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Akpabio: Senate passed tax reform bills for Nigeria's progress

By Friday Omosola

Senate President Godswill Akpabio has attributed the upper chamber's approval of key tax reform bills to a commitment to national progress rather than political or regional loyalties.

In a statement issued through his spokesperson, Esemé Eyiboh, Akpabio noted that the National Assembly thoroughly reviewed the bills sent by President Bola Tinubu, incorporating feedback from various stakeholders through transparent dialogue and rigorous scrutiny.

The tax reform package, comprising the Nigeria Revenue Service (Establishment) Bill, the Joint Revenue Board Bill, the Nigeria Tax Administration Bill, and the Nigeria Tax Bill—forms a central pillar of the Tinubu administration's Renewed Hope economic strategy.

Originally submitted in November 2024, the bills were passed by the Senate last week after prolonged deliberation.

"These reforms are pivotal to restructuring the nation's tax framework," Akpabio said.

He said once the bills are signed into law, they will bolster federal revenue streams and introduce a more balanced, efficient system of tax administration.

However, the legislative process encountered significant resistance. A proposal that would have allowed states to retain 60 per cent of VAT collections proved controversial, particularly among northern senators who warned it could deepen economic disparities.

To break the impasse, lawmakers agreed to lower the retention to 30 per cent and revise the terminology



to "place of consumption" to reflect a more neutral distribution principle.

Akpabio acknowledged the hurdles encountered during negotiations, noting that even Senate leadership experienced internal divisions.

Nonetheless, he credited the eventual consensus to a spirit of compromise and sustained dialogue.

"The discussions were, at times, intense," the statement revealed. "But Senator Akpabio's leadership and consensus-building skills ensured the process remained on track."

He also extended praise to his colleagues in both the Senate and House of Representatives, singling out House Speaker Tajudeen Abbas for rallying younger legislators behind the reforms.

In addition, Akpabio appreciated state governors who had initially opposed the bills but later aligned

with the revised framework.

"The governors' support was instrumental in lowering political tensions and fostering national acceptance of the reforms," he said.

Akpabio emphasised that the process was open and inclusive, with contributions from civil society, economic experts, and the general public through public hearings.

The bills now await Tinubu's assent, with Akpabio describing their passage as a milestone in the administration's reform journey.

"With two years remaining in the current term, this achievement lays the groundwork for more impactful economic policies," he said.

"We must recognise those who worked tirelessly to make it happen."

THE NEW DAILY PRIME RATE CARD

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Eid-El-Kabir: 'Do not lose hope', Tinubu urges Nigerians

By Oluwaotsin Ologun



As Muslims in Nigeria joined their counterparts across the world to celebrate 2025 Sallah day, President Bola Tinubu has urged citizens to keep hope alive.

While acknowledging that the country is not yet where it aspires to be, but, the President made the appeal in the Eid-el-Kabir message to Nigerians, which he signed on Thursday.

Tinubu noted that Eid-el-Kabir reminds us of our responsibilities beyond faith: to show resilience, tolerance, compassion, and dedication to the progress of our beloved country.

He reaffirmed his “commitment to these values and expressed my deep appreciation for the faith, patience, and perseverance Nigerians show as we implement bold reforms.”

“Though the journey has not been easy, and some doubted our direction, the resilience of public and private sector leaders, along with the steadfast support of most Nigerians, is yielding results. I assure you that the toughest days are behind us. We are entering a new era of renewed hope and prosperity that we

promised two years ago.

“We may not yet be where we aspire to be, but I urge all Nigerians not to lose hope. Let us hold on to our faith and persevere. Our reforms are gaining traction, with key economic indicators now moving in a positive direction. Soon, all will feel the benefits,” the statement read in part.

According to Tinubu, the ultimate objective of these reforms is not just to improve statistics but to transform lives and set Nigeria firmly on the path to sustainable development.

“There are no quick fixes, but we are committed to repairing the foundations of our economy once and for all. Our administration will continue acting in the nation’s best interest, ensuring that the gains we are recording translate into improving people’s lives.”

“We crafted our Renewed Hope Agenda to bring prosperity to every Nigerian, and we remain steadfast in our pursuit of it. As we celebrate today, remember that Eid-el-Kabir enjoins love, compassion, and generosity for all, regardless of faith or background. Let us care for one another’s well-being during this season and

always.”

The President called for prayers for front-line officers who risk their lives for our safety and security during the Eid celebrations.

He also appealed for prayers for leaders at all levels and asked for those in need to be remembered.

“Let us pray for our leaders at all levels and our country. Let us pray for peace in our tumultuous world of troubles and uncertainties. Let us dedicate this sacred celebration to seeking God’s guidance and blessings for our country.

“May those who have more remember those in need, sharing kindness and support as true brothers and sisters. Let the virtues of perseverance, sacrifice, loyalty, faith, and shared humanity bind us closer.

“May the joy and blessings of Eid-ul-Adha multiply in our lives and the life of our great nation. May Almighty Allah accept our worship and devotion as acts of Ibadah, and may His blessings be with us always.”

INEC confirms 16 parties for Anambra governorship election

By **Friday Omosola**



The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has announced that 16 of Nigeria's 19 registered political parties will participate in the Anambra State governorship election.

Sam Olumekun, INEC's National Commissioner and Chairman of the Information and Voter Education Committee confirmed this in a statement on Thursday.

Olumekun said the commission received submissions from 16 political parties that successfully uploaded their candidates' details using Form EC9 before the deadline of 6:00 p.m. on 12 May for the election scheduled for 8 November.

He recalled that INEC earlier published the credentials of those nominated following the conclusion of the parties' primary elections.

Among the participating parties are Accord, represented by Charles Onyeze and Apollonia Ezeadili, and Action Alliance, which fielded Japhet Ndeke and Anayochukwu Obi.

The African Action Congress submitted Grace Ifemeludike and Ikechukwu Mgbemena, while the African Democratic Congress was represented by John Nwosu and Ndubuisi Nwobu.

The All Progressives Congress nominated Nicholas Ukachukwu and Lilian Ekwunife, and the All Progressives Grand Alliance will be represented by Chukwuma Soludo and

Gilbert Ibezim.

Allied Peoples Movement presented Echezona Otti and Samuel Ezeigwe, while the Action Peoples Party nominated Cukwudubem Ndeke and Ebele Okeke.

The Boot Party submitted Jerry Okeke and Happiness Ugboma, the Labour Party will be represented by Nnadubem Moghalu and Veronica Okaro, and the New Nigeria Peoples Party nominated Geoffrey Onyejebu and Victor Arinze.

The National Rescue Movement fielded Ndidi Olieh and Reginald Egbe, the Peoples Democratic Party will contest with Jude Ezenwafor and Chukwudi Okeke, and the Social Democratic Party submitted Vincent Chukwurah and Venatious Odira.

The Young Progressives Party nominated Chukwuka Chukwuma and Izuchukwu Okagbue, while the Zenith Labour Party is represented by Martin Ugwoji and Faith Obi.

Olumekun explained that in accordance with Section 33 of the Electoral Act 2022, political parties were allowed to substitute candidates who voluntarily withdrew before the cut-off date of 2 June.

He confirmed that the commission had now published the final list of candidates who will be contesting the Anambra governorship poll.

He added that no political party nominated a

candidate with a disability and noted that the ages of those contesting range from 36 to 71 years.

The comprehensive list of candidates, including their parties, genders, ages, and academic qualifications, has been uploaded on INEC's official website and social media platforms for public access.

He further stated that no further withdrawals or replacements of candidates will be permitted, except in cases where a candidate or running mate dies before the election day, in line with the provisions of Section 34(1) of the Electoral Act.

He said that political campaigns will commence on 11 June and end at midnight on 6 November, two days before the election, as stipulated in Section 94(1) of the Act.

Olumekun stressed that all political parties and candidates must be granted equal access to public facilities for campaign activities, including media broadcasts, outdoor advertising, public rallies, and meetings.

He reminded stakeholders that Section 95(2) of the Electoral Act prohibits the misuse of incumbency to benefit or disadvantage any party or candidate.

He expressed the commission's confidence that the Anambra governorship election will take place as scheduled on 8 November.

2027: APC rules out automatic tickets for national assembly members

By **Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi**



The All Progressives Congress (APC) has declared that it will not grant automatic tickets to its members in the National Assembly ahead of the 2027 general elections, putting to rest growing speculation about special privileges for first-term lawmakers and recent defectors.

This position was made clear by the party's National Publicity Secretary, Barrister Felix Morka, who described reports suggesting the APC had promised automatic re-nomination as "fake news" and without foundation. "The report is fake and of mischievous origin. It should be disregarded in its entirety," Morka stated.

The clarification comes amid a wave of defections from opposition parties to the APC. The party currently commands a majority in both chambers of the National Assembly, boasting 68 senators out of 109 and over 200 members in the House of Representatives. The influx of new members had sparked rumours that the ruling party was offering automatic return tickets as an incentive.

Adding fuel to the fire were comments made by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu

during the 2025 budget presentation, where he quipped, "You are all re-elected," drawing applause and a chorus of "On your mandate we shall stand..." from lawmakers. The remark, though intended as humorous, was interpreted by some as a promise of return tickets.

However, party leaders have now sought to temper expectations. While acknowledging the value of legislative experience, APC lawmakers and officials alike noted that automatic endorsements are not supported by the party's constitution or Nigeria's Electoral Act.

"There is no automatic ticket anywhere in the world in a democracy; only consensus. The Electoral Act mandates internal democracy through competitive primaries," said Rep. Ahmadu Usman Jaha (APC, Borno). He emphasized that due process must be followed, warning that shortcuts could lead to legal pitfalls, citing the Zamfara debacle of 2019 as an example.

Benue Rep. Terseer Ugbor stressed that while experience is valuable, political realities vary from one constituency to another. "You can't force continuity on people if they want something new," he

noted, warning against a blanket policy.

Other lawmakers echoed similar sentiments, pointing out that the APC must navigate internal party dynamics such as zoning, individual candidate performance, and local political climates. One lawmaker anonymously stated, "The party is supreme, but decisions must reflect grassroots realities."

Analysts have praised the APC's position as a move that upholds democratic principles. Political commentator Jackson Lekan Ojo said, "This is a good omen for democracy. It averts internal crisis and keeps the playing field open."

Despite the unanimous endorsement of President Tinubu by APC governors and lawmakers as the party's 2027 flagbearer, the same courtesy will not be extended wholesale to lawmakers. Instead, candidates will be assessed on their merit, popularity, and adherence to party processes.

As the 2027 elections approach, the APC appears committed to balancing loyalty with meritocracy—a test that will not only shape the party's credibility but also its electoral prospects.

Wike: Tinubu possesses qualities to build better Nigeria

By Friday Omosola



Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, FCT, Nyesom Wike, has declared that President Bola Tinubu has the leadership qualities required to steer Nigeria towards meaningful progress and national fulfilment.

Speaking at the 2025 Distinguished Personality Lecture titled “The Nigeria of Our Dreams”, held at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Wike highlighted the importance of visionary leadership in confronting the country’s longstanding developmental challenges.

He argued that Nigeria’s greatest obstacle over the decades has been a persistent failure of leadership, echoing the sentiments of literary icon Chinua Achebe, who once noted that Nigeria’s primary issue lies in the absence of effective and sincere governance.

“Our leadership history is plagued by narrow interests, both under military and civilian regimes,” Wike said.

“Those who have emerged in positions of power often prioritised self-preservation over the collective good.”

However, the minister praised Tinubu as a significant departure from that trend.

According to him, the President has demonstrated the decisiveness, resilience, and strategic mindset necessary to drive reforms and unlock Nigeria’s full potential.

He described Tinubu as a leader willing to make tough but necessary decisions—pointing to the immediate removal of fuel subsidy upon assuming office.

“While many past leaders recognised the dangers of the subsidy regime, none summoned the courage to end it. Tinubu did,” Wike said.

He noted that the removal, though controversial, has started yielding fiscal benefits, allowing states greater access to resources, reducing national debt accumulation, and enabling more efficient economic regulation.

Wike also commended efforts under the current administration to decentralise power and resources, citing the creation of regional development commissions as a strategic move to return governance closer to the people.

**Continue reading
on next page**

Cont from page 7

On security, the minister revealed that Tinubu had prioritised investment in personnel and infrastructure, with initiatives such as the nationwide recruitment of forest guards aimed at tackling rural banditry and terrorism more effectively.

“These reforms show a clear determination to reposition Nigeria on the path of genuine development,” Wike added.

He further emphasised that the country needs a leader who combines courage, foresight, and inclusivity—qualities he believes

Tinubu embodies.

“To build the Nigeria we envision, leadership must be grounded in action, excellence, and an unshakeable belief in our national potential,” he said.

Earlier in the programme, Osun State Governor, Ademola Adeleke, represented by his deputy, Kola Adewusi, described Wike as a forthright and courageous leader whose impact in the FCT has been transformative.

The Vice-Chancellor of Obafemi Awolowo University, Professor

Adebayo Bamire, said the theme of the lecture was timely, especially as the nation confronts pressing questions about democratic governance, civic trust, and national development.

The Ooni of Ife, Oba Adeyeye Ogunwusi, who attended as the Royal Father of the Day, praised Wike’s fearless approach to politics, describing him as a rare leader who speaks truth to power.

“Whether you like him or not, he stands by his convictions,” the monarch said.

Insecurity: DELSU shuts down

By Friday Omosola



The management of the Delta State University, Abraka, DELSU, has shut down the school following an increase in kidnapping and other criminal activities in the university town.

The decision to shut down was announced by the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Samuel Asagba and it followed an emergency security meeting called

by the State Governor, Rt. Hon. Sheriff Oborevwori, scheduled to hold on Thursday at the Government House.

“I wish to inform you all that due to the security situation in Abraka town, I have directed all our students to remain indoors today, Thursday, June 5, 2025, until Management is certain of the safety of both staff and students.

“Consequently, lectures and other academic activities will not hold today, Thursday, June 5, 2025. Let us all hope for a return to normality after the public holidays.”

The town has been under siege recently from activities of kidnappers and bandits who are terrorizing the residents with many people killed or abducted.

Lagos partners with SOGON to tackle maternal, neonatal deaths

By Friday Omosola



In a renewed effort to curb maternal and neonatal mortality, the Lagos State Government has strengthened its partnership with the Society of Gynaecology and Obstetrics of Nigeria (SOGON).

Maternal and neonatal mortality are deaths related to pregnancy, childbirth, and the period shortly after birth.

This was made during an advocacy visit by SOGON executives to the Commissioner for Health, Akin Abayomi, at the Ministry's office in Alausa, Ikeja.

The delegation was led by former SOGON National President Rotimi Akinola and Lagos Sector Chairman Abidoye Gbadegesin.

Abayomi emphasised that maternal and infant welfare must remain a top priority in Lagos' public health investment agenda.

Describing human capital as the state's most critical infrastructure, he drew parallels with Southeast Asia, where governments invest heavily in family health to secure the future.

"Childbirth is one of life's most traumatic transitions. Whether natural or assisted, we must make it as safe as possible for both mother and child," he said.

The Commissioner applauded SOGON's voluntary offer to support maternal and

reproductive healthcare and described the society's 350-member strong workforce as a valuable asset in addressing the acute shortage of specialists in public hospitals.

Abayomi also pledged to incorporate SOGON's proposals, including reviving the Voluntary Obstetrician Service Scheme (VOSS), into the Ministry's strategic planning.

He called for relevant data on the World Health Organisation's doctor-to-population ratio and the current state of residency training programmes in Lagos to guide policy formulation.

He underscored the importance of inspiring young doctors to pursue careers in obstetrics and gynaecology through mentorship and early exposure, urging SOGON to play a central role in grooming the next generation of specialists.

On broader reforms, the Commissioner restated the government's commitment to decentralising obstetric care and redesigning Maternal and Child Care Centres across the state.

He also addressed the sensitive issue of pregnancy termination, calling for a discreet, policy-aligned approach to reduce preventable deaths, while maintaining alignment with existing guidelines.

In his presentation, Akinola advocated for legislative backing for the Maternal and

Perinatal Death Surveillance and Response (MPDSR) programme, which has operated within the ministry for over a decade without formal legal support.

"The draft legislation is ready. We appeal to the Commissioner to push this forward to institutionalise the process," he said.

He also noted that unsafe abortions contribute to around 13% of maternal deaths in Lagos.

"SOGON is not calling for abortion on demand, but for safe, medically indicated terminations in line with national guidelines. This is about saving lives, not sparking moral debates," he clarified.

Meanwhile, Gbadegesin reaffirmed SOGON's commitment to women's health and called for closer collaboration with the government in policy formulation and implementation.

"We speak for over 350 obstetricians and gynaecologists in Lagos. Women's health is our core mandate," he stated.

He further warned that deploying unskilled birth attendants during labour remains a significant contributor to maternal deaths, referencing WHO and FIGO guidelines that mandate skilled care during childbirth.

"Anything less is a ticking time bomb," he said.

NAFDAC shuts rice mills, brewery depot in Nasarawa over safety violations

By Helen Okechukwu

The National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) has sealed four rice milling facilities in Nasarawa State over concerns of food safety violations and deceptive packaging practices.

The enforcement operation targeted local milling hubs located in Autabalefi, Masaka Main Market, and the Masaka Motor Park.

According to NAFDAC X page on Thursday, the affected facilities were involved in the repackaging of substandard or unregistered rice into empty branded bags of popular products such as Royal Stallion, Tomato, Big Bull, and BUA Rice.

“It was observed that beverages were stored outside the building and exposed to direct sunlight, raising serious hygiene and safety concerns,” NAFDAC stated.

In a separate move, the agency also



placed the Masaka Depot of Nigerian Breweries on regulatory hold.

Inspectors observed that several beverage products were being stored outside the building, directly exposed to sunlight—raising red flags regarding hygiene, safety, and potential product degradation.

“The Agency placed the Masaka Depot

of Nigerian Breweries on hold for poor storage practices,” the agency noted.

NAFDAC reiterated its commitment to protecting public health and emphasized that food and beverage operators must meet established safety and quality standards or face regulatory consequences.

Nigeria's SARMAAN project offers lifeline in child survival crisis

By Helen Okechukwu

With high rate of children mortality faced in Nigeria, where report evidence that one in ten children dies before age five, a new initiative is showing potential to turn the tide on this long-standing public health crisis.

The Nigerian Institute of Medical Research (NIMR) has launched SARMAAN — Safety and Antimicrobial Resistance of Mass Administration of Azithromycin in Nigeria — to combat infant mortality using azithromycin, a broad-spectrum antibiotic.

In SARMAAN's first phase, over four million infants aged one to 11 months received the drug in six high-risk states: Kano, Kebbi, Jigawa, Sokoto, Abia, and



Akwa Ibom.

According to Prof. Oliver Ezechi, SARMAAN's lead investigator, the programme aims to determine whether periodic azithromycin use can reduce deaths in areas with limited healthcare.

While such mass administration raises concerns about antimicrobial resistance (AMR), SARMAAN tackled this through rigorous surveillance.

Remarkably, resistance rates dropped over three testing cycles — from 41.1% to 26.5% — challenging assumptions that mass antibiotic use inevitably worsens resistance.

The project's early success suggests that, with proper monitoring, antibiotics like azithromycin can save lives without fueling resistance.

NIMR plans to expand SARMAAN, potentially offering a model for similar efforts across Africa.

Health experts warn of measles risk for UK travellers during summer

By Helen Okechukwu

Health officials are urging United Kingdom (UK) families to ensure they're fully vaccinated against measles ahead of summer travel, as outbreaks intensify across Europe.

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) says over 127,000 measles cases were recorded in Europe last year — the highest in nearly 30 years — with recent spikes in countries like France, Spain, Italy, and Germany, says Independent report.

There are fears that returning travellers may reintroduce the virus to the UK.

Declining MMR vaccination rates in England have left many children at risk. The UKHSA recommends that everyone, especially those travelling abroad, check that they've had both doses of the MMR jab, which protects against measles, mumps, and rubella.



Measles is highly contagious and can lead to serious complications such as brain swelling, chest infections, and even long-term disability or death.

Read Also: WHO warns of disease outbreak in Myanmar after devastating

earthquake

In England, confirmed measles cases rose to 109 in April and 86 in May, mostly among unvaccinated children, with London, the North West, and West Midlands reporting outbreaks.

Dr Vanessa Saliba of UKHSA stressed the importance of catching up on missed vaccines, noting that it's "Nobody wants this for their child and it's not something you want to experience when away on holiday."

NHS England's Dr Amanda Doyle echoed this, reminding parents that the MMR vaccine is available for free on the NHS.

Global outbreaks have also been reported in countries such as India, Nigeria, Indonesia, and Pakistan, raising further concerns for summer travellers.

mRNA breakthrough: Scientists uncover hidden HIV for cure

By Helen Okechukwu

A breakthrough by scientists at the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity may have brought the world a step closer to a cure for HIV, after researchers found a novel way to force the virus out of hiding inside human cells.

HIV's ability to lie dormant within certain white blood cells has long been a formidable barrier to a cure. These "invisible" viral reservoirs evade both the immune system and antiretroviral drugs, allowing the virus to persist for life and potentially reactivate. Now, researchers say a new technique using mRNA, the same technology used in COVID-19 vaccines, could change that.

In findings published in Nature Communications, the Melbourne-based team demonstrated that mRNA can be delivered into the very white blood cells where HIV hides, making the virus visible to the body's defences for the first time.



"It was previously thought impossible to get mRNA into these cells," said Dr. Paula Cevaál, co-first author of the study. Traditional lipid nanoparticles (LNPs), tiny fat bubbles used to deliver mRNA, were ineffective with these immune cells. But the team engineered a new nanoparticle, dubbed LNP-X, that these cells can absorb.

"We hope that this new nanoparticle design could be a new pathway to an HIV

cure," Cevaál said.

She described the lab's reaction to early test results as astonishment. "We were overwhelmed by how much of a night-and-day difference it was... all of us were just sitting gasping like, 'wow'."

Millions live with HIV globally

Nearly 40 million people globally live with HIV and must take daily medication to suppress the virus. Despite advances in treatment, HIV still kills. One person died every minute from the virus in 2023, according to UNAIDS.

Though the current study was carried out only in cells donated by HIV patients and not in living organisms, researchers are optimistic. The next steps will include testing in animals, followed by human safety trials. These phases are expected to take years before any potential clinical treatment becomes available.

Peter Okoye cries foul, alleges brotherly betrayal in court clash

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Peter Okoye, one-half of the now-defunct music duo P-Square, has publicly voiced his anger and frustration toward his brothers, Paul and Jude Okoye.

In a series of emotionally charged Instagram posts, Peter accused them of trying to destroy his reputation amid their ongoing legal dispute.

The singer alleged that his brothers, with the help of a publicist, are orchestrating a campaign to paint him as dishonest. He stated that their actions were not only calculated but also deeply hurtful, especially as they involve misleading the authorities.

Legal battle sparks family tensions

According to Peter, the conflict escalated after a recent court hearing. During the proceedings, Jude Okoye's lawyer reportedly accused Peter of submitting false information to the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) concerning a dispute over music royalties.

This, Peter said, was a deliberate attempt to make him look like a liar in the eyes of the law and the public. The singer insists that he told the truth and feels betrayed by what he calls a smear campaign led by someone close to his brothers.

"Exactly what I was talking about," Peter wrote in one of his posts. "Their publicist is doing everything possible to make me look like a liar."

Peter rejects role of 'bigger person'

Peter, known for usually keeping a calm public image during family conflicts, said he has had enough. He declared that he will no longer keep quiet for the sake of peace.

In his words: "I am not May D or Cynthia Morgan. I am Peter Okoye, The Rock, Okwute of the Okoyes. The truth shall surely prevail."

He even quoted in Pidgin: "Una thief abi una no thief?" a question aimed at challenging the credibility of those



pointing fingers at him.

Mohbad's case inspires a shift in attitude

Peter revealed that the tragic case of the late Nigerian singer Mohbad played a key role in his decision to speak out. Mohbad's death, which stirred widespread discussion and controversy in the Nigerian music industry, made Peter reflect on the dangers of silence.

"After watching everything about Mohbad's death and how the whole thing played out to date," he wrote, "I decided I would never play the bigger person or act as the mature one again."

He added that trying to stay quiet and maintain peace only made things worse. "That's exactly what led to this whole madness," he said. "Simply because I was trying to be the bigger person. Never again!"

2021 P-Square reunion was 'manipulated'

Peter also dropped a bombshell regarding the much-celebrated P-Square reunion in November 2021. Fans had welcomed the brothers' decision to reunite after years of separation, seeing it as a positive sign of reconciliation.

However, Peter now claims the reunion was not what it seemed. "Only to find out

that I was actually used in the whole November 2021 reunion," he said.

Although he didn't go into full detail, he hinted that more revelations would come in due time. "But since we're already in court," he wrote, "I'll wait for the right time to tell what really went down."

Fans react to Peter's explosive claims

Peter's outburst on Instagram has sparked a flood of reactions online. Some fans have expressed sympathy, saying he has every right to defend himself. Others are calling on the Okoye family to settle their differences privately, urging them to avoid dragging family matters into the public space.

Meanwhile, neither Paul nor Jude Okoye has responded publicly to Peter's recent accusations at the time of this report.

Looking ahead

With the legal case ongoing and emotions running high, it's unclear how this family feud will end. But one thing is certain: Peter Okoye is no longer holding back. For him, the time for silence is over.

As he wrote, "The truth shall surely prevail."

Kizz Daniel announces break in music to focus on family

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigerian music star Daniel Anidugbe, better known by his stage name Kizz Daniel, has revealed plans to retire from music.

In a series of posts on social media, the popular singer suggested he is preparing to exit the music scene, but not before dropping hundreds of unreleased tracks.

Kizz Daniel, who recently released an EP titled *Lemon Chase*, is already gearing up to release another project called *Orange Chase*. This back-to-back release strategy is part of a larger plan, he said, to share over 600 unreleased songs with his fans before calling it quits.

“I have over 600 songs to release”

The singer made the surprising revelation while interacting with fans on X (formerly Twitter). After unveiling the guest lineup for *Orange Chase*, one fan playfully commented, “VADO wan finish us with over feeding”, a lighthearted way of saying the artist is spoiling fans with too much music at once.

Kizz Daniel responded by confirming the fan’s suspicion. He wrote, “I have over 600 songs I want to dish out before I hang boot, so.” His use of the phrase “hang boot” is often used in Nigerian slang to mean retirement or stepping away from a profession.

Family comes first

In another post, the Buga crooner explained that he is stepping back from recording to spend more time with his family. He admitted that his dedication to music had affected his personal life, and it was time to make a change.

“No more recording for me... Just enjoying life like it should be,” he wrote. “My family don diss me say I choose studio over them, I’m changing.”



The message struck a chord with many fans, who praised him for prioritizing family. Others expressed concern that he might be leaving the industry too soon.

A busy year for the hitmaker

2025 has already been a busy year for Kizz Daniel. Just days ago, he dropped *Lemon Chase*, which received positive reactions from fans and music critics. The project featured a blend of upbeat tracks and soulful melodies, showing his range as both a singer and songwriter.

Now, with *Orange Chase* on the way, Kizz Daniel seems determined to give his fans a taste of what he has been keeping in the vault. Though he has not announced an official retirement date, his comments suggest that the end could be closer than many expected.

Fans react with mixed emotions

Reactions online have been mixed. Some fans are excited about the prospect of hearing hundreds of unreleased songs. Others are not ready to say goodbye.

“This guy has given us back-to-back hits

for years,” one fan wrote. “But if it’s time for him to rest, he deserves it.”

Another said, “Kizz Daniel is one of the most consistent artists in Nigeria. I hope this retirement talk is not real.”

Not the first time

This isn’t the first time Kizz Daniel has hinted at taking a break. In the past, he has spoken about the pressures of fame and the demands of the music industry. However, this time feels different. His tone is more reflective, and his focus on family suggests a shift in priorities.

What’s next?

For now, fans can look forward to *Orange Chase* and possibly more EPs and albums as the artist works through his backlog of songs. Whether or not this is truly the end of his music journey remains to be seen. But one thing is clear: Kizz Daniel wants to leave on his own terms.

Until then, the singer seems ready to balance music with life, love, and family.

Bobrisky changes name, embraces new identity

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigerian internet personality and self-proclaimed “Queen of Snapchat,” Bobrisky, has made headlines once again.

This time, the controversial social media figure has officially dropped his birth name and unveiled a new feminine identity.

Born Okuneye Idris Olarenwaju, Bobrisky has long been known for challenging gender norms and sparking debates across the country. Now, he has taken another bold step in his transformation. In a recent online post, the Lagos-based influencer announced that he has legally changed his name to “Afolashade Amope Okuneye”.

“My new name is Afolashade Amope Okuneye,” he wrote in a post that quickly went viral. “I expect to be addressed properly going forward.”

Online reaction follows swiftly

The announcement triggered an immediate wave of reactions on social media. Within hours, fans and critics alike were debating the move across platforms like X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, and Facebook. While some users praised Bobrisky for his confidence and commitment to living openly, others expressed surprise, confusion, or outright disapproval.

One fan commented, “Afolashade fits you perfectly! You’re living your truth and I love it.” Another, more critical voice wrote, “This country has real problems and Bobrisky’s name isn’t one of them. Why is this news?”

Still, the discussion raged on, highlighting how deeply the influencer continues to divide public opinion.

Bobrisky: No stranger to controversy
This latest move is not the first time Bobrisky has drawn widespread attention. Over the years, he has made headlines for his flashy lifestyle, open support for cross-dressing, and close association with Nigerian celebrities and politicians.



He first rose to fame in the mid-2010s, using platforms like Snapchat and Instagram to share beauty tips and showcase his lavish lifestyle. His bold fashion choices, makeup tutorials, and unapologetic personality helped him gain millions of followers.

While Bobrisky has never publicly declared that he is transgender, he has often referred to himself using female pronouns. He regularly calls himself a “she,” wears traditionally feminine clothing, and insists on being treated like a woman.

With this name change, it seems he is further solidifying that identity.

A legal and public declaration

Though Bobrisky did not disclose whether the name change was made through legal channels such as a court affidavit or national ID update, his public declaration appears serious. By announcing it on his verified social media accounts, he signaled a commitment to this new identity that goes beyond performance or fashion.

The name “Afolashade Amope” is Yoruba and commonly used by women. “Afolashade” loosely translates to “one who is pampered with wealth,” while “Amope” means “child who is complete.” Both names strongly reflect the glamorous, confident persona Bobrisky

has long portrayed online.

Cultural divide deepens

In Nigeria, issues around gender identity remain sensitive and often controversial. The country’s laws still criminalize same-sex relationships, and public figures who deviate from traditional gender roles often face harsh criticism. Bobrisky, however, has consistently challenged these social norms, often responding to critics with defiance.

His name change is likely to fuel more debates around gender expression, personal freedom, and the influence of social media figures in shaping public opinion.

A bold rebrand

Changing one’s name is a deeply personal choice. For Bobrisky, it marks not just a rebranding, but also a declaration of who he is and who he wants the world to see.

Whether celebrated or criticized, this latest move confirms one thing: Bobrisky knows how to stay in the spotlight. And with every new twist in his story, the world watches, reacts, and talks just as he intends.

As he steps fully into the identity of Afolashade Amope Okuneye, one thing is clear: Bobrisky is writing his own script and he’s not afraid to turn the page.

Rema's 'Rave & Roses Ultra' hits 3B YouTube music streams

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigerian music sensation Rema has made history. His debut album, 'Rave & Roses Ultra', has become the first African album to hit 3 billion streams on YouTube Music.

This milestone places the young Afrobeats star, born Divine Ikubor, in a league of his own. No other African artist has achieved this level of success on the global video-streaming platform.

A review by New Daily Prime on Thursday confirmed the streaming record. The numbers show that 'Rave & Roses Ultra' has surpassed the 3 billion mark on YouTube Music, setting a new standard for African music on the platform.

Rema's 'Calm Down' leads the way. The album's massive success owes much to its standout hit, 'Calm Down'. The track was already a major hit in Nigeria and other parts of Africa. However, its reach exploded with the release of a remix featuring American pop star Selena Gomez.

The remix introduced Rema's sound to millions of new listeners across the globe. The original and remix versions of 'Calm Down' combined have accounted for a significant chunk of the 3 billion streams on YouTube Music.

'Calm Down' became a global anthem. It dominated charts in multiple countries, received heavy rotation on international radio, and sparked countless fan-made videos and dance challenges on social media.

Success beyond YouTube
Rema's success isn't limited to YouTube. The Ultra version of 'Rave & Roses' has also become the most-streamed African album on Spotify, with over 3.9 billion streams to date.

The album made history on Spotify by being the first African project to cross 2 billion streams. It remains the only



Nigerian album to surpass that threshold on the platform.

This multi-platform achievement underscores Rema's growing influence not just in Africa but across the global music scene. His blend of Afrobeats, pop, and trap has found a devoted international audience.

A new era for afrobeats
Rema's success reflects a larger trend: the global rise of Afrobeats. Over the past few years, artists like Burna Boy, Wizkid, and Tems have introduced the sound to new audiences worldwide.

Now, with this record-breaking milestone, Rema has pushed African music even further into the global spotlight.

His chart-topping album includes other hit tracks like 'Holiday,' 'Charm,' and 'Soundgasm,' which have each helped attract millions of fans. The Ultra edition added new material and fresh energy to the original album, which was first released in March 2022.

Industry reactions pour in
Fans and fellow musicians have flooded social media with praise. Many have called Rema's achievement a defining moment for Nigerian music. Music critics and industry professionals say the record proves that African artists can compete and win on the biggest stages in the world.

A Lagos-based music executive said, "This is a massive moment for the culture. Rema has opened doors and raised the bar for everyone coming after him."

More than just numbers
While the streaming numbers are impressive, they also reflect something deeper: a genuine global connection. Rema's music speaks to a new generation. His themes of love, youth, ambition, and freedom resonate far beyond Nigeria's borders.

His success shows the power of digital platforms in breaking down barriers and amplifying African voices.

Falz clarifies relationship with Bobrisky in new statement

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Popular Nigerian rapper and actor, Folarin Falana, known professionally as Falz, has denied ever having a personal relationship with controversial crossdresser, Bobrisky.

Falz made the statement during a televised interview on Arise TV on Wednesday evening, where he also gave an update on his ongoing legal battle with social media personality, VeryDarkMan.

Background of Falz's controversy

The controversy began in 2023 when VeryDarkMan, whose real name remains unknown, allegedly leaked a private phone conversation between Falz and Bobrisky. At the time, Bobrisky was reportedly behind bars.

Following the leak, rumours spread rapidly across social media. Many speculated that Falz might be involved in a secret relationship with Bobrisky. The viral audio clip caused a stir and raised questions about the singer's personal life.

In response, Falz filed a defamation lawsuit against VeryDarkMan, accusing him of spreading false and damaging information. The case has since gained widespread public attention.

Update on court proceedings

During the interview, Falz confirmed that the court case is still ongoing. He revealed that his legal team, which includes his father, respected human rights lawyer Femi Falana, had filed a substantive suit against VeryDarkMan for defamation.

"Update on the court case, very much still in court," Falz said. "There's a substantive suit which myself and my dad filed, alleging defamation."

He explained that instead of responding directly to the defamation claims, VeryDarkMan's team tried to stop the case by filing a preliminary objection.



They argued that the court did not have the right to hear the matter.

However, Falz noted that the court dismissed that objection. "The court has thrown out that preliminary objection. Now they have to enter a defence, or the court will just go on to rule on the case," he added.

Falz declined to go into further detail, citing legal limitations. "I can't really say much about the subject of current litigation, so I will leave it there," he said.

Clarifying his connection with Bobrisky

Falz firmly denied having any prior relationship with Bobrisky. He explained that the phone call in question was not romantic or personal. Instead, it was a response to a message Bobrisky had sent on Instagram, asking for help.

"I never had any relationship with Bobrisky before that phone call," Falz said. "He messaged me on Instagram and said, 'I'm in this case and I want to speak to you about how you can help.'"

Falz added that it was not unusual for him to receive such requests. "Thousands of people message me about similar stuff like that. This is not a special case; it's not exceptional in any way."

According to him, he often listens to people who ask for help, especially when their situations seem urgent. "In a lot of those cases, I give them an audience. I ask, what is the issue? How can I help? Compassionately," he said.

However, he now regrets being too trusting. "Little did I know," he added with a sigh. "As they say, once bitten, twice shy."

Falz plans to be more careful

While the incident has made Falz more cautious, he stressed that it will not stop him from helping people entirely. Still, he admitted he may now take a more careful approach.

"At the end of the day, maybe I won't help anyone again in my life," he joked, "but maybe I will just be much more conscious."

Trump ally calls for Elon Musk's deportation to South Africa

By Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi

Elon Musk faces deportation Call from Trump Ally Bannon. In a dramatic unraveling of one of America's most powerful alliances, President Donald Trump and tech billionaire Elon Musk have entered into a highly publicized feud marked by personal insults, political divergence, and threats that may have economic ramifications far beyond their personal rift.

Once seen as allies during Trump's return to the White House in 2024, the relationship between the two figures has rapidly deteriorated following a political dispute over Trump's flagship tax and spending legislation, dubbed the "Big Beautiful Bill." The bill, which proposes slashing electric vehicle subsidies and ballooning the national deficit by over \$2.4 trillion, was met with fierce criticism from Musk. Calling it a "disgusting abomination," Musk urged Congress to reject it, sparking the first serious rupture in the alliance.

The Fallout Begins Trump, known for his combative style, responded by accusing Musk of being driven by self-interest, pointing out that the bill would cut crucial electric vehicle tax credits that benefit Tesla. This ignited a public war of words on social media platforms, with Trump threatening to cancel all federal contracts awarded to Musk's companies — including Tesla and SpaceX — which had reportedly secured over \$3 billion across nearly 100 contracts in 2023 alone.

As the tension escalated, Musk retaliated with a barrage of posts, claiming that without his support, Trump would not have won the 2024 election. In an incendiary twist, Musk further alleged that Trump's name appeared in the infamous Epstein files, insinuating that this was the reason the documents had not been fully released. Though Musk provided no evidence, the accusation threw social media into a frenzy.

Political and Economic Consequences Musk's comments were met with a mix of outrage and curiosity. Trump, in turn, distanced himself from any association with Jeffrey Epstein, referring to their connection as casual and dating back over 15 years. Still, the damage appeared to be



done. Political analysts say the feud underscores a growing fracture within the political and business elite.

The economic repercussions were immediate. Tesla's stock fell more than 14% in one day, wiping out \$150 billion in market value. Investors fear the loss of federal contracts, tighter regulatory scrutiny, and overall uncertainty surrounding Musk's increasingly political and unpredictable behavior.

Meanwhile, Stephen K. Bannon, former Trump adviser and a prominent voice within the MAGA movement, urged the Trump administration to launch full-scale investigations into Musk's citizenship status, alleged drug use, and business activities. "They should initiate a formal investigation and deport him if he's not legally here," Bannon told media outlets.

A New Political Path? Musk's disillusionment with traditional parties has led him to float the idea of forming a new centrist political party — a move that signals a deeper ideological split from Trump and the Republican Party. He has also resigned from his special advisory role with the federal government, claiming that Trump's fiscal policy and political tactics no longer align with his vision for America's future.

The Epstein Files Connection Fueling the feud further is the long-simmering controversy over the Jeffrey Epstein case. Musk's assertion that Trump is listed in the Epstein files has renewed calls from conspiracy theorists and internet sleuths

for the unredacted release of all case materials. These files, heavily redacted in the initial 2024 release under Attorney General Pam Bondi, were criticized as incomplete and non-revelatory.

Law enforcement officials are now reportedly working on "Phase 2" of the release, though concerns about reputational damage to potentially innocent individuals continue to delay publication.

The Bigger Picture Political insiders see the Musk-Trump clash as indicative of a new kind of political theater — one that plays out primarily online, with major policy and economic consequences being decided via tweets and viral posts. What once appeared to be a pragmatic alliance has devolved into a highly personal, almost gladiatorial conflict, with global implications.

With 2027 on the horizon, questions loom: Will Musk's centrist ambitions reshape America's political map? Will Trump's threats translate into tangible action against one of America's most successful entrepreneurs? And most critically, how will this affect U.S. economic policy, clean energy innovation, and the fragile relationship between Silicon Valley and Washington?

For now, one thing is certain: the era of billion-dollar bromances in politics may be over. And in its place, a new age of digital feuds is rising, where power is measured in followers, not just votes.

Supreme court sides with catholic group in wisconsin tax row

By **Fatimah Idera**

The U.S. Supreme Court on Thursday unanimously ruled in favor of a Catholic nonprofit seeking exemption from Wisconsin's unemployment insurance tax, marking another significant decision expanding religious rights.

In a 9–0 decision written by Justice Sonia Sotomayor, the court sided with the Catholic Charities Bureau, an arm of the Catholic Diocese of Superior and four of its affiliated service organizations. The ruling overturned a lower court's decision that denied the group a religious exemption, citing the First Amendment's protection of religious freedom and government neutrality toward religion.

At the center of the case was whether Wisconsin's refusal to grant the exemption violated constitutional guarantees of free religious exercise and barred governmental preference among religious groups.

Sotomayor criticized the Wisconsin Supreme Court's interpretation of the state's exemption criteria, calling it discriminatory. She wrote that denying the exemption based on the group's decision not to proselytize, despite its religious motivation, amounted to "textbook denominational discrimination."

"A law that differentiates between religions along theological lines is textbook denominational discrimination," Sotomayor stated. She emphasized that the government must remain neutral among religious denominations and that any favoritism triggers the highest level of judicial scrutiny.

The Catholic Charities Bureau, established in 1917, provides services to the poor, disabled, elderly, and children with special needs. It describes its



mission as an expression of the Catholic Church's social ministry. The organization and its affiliates do not require employees or clients to be Catholic and do not explicitly promote religious doctrine in their services.

In 2024, Wisconsin's highest court concluded the organization was not "operated primarily for religious purposes" because its work was largely charitable and secular, despite its religious motivations.

Bishop James Powers of the Diocese of Superior welcomed the ruling, saying it affirms the religious nature of their charitable work.

"At the heart of Catholic Charities' ministry is Christ's call to care for the least of our brothers and sisters, without condition and without exception," Powers said. "We're grateful the court unanimously recognized that improving the human condition by serving the poor is part of our religious exercise."

Critics of the ruling expressed concern about its broader implications. Patrick Elliott, legal director at the Freedom From Religion Foundation, warned the decision could weaken the separation of church and state.

"This ruling is a dramatic expansion of religious exemptions that invites confusion, litigation, and further erosion of state-church separation," Elliott said.

While federal law and most states offer unemployment tax exemptions for religious organizations, eligibility typically depends on whether an entity is "operated primarily for religious purposes." The Catholic Charities Bureau's challenge to that standard reflects a broader legal trend, with the Supreme Court increasingly favoring expansive interpretations of religious freedom.

The ruling continues a pattern of decisions from the conservative-leaning court that favor religious groups. Recent landmark cases include rulings on public funding for religious schools, the rights of religious foster care agencies, and public prayer by school employees.

Despite this trend, the Court has drawn limits—such as its May 2025 decision blocking the creation of the nation's first publicly funded religious charter school in Oklahoma.

Judge orders Trump administration to reinstate AmeriCorps programs in 24 States

By **Fatimah Idera**



A federal judge ruled Thursday that the Trump administration must reinstate AmeriCorps-funded programs in 24 Democratic-led states, following a lawsuit challenging the administration's efforts to dismantle the national service agency. However, the judge declined to prevent mass layoffs within the agency.

U.S. District Judge Deborah Boardman, based in Baltimore, issued a partial injunction in response to a legal challenge brought by those states and the District of Columbia. They argued that the administration acted unlawfully in ending over 1,000 AmeriCorps grants and placing 85 per cent of the agency's workforce on administrative leave, with plans to terminate them by June 24.

The lawsuit, filed in April, contended that former President Donald Trump overstepped his constitutional authority in moving to effectively dismantle AmeriCorps, a program created by Congress. The states also said the administration failed to follow proper legal procedures before halting or altering program services.

Judge Boardman, appointed by President Joe Biden had agreed in part, ruling that the administration should have followed a formal rulemaking process, including public notice and comment, before making such sweeping changes to state-level service programs.

"It did not," she wrote. "As a result, the states have been

irreparably harmed."

However, the judge rejected the states' request to block the planned layoffs of AmeriCorps staff. She found their claims about the impact of the job cuts too speculative and based on the unfounded assumption that reinstated employees would resume their previous duties without issue.

The states had argued that the layoffs would disrupt community services and delay grant evaluations, but Judge Boardman said those consequences were not concrete enough to warrant halting the firings.

Neither AmeriCorps nor the White House had commented.

BBC accuses Iran of Punishing Journalists' Families

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



BBC News in London have accused the Iranian government of escalating a campaign of harassment by punishing their families in Iran, as part of a wider attempt to silence journalists working for the broadcaster's Persian service.

It revealed this week that there has been a "sharp and deeply troubling escalation" in the targeting of its journalists' families, describing the campaign as "psychological warfare" by the Iranian regime.

BBC Persian, the Farsi-language arm of the BBC's World Service, has long faced pressure from Tehran. But staff now say Iranian authorities have stepped up intimidation tactics, dragging relatives into interrogations, threatening them with imprisonment, job loss, and asset seizures, all because they are related to the platform's journalists.

Behrang Tajdin, a journalist at BBC Persian, described the situation as

"punishment" rather than mere harassment. "They are trying to make our families' lives miserable. It's psychological warfare," he said. "The scale and number of families targeted have gone up exponentially."

Tajdin added that some staff are forced to emotionally disconnect from their loved ones just to keep working. "We would not be able to continue working if we kept thinking about the consequences for them," he said.

One journalist reported being told: "It doesn't matter that you don't live in Iran, we can also do whatever we want in London."

The intimidation campaign is seen as retaliation for the news platform Persian's wide reach, with a weekly audience of nearly 22 million viewers. The service, which provides independent news and analysis in Farsi, is one of the few trusted sources of information for Iranians amid increasing censorship and government

propaganda.

The UK's Metropolitan Police have recorded over 20 "threat-to-life" incidents linked to Iran in recent years. In one high-profile case last year, an Iranian journalist was stabbed outside his London home and subsequently fled the country for safety.

BBC condemns assault

Its Director General, Tim Davie, condemned the harassment, calling it "clearly designed to exploit family ties as a means of coercion, pressuring our journalists to abandon their work or return to Iran under false pretences."

The station is preparing to file a new complaint with the UN Human Rights Council, calling for international intervention against Iran's growing transnational repression.

The Iranian government has not responded to the latest allegations.

Trump suspends entry of international students at Harvard

By **Fatimah Idera**

In a move that intensifies an ongoing battle with one of the nation's most prestigious universities, President Donald Trump on Wednesday suspended the entry of foreign nationals seeking to study or participate in exchange programs at Harvard University, citing national security concerns.

The presidential proclamation, effective for an initial period of six months, blocks new international students from entering the U.S. to attend the varsity. It also directs the State Department to consider revoking the academic or exchange visas of current students who fall under the directive's criteria. The suspension could be extended beyond six months.

The school swiftly condemned the move, calling it "yet another illegal retaliatory step taken by the Administration in violation of its First Amendment rights." The university vowed to continue defending its international students.

The order follows a week of legal wrangling in federal court. U.S. District Judge Allison Burroughs in Boston recently indicated she would issue an injunction protecting the school's ability to enrol international students, who comprise roughly a quarter of its student body.

The administration had earlier attempted to revoke the institution's Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) certification, a move that was temporarily blocked by Judge Burroughs.

Wednesday's action adds a new layer to what the school officials have described



as a multifaceted campaign by the Trump administration against the university. That campaign has included the freezing of billions in federal grants, threats to revoke the varsity's tax-exempt status, and increasing scrutiny of the school's operations.

However, the State Department was said to have instructed its overseas consular offices to implement heightened vetting of visa applicants intending to travel to the school, following Burroughs' indication that she would issue a broader injunction.

White House proclamation accuses Harvard

The White House proclamation accused Harvard of having "extensive entanglements with foreign adversaries," including China, and of harbouring "a history of concerning foreign ties and radicalism." It cited FBI warnings about foreign espionage and information theft within American

universities, as well as alleged lapses in Harvard's handling of campus discipline and cooperation with Homeland Security.

Harvard has rejected these claims, maintaining that the administration's actions are politically motivated. The university argues it is being targeted for resisting efforts by federal officials to influence its governance, academic direction, and ideological leanings.

Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem had previously announced the revocation of Harvard's SEVP certification on May 22. But after legal challenges mounted, the department backtracked, opting to pursue the matter through a slower administrative process.

Despite the shift, Judge Burroughs said she planned to issue a preliminary injunction to protect Harvard's international student population.

EU scholar critiques Hungary's controversial LGBTQ+ law

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

A senior legal expert at the European Court of Justice (ECJ) has delivered a blistering critique of Hungary's controversial 2021 law banning LGBTQ+ content in schools and on primetime television, declaring it a clear violation of basic human rights and freedom of expression.

Tamara Čapeta, advocate general at the ECJ, issued her non-binding opinion on Thursday, stating unequivocally that the legislation, enacted under the guise of child protection, is not rooted in scientific evidence but in prejudice against non-heterosexual and non-cisgender identities.

"The stigmatising effects of the Hungarian legislation, which creates a climate of hostility towards LGBTI persons, may affect the feelings of identity, self-esteem and self-confidence of LGBTI persons," Čapeta wrote in a 69-page report. "Rather than protecting minors from harm, the contested legislation expands such harm."

Čapeta argued that by removing LGBTQ+ content from public education and media, Hungary is harming young LGBTQ+ individuals and violating fundamental EU rights, including human dignity, non-discrimination, and respect for private and family life.

The law, which has been compared to Russia's "gay propaganda" law, prohibits the depiction of gay or transgender themes in school materials and bans such content from media broadcasts before 10 pm. It has



been widely condemned across Europe for equating LGBTQ+ visibility with child endangerment.

Čapeta's opinion also supports claims that the law violates EU commercial and audiovisual laws, which restrict member states from limiting media freedoms without legitimate public interest.

While the opinion is not binding, the ECJ often rules in line with the advocate general's recommendations. A final judgment is expected later this year.

Hungary yet to reply LGBTQ+ critic
The Hungarian government has yet to respond to the opinion, but it continues to push a hardline stance on LGBTQ+ issues. In April, lawmakers passed a constitutional amendment banning Pride events and authorising facial recognition surveillance of attendees, effectively criminalising participation.

The European Commission launched

legal action against Hungary shortly after the 2021 law was passed. The case has since gained support from 16 other EU member states and the European Parliament. Just last month, 17 EU countries, including France and Germany, signed a joint letter organised by the Netherlands, condemning Hungary's anti-LGBTQ+ measures and calling for their repeal.

Critics argue that Hungary's use of "child protection" language is a smokescreen for broader discriminatory policies. Čapeta reinforced that view, writing, "The law is based not on proof, but on a value judgment, a prejudice that homosexual and non-cisgender life is not of equal value or status as heterosexual and cisgender life."

The ECJ's upcoming ruling could set a landmark precedent for LGBTQ+ rights within the EU, potentially forcing Hungary to revise or repeal its contentious legislation.

Gates commits majority of \$200b fortune to Africa's future

By **Elizabeth Jenrola Oso**

In a monumental move that could reshape the future of millions across the African continent, U.S. tech mogul and philanthropist Bill Gates has pledged the majority of his estimated \$200 billion fortune to improving health and education services in Africa.

Speaking at a major event in Addis Ababa on Monday, the 69-year-old Microsoft co-founder and co-chair of the Gates Foundation announced an ambitious, two-decade commitment to “unleashing the human potential through health, through education.”

“Every country in Africa should be on a path to prosperity,” Gates told attendees. “I recently committed that my wealth will be given away over the next 20 years. And so you can see, you know, I’m extremely lucky. My wealth has gotten to a very high level here. And now, by accelerating my giving, I will have the Gates Foundation take all of those resources.”

Gates invests billions in health, others

The pledge, Gates said, is deeply rooted in fundamental human values. “mothers should survive delivery. Babies should survive past their fifth birthday, kids should be well nourished. Many of these infectious diseases should go away, and the rest within 20 years should be at a very low level,” he said.

The Gates Foundation, which has



already invested billions in global health, education, and agricultural development, confirmed in a statement that it will “sunset its operations” after 20 years. Over that time, it plans to channel funds toward three major objectives: ending preventable deaths of mothers and newborns, eradicating deadly infectious diseases, and lifting millions out of poverty through access to education and better health infrastructure.

He also highlighted the transformative role of technology, particularly artificial intelligence (AI), in addressing these global challenges. “I am a technologist at heart. I love backing scientists with great new ideas,” he said. “The latest technology we’re all hearing about is artificial intelligence. It’s an incredible opportunity. It brings

challenges with it, but as we drive it forward, it will make a huge difference in health, education, and agriculture.”

His remarks were not without critique of global leadership, particularly concerning recent shifts in U.S. foreign aid. Without explicitly naming President Donald Trump, Gates condemned the deep budget cuts to international aid programs under Trump’s administration.

“We’re sitting here at a time of a significant crisis,” he said. “Some of those cuts are being made so abruptly that there are complete interruptions in trials, or medicines are still sitting in warehouses and are not available. These cuts are something that I think is a huge mistake.”

Republic of Ireland deports five Nigerian children over failed asylum

By **Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi**

In a move that has sparked renewed attention on Europe's immigration enforcement policies, the Republic of Ireland has deported 35 people, including five Nigerian children, on a chartered flight from Dublin Airport, following the rejection of their asylum applications.

According to the Irish Times, the deportation, carried out on Wednesday, was overseen by the Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB) and involved 21 men, nine women, and five children. Authorities confirmed that the children were removed as part of family units.

In a statement issued after the operation, An Garda Síochána stated that it “continues to work closely with the Department of Justice in implementing immigration policy,” reinforcing the Irish government's approach to enforcing immigration law.

This marks the third chartered deportation flight from Ireland this year, and follows a similar operation in February that removed 32 individuals to Georgia at a reported cost of €102,476.

“The Foundation of a Rules-Based System”

Minister for Justice Jim O’Callaghan defended the decision, asserting that a functioning immigration system must be rooted in the enforcement of its legal parameters.

“People coming to Ireland must follow the appropriate pathways for legal migration... If a person’s application for international protection is refused and they are ordered to leave the State, they



must do so,” he said.

The minister confirmed that Wednesday’s flight faced an unscheduled stop due to a medical incident on board but later resumed safely. All 35 returnees arrived in Nigeria early Thursday morning.

O’Callaghan praised the efforts of the GNIB and the Department of Justice, stating:

“Removal operations of this nature send a clear message that there are consequences for people who remain in our country without permission and underscores this Government’s intention to protect the integrity of our immigration system.”

Deportation Statistics Surge

According to updated figures from the Department of Justice, Ireland signed 2,403 deportation orders in 2024,

reflecting a staggering 180% increase over 2023. So far this year, 1,940 new orders have already been issued, and 888 individuals have departed the country, either voluntarily or through enforced deportation.

This latest operation continues to raise questions about how Ireland balances its humanitarian obligations with border enforcement and national security.

While some government officials have lauded the decision as a necessary part of a “rules-based” immigration system, critics say the forced removal of children and families underscores the need for a more compassionate review process — particularly for asylum seekers fleeing conflict, poverty, or persecution.

Rights organizations have not yet issued formal responses to Wednesday’s operation, but migration advocates across Ireland and the EU are expected to weigh in over the coming days.

Spain edge France 5-4 in Nations League classic

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi



In one of the most electrifying matches in UEFA Nations League history, Spain booked their place in the final after surviving a stunning second-half comeback to defeat France 5-4 in Stuttgart on Thursday night. The clash at MHPArena will be remembered for its breathtaking goals, relentless pace, and an ending that nearly defied belief.

Spain came out of the blocks with precision and purpose, taking a commanding 2-0 lead into the break. Nico Williams opened the scoring in the 22nd minute with a sharp finish after a fine delivery from Mikel Oyarzabal. Just three minutes later, it was Oyarzabal again with the assist, this time setting up Mikel Merino, who powered home a header to double La Roja's advantage.

Luis de la Fuente's side picked up where they left off after halftime. Barcelona prodigy Lamine Yamal converted from the penalty spot in the 54th minute following a foul in the area. Within seconds of the restart, Spain struck again—this time through Pedri, who latched onto a cutback from Williams to make it 4-0.

But just as Spain looked to be cruising to an easy win, France sparked into life.

Kylian Mbappé drew one back from the spot in the 59th minute after a clumsy challenge in the box. Spain, however, responded with a fifth. Yamal added his second of the night in the 67th minute after a clever assist by Pedro Porro, restoring what seemed an unassailable four-goal lead.

Read Also: UEFA fines Real Madrid for homophobic Guardiola chants

Still, France were not done. Rayan Cherki replaced a subdued Antoine Griezmann and immediately influenced the game. His 79th-minute strike, assisted by Mbappé, gave Les Bleus hope at 5-2. Then came a moment of calamity for Spain. Dani Vivian, brought on to shore up the defense, inadvertently redirected Malo Gusto's cross into his own net in the 84th minute.

France pressed frantically, and the pressure paid off deep into stoppage time. Cherki once again turned provider, swinging in a perfectly placed cross for Randal Kolo Muani, who headed in France's fourth goal in the 90+4th minute. The Spanish defense, rattled and fatigued, clung to their narrow lead in the dying seconds.

Despite France's late heroics, Spain held on to seal a spot in the final against Portugal on June 8th, setting up a mouth-watering all-Iberian showdown. The result sees Spain looking to lift their first Nations League title, having lost the final in 2021 to France.

The match was a rollercoaster from start to finish, a showcase of attacking brilliance, youthful energy, and relentless spirit from both sides. Lamine Yamal, only 17, shone brightly for Spain, while Mbappé and Cherki nearly pulled off a miraculous rescue act for France.

It was also a night of redemption and resilience. Gavi made his return to the national side following a serious injury in 2023, receiving a warm welcome as he replaced Merino late on. Meanwhile, Spain's Unai Simón made a crucial late catch from a French free-kick, extinguishing any final hopes of an equalizer.

For the neutrals, this semi-final was a gift. For Spain, it was a test of nerve. And for France, it was a reminder that even their star-studded squad can fall short when the clock runs out—despite fighting until the very last whistle.