it is in the Oval [Office] right now."

It remains unclear whether the two trophies are identical or if the original has been replaced. FIFA has been contacted for clarification but has yet to provide a formal response.

Trump's involvement with FIFA has grown significantly since his return to office, with the football governing body unveiling the Club World Cup trophy at the White House in March. Since then, the trophy has featured in several events held in the Oval Office.

The president also made headlines during the interview by suggesting he might sign an executive order to rename the sport from "soccer" to "football" in the United States. He

further claimed that world leaders have dubbed the US "the hottest country in the world" in terms of economic activity and geopolitical relevance.

Discussing the global impact of football, Trump said: "It's about unity. It's about everybody getting together and a lot of love between countries. I guess this is probably the most international sport, so it can bring the world together."

However, planning for next year's World Cup, set to take place in the US, has encountered obstacles due to policies introduced under Trump's second administration. These include renewed travel bans affecting fans from certain countries, heightened immigration enforcement at match venues, and significant delays in visa processing for supporters seeking entry into the country. Notably, athletes and official personnel are currently exempt from these restrictions.

# Xi urges Albanese to preserve China-Australia ties

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Chinese President Xi Jinping has called on Australia to remain committed to cooperation despite growing global instability and renewed trade threats from Donald Trump, during a high-level meeting with Prime Minister Anthony Albanese in Beijing.

In their second face-to-face meeting, held at the Great Hall of the People, Xi stressed that recent improvements in the bilateral relationship must not be derailed by international turbulence.

“No matter how the international landscape may evolve, we should uphold this overall direction unswervingly,” Xi said, via an interpreter.

Albanese stands with Xi

Albanese, in turn, echoed Xi’s calls for stability and dialogue, stating: “I note your comments in your opening remarks about seeking common ground while sharing differences. That approach has indeed produced very positive benefits for both Australia and China.”

The talks come amid increasing geopolitical tensions, including renewed trade friction from US President Donald Trump and continued pressure from Washington regarding Taiwan. Despite these challenges, both leaders sought to portray a maturing and stabilising relationship between Beijing and Canberra.

Security concerns flared ahead of the meeting when Chinese authorities attempted to restrict Australian journalists accompanying the Prime Minister, preventing them from leaving a popular tourist site in Beijing. Albanese acknowledged the incident, noting, “China has a different system obviously with the media.”

Since taking office, the Albanese government has worked to thaw icy relations with Beijing that reached a nadir in 2020, when China imposed trade sanctions worth AU\$20 billion in



retaliation for Australia’s foreign policy decisions, including calls for a COVID-19 origins inquiry.

While Albanese focused on dialogue and common ground, several sensitive issues remained on the table. He confirmed that the controversial Chinese ownership of the Port of Darwin, a topic of bipartisan concern in Australia, was not raised during the talks, despite previous campaign promises to reclaim it using public funds if needed.

The PM said he raised the case of detained Chinese-Australian academic Yang Hengjun, who was handed a suspended death sentence earlier this year, though he admitted there was no expectation of an immediate resolution.

“President Xi Jinping and I agreed dialogue must be at the centre of our relationship,” Albanese said following the meeting. “If you don’t have communication, you can have misadventure and misinterpretation.”

Tensions over Taiwan also loomed in the background. The United States has been pressuring Canberra to clarify whether it would commit troops in the event of a conflict with China over Taiwan, but the Albanese government

has remained non-committal. The Prime Minister reiterated Australia’s support for the status quo in the Taiwan Strait.

Coalition Senator James Paterson supported this position, saying Australia should not be asked to take a stance more definitive than that of the US itself.

“It wouldn’t be appropriate for the US government to ask Australia to do more than the United States is willing to do in that regard,” Paterson told ABC Radio, pointing to Washington’s long-standing policy of “strategic ambiguity” since 1979.

Albanese also addressed a Chinese military live-fire exercise conducted off the New South Wales coast earlier this year. While acknowledging that the action fell within international law, he conveyed Australia’s concerns regarding the lack of adequate notice and the nature of the drill.

The Prime Minister was scheduled to meet Chinese Premier Li Qiang after his discussions with Xi, as part of his six-day visit aimed at reinforcing diplomatic ties and promoting economic stability between the two nations.



# Labour drops plan to ban sex education for children under nine

By **Fatimah Idera**

**L**abour has announced a major shift in England's sex education policy, scrapping previous Conservative plans to ban children under the age of nine from receiving sex education.

The updated statutory guidance, set to be released on Tuesday, will instead recommend rather than mandate that sex education be introduced no earlier than year five.

