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# Democracy Day: PDP urges Nigerians to resist alleged one-party plot by APC

By Friday Omosola



**A**s Nigeria marks Democracy Day on June 12, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has called on Nigerians to stand firm against what it described as a plot by the All Progressives Congress (APC) to establish a one-party state in the country.

In a statement issued yesterday by its National Publicity Secretary, Debo Ologunagba, the opposition party accused the ruling APC of undermining democratic institutions and attempting to entrench a despotic political regime.

“The PDP calls on Nigerians to use the occasion of the June 12 Democracy Day to reawaken and strengthen their resistance to the anti-democratic designs of the APC,” the statement read.

“The ruling party is plotting to foist a despotic one-party system on the nation.”

The PDP alleged that the APC-led federal government was using state institutions to suppress opposition voices, stifle media freedom, manipulate electoral processes, and erode the rule of law.

It also accused the ruling party of weaponising poverty to suppress dissent.

According to the PDP, “the APC government continues to use compromised state apparatus to violate the Constitution, defy the liberty of citizens, and corrupt institutions of democracy. This includes collusion with certain judicial figures and a rubber-stamp National Assembly to impose a totalitarian system on the country.”

The party also cited recent events in Edo and Rivers States as examples of what it described as constitutional violations by the ruling party.

It condemned the outcome of the Edo governorship primary and the appointment of a sole administrator in Rivers State, calling both instances a “clear and present danger” to Nigeria’s democratic order.

The PDP urged democratic institutions, including the National Assembly, the judiciary, and the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), to assert

their independence and act in line with constitutional provisions and the public interest.

It also called on Nigerians to honour the legacy of MKO Abiola, the symbol of the June 12 struggle, by defending the principles of justice, accountability, and credible elections.

“June 12 represents the people’s rejection of oppression and their aspiration for a government that is accountable and governed by the rule of law. Sadly, these values have been eroded under the APC,” the statement continued.

While congratulating Nigerians on Democracy Day, the PDP urged citizens to remain law-abiding and not lose faith in the democratic process.

PDP called for unity ahead of the 2027 elections: “We encourage Nigerians to rally with the PDP as we reposition to rescue our nation from the stranglehold of the APC.”

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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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4X3	39,499.50
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10X4	103,963.00
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9X4	N/A
8X6	N/A
8X3	N/A
7X4	72,676.00
6X4	65,000.00
6X3	41,124.50
6X2	29,858.00
5X6	71,378.00
5X4	42,825.00
5X3	29,858.00
5X2	22,841.00
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4X3	N/A
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# One-party state not in offing – Tinubu

By Friday Omosola

President Bola Tinubu has dismissed fears that Nigeria is drifting towards a one-party system, assuring citizens that democracy remains firmly embedded in the country's political landscape.

The New Daily Prime gathered that following a wave of defections from major opposition parties, many Nigerians have expressed concern that the defection of key politicians to the All Progressives Congress (APC) could signal the emergence of a one-party state.

Speaking during a joint session of the National Assembly to commemorate Democracy Day 2025 on Thursday, Mr Tinubu stressed that a vibrant opposition is essential for democratic growth.

He affirmed that his administration would never undermine the multi-party system enshrined in the Constitution.

Mr Tinubu added that, given his political history, he would be the last person to advocate for a one-party system.

He recalled that in 2003, when the then-ruling party attempted to eliminate political opposition through manipulation and coercion, he remained the last standing progressive governor in his region.

“To those who ring the alarm that the APC is intent on a one-party state, I offer you a most personal promise. While your alarm may be a result of your panic, it rings in error. At no time in the past, nor any instance in the present, and at no future juncture shall I view the notion of a one-party state as good for Nigeria. I have never attempted to alter any political party registration with INEC. Equally, my friends, we cannot blame anybody seeking to bail out of a sinking ship even without a life jacket.



“In all their numbers and false grandeur, they boasted of ruling, not governing, Nigeria for the next half century or more. Where are they now? Yet, I stood alone. My allies had been induced into defeat. My adversaries held all the cards that a mortal man could carry. Even with all of that, they could not control our national destiny because fate is written from above. A greater power did not want Nigeria to become a one-party state back then. Nigeria will not become such a state now”, Mr Tinubu said.

According to him, the failed attempt to establish a one-party state set progressive political forces on the path to forming the APC.

He stated that this development also set him on the trajectory that eventually led to his emergence as President.

“I dare not do such a favour to any political adversary by repeating the same mistake of political overreach.”

The president said, “A one-party state is not in the offing. Nor should it ever be. That said, we would be guilty of political malpractice if we closed the door on those from other parties who now seek to join the APC and I sincerely welcome our

party's newest members from Delta and Akwa Ibom States led by Governor Sheriff Oborevwori and Pastor Umo Eno and other members of this National Assembly.

“Political parties fearful of members leaving may be better served by examining their internal processes and affairs rather than fearfully conjuring up demons that do not exist. For me, I would say try your best to put your house in order. I will not help you do so. It is, indeed, a pleasure to witness you in such disarray.

“We must welcome and accept the diversity and number of political parties just as we welcome and embrace the diversity of our population. Our efforts must never be to eliminate political competition but to make that competition salutary to the national well-being by working across the political aisle whenever possible.

“One area in which democracy calls us to work together, whether in the legislative or executive branch, whether in this or other political parties, is that of economic and social development.”



# Democracy Day: Afenifere backs 1963 constitution, state police

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

**T**he National Leader of Afenifere, the pan-Yoruba socio-political organisation, Pa Reuben Fazoranti, has called on Nigerian leaders and citizens to revisit the foundational principles of federalism as outlined in the 1963 Constitution, describing it as the most effective framework for fostering national unity and sustainable development.

In a statement released on Wednesday to commemorate Democracy Day, Fazoranti urged the country to adopt the 1963 Republican Constitution, which, he said, promotes true federalism by granting Nigeria's diverse regions a degree of autonomy to govern themselves in line with their unique cultural and socio-economic realities.

"To ensure an enduring framework for unity and progress in the country, federalism enables the constituent parts of the country to exercise some level of autonomy or self-determination as obtained in the First Republic," Fazoranti stated.

He criticised Nigeria's current centralised system of governance, describing it as inadequate for addressing the country's complex and diverse needs.

He argued that a return to true federalism would not only encourage equitable development across regions but also reduce inter-regional tensions.

While celebrating the milestone of uninterrupted democratic rule since 1999, the elder statesman emphasised the need for urgent structural reforms to consolidate democratic governance.

He paid tribute to pro-democracy



activists and civil society groups who fought tirelessly for the restoration of civil rule in the 1990s.

"Without doubt, the sustained and uninterrupted democratic rule since 1999 is a product of the sacrifices and commitment of our heroes and heroines in the civil society groups, and other well-meaning compatriots, who, along with Afenifere, coalesced into the National Democratic Coalition (NADECO) to constitute the vanguard of progressive forces that ensured the restoration of democracy and the birth of the Fourth Republic," Fazoranti noted.

Expressing concern over the continued insecurity affecting many parts of Nigeria, Fazoranti stated that violent non-state actors remain a major threat to citizens' safety.

To address this challenge, he advocated the immediate establishment of State Police and Community Policing, which he described as practical and urgently needed solutions.

"We, in Afenifere, share the view of many other patriotic Nigerians that establishing State Police and checking internal collaborators appears to be the panacea for this scourge that tends to make living or travelling in certain parts of the country a nightmare," he said.

Fazoranti urged both federal and state governments to prioritise the implementation of these security measures, arguing that localised policing would enhance public safety and restore trust in the security architecture.

He concluded by reminding Nigerians of the deeper meaning of Democracy Day and called on all citizens to transcend divisions and work collectively towards a more united and prosperous nation.

"The progressive spirit that birthed our democracy must continue to guide and nurture it. June 12 represents more than a date it is a symbol of our shared resolve to uphold justice, liberty and the will of the people," he said.

# June 12: Tinubu confers national honours on Yar'Adua, Kudirat Abiola, others

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi



**P**resident Bola Ahmed Tinubu has conferred national honours on some Nigerians to commemorate this year's Democracy Day.

The conferment of the national honours was announced by the President on Thursday while addressing the nation.

Those honoured include: Kudirat Abiola, the heroine of the June 12 struggle; Shehu Musa Yar'Adua (GCFR), Prof. Humphrey Nwosu (CON), Rear Admiral Ndubuisi Kanu (CON), Alhaji Balarabe Musa (CFR), Pa. Alfred Rewani (CFR), Bagauda Kaltho (OON), Chima Ubani (OON), Dr. Beko Ransome-Kuti (CON), Alao Aka Bashorun (CON), Chief Frank Kokori (CON), Emma Ezeazu (OON), Bamidele Aturu (OON), Fredrick Fasehun (CON), Professor Festus Iyayi (CON), Dr John Yima Sen (OON), Alhaja Sawaba Gambo (CON), Dr. Edwin Madunagu (CON), Dr. Alex Ibru (CON), Chief Bola Ige (CFR), Pa. Reuben Fasoranti (CFR), Sen. Ayo Fasanmi (CON), Sen. Polycarp Nwite (CON) and Dr. Nurudeen Olowopopo (CON).

"Furthermore, I also confer posthumous national honours on Ken Saro Wiwa (CON), the leader of the Ogoni Nine and his fellow travellers, Saturday Dobe (OON), Nordu Eawo (OON), Daniel Gbooko (OON), Paul Levera (OON), Felix Nuate (OON), Baribor Bera (OON), Barinem Kiobel (OON), and John Kpuine (OON). I shall also be exercising my powers under the prerogative of mercy to grant these national heroes a full pardon, together with others whose names shall be announced later in conjunction with the National Council of State," he said.

## More Nigerians bag national honours

The president also awarded Prof. Wole Soyinka (GCON), Prof. Olatunji Dare (CON), the journalist and journalism teacher; Kunle Ajibade (OON); Nosa Igiebor (OON), Dapo Olorunyomi (OON), Bayo Onanuga (CON), Ayo Obe (OON), Dare Babarinsa (CON), Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah (CON), Senator Shehu Sani (CON), Governor Uba Sani (CON), Barrister Femi Falana, SAN (CON), Prof. Shafideen Amuwo (CON),

Barrister Luke Aghanenu (OON), Senator Tokunbo Afikuyomi (CON).

Others include Hon. Labaran Maku (OON), Dr. Tunji Alausa (CON), Mr Nick Dazang (OON), Hon Abdul Oroh (OON), Odia Ofeimun (CON), Seye Kehinde (OON), Barrister Felix Morka (CON), Barrister Ledum Mitee (CON), Hon. Olawale Osun (CON), Dr. Amos Akingba (CON), Prof. Segun Gbadegesin (CON), Mobolaji Akinyemi (CFR), Dr. Kayode Shonoiki (CON), Prof. Julius Ihonvbere (CON), Prof. Bayo Williams (CON), Sen. Abu Ibrahim (CFR), and Sen. Ame Ebute (CFR).

"Additionally, I confer the national honour of CON on Uncle Sam Amuka Pemu, a legendary journalist and publisher who remains true to his lifetime calling as he marks his 90th birthday tomorrow, June 13."

Tinubu also decorated the presiding officers of the National Assembly with the National Honours earlier conferred upon them last year



# Protesters mobilise as Tinubu marks democracy day at National Assembly

By Adeniyi Yusuf

**A**mid Nigeria's 26th Democracy Day celebrations, the Take It Back Movement and other civic groups have begun demonstration in some parts of the country and Abuja.

The protests are timed to coincide with President Bola Tinubu's address to a joint session of the Senate and House of Representatives today, an appearance that replaces the traditional Democracy Day broadcast to the nation.

In a statement released Wednesday, Segun Imohiosen, Director of Information and Public Relations at the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, explained the shift in plans, "Due to President Bola Tinubu's scheduled attendance at the National Assembly Joint Session, the Presidential National Broadcast on June 12 has been cancelled. President Tinubu will deliver his address from the National Assembly."

With tensions running high and demonstrations looming, security forces across the country have stepped up their presence in key locations.

In some pictures sighted by our correspondent on X, the TakeItBackMovement has started coming together in Abuja for the demonstration.

Organisers of the protest confirmed in an interview with The PUNCH not The New Daily Prime that their campaign would target the administration's economic and social policies, which they say have deepened hardship for millions of Nigerians. The protest was initially slated to take place at Eagle Square but has since been relocated to the National Assembly.

According to National Coordinator of the Take It Back Movement, Juwon Sanyaolu, the location change does not affect their mission.

"That we earlier said the protest would hold at the Eagle Square doesn't foreclose the fact that Nigerians cannot organise themselves at the National Assembly to protest the two years of misrule under Tinubu," Sanyaolu said.

He pointed to widespread poverty,



growing insecurity, and a lack of democratic accountability as central reasons for the protests.

"The unprecedented hardship and insecurity we have experienced under his government are alarming. So, Nigerians will be turning out nationwide to protest against this, and the National Assembly is one of those spaces where Nigerians can exercise their constitutional rights. We are encouraging Nigerians to move there in their numbers tomorrow (today)," he added.

Sanyaolu emphasized that the demonstrations represent a last stand for many Nigerians struggling to survive.

"All Nigerians from different walks of life have been mobilised, Nigerians are coming to the streets tomorrow (today) to demand an end to bad governance," he said.

"Nigerians have nothing to lose. Nigerians have been beaten and battered. We are like people who are on the ground; we should have no fear of falling. It is also their constitutional right to protest.

"They have no reason to fear. The worst has happened, and the only way to stop the escalating level of our sorrow, tears and blood they are witnessing is to actually do something by protesting tomorrow. We have nothing to fear and

we have nothing to lose but our chains."

Joining the call to action, the Campaign for Democratic and Workers' Rights (CDWR) also urged Nigerians to take to the streets. In a statement signed by its National Chairperson, Comrade Rufus Olusesan, the group accused the ruling elite of deepening inequality and failing the people.

"The only beneficiary of this so-called democracy is the capitalist class, whose wealth has increased geometrically while most people are continually condemned to more poverty," the statement read.

"Political office holders and other top government functionaries earn outrageous salaries and allowances while most workers earn poverty wages."

The CDWR pointed to a dual system where public services remain underfunded while the wealthy few enjoy luxury at the public's expense.

"In place of neglected and underfunded public education and healthcare, the capitalist class use looted public funds to patronise expensive private schools and hospitals in the country and abroad; in place of abandoned roads and basic community infrastructure, the wealthy capitalist class build their own enclaves, etc."



# APC, PDP back single six-year term for Governors, President

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

**T**wo prominent political leaders in Cross River State Barrister Alphonsus Eba of the All Progressives Congress (APC) and Barrister Venatius Ikem of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) have added their voices to the growing call for a single six-year term for Nigeria's president and state governors.

Speaking in separate exclusive interviews on Thursday to mark Democracy Day, both party chairmen emphasised the need for reform, stating that a single term would ease the pressures of re-election and improve governance.

APC chairman Alphonsus Eba said, "I totally agree with the popular call for a single tenure of six years because it puts less pressure on the President and Governor, with all the associated strain of re-election which is often cumbersome."

His counterpart from the PDP, Venatius Ikem, echoed the sentiment, arguing that the proposal has become even more



relevant today.

He recalled that the idea had been debated during previous constitutional reform efforts, including the 2006 Political Reform Conference in which he participated.

"One wonders why the reform recommendation is still on the shelves,"



Ikem said, noting that the one-term model has been effectively used for Vice Chancellors in Nigerian universities, eliminating tensions over second terms.

Both leaders urged authorities to revisit and implement the reform, suggesting that it could foster more focused and peaceful leadership at the executive level.

## Sanwo-Olu: Lagos tackling housing challenges with innovative solutions

By Friday Omosola

**G**overnor Babajide Sanwo-Olu of Lagos State has reiterated his administration's resolve to address the housing deficit in the state through strategic and innovative measures aimed at boosting the real estate sector.

Speaking at the 75th World Congress of the International Real Estate Federation, held at Eko Hotels and Suites, Victoria Island, Lagos, the governor, represented by the Commissioner for Housing, Moruf Akinderu-Fatai—highlighted the state's ongoing efforts to transform the housing landscape.

Themed "Global Real Estate Renaissance", the event marked the first time the prestigious global gathering was hosted on African soil.

Mr Sanwo-Olu stated that the state government sees housing as a critical driver of economic growth, with far-reaching effects on



employment, social wellbeing, and stability.

"Our administration is deploying a variety of innovative solutions to scale up the delivery of affordable housing. We have prioritised low- and middle-income earners through targeted budgetary allocations, while encouraging private sector participation via Public-Private

Partnerships," he said.

According to the governor, nearly 10,000 housing units have been delivered in the last six years, with over 14,000 additional units projected for completion by 2026.

These projects, he noted, aim to improve affordability, enhance living standards, create jobs, and stimulate broader economic activity.

He added that Lagos remains open to global partnerships, and is committed to adopting international best practices and sustainable development frameworks in its quest to meet growing urban housing demands.

President Bola Tinubu was represented at the congress by the Minister of Defence, Mohammed Badaru, while former Vice President Professor Yemi Osinbajo delivered the keynote address.

# Aliko Dangote steps down as Board Chairman of Dangote Sugar Refinery

By Friday Omosola



**A**liko Dangote, Africa's richest man and founder of Dangote Sugar Refinery Plc, has announced his retirement as Chairman of the company's Board of Directors.

The retirement will take effect on 16 June 2025, according to a statement issued by the Company Secretary, Temitope Hassan.

His departure brings to a close two decades of leadership that significantly influenced the company's trajectory, market dominance, and governance structure.

As one of the company's founding directors, Dangote was instrumental in driving its strategic expansion, enhancing shareholder returns, and guiding it through key phases of industry transformation.

The company acknowledged his exceptional service, stating that the decision aligns with best practices in corporate governance and succession planning.

During his tenure, Dangote Sugar Refinery launched several backward integration projects across Adamawa, Taraba, and Nasarawa States, aiming to reinforce local supply chains and scale domestic sugar output.

The statement credited Dangote's leadership with establishing a strong strategic and cultural framework that underpinned the company's sustained growth.

Following an extensive succession process, the Board has appointed Independent Non-Executive Director Arnold Ekpe as the

incoming Chairman, also effective from 16 June 2025.

Ekpe, a respected figure in the banking sector, brings a wealth of executive experience from leadership roles across finance and other major industries.

The company noted that his expertise in governance, long-term strategy, and stakeholder engagement makes him well-positioned to guide the company into its next chapter.

With this leadership change, attention is now turning to how Ekpe will navigate the company through an evolving business and regulatory environment, while building on the solid foundation laid under Dangote's stewardship.



# My administration is committed to boosting economy's productive base – Tinubu

By Friday Omosola

President Bola Tinubu has reaffirmed his administration's unwavering commitment to strengthening the productive base of the Nigerian economy.

He made this known during a joint session of the National Assembly to commemorate Democracy Day 2025 on Thursday.

According to Mr Tinubu, the government is driving this transformation through investments in critical infrastructure, including roads, the expansion of port operations, rail, and power.

He added that these efforts are aimed at creating a new environment in which industry and manufacturing can thrive.

He further noted that ongoing tax and fiscal policy reforms are designed to streamline tax administration and eliminate burdensome and multiple taxation, thereby enabling industrialists and entrepreneurs to operate in a more conducive economic climate.

The former Lagos State Governor also emphasised that governance must be effective and deliver tangible value to the people.

“As part of our tax reforms, we have provided small businesses with an exemption and established the Office of the Tax Ombudsman to ensure transparency and protect taxpayer rights. Digital tools now help us track performance and reduce waste. The Diaspora Bond and Non-Resident BVN are bringing Nigerians abroad into the national development fold.

“In line with my promise during my New Year address to the nation, I recently appointed the board of directors



of the newly established National Credit Guarantee Company. The company backed with 100 billion naira in initial capital; with BOI, which, by the way, is performing very well in supporting SMEs, NSIA, CreditCorp, and MOFI as stakeholders, will play a significant role in transforming the nation's industrial landscape and reducing corruption.”

Additionally, he noted that, under the umbrella of national security, his administration had intensified security operations to reclaim communities from criminals and terrorists.

Mr Tinubu stated that Nigeria had become more effective in coordinating intelligence, with improved inter-agency cooperation. “Our highways are safer, and we invest in technology and training to secure every inch of this country”, he said.

“Let us take this opportunity to thank the men and women of our Armed Forces for their bravery in service of the nation. Their selfless dedication to protecting

our sovereignty and ensuring the safety of citizens should serve as an inspiration to us all. As we celebrate the progress of our democracy, we must not forget the pivotal role they play in safeguarding our freedoms. For their courage and commitment, they deserve not only our gratitude but also our continued support, prayers and recognition.

“Fellow compatriots, our achievements are not the work of one man. They are the result of a collective effort to make possible the Nigerian Dream. Yet, the journey is not over. We must work even harder to translate broad macroeconomic gains into tangible improvements in the lives of ordinary Nigerians. We must stay the course, reject cynicism, and believe Nigeria can and will rise again.

“As we mark a twenty-sixth year of unbroken democracy, it is right to honour those who have made sacrifices in the past, braving all the odds and the guns to ensure we have a regime of democracy in our country.”



# Nigeria observes June 12 amidst renewed calls for democratic commitment

By Friday Omosola

Nigeria commemorated June 12 as Democracy Day, marking 26 years since civilian governance returned to the country. During this period, five presidents have led the nation through successive electoral cycles that reshaped leadership across federal and state levels.

Initially observed on May 29 to celebrate the inauguration of former President Olusegun Obasanjo in 1999, Democracy Day was shifted to June 12 by President Muhammadu Buhari in 2018. The change honoured the widely regarded free and fair election of June 12, 1993.

To mark this year's celebration, President Bola Tinubu is expected to deliver a national address before a joint session of the National Assembly.

While various commemorative events are planned nationwide and in the Federal Capital Territory, the usual ceremonial parade will not take place this year.

Foreign Affairs Minister Yusuf Tuggar described the anniversary as a significant symbol of democratic progress in West Africa.

Through a statement issued by his aide, Alkasim Abdulkadir, Tuggar noted that Nigeria's democratic development could serve as a guide for the region amid rising instability.

"Democracy is not just an internal affair. It is our strategic contribution to regional peace. Our progress strengthens the African democratic project as a whole," he said.

Several governors echoed similar sentiments, urging citizens to safeguard democratic principles and acknowledge the strides made so far.



Niger State Governor Umaru Bago described June 12 as a powerful symbol of the people's triumph over authoritarian rule.

In a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Bologi Ibrahim, Bago emphasised that democracy had fostered openness in governance, healthy political competition, greater public engagement, and diverse perspectives in national discourse.

Governor Monday Okpebholo of Edo State encouraged citizens to take inspiration from the lessons of June 12 by recommitting to justice, unity, and democratic ideals.

"As we commemorate June 12, our Democracy Day, we are reminded of the strong resolve of Nigerians who, on that fateful day in 1993, spoke with one voice in favour of popular will," Mr Okpebholo said.

"It is a day to honour the memory of Chief M.K.O. Abiola and all those who played significant roles in the struggle for the democracy we now cherish," he added.

Kaduna State Governor Uba Sani also

called for reflection and renewed dedication to democratic values.

"June 12 holds a special place in our national history. It marks a defining moment in our collective struggle for democracy and our continued journey toward building a free and just nation," he said.

Suspended Rivers State Governor Siminalayi Fubara reaffirmed his administration's commitment to inclusive governance, regardless of political differences.

He acknowledged that Rivers State's democratic evolution had involved both victories and challenges, highlighting the importance of perseverance.

Meanwhile, civil society groups have begun protesting over what they describe as growing threats to Nigeria's democracy.

One of the leading organisers, the Take It Back Movement, revealed that protests are planned in Abuja and 19 other states.

# Seeking Asylum in the UK: A Nigerian's Guide (2025 Edition)

By **Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi**

As the UK's immigration landscape tightens, many Nigerians considering asylum find themselves navigating a complex and often daunting process. Yet asylum remains a vital lifeline for those fleeing persecution, violence, or fear — not merely an immigration loophole.

Examples of Nigerian cases in the UK include a landmark ruling that established gay men in Nigeria are at risk of serious harm due to persecution. The court found that Nigerian state protection was inadequate and that openly gay men face a real risk of persecution.

Similarly, a Nigerian woman successfully appealed against deportation after establishing a strong claim under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) — the right to private and family life. The court ruled that her removal would breach her rights, given her long residence, integration, and family ties in the UK.

This guide explains, step by step, what Nigerians need to know if they wish to claim asylum in the UK.

## 1. The first question is that do you qualify to claim Asylum?

To apply for asylum in the UK, you must show that:

- You have left Nigeria and cannot return because you fear persecution based on protected grounds (race, religion, nationality, political opinion, gender, sexuality)
- You are unable or unwilling to rely on Nigerian protection.

## 2. Where and When to Apply

Asylum claims must be made:

- Upon arrival in the UK (e.g., at border control), or
- As soon as possible afterward, you should typically apply through the UK Home Office's Asylum Intake Unit. However, in some rare cases, asylum can also be sought if you have been living in the UK and there is a well-founded fear that your rights would not be protected by the Nigerian government upon your return..

## 3. After applying for protection, you must attend at least one interview with a Home Office immigration official, who will assess your case

Once you claim asylum in the UK:

- You will undergo an initial screening process, during which your fingerprints, photographs, and basic personal information are recorded.
- You will be informed of your rights and responsibilities, upcoming interview



stages, and key restrictions.

- While you are generally prohibited from working, you are allowed to volunteer during the application process.
- If you have waited 12 months without a decision on your initial asylum claim, you can request permission to work — but only in specific sectors listed by the Home Office.
- Important: If your asylum claim has been refused and you are awaiting the outcome of an appeal, you will not be eligible to apply for permission to work during this appeal period. Full details are available in the official Home Office guidance.

## 4. Asylum Interview

The substantive interview assesses:

- Your personal story—fears, reasons for fleeing Nigeria.
- Credibility, evidence, and country conditions.
- You're entitled to legal representation and interpreter assistance.

## 5. When Are You Recognised as a Refugee?

Under the 1951 Refugee Convention, you'll be granted refugee status if:

- You fear serious harm in Nigeria.
- Fearing Nigerian protection due to your special status or identity.

## 6. Special Considerations for Nigerian Asylum Seekers

- Recent UK rule changes target Nigerians as "high-risk" for asylum under work/study visas. Genuine asylum claims based on religion, sexuality, or trafficking remain valid and successful. High-profile cases, NGO involvement (e.g., Refugee Council, Migrant Help), and legal advocacy have led to successful outcomes.

## 7. Support While You Wait

Asylum seekers have access to:

- Accommodation & financial support (if destitute)
- Legal aid, though limited outside London

## 8. If Your Claim Is Rejected

- You can appeal to the Immigration & Asylum Tribunal using legal representation
- If all appeals fail, enforced removal may follow—but new evidence can trigger fresh claim rights.
- Cases defended via Article 8 (private/family life), family reunion, or compassionate grounds can still succeed.

## 9. Post-Recognition: What Comes Next?

If granted status, you receive:

- Refugee status: Five years leave with option to settle (Indefinite Leave to Remain).
- Humanitarian/Discretionary Leave: Usually 30 months or flexible Article 8 route.
- After qualifying years, you may apply for settlement and eventually citizenship —

For Nigerian asylum seekers, the path ahead requires courage, preparation, and patience—but it remains open. While the UK may tighten work and student visa routes, the right to seek asylum remains protected by international and domestic law. Nigerians fleeing genuine threats must come forward supported by legal counsel, credible evidence, and resilience.

At New Daily Prime, we are committed to providing up-to-date advice, expert insight, and practical support for Nigerians navigating UK asylum challenges. Because your story matters—and so does the hope of a safe, new life.



# Nigeria sets goal to reduce maternal deaths, infant mortality by 35% in 2027

By **Fatimah Idera**

**T**he Federal Government has reaffirmed its commitment to improving maternal and child health in Nigeria, with a targeted goal of reducing the maternal mortality rate by 20% and the under-five mortality rate by 15% by the year 2027.

This was disclosed by the Minister of State for Health and Social Welfare, Dr. Iziaq Salako, during a ceremony in Enugu State where 10,000 professional kits were distributed to midwives. The event, held at the International Conference Centre, Enugu, was part of an ongoing initiative spearheaded by the First Lady, Senator Oluremi Tinubu.

Dr. Salako emphasised that the distribution of professional kits is a strategic effort to empower and motivate frontline health workers, especially nurses and midwives, who play a critical role in reducing maternal and infant deaths. According to him, the initiative is aligned with President Bola Tinubu's broader health agenda.

"This effort is to create a large pool of motivated and empowered professionals who can deliver on the president's vision of reducing maternal and under-five mortality by 2027," he said.

In her remarks, the First Lady of Nigeria, Oluremi Tinubu, stated that the initiative falls under the Renewed Hope Initiative (RHI), which aims to bolster maternal and child health services and support frontline healthcare workers nationwide.

Senator Tinubu revealed that 10,000 kits containing scrubs and Crocs were being distributed to midwives in the Southeast region, as part of a nationwide plan to provide 60,000 kits to health professionals.

"Since January 2024, we've distributed 50,000 kits across five geopolitical zones. I'm pleased that we are concluding this phase with the Southeast," she noted.

She also highlighted that the project has received backing from international partners engaged during global forums such as the 2023 United Nations General Assembly and the 2024 African Union Summit.

The initiative underscores the Federal



Government's renewed focus on strengthening Nigeria's healthcare system and reducing preventable deaths among women and children.

## Other Initiatives

Nigeria's First Lady also announced the launch of the "Free to Shine Triple Elimination Campaign", an ambitious initiative aimed at eradicating mother-to-child transmission of HIV, syphilis, and hepatitis.

The campaign is set to officially commence in Enugu as part of the broader Renewed Hope Initiative (RHI), a flagship program focused on strengthening maternal and child health.

Speaking at an event in Enugu where 10,000 professional kits were distributed to midwives in the Southeast region, Mrs Tinubu emphasised that the new campaign marks another milestone in the government's ongoing effort to curb maternal and infant mortality in Nigeria.

Beyond the health sector, the First Lady also unveiled a major economic empowerment package for petty traders in Enugu State. She announced that ₦50 million will be disbursed as grants to 1,000 local traders while an additional ₦50 million, donated by the Tony Elumelu Foundation, will benefit another 500 traders.

Mrs Tinubu, accompanied by the wife of the Vice President, Hajiya Nana Shettima, and

several wives of state governors, also highlighted the scale of the RHI's health workforce training program.

She noted that 60,000 frontline health workers have already been trained through the initiative, complementing the Federal Government's target to retrain 120,000 medical personnel.

Speaking at the event, Mrs Nkechinyere Mbah, the wife of the Enugu State Governor, underscored the pivotal role of midwives in maternal and child healthcare systems. She cited global studies showing that a well-supported midwifery workforce can prevent up to 41% of maternal deaths, 39% of neonatal deaths, and 26% of stillbirths.

Governor Peter Mbah of Enugu State also lauded the Federal Government for its efforts to revamp primary healthcare infrastructure across the country.

He stated that Enugu had effectively utilised these federal initiatives to bolster healthcare services at the community level.

"We sincerely appreciate the impactful role that midwives are playing in delivering on the maternal and child health agenda of the president," Governor Mbah said. "I want to salute our frontline midwives who guide our women through safe pregnancies and healthy deliveries."



# UNESCO REF appeals to Tinubu to tackle child labour in Nigeria

By Helen Okechukwu



**T**he President of the Read and Earn Federation for United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO REF), Abdulsalami Ladigbolu-Oranmiyan, has urged President Bola Tinubu to step up efforts to eliminate child labour in Nigeria, calling it a pressing moral and national responsibility.

In a statement issued to mark both the International Day Against Child Labour and Nigeria's Democracy Day, Ladigbolu-Oranmiyan emphasised that the protection of children must be central to the President's Renewed Hope vision, aligning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN-SDG)—particularly Goal 8.7, which calls for the global abolition of child labour.

He stressed that child labour deprives millions of children of their right to education, safety, and a dignified life, and that its persistence undermines Nigeria's social and economic progress.

"For Nigeria, this day holds even greater significance as it coincides with

Democracy Day, a powerful reminder that true democracy must extend beyond political structures to ensure freedom, dignity, and opportunity for every citizen, especially the children who hold the key to our shared future."

Ladigbolu-Oranmiyan called on the government to strengthen policies that protect children, invest in education, and expand social safety nets to prevent vulnerable families from resorting to child labour as a survival strategy.

He also highlighted the importance of collaboration between government agencies, international organisations, non-profits, and local communities to address the root causes of child labour and prioritise long-term solutions.

"To achieve lasting impact, Nigeria must deepen engagement with genuine stakeholders, including United Nations agencies, global educational advocates, humanitarian organisations, and grassroots changemakers, who prioritise child protection and education over commercial interests.

According to him, while progress has

been made, much remains to be done. He urged all sectors—public and private—to renew their commitment to a future where every Nigerian child has access to quality education, healthcare, and the opportunity to reach their full potential.

"As we reflect on Democracy Day, let us recognise that democracy must stand as a beacon of justice and equality, ensuring that freedom is not limited to political rights but extends to the very foundation of childhood itself," he added.

"The world is watching, and together, we must forge a path where children are protected, nations are strengthened, and the promise of a better tomorrow is fulfilled." construct news story using the proposed using British language.

Ladigbolu-Oranmiyan's message comes amid growing concerns over the prevalence of child labour in Nigeria and increasing calls for the government to intensify its efforts to combat the issue in line with international standards.

# New blood test could revolutionise coeliac disease diagnosis without gluten consumption

By Helen Okechukwu



**A** new blood test may soon allow people with coeliac disease to get a diagnosis without eating gluten – a major breakthrough for sufferers of the condition.

Researchers from the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute (WEHI) in Australia have developed a test that can detect coeliac disease using a simple blood sample, even if the person is on a strict gluten-free diet. Their findings were published in the journal *Gastroenterology*.

At present, individuals with suspected coeliac disease must undergo a gluten challenge – eating foods containing gluten for several weeks – before testing can confirm the diagnosis. This often leads to severe discomfort, prompting many to avoid the process entirely.

Coeliac disease is a serious autoimmune disorder in which gluten – a protein in wheat, rye and barley – triggers the immune system to attack the gut lining. If left untreated, it can

cause long-term complications such as weakened bones, reproductive problems, and an increased risk of intestinal cancers.

According to Coeliac UK, around one in 100 people in the UK are affected, but fewer than four in ten are formally diagnosed.

The new test detects an immune molecule called interleukin-2 (IL-2), which rises sharply when blood from a coeliac patient is exposed to gluten in a lab. Notably, this reaction is measured outside the body, meaning the patient does not have to eat gluten themselves.

The research team tested blood from 181 volunteers, including individuals with diagnosed coeliac disease, gluten sensitivity, and healthy controls. The test demonstrated a high level of accuracy – identifying the condition with up to 90% sensitivity and 97% specificity.

“This test could be a game-changer. “It’s a major step towards faster, safer

diagnosis,” said Associate Professor Jason Tye-Din, Head of WEHI’s Coeliac Research Laboratory.

Lead researcher and PhD candidate Olivia Moscatelli, who has coeliac disease, highlighted that the test also proved reliable in patients with coeliac disease who also have other autoimmune conditions, such as type 1 diabetes and Hashimoto’s thyroiditis.

WEHI is now partnering with Novoviah Pharmaceuticals to further assess the test’s reliability across broader and more diverse populations.

If successfully adopted into clinical settings, this method could pave the way for faster, safer, and more accessible coeliac disease diagnoses across the globe.

# How Davido helped me join Sony music, Mayorkun reveals

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Popular Nigerian artist, Mayorkun, has revealed that Afrobeats superstar Davido played a major role in helping him sign a new deal with Sony Music Africa.

In a recent interview with 3Music TV, the singer praised his former record label boss for facilitating the move. Despite leaving Davido Music Worldwide (DMW) in 2021, Mayorkun made it clear there is no bad blood between them.

“Aside from having my own label, right now I’m also with Sony Africa. Shout out to Davido for that as well. He facilitated the deal,” he said.

His comments come after years of speculation that the two artists had fallen out following his exit from DMW.

A look back at Mayorkun’s journey

Mayorkun, whose real name is Adewale Mayowa Emmanuel, shot to fame in 2016 when Davido discovered a video of him singing on Twitter. Impressed by his talent, Davido quickly signed him to his DMW label.

That signing marked the beginning of a successful career for Mayorkun. He released several hit songs under the label, including Eleko, Mama, and Che Che. His debut album, The Mayor of Lagos, dropped in 2018 and received widespread praise.

However, in 2021, Mayorkun quietly left DMW. Fans quickly noticed that his second album, Back in Office, was released without any DMW branding. This fueled rumours that the relationship between Mayorkun and Davido had turned sour.

Rumours of a fallout

The absence of public interactions between the two artists after Mayorkun’s exit further fueled gossip. Many assumed that there had been a disagreement or falling out.



In Nigeria’s music scene, parting ways with a record label, especially one as closely knit as DMW, often leads to speculation. Fans and blogs filled in the gaps with assumptions.

But Mayorkun’s latest comments put those rumours to rest. By openly crediting Davido for his Sony Music Africa deal, he confirmed that the two still share mutual respect.

Davido’s influence in the industry

Davido, whose real name is David Adeleke, has built a reputation not just as a hitmaker but also as a kingmaker. He has helped launch the careers of many Nigerian artists, including Peruzzi, Dremo, Liya, and Mayorkun.

His support for Mayorkun’s new deal shows that his mentorship goes beyond label contracts. It also highlights his continued influence in the music industry across Africa.

Davido’s involvement in securing a deal with Sony Music Africa suggests that he still actively supports artists he once worked with. It reflects a more collaborative, rather than competitive, spirit within the Afrobeats scene.

Mayorkun’s new chapter

Mayorkun is now moving forward with his career under a dual setup—running his own label while also working with Sony Music Africa. This hybrid arrangement gives him both independence and the backing of a global platform.

The singer did not reveal the name of his own label or details of the Sony deal. However, the move is clearly a strategic one aimed at expanding his reach across Africa and beyond.

With hits like Certified Loner and For Daddy, Mayorkun has kept his momentum going. His latest work blends street sounds with pop, maintaining his reputation as one of Nigeria’s most versatile artists.

Closing the chapter on rumours

Mayorkun’s recent comments mark an important moment. They correct public assumptions and show the strength of the relationship he still shares with Davido.

While their professional paths may have diverged, the respect remains strong. And in an industry where disputes often play out in public, this quiet show of support is both rare and refreshing.

For fans, it’s a reminder that behind the scenes, artists can still uplift one another, even after they move on.



# Angela Okorie's ex makes shocking new allegations

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

The ex-boyfriend of popular Nollywood actress Angela Okorie, known by the name Oil Money, has gone public with serious accusations following their recent breakup.

In a string of posts shared through his Instagram Story, Oil Money claimed that several well-known Nollywood actors had been romantically involved with the actress. His allegations have since sparked heated discussions on social media.

Names and photos shared online  
Oil Money didn't stop at vague suggestions. He boldly revealed the names of the actors he accused of having intimate relationships with Okorie. He also posted pictures of the individuals, giving his claims more weight in the eyes of his followers.

The posts quickly gained attention as fans and critics alike shared their opinions. Some expressed shock, while others questioned his motives for going public with private information.

More allegations emerge  
In one of the most controversial parts of his rant, Oil Money described what he claimed to be the easiest way to get close to Okorie. According to him, it doesn't take much effort. A flashy car and some alcohol, he claimed, are enough.

"If you wan chop grandma, just rent one nice car and get any type of alcohol," he wrote in Pidgin English. His statement drew mixed reactions, with some interpreting it as disrespectful and others calling it a personal attack.

Social media reacts  
The backlash was immediate. While some followers criticized Oil Money for airing dirty laundry, others were more focused on the names he mentioned. The accused actors have not yet responded to the claims, and Angela Okorie herself has remained silent on the matter as of the



time of writing.

Despite the silence from those directly involved, the story has gone viral. Entertainment blogs, gossip platforms, and fan pages are now flooded with conversations about the scandal.

A history of drama  
Angela Okorie is no stranger to controversy. Just a few days before these accusations, she had a public clash with fellow actress Regina Daniels. The details of that dispute remain unclear, but the timing of these new claims adds more fuel to the fire.

Many fans are beginning to wonder if there is more going on behind the scenes in Nollywood than meets the eye. The drama seems to be unfolding in real time, with new twists each day.

Is it about revenge?  
Some social media users believe Oil Money's posts are driven by heartbreak and revenge. His relationship with Okorie appears to have ended on bad terms, and many see the Instagram posts as an attempt to damage her reputation.

"It looks like he's hurt and wants to get back at her," one commenter wrote. "But this is not the way to go about it."

Others have asked why he chose to involve other actors in what should have remained a private matter between two adults.

No official statement yet  
As of now, neither Angela Okorie nor the actors mentioned have made any official statements. Their silence is leading to even more speculation, as fans wait to hear their side of the story.

Legal experts online have also started weighing in. Some say that Oil Money could face legal consequences if the accusations turn out to be false or damaging.

A reminder about social media limits  
This incident serves as another reminder of how quickly personal matters can explode online. With millions of followers, celebrities often find their private lives exposed. And once something is posted, it's hard to take it back.

Whether these claims are true or not, the damage may already be done. Angela Okorie's name is now trending again, not for a new film or award, but for a controversy that may take time to clear up.

# 'You need N1.2bn to win senate seat', Ali Baba reveals

## Nigerian politics price tags

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Veteran Nigerian comedian Ali Baba has sparked conversation after revealing the massive costs involved in securing political positions in the country.

He shared these shocking figures during a recent interview on the OUTSIDE THE BOX podcast, where he openly discussed corruption in Nigerian politics.

Ali Baba, a respected entertainer and social commentator, said Nigerian politics has turned into a money-driven game. According to him, running for any major political office now requires billions of naira, figures that put the political process far out of reach for everyday citizens.

### Senate seat costs over ₦1 billion

During the podcast, Ali Baba claimed that a candidate needs at least ₦1.2 billion to win a seat in the Nigerian Senate.

"To win a senatorial seat today, you need between ₦1.2 billion and ₦2 billion," he said. "If you're aiming for the House of Representatives, you'll need around ₦1 billion."

Even at the state level, the comedian said the situation isn't much better. He explained that contesting for a seat in a State House of Assembly can cost about ₦500 million. These figures, he stressed, show that politics in Nigeria is no longer a platform for public service, but a business venture for the rich and powerful.

Governorship campaigns run into tens of billions

The cost of running for governor, according to Ali Baba, varies by state. Some states are more expensive than others, but the required funds are still shockingly high.

"In Delta State, you may need up to ₦20 billion," he said. "In Rivers State, it could go as high as ₦25 billion. In some northern states, the cost is slightly



lower, maybe around ₦4 to ₦6 billion, but it's still too much."

These numbers, he explained, demonstrate that Nigeria's political system is designed to favour those with deep pockets. He called it a "capital-intensive project" that pushes politicians to recover their campaign investments once they are in office.

### Corruption fueled by high campaign costs

Ali Baba argued that these heavy financial demands are a major reason behind widespread corruption in government. Politicians, he said, enter office with one goal in mind—to make back the money they spent during the campaign.

"When people win elections, they don't think about education or healthcare," he said. "They only care about projects that can give them money they can use when the next election comes."

He explained that most leaders are more interested in awarding contracts that benefit them personally. These projects are often designed to funnel money back into the pockets of politicians and their allies, rather than serve the needs of the people.

A system that ignores the people

Ali Baba also criticised leaders for neglecting public welfare. According to him, Nigerian politicians only focus on infrastructure and development when they see financial gain.

He said, "They are not interested in solving real problems. They are not thinking about how to improve schools or hospitals unless they can make money from it."

This mindset, he warned, has made it difficult for the country to progress. Instead of building a better future for citizens, many politicians are busy preparing for the next election cycle and the money they need to stay in power.

### Call for reform

Ali Baba's comments have added to growing public frustration with Nigeria's political system. Many citizens feel that the country needs serious reforms to reduce corruption and open the door for honest leadership.

Experts say that reducing the cost of running for office is key to cleaning up the system. Until then, political power will likely remain in the hands of the wealthy few, while the needs of ordinary Nigerians continue to be ignored.



# Tolanibaj shares key insights for aspiring Big Brother stars

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

As anticipation builds for the 10th season of the popular reality TV show Big Brother Naija, former housemate Tolanibaj has shared a set of practical and honest tips for those hoping to enter the house this year.

In a recent video message posted on her TikTok page, the ex-BBNaija star didn't hold back. She gave aspiring contestants a reality check, warning them to stay grounded, be authentic, and plan. Her message serves as both encouragement and a wake-up call.

**"Be yourself, but don't be boring"**

Tolanibaj's first piece of advice is simple: be real.

"Don't go in there and be boring," she warned. "Nigerians won't like it, and it won't work in your favour."

She encouraged housemates to show their true personalities, rather than trying to act or pretend. Viewers, she noted, can easily tell when someone is not being genuine.

**Dress to impress, every day counts**

Tolanibaj emphasised that while the house may feel like just another home, it's actually a stage. She urged contestants to look good every day.

"Dress up daily. It might seem silly since you're just inside a house, but remember, it's still a show," she explained. "This is your chance to attract fashion brands."

She added that housemates should take control of their appearance. Even though the organisers provide outfits for Saturday night parties, she advised bringing personal clothes in case the provided ones don't suit their style.

"Girls, do your makeup every day. Guys, dress well too. Always be camera-ready."

"Housemates are not automatically your friends"

One of Tolanibaj's strongest warnings was about relationships inside the house.



She reminded hopefuls that fellow contestants are not necessarily their friends.

"Just because you're living with people for a few months doesn't mean they are your friends. They're your teammates, your colleagues, not family," she said firmly.

She explained that while some housemates do form genuine friendships, most don't last beyond the show. Once the cameras stop rolling, many contestants realise that the bonds they thought were real were just temporary.

"If you're lucky to make a true friend in the house, that's great. But don't be shocked if things change outside. Go back to the real people who know and support you."

**Plan for life after the show**

Tolanibaj didn't sugarcoat what comes after BBNaija. She stressed the importance of planning for the future before stepping into the house.

"Have a plan for after the show. The organisers won't check on you once it ends. You're on your own," she said bluntly.

She also advised housemates not to rely too heavily on prize money. According to her, even if a contestant wins millions, the money often comes in parts, not all at

once.

"If you win ₦10, ₦20 million, it won't drop in your account in one day. You may get ₦200k or ₦500k every week. So, plan and don't depend on that money alone."

**"The real game begins after eviction"**

Finally, Tolanibaj reminded aspirants that the real journey starts once they leave the house, whether as winners or evictees.

"If you win, that's amazing. But if not, it's not the end," she said. "What matters is what you do after the show."

She urged contestants to stay focused, build their brand, and use the exposure to create a solid future.

**Reality check before the reality show**

Tolanibaj's message comes as a timely reminder that Big Brother Naija is more than just a show, it's a career launchpad. However, success requires more than just screen time. Authenticity, strategy, appearance, and post-show planning all play a major role.

As BBNaija Season 10 draws near, aspiring housemates would do well to take her words to heart. In a show where millions are watching, how you play the game and what you do after makes all the difference.

# How Nigerian victims of UK modern slavery can get immigration support

By Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi

In the UK, modern slavery is a crime under the Modern Slavery Act 2015, and if you are a victim, you can receive immigration support. Modern slavery refers to situations where people are exploited, controlled, and forced to work or provide services against their will — often through violence, threats, coercion, or deception. Modern slavery, which includes human trafficking, forced labour, sexual exploitation, and criminal exploitation.

This is the most documented form of trafficking involving Nigerians in the UK. Many Nigerian women and teenage girls are trafficked to the UK (and other parts of Europe) under false promises of jobs or education. They are then forced into prostitution or escort work. The UK Home Office has documented different cases involving a trafficking gang operating between Benin City and London — they used juju oaths to control dozens of young Nigerian women and force them into prostitution in UK cities.

Despite tough UK legislation, modern slavery persists in plain sight across British cities, suburbs, and rural areas. According to the UK Home Office, tens of thousands of people are believed to be trapped in modern slavery across the country. In 2023 alone, over 17,000 potential victims were referred to the UK's National Referral Mechanism (NRM).

Victims can be:

- Adults or children
- Men or women
- Legal or undocumented migrants
- Individuals with learning difficulties or other vulnerabilities

It is important to understand that modern slavery includes human trafficking, but not all cases require the victim to be moved from one place to another.

**Defining Human Trafficking: Three Key Elements**

Under the law, the definition of human trafficking can be broken down into three core parts:

1. **Action** — You were moved by another person, either within the UK or across borders.
2. **Means** — The person used, or threatened to use, force, coercion, or deception to control you.



3. **Purpose of Exploitation** — The person's intention was to exploit you, by forcing you to work, commit crimes, or participate in the sex industry, among other forms of exploitation.

Crucially, it is the intent to exploit that matters — not whether the action was completed.

**UK special Considerations for Children**  
Children receive additional protections under the law. If you are a child victim of trafficking, it does not matter whether you were coerced, as legally, a child cannot consent to their own exploitation. In cases involving children, the act of moving them is not required for the exploitation to be recognised as modern slavery.

## Support for Victims

Victims of modern slavery and human trafficking can seek official recognition through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), an independent part of the Home Office. If the NRM accepts that you have been a victim, several avenues of support become available:

## Immigration: Discretionary Leave to Remain

Victims accepted by the NRM may apply for Discretionary Leave to Remain (DLR) in the UK if one of the following applies:

- **Medical treatment:** You require medical treatment that is unavailable in your country of origin.
- **Pursuing compensation:** You need to remain in the UK to seek

compensation against your traffickers.

- **Cooperating with police:** You are helping law enforcement investigate the people responsible for your exploitation.

If granted, Discretionary Leave to Remain typically lasts between 12 months and 30 months. Before the visa expires, victims can apply for an extension if the reasons for granting the visa continue to apply.

## Asylum Options for Victims

If you were trafficked in your country of origin and now fear the risk of being re-trafficked or facing harm upon return, you may also apply for asylum in the UK.

Victims granted asylum receive longer-term protection and may eventually apply for permanent residency.

## How to Report Modern Slavery

Modern slavery is a crime that thrives in the shadows. Public awareness and action are crucial in tackling it.

If you suspect modern slavery is happening — in a business, a household, or elsewhere — you can report it in several ways:

- **Modern Slavery Helpline:** Call 08000 121 700
- **Police:** Dial 999 in an emergency or 101 for non-emergencies
- **Crimestoppers:** Report anonymously on 0800 555 111



# Air India plane crashes into Ahmedabad college, kills over 240

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



**T**ragedy struck just minutes after takeoff as Air India Flight 171, en route from Ahmedabad to London Gatwick, crashed outside the airport perimeter in a catastrophic accident on Wednesday afternoon. The airline has confirmed the incident and expressed deep sorrow over the loss.

“With profound sorrow I confirm that Air India Flight 171 operating Ahmedabad–London Gatwick was involved in a tragic accident today,” said Natarajan Chandrasekaran, Chair of Air India, in a statement shared via Agence France-Presse (AFP). “Our thoughts and deepest condolences are with the families and loved ones of all those affected by this devastating event.”

The flight departed Ahmedabad at approximately 1:39 PM IST (0809

UTC), slightly behind its scheduled departure time. According to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), the aircraft issued a mayday call shortly after takeoff, but communication was lost thereafter.

Officials report that the plane crashed just nine minutes after takeoff, plummeting to the ground beyond the airport’s boundary. Eyewitnesses near the scene saw heavy black smoke billowing from the crash site, raising immediate fears of fatalities.

India’s aviation minister reacted swiftly, stating he was “shocked and devastated” by the crash and assured the public that emergency response teams had been fully mobilised. “We are on the highest alert,” he said.

The DGCA provided additional

details about the crew, confirming that Captain Sumeet Sabharwal, the pilot-in-command, was a seasoned Long-Term Captain (LTC) with over 8,200 flying hours. The co-pilot had 1,100 hours of experience.

Initial investigations suggest a mechanical or technical failure may have occurred shortly after departure from Runway 23. The cause of the crash remains under investigation.

An emergency centre has been activated, and a support team is working around the clock to provide assistance and information to families of passengers on board.

As of press time, no official confirmation has been given on the number of casualties. However, authorities fear that all on board may have perished.

# China reaffirms trade agreement with U.S

By Fatimah Idera



China on Thursday confirmed its commitment to a recently announced trade agreement with the United States, underscoring the importance of mutual adherence to the deal's terms.

The agreement follows a phone call last week between U.S. President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping, which marked a significant step toward easing tensions in the long-running trade dispute between the world's two largest economies.

Speaking at a regular press briefing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian stated, "China has always kept its word and delivered results. Now that a consensus has been reached, both sides should abide by it."

The trade pact, which Trump has hailed as a breakthrough, represents a fragile truce in the bilateral economic standoff that escalated earlier this year. It builds upon a preliminary agreement reached in Geneva, which had stalled amid concerns over China's continued restrictions on critical mineral exports.

Following the Trump-Xi call, additional negotiations were held in London, which U.S. officials say added substance to the Geneva framework. These talks reportedly helped resolve key sticking points and clarified terms related to tariff reductions and export controls.

Deal with China done—Trump President Trump, posting on Truth Social, expressed satisfaction with the outcome. "Our deal with China is done, subject to final approval with President Xi and me," he said. "Full magnets, and any necessary rare earths, will be supplied, up front, by China. Likewise, we will provide to China what was agreed to, including Chinese students using our colleges and universities (which has always been good with me!). We are getting a total of 55% tariffs, China is getting 10%."

While Trump celebrated the deal's provisions, many details remain undisclosed, including how the agreement will be enforced and what specific obligations each side has undertaken.

A U.S. official explained that the 55% tariff figure cited by Trump combines several components: a general 10% reciprocal tariff on most imports, a 20% levy on Chinese goods related to fentanyl concerns, and a pre-existing 25% tariff from Trump's previous term.

On the Chinese side, questions remain over export curbs, particularly on rare earth minerals. When asked about the ongoing restrictions, a spokesperson from China's Ministry of Commerce declined to specify how many export licenses would be approved this week. However, the spokesperson reaffirmed Beijing's willingness to maintain open communication with trading partners.

"China is willing to further enhance communication and dialogue on export control with relevant countries, and promote the facilitation of compliant trade," said ministry spokesperson He Yadong.

The full scope and implementation timeline of the trade deal are expected to emerge in the coming weeks, as both sides continue discussions and seek to stabilise economic relations.



# U.S. pulls diplomats from Middle East as tensions with Iran rise

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



**T**he United States has ordered the departure of non-essential diplomatic staff and their families from several embassies across the Middle East, citing escalating tensions with Iran and growing fears of a broader regional conflict.

The U.S. State Department confirmed Wednesday that it had instructed non-essential personnel to leave the embassy in Baghdad, Iraq, as a precautionary measure. "This decision reflects our commitment to keeping Americans safe, both at home and abroad," a department spokesperson said. Although the Baghdad embassy was already operating with limited staffing, the move underscores the seriousness of the situation.

Similar voluntary departures have been authorized for U.S. staff and their families in Bahrain and Kuwait. The Pentagon also announced that Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth has approved the departure of military dependents from several bases across the region.

"These steps are being taken as a precaution, as U.S. Central Command continues to monitor the developing

tension in the Middle East," the Pentagon said in a statement.

The decision comes amid a sharp rise in hostility between the U.S. and Iran. Iran's defense minister, General Aziz Nasirzadeh, issued a stern warning on Wednesday, threatening to target U.S. military bases in host countries if conflict erupts. "All its bases are within our reach," Nasirzadeh said. "Without hesitation, we will target all of them."

Tensions have been mounting after nearly 18 months of war in Gaza, which has fueled broader instability in the region. Nuclear negotiations between the U.S. and Iran appear to be at a standstill, with Iran continuing to defend its uranium enrichment program as a "non-negotiable" right and Washington branding it a "red line."

President Donald Trump, who had previously expressed optimism about a potential deal, struck a more doubtful tone in a podcast interview released Wednesday. "I'm getting more and more less confident about it," Trump told the New York Post's Pod Force One. "Maybe they don't want to make a deal. What can I say?"

Nonetheless, Trump reiterated his administration's stance that the U.S. will not allow Iran to obtain a nuclear weapon. "It would be nicer to do it without warfare, without people dying," he said.

Meanwhile, U.S. Special Envoy Steve Witkoff is set to meet Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi in Oman on Sunday, hoping to break the diplomatic deadlock.

Britain is also watching developments closely. Its maritime agency issued a warning Wednesday, urging vessels to use extreme caution while navigating the Gulf, the Gulf of Oman, and the Strait of Hormuz critical waterways bordering Iran. The UK Foreign Office said it was keeping its embassy in Iraq under constant review.

Adding to the uncertainty, the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee announced that a scheduled testimony by General Erik Kurilla, the top U.S. military officer for the region, has been postponed. No reason was given for the delay.

# How UK residents without valid visas can get legal status

By Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi



**F**or many immigrants in the United Kingdom, years or even decades of life here can still leave them without a valid visa or permanent status. Whether through overstayed visas, rejected applications, or family circumstances, thousands now find themselves living in legal limbo — long-term UK residents without papers.

Recent shifts in UK immigration policy, particularly under the government's drive to reduce net migration, have raised fresh fears among undocumented communities. Yet pathways to legal status do exist — and understanding them is crucial for those hoping to remain in the country lawfully.

“We’re seeing an increase in long-term undocumented cases,” says Ana, 20 years London resident. “Many have lived in the UK for 10 or even 20 years — they work, have families, and contribute, but are technically without

valid status. It’s critical they know their options.”

This report, based on legal expert advice and current UK Home Office guidance, outlines how such residents can seek to regularize their status in 2025.

The Reality of Undocumented Life in the UK

- An estimated 800,000 to 1.2 million unauthorized immigrants were living in the United Kingdom in 2017, according to new estimates from the Pew Research Center based on the latest available data. This figure has remained largely unchanged since 2014.
- Many arrived lawfully but overstayed visas or fell out of legal status due to changing personal or legal circumstances.
- Without papers, they face:

- Inability to work legally
- Barriers to housing
- Risk of detention or deportation
- Difficulty accessing healthcare and education

“These are not people trying to hide from society,” says Catherine, UK immigration barrister. “Most are deeply integrated but stuck in a system that offers few straightforward routes to status.”

Legal Pathways Available in 2025

1. Private Life Applications (Article 8 ECHR — Right to Private and Family Life)

For many long-term undocumented residents, this is the most common legal route.

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on next page**



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I. Eligibility depends on: Length of continuous residence in the UK

II. Level of integration (family ties, community involvement)

Whether removal would cause serious hardship

General Rules:

- Adults who have lived 20 years continuously (even unlawfully) can apply.
- Children who have lived 7 years continuously can apply.
- Adults with 10+ years residence with strong UK ties may qualify even if under the 20-year threshold.
- Applicants must show genuine life in the UK — evidence matters: school records, rent payments, community references.

“The Home Office does consider Article 8 applications seriously, especially where children are involved,” says Taroni.

## 2. Family-Based Applications

Those with British citizen or settled family members may be able to apply for status even without a current valid visa.

Routes include:

- Parent of a British child
- Partner/spouse of a British citizen or settled person
- Adult dependent relatives

In many cases, even those previously refused can succeed with fresh evidence and good legal representation.

“We’ve seen success for parents of British children, even after years undocumented,” says Richard Harris,

legal officer at Robert Walters Group.

## 3. Long Residence / 10-Year Rule

While intended for those with lawful residence, some undocumented applicants with mixed immigration histories may still qualify under the Long Residence rule if they can prove 10 years continuous lawful stay before falling out of status — and that removal would be disproportionate under Article 8.

Legal advice is strongly recommended here.

## 4. Asylum and Humanitarian Protection

For some, the correct pathway may be an asylum claim or application for humanitarian protection — particularly for those facing risk of persecution, trafficking, or serious harm if returned.

In 2025, the UK’s asylum system is under strain — but viable claims still succeed, especially with proper evidence and legal support.

## 5. Discretionary Leave and Exceptional Circumstances

In rare cases, applicants may seek discretionary leave based on exceptional circumstances not covered by standard routes.

Success depends heavily on:

- Strength of humanitarian arguments
- Support from MPs, charities, legal advocates

“This is not a first option — but for some with very strong UK ties and no other legal pathway, it can be a last resort,” says Taroni.

## Key Challenges in 2025

- **High Costs:** Application fees + NHS surcharge total over £2,600 per person in many cases.
- **Complex Evidence Requirements:** Proving continuous residence and strong UK ties is vital.
- **Limited Legal Aid:** Free legal representation is scarce outside London.
- **Hostile Climate:** Current political rhetoric creates fear among undocumented residents.

“It’s essential for applicants to get legal advice early and to build a strong case,” says Harris.

One Nigerian-born woman, who requested anonymity, shared her story:

“I came to the UK in 2011 on a student visa. My visa expired in 2013, but I stayed. I married a British man — we have three children. For years I lived in fear. Last year, with help, I applied based on private life. I now have leave to remain. I can finally breathe.”

Experts stress that while the process is challenging, pathways do exist — and success is possible.

“Many think they have no options — that’s not true,” says Taroni. “But you must act — and you must get proper help.”

As the UK government intensifies efforts to control migration, undocumented residents face growing uncertainty. But the law still provides avenues to secure status for those who qualify — and for those willing to fight for their right to remain in the country they call home.

# Israeli intelligence officers refuse to serve, call Gaza war “illegal and unnecessary”

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

In an unprecedented act of dissent, a group of 41 Israeli military intelligence officers and reservists has publicly declared their refusal to participate in combat operations in Gaza, accusing the government of issuing “clearly illegal” orders and perpetuating a “needless, eternal war.”

In a scathing letter addressed to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Defence Minister Israel Katz, and the Chief of Staff of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), the officers, members of the elite military intelligence directorate, condemned the ongoing offensive in Gaza as one waged for political gain rather than national security.

“When a government acts for ulterior motives, harms civilians, and leads to the killing of innocent people, the orders it issues are clearly illegal, and we must not obey them,” the letter reads.

The signatories, though unnamed for security reasons, are understood to include operatives from Unit 8200, the IDF’s top surveillance and cyber intelligence unit, which has played a central role in selecting bombing targets during the 20 month Gaza offensive.

Organised by the anti-war initiative Soldiers for the Hostages, the letter accuses Netanyahu’s administration of choosing war over diplomacy, particularly pointing to the collapse of a ceasefire deal in March that could have ensured the return of Israeli hostages held in Gaza.

“The government gave a death sentence to the hostages,” the officers wrote, alleging that “many hostages have already been killed by IDF bombings”



and warning that “the government continues to abandon their lives.”

Their message comes as tensions within the IDF rise, with more soldiers reportedly refusing to serve. One of the letter’s signatories, speaking anonymously to The Guardian, described the war as “unnecessary” and the government’s conduct as morally indefensible.

“All the death is unnecessary. The hostages suffer and die. Soldiers are sent for nothing. And all the killing in Gaza, everything is completely unnecessary,” they said.

Another intelligence officer, who recently refused to serve, cited the IDF’s disregard for civilian casualties in Gaza. “I felt it was immoral and insanely excessive,” they said. “They were willing to do everything to achieve a goal that wasn’t really a real goal... unless that goal is to get rid of Gaza’s population by any means.”

The letter marks a dramatic escalation from earlier dissent. In April, 250 reservists and alumni from Unit 8200 urged the government to end the war but stopped short of calling for refusal to

serve. This latest statement goes further, calling on all Israelis to “do everything in their power” to oppose the war, with some officers pledging public refusal and others choosing silent resistance.

The Israeli military has not yet issued an official response to the letter.

According to Gaza health authorities, at least 55,000 people have been killed and another 125,000 wounded in the Israeli offensive since it began. The figures, which do not distinguish between civilians and militants, are believed by some observers to be significantly underreported.

Fifty-six hostages are still held in Gaza following the October 7, 2023, attacks by Hamas, which killed 1,200 people in southern Israel. Israeli officials estimate that around 20 of the hostages may still be alive.

As internal criticism mounts and global scrutiny intensifies, the open rebellion of the IDF’s intelligence officers has sent shockwaves through the Israeli defense establishment, raising critical questions about the legality, morality, and political motivations behind the war in Gaza.



# Japan condemns Chinese jet's near miss as Pacific tensions rise

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Japan has issued a stern warning to China after a near collision between a Chinese fighter jet and a Japanese patrol plane over the Pacific Ocean, calling the encounter “seriously concerning” and warning of the potential for a dangerous escalation.

According to Japan’s defense ministry, a Chinese J-15 fighter jet took off from the aircraft carrier Shandong and flew within just 45 meters of a Japanese Self-Defence Forces (SDF) surveillance aircraft last weekend. The ministry said the incident, which took place over international waters, could have led to a catastrophic accident. The J-15 reportedly also passed directly in front of another Japanese aircraft at the same altitude, 900 meters away.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshimasa Hayashi addressed the incident on Thursday, urging Beijing to take steps to avoid a repeat. “These abnormal approaches pose serious risks,” Hayashi said. “We demand that China act responsibly under international norms.”

While the Japanese aircraft and crew were unharmed, Tokyo expressed grave concern over what it described as “dangerous and provocative” actions.

China, however, rejected the accusations outright. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian blamed Japan for escalating tensions by conducting close-range reconnaissance during China’s “normal military activities.”

“The root cause of this risk lies with Japan’s actions, not ours,” Lin said,



calling for Tokyo to cease what it termed “dangerous behavior.”

The confrontation is the latest flashpoint in a growing list of tensions across the Asia-Pacific region, as China expands its military footprint. The Shandong, alongside China’s first carrier, the Liaoning, conducted rare dual aircraft carrier drills last weekend, pushing into Japan’s Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and beyond the so-called “second island chain” a key strategic line that includes Guam and other US-aligned territories.

Japan’s Defense Minister Gen Nakatani said the maneuvers were clearly designed to test China’s ability to project power further into the Pacific. “This shows an increased ambition to operate in distant sea and airspace,” Nakatani stated.

Chinese state media defended the exercises, describing them as lawful and peaceful, while accusing Japan of violating its postwar constitution by deploying new missile systems to Kyushu and ramping up weapons

procurement.

Tensions are also flaring between China and other regional powers. In recent months, the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) has faced criticism from Australia, the Philippines, the US, and Canada for reckless behavior in the air and sea. In February, Chinese forces held live-fire drills in the Tasman Sea, further alarming defense officials in the region.

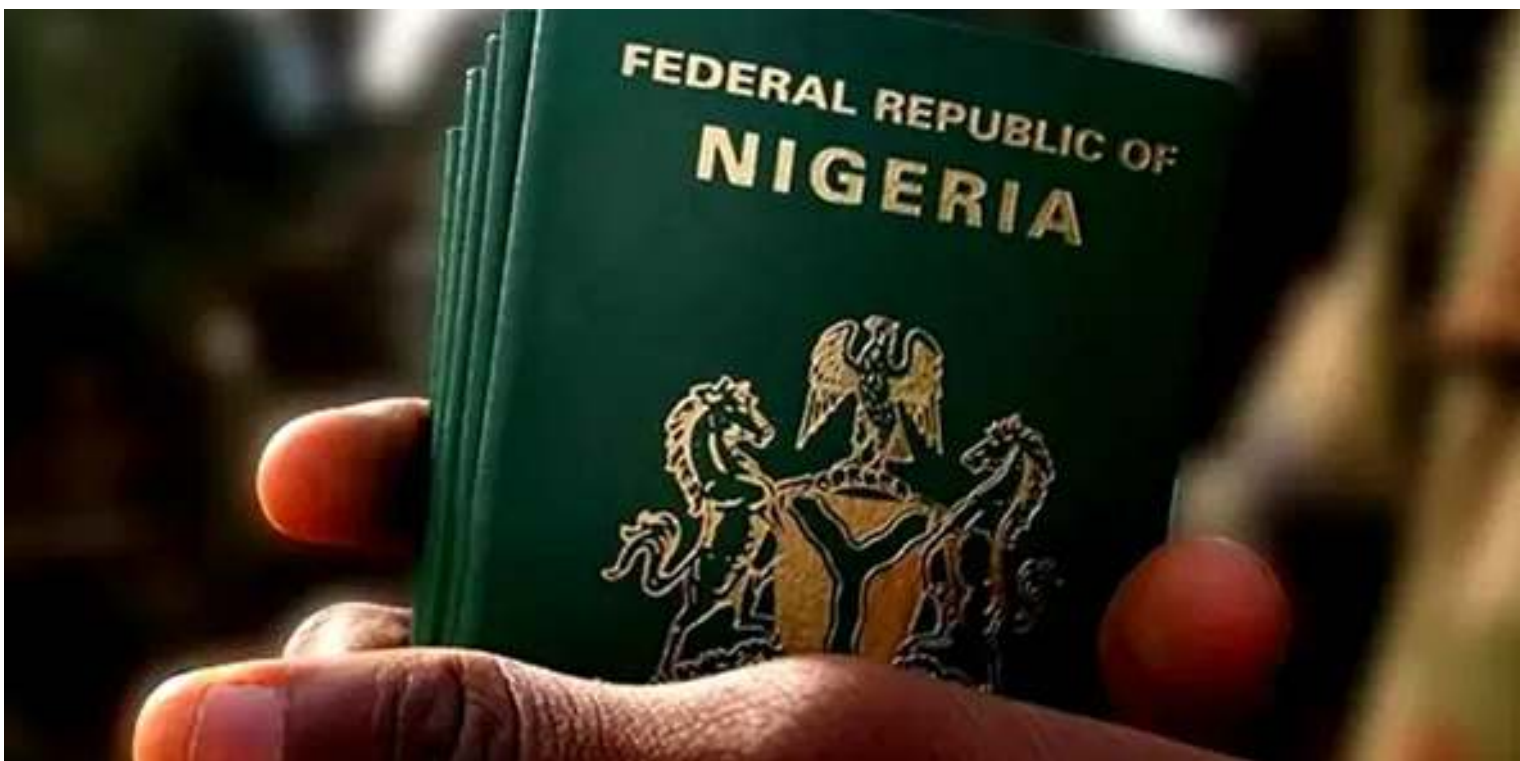
Despite reassurances from Beijing that its defense posture remains “defensive in nature,” regional powers view the increased assertiveness, particularly around Taiwan and disputed territories, as a clear signal of Beijing’s strategic ambitions.

Japan continues to monitor China’s activities closely and has vowed to maintain its own security posture while seeking to avoid direct confrontation.

“The peace and stability of this region is not something to be gambled with,” said Hayashi. “We will act with caution, but also with resolve.”

# Immigration: How Nigerian families can bring their partners, children to UK in 2025

By Fatimah Idera



As the UK government continues to update and refine its immigration rules, understanding the rights of your family members — especially your children and partner — is essential when planning to move to or remain in the country.

For many Nigerian families, navigating the UK's complex immigration system can be challenging. Whether you are applying for a Skilled Worker visa, extending your current visa, or bringing your family from Nigeria or another country, it is vital to know your options and responsibilities.

Here is a comprehensive guide to child and family immigration in the UK, based on the latest official guidance — and what Nigerian applicants and their dependants should consider in 2025.

## Who Counts as a Dependant?

The UK government defines a “dependant” as:

- Your husband, wife, civil partner, or unmarried partner

- Your child under 18, including a child born in the UK during your stay
- Your child over 18, if they already have permission to be in the UK as your dependant

Each dependant must complete a separate application to join or remain with you in the UK.

Important: If you are applying as a care worker or senior care worker, additional restrictions apply (see below).

## Visa Duration for Dependants

- Your partner or child's visa will generally end on the same date as yours.
- If both parents have visas with different end dates, the child's visa will expire on the earliest parent's visa date.

## Proving Your Relationship

You will need to provide evidence of your relationship to your dependants:

For your partner:

- Proof of marriage or civil partnership recognised in the UK, or
- Proof of living together in a relationship for at least 2 years, or
- If not living together (due to work, study, or cultural reasons), evidence of an ongoing committed relationship (regular communication, financial support, time spent together).

For your child immigration:

- Evidence that your child lives with you (unless they are in full-time education away from home).
- Proof they are not married or in a civil partnership.
- Acceptable documents include bank statements, credit card bills, driving licence, NHS registration, or official letters from their educational institution.

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## Applying from Outside the UK

Your partner and children must apply before they travel to the UK:

- Apply online as a partner or child outside the UK.
- Each family member completes a separate application and pays the relevant fee.
- They will need your application number (GWF or UAN), and optionally a family linking code.

## Proving Identity:

Applicants will either:

- Use the UK Immigration: ID Check app to scan their identity document, or
- Attend an in-person appointment at a visa application centre to provide fingerprints and photos.

## Processing Time:

- 3 weeks from when they complete their application, identity check, and provide supporting documents.
- In some cases, a priority service may be available for faster processing.
- Applying from Inside the UK (Extending or Switching Visas)

If you extend or switch your visa, your partner or child must also apply to extend or switch their visa before their current visa expires.

They can apply at the same time as you, or separately — but they must apply before the visa ends.

## Restrictions:

Partners or children currently in the UK on certain visas cannot switch to your Skilled Worker visa as dependants. This includes those on:

- Visitor visa
- Short-term student visa
- Parent of a Child Student visa
- Seasonal worker visa

- Domestic worker in a private household visa
- Immigration bail
- Exceptional permission outside the immigration rules

For Student visa holders:

They may switch only if they have:

- Completed their sponsored course, or
- Studied for at least 24 months toward a PhD.

## Processing Time:

- 8 weeks for a standard decision.
- Priority options may be available.

Travel warning: Once they apply, your partner or child must not travel outside the UK until a decision is made, or their application will be withdrawn.

## Special Rules for Care Workers

If you are a care worker or senior care worker, the rules are stricter:

Your partner or child can only apply as dependants if you were employed in this role before 11 March 2024 and you:

- Remain on a Skilled Worker visa,
- Are extending your visa with the same employer, or
- Are changing jobs within the same occupation code.

If you switch from another visa to a Skilled Worker visa as a care worker after March 2024, your dependants generally cannot apply to join you.

## Children Born in the UK

If you have a child while in the UK, they do not automatically become a British citizen.

You must apply for a child dependant visa if you wish to:

- Travel in and out of the UK with them.
- Allow them to remain in the UK

legally.

Applications can be made:

- Inside the UK
- Outside the UK

You must provide a full UK birth certificate showing both parents' names. Apply before the child turns 18 to maintain their dependant status.

## What Your Partner or Child Can Do in the UK

If their application is approved, your partner or child can:

- Work (except as a sports person or coach)
- Study
- Travel abroad and return to the UK
- Apply for Indefinite Leave to Remain after 5 years (if eligible)

However, they cannot:

- Access most UK benefits (public funds)
- Claim the State Pension

A full list of permitted and prohibited activities will be provided in their visa approval letter.

For many Nigerians moving to the UK on Skilled Worker or other eligible visas, understanding the rules around child and family immigration is crucial.

Planning ahead and preparing strong evidence of your relationships and financial resources will help avoid delays and refusals.

Always check the latest UK government guidance or consult an immigration professional if your situation is complex.

At New Daily Prime, we will continue to provide clear updates and advice to help Nigerian families thrive and stay connected — wherever life takes them.

# Miracle: British national survives Air India plane crash

By New Daily Prime

**T**he miracle report of a lone survivor from a London-bound passenger plane that crashed Thursday in the Indian city of Ahmedabad with 242 on board offered a glimmer of hope.

Indian rescue teams with sniffer dogs clawed through smouldering wreckage through the night searching for clues for what had caused the Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner bound for London's Gatwick Airport to explode in a blazing fireball soon after takeoff from the western city of Ahmedabad.

Bodies from Air India's flight 171 were lifted out of the torn fuselage, as well as being pulled out of the charred buildings of the medical staff hostel that the airplane smashed into, killing several there too.

The death toll currently stands at 260, police said.

But hours after police said that there "appears to be no survivor in the crash", officials reported the initially seemingly impossible account that one man had walked out alive.

"One survivor is confirmed," Dhananjay Dwivedi, principal secretary of Gujarat state's health department, told AFP.

The person was being treated in hospital, he added without further details.

India's Home Minister Amit Shah, who visited the crash site and then the hospital, said he was "pained beyond words by the tragic plane crash" in Ahmedabad, the main city in Gujarat state, where Shah is a lawmaker.

But he also told reporters he had heard the "good news of the survivor" and was speaking to them "after meeting him".



Indian media widely reported the survivor had been sitting in seat 11A, after videos shared on social media showed a man — in a bloodied t-shirt and limping, but walking towards an ambulance.

He shared a boarding card that named him as Vishwash Kumar Ramesh, a 40-year-old British national, one of 53 UK citizens on board.

AFP was not able to confirm the reports, but the BBC spoke to his cousin in the city of Leicester, Ajay Valgi, who reported that Ramesh had called his family to say he was "fine".

Britain's Press Association news agency also spoke to his brother, Nayan Kumar Ramesh, 27, also in Leicester.

"He said, I have no idea how I exited the plane", his brother told PA.

## Heartbreaking loss

But while Ramesh's reported survival offered a chance of hope, stories also flooded in of heartbreaking loss: elderly parents going to visit children in Britain, or family returning home.

Air India is organising relief flights — one from the capital New Delhi and another from financial hub Mumbai — to Ahmedabad for "the next of kin of passengers and Air India staff", the information ministry said in a statement.

They will have to take part in the grim task of identifying the bodies, many of which were reported to have been badly burned.

The plane, which was full of fuel as it took off for a long-haul flight to London, exploded into a burst of orange flame, videos of the crash showed.

Dwivedi, the health official, said DNA collection facilities had been set up at BJ Medical College in Ahmedabad.

"DNA testing arrangements have been made", he told reporters.

"Families and close relatives of the flight passengers, especially their parents and children, are requested to submit their samples at the location so that the victims can be identified at the earliest."



# Alexander-Arnold unveiled as Real Madrid player

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

**T**rent Alexander-Arnold was officially presented as a Real Madrid player on Thursday, delivering a polished speech in Spanish and declaring his move a “dream come true.” The 26-year-old right-back has signed a six-year deal with the European champions, ending a lifelong association with Liverpool in one of the summer’s biggest transfers.

Alexander-Arnold, who would have become a free agent at the end of June, made the switch early after Real Madrid paid Liverpool a fee to release him in time for the Club World Cup, where Real face Al-Hilal on 18 June in Miami. Speaking to fans and media at the Bernabéu alongside club president Florentino Perez, Alexander-Arnold impressed by addressing the crowd in Spanish.

“Signing for a club like Real Madrid doesn’t happen every day,” he said. “It’s a dream come true. I’m very happy and proud to be here. I want to win many titles and enjoy football with the best in the world.”

His unveiling featured a highlight reel of his best moments at Liverpool, including assists, long-range goals, and defensive stops. The presentation ended with the Englishman holding up his new shirt—bearing the name “Trent” and the number 12—instead of his iconic Liverpool 66.

Perez praised the signing, calling Alexander-Arnold “one of the best full-backs in world football” and a player who “has won everything.” The England international was joined at the ceremony by his girlfriend Estelle Behnke, his parents, and siblings.

Shortly after, Alexander-Arnold spoke to the press in English, revealing he had been learning Spanish for several months in preparation for the move. “It shows the intent I have to come here and get off on the right foot,” he said. “I think a few people were surprised, including the president!”



The £840m buy-out clause in his new contract underlines Real Madrid’s belief in the player’s long-term future. He joins a squad full of talent, including fellow England international Jude Bellingham, with whom he shares a close friendship. “A lot of people think Jude played a big role in me coming here,” said Alexander-Arnold. “We talked, but ultimately, this club speaks for itself.”

His transfer comes after helping Liverpool win the 2024–25 Premier League title under new manager Arne Slot. In total, he made 354 appearances for the Reds, scoring 23 goals and contributing 86 assists. His trophy haul includes one Champions League, two Premier League titles, and three domestic cups.

Alexander-Arnold’s departure wasn’t without controversy. After announcing he would leave the club, he was booed during a substitute appearance against Arsenal. Jürgen Klopp, Liverpool’s former manager, later admitted he “turned off