However, primary schools will retain the discretion to teach younger pupils if deemed appropriate.

The move marks a departure from draft guidance issued under the Conservative government, which sought to enforce stricter age thresholds and limit discussions of sensitive topics such as extreme sexual violence and gender identity.

Labour's revised curriculum also rolls back plans to place an age restriction on content related to sexual offences. The Tories had proposed not teaching these topics in any explicit way before year nine.

Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson speaks

Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson argued that such restrictions were out of touch with the reality many children face. "By Year 9, it's too late," she said, stressing the need for earlier, age-appropriate conversations, especially as many teenagers, particularly girls, are already encountering harmful content and experiences online.

Despite support for the more flexible approach, Phillipson has faced criticism over delays in publishing the revised guidance, which comes over a year after the public consultation closed.

Shadow Education Secretary, Laura Trott, accused the government of weakening critical safeguards: "It's not partisan to protect children from age-inappropriate content," she said, warning that removing hard age limits could lead to children being exposed to complex topics too early.

However, Labour's guidance will mirror Conservative concerns over ideological



influence in schools. It will maintain a cautious approach to gender identity, instructing schools not to present contested issues as fact. Pupils will be taught the legal and biological facts around gender reassignment, but schools will be discouraged from teaching broader gender identity concepts as unquestioned truths. Whether teachers can still introduce such topics as opinions remains unclear.

Sir Keir Starmer previously stated he opposed the teaching of ideology in schools regarding gender, a stance that aligns with Labour's current direction. In contrast, the previous Tory administration had pushed for a total ban on the teaching of gender identity in schools.

Labour's RSHE (Relationships, Sex and Health Education) reforms will also introduce new content to tackle online harm. Pupils will be educated about pornography, harmful deepfake content, and the growing influence of misogynistic subcultures such as the incel movement. Lessons will include content to help boys identify positive role models and counteract toxic messages from online personalities such as Andrew Tate.

Phillipson emphasised the urgency of equipping children to navigate the digital world safely. "I want our children to be equipped to defy the malign forces that exist online," she said. "Schools and parents alike have a vital role to play."

While the Department for Education

(DfE) said the new guidance will take effect from September 2026, it has not yet confirmed whether parents will be guaranteed the right to view all RSHE materials, a key element of the former government's proposal. Separate guidance on supporting gender-questioning children is also expected to follow at a later date.

Children's Commissioner Dame Rachel de Souza welcomed the update but stressed that effective teaching and parental involvement remain vital. "A strong curriculum is only as good as those who teach it," she said, urging the government to invest in specialist RSHE educators.

She also emphasised the need for open communication between parents and children, particularly in the face of increasing exposure to explicit content online.

Research from her office revealed that one in ten children had encountered pornography by the age of nine, often through mainstream social media platforms. "Children want boundaries," she said. "We must talk to them openly and early about what they are seeing."

RSHE has been a compulsory part of the national curriculum since 2020. Labour's revisions represent not just a change in timing and content but a broader attempt to balance safeguarding with realism in an increasingly complex digital age.

# Melania Trump praised by Ukrainians after president's Sudden Russia Pivot

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



Ukrainians have taken to social media in celebration of Melania Trump, transforming the First Lady into an unlikely internet heroine following comments made by her husband, Donald Trump, that appeared to credit her with altering his stance on Russia.

During a meeting at the White House on Monday with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte, the president suggested that his wife had played a key role in drawing attention to Russian President Vladimir Putin's duplicity.

"My conversations with him [Putin] are always very pleasant. I say, isn't that a very lovely conversation? And then the missiles go off that night," Trump told reporters. "I go home, I tell the First Lady: I spoke with Vladimir today. We had a wonderful conversation. She said: Really? Another city was just hit."

Social media users across Ukraine quickly seized on the moment, dubbing Melania "Agent Melania

Trumpenko" and portraying her as a secret pro-Ukrainian operative within the White House. One popular meme shows her wearing a blazer emblazoned with Ukraine's trident insignia, her face half-shaded by a wide-brimmed hat, the image suggesting she is working covertly on Kyiv's behalf.

## About Melania Trump

Melania, who was born in Slovenia and grew up in the former Yugoslavia, has previously voiced sympathy for Ukraine. In the early days of Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022, she urged her followers on social media to donate to the Red Cross, describing the scenes from Ukraine as "heartbreaking and horrific."

By contrast, her husband has drawn criticism for his stance on the conflict. Earlier this year, he referred to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy as a "dictator" and repeatedly expressed scepticism about American aid to the country.

The Ukrainian magazine *Business in Ukraine* noted on Monday night that "there is a lot of love on social media tonight for Melania Trump" after news broke that the US would be sending Patriot air defence systems to Ukraine, a move many believed she had subtly influenced.

One widely shared meme borrows from a longstanding internet template that features three cartoonish figures donning military helmets, a nod to Western politicians or celebrities seen as supportive of Ukraine. In the reimagined version, the trio crowns Melania with a hat decorated with the Ukrainian flag.

Another meme doing the rounds shows the First Lady standing behind her husband in the Oval Office as he signs a document, with the caption: "Sisters Melania of the Bene Gesserit" a playful reference to the powerful and enigmatic sisterhood from Frank Herbert's *Dune* series, known for shaping events from the shadows.



# Sudan's RSF accused of killing nearly 300 civilians in raids

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



**S**udan's paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) have been accused of killing nearly 300 civilians in a series of violent attacks across villages in North Kordofan state, according to Sudanese human rights activists.

The RSF, which has been engaged in a brutal civil war against the Sudanese army since April 2023, reportedly launched a series of coordinated raids on Saturday in areas surrounding the city of Bara, a key RSF stronghold.

Emergency Lawyers, a Sudanese human rights group, reported that over 200 civilians were killed in the village of Shag Alnom alone, either shot or burned alive during arson attacks. In nearby villages, looting raids led to the deaths of 38 more civilians, while dozens remain unaccounted for.

On Sunday, the violence continued as RSF fighters attacked the village of Hilat Hamid, where 46 people

were killed, including pregnant women and children, according to the group's statement. The United Nations estimates that over 3,400 people have been displaced as a result of the weekend's assaults.

"It has been proven that these targeted villages were empty of any military objectives," Emergency Lawyers stated. "This makes clear the criminal nature of these crimes, carried out in complete disregard of international humanitarian law." The organisation placed direct responsibility on RSF leadership.

RSF accuses U.S., others of committing war crimes

The RSF has previously been accused by the United States and international human rights organisations of committing war crimes, crimes against humanity, and acts of genocide. The group's forces have been linked to widespread looting and systematic violence in areas under their

control.

While the Sudanese army maintains control over the central and eastern parts of the country, the RSF has tightened its grip on western regions, including North Kordofan, as it continues efforts to consolidate its power.

The RSF leadership has issued statements asserting that individuals responsible for violations will be brought to justice, though critics remain sceptical.

The ongoing civil war has plunged Sudan into the world's largest humanitarian crisis. Over half of the population is facing hunger, while diseases such as cholera spread rapidly due to displacement and the collapse of health systems. Global reductions in aid funding have further strained an already fragile humanitarian response.

# UK offers asylum to 24,000 Afghans over data breach

By **Fatimah Idera**



**T**he UK Government has secretly offered asylum to nearly 24,000 Afghan soldiers and their families following what is now revealed to be the most severe data breach in British history.

The unprecedented security failure, kept under wraps by a two-year superinjunction, forced ministers to allocate £7 billion over five years to resettle affected individuals, a move that could significantly impact the national budget and intensify pressure on Chancellor Rachel Reeves ahead of her Mansion House speech.

The data breach occurred in February 2022, when a Royal Marine mistakenly included a spreadsheet in an email to Afghan asylum seekers.

The spreadsheet revealed the identities of 25,000 Afghans, many of them former soldiers who had worked alongside British forces during the war in Afghanistan.

Although the posts were swiftly removed following intervention by

the Ministry of Defence (MoD), the government concluded it had no choice but to offer protection to those identified, citing the risk of Taliban reprisals.

Individuals granted asylum previously denied entry

Since the Taliban regained control of Afghanistan in 2021, numerous Afghan special forces personnel have reportedly been killed. Some of the individuals now being granted asylum had previously been denied entry into the UK, but officials were forced to overturn those decisions in light of the breach.

Although court documents initially stated that nearly 43,000 people would be resettled as a result of the breach, Defence Secretary John Healey is expected to clarify in Parliament that 6,900 individuals will be brought to the UK under a scheme established specifically in response to the leak. Of these, 4,500 are already in the UK or en route, with another 2,400 awaiting travel.

In addition, 17,000 more Afghans already deemed eligible for resettlement under a separate relocation programme were found to have had their data exposed. Of this group, 14,000 are already in the UK or in transit, and 3,000 are yet to arrive.

Altogether, it's believed that between 80,000 and 100,000 individuals were impacted by the breach, including British government officials, according to findings presented to the Court of Appeal.

The government has gone to extraordinary lengths to keep the breach out of the public eye. A superinjunction secured by ministers not only barred media outlets from reporting on the leak but also prohibited mention of the legal proceedings themselves. The injunction was lifted by the High Court at midday on Tuesday, paving the way for public scrutiny and parliamentary accountability for the first time.



# Trump declares Indonesia 'deal' after tariff threats

By New Daily Prime

**U**S President Donald Trump said Tuesday that he had struck a deal with Indonesia — without providing specifics of the agreement — a week after threatening steeper tariffs on the Southeast Asian country.

“Great deal, for everybody, just made with Indonesia,” Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform, saying that he worked with the country’s president directly. “DETAILS TO FOLLOW!!!”

The Trump administration has been under pressure to finalize trade pacts after promising a flurry of deals, as countries have sought negotiations with Washington to avoid Trump’s tariff threats.

But the US president has so far only unveiled deals with Britain and Vietnam, alongside an agreement to temporarily lower tit-for-tat levies with China.

Last week, Trump renewed his threat of a 32 percent levy on Indonesian goods, saying in a letter to the country’s leadership that this level would take effect August 1.

It remains unclear what Indonesia’s new tariff level will be under the latest deal with Washington, Indonesia’s former vice minister for foreign affairs Dino Patti Djalal told a Foreign Policy event Tuesday.

But he added that insiders from the Indonesian government indicated they were happy with the new deal, adding that he expected further information in the coming hours.



Trump in April imposed a 10 percent tariff on almost all trading partners, while announcing plans to eventually hike this level for dozens of economies, including the European Union and Indonesia.

But days before the steeper duties were due to take effect, he pushed the deadline back from July 9 to August 1. This marked his second postponement of the elevated levies.

Instead, since the start of last week, Trump began sending out letters to partners, setting out the tariff levels they would face come August.

The levy he cited to Indonesia last week was unchanged from the figure he first unveiled in April.

To date, Trump has sent more than 20 such letters to partners including the EU, Japan, South Korea and Malaysia.

Canada and Mexico, both countries that were not originally targeted in Trump’s “reciprocal” tariff push, also received similar documents outlining updated tariffs for their products.

But existing exemptions covering goods entering the United States under a North American trade pact are expected to remain in place.

Analysts have warned that without trade agreements, Americans could conclude that Trump’s strategy to reshape US trading ties with the world has not worked.

“In the public’s mind, the tariffs are the pain, and the agreements will be the gain. If there are no agreements, people will conclude his strategy was flawed,” William Reinsch, senior adviser at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, previously told AFP.

# French PM proposes cutting national holidays to avert budget crisis

By New Daily Prime

Prime Minister Francois Bayrou said Tuesday he wanted to reduce the number of public holidays in France as part of a bid to tackle what he called the “curse” of his country’s debt.

Presenting 2026 budget proposals, Bayrou said two out of France’s 11 national holidays could go, suggesting Easter Monday and May 8, a day that commemorates the end of World War II in Europe.

Such a measure would bring France into line with Germany’s nine national holidays — although federal states can add their own — and take it well below Italy’s 12 days.

After years of overspending, France is on notice to control its public deficit and cut its sprawling debt, as required under EU rules.

Bayrou said France had to borrow each month to pay pensions and the salaries of civil servants, a state of affairs he called “a curse with no way out”.

Losing two public holidays, meanwhile, would add “several billions of euros” to the state’s coffers, Bayrou said.

But the proposed measure sparked an immediate protest from Jordan Bardella, leader of the far-right National Rally.

## Holiday protests

He said abolishing two holidays, “especially ones as filled with meaning as Easter Monday and May 8 is a direct attack on our history, our roots and on labour in France”.

The party’s parliamentary leader, Marine Le Pen, warned that “if Francois Bayrou does not revise his plan, we will vote for a no-confidence motion”.

Leftist firebrand Jean-Luc Melenchon of the France Unbowed party called for Bayrou’s resignation, saying “these injustices cannot be tolerated any longer”.



His party colleague Mathilde Panot accused Bayrou of starting “a social war”.

Bayrou had said previously that France’s budgetary position needed to be improved by 40 billion euros (\$46.5 billion) next year.

But this figure has risen after President Emmanuel Macron said at the weekend he wanted 3.5 billion euros of extra military spending next year because of rising international tensions. France has a defence budget of 50.5 billion euros for 2025.

Bayrou said the budget deficit would be cut to 4.6 percent next year, from an estimated 5.4 percent this year, and would fall below the three percent required by EU rules by 2029.

To achieve this, other measures would include a general freeze on spending increases — including on pensions and health — except for debt servicing and the defence sector, Bayrou said.

“We have become addicted to public spending,” Bayrou said. “We are at a critical juncture in our history”.

## Remember Greece

The prime minister even held up Greece as a cautionary tale, an EU member whose spiralling debt and deficits pushed it to the brink of dropping out of the eurozone after the 2008 financial crisis.

“We must never forget the story of Greece,” he said.

France’s debt stands at 114 per cent of GDP — compared to 60 per cent allowed under EU rules — the biggest debt mountain in the EU after Greece and Italy.

The government hopes to cut the number of civil servants by 3,000 next year, and close down “unproductive agencies working on behalf of the state”, the premier said.

Bayrou said wealthy residents would be made to contribute to the financial effort.

“The nation’s effort must be equitable,” Bayrou said. “We will ask little of those who have little, and more of those who have more.”



# Amnesty International slams President Ruto's call to shoot protesters

By New Daily Prime



**A**mnesty International on Tuesday slammed a call by the Kenyan President William Ruto to shoot protesters, saying it would fuel more violence at a time of mounting anger and deadly anti-government rallies.

At least 38 people died last week during demonstrations, rights groups say, marking the deadliest day of protests since the start of youth-led rallies against Ruto.

The demonstrations have shaken the country, and Ruto recently said protesters who engaged in violence “should be shot in the leg”.

Amnesty International’s Kenya director, Irungu Houghton, said the president’s comments were “unlawful”.

“It is extremely dangerous for politicians to instruct police officers... on how to conduct policing during protests,” he said.

Irungu said such orders “would escalate the levels of violence” through “greater conflict between police officers, protesters, bystanders, counter-protesters, and even criminals and

bullies”.

Rights groups have previously warned about the presence of armed men during protests and noted reports suggesting that some operate alongside police officers.

Kenyan police have repeatedly denied the allegations.

International criticism has also mounted, with the United Nations urging restraint.

In a report released Tuesday by the Police Reforms Working Group — a coalition of grassroots and national rights groups, including Amnesty — found the recent marches were “marred by state violence, unlawful policing tactics”.

The report said it had documented “the use of live ammunition against unarmed civilians, extrajudicial executions, disappearances, and unlawful arrests”.

“The evidence points to serious allegations of unlawful conduct and extrajudicial killings by individuals suspected to be police officers,” it said, adding that over 500 civilians and police officers were wounded.

The National Police Service spokesperson told AFP such allegations were part of a “false narrative”.

Interior Minister Kipchumba Murkomen on Tuesday said police excesses during protests will be investigated, adding, “There is no law that excuses a police officer to commit crimes or kill people”.

Murkomen also stated that he will issue a policy directive on the use of force and firearms by officers on Friday.

The interior ministry said more than 1,500 people had been arrested during the last two demonstrations, with 71 being handled by the anti-terror unit.

There was widespread looting and vandalism during the protests, with many businesses forced to close and employees remaining home to avoid the violence.

The report noted the protests were responsible for an “economic loss possibly as much as 1.1 billion Kenyan Shillings (\$14 million)” but did not elaborate.

# Man City sign record long-term kit deal with Puma

By New Daily Prime



**M**anchester City have signed a blockbuster new kit deal with Puma worth a reported £1 billion (\$1.34 billion) over the next 10 years.

City's extension of their contract with Puma ranks as the largest kit manufacturing partnership in Premier League history.

Having agreed a £65 million per year deal with the German company in 2019, City's new arrangement is believed to be worth a £100 million per year until 2035, according to British media reports.

That figure shatters the £90 million per year deal signed by Manchester United with Adidas in 2023.

Spanish giants Real Madrid and Barcelona are both reported to have kit deals worth in excess of £100 million per year.

"We joined forces with Puma with the ambition to challenge ourselves and go beyond the expectations. We have achieved this and more over the last six seasons," City Football Group chief executive Ferran Soriano said.

"Puma have seamlessly integrated into our organisation, and we have enjoyed many historic moments together, engaging fans globally."

Puma chief executive Arthur Hoeld added: "Puma's partnership with Manchester City has been a great success both on and off the pitch.

"Trophies, a perfect stage for our performance products and commercial success were exceptional."

City's massive deal comes after the club's first season without major silverware since 2016-17.

Pep Guardiola's men finished third in the Premier League after winning the title for the previous four seasons.

They also suffered a shock FA Cup final defeat against Crystal Palace and crashed out of the recent Club World Cup in the last 16 against Saudi Pro League side Al-Hilal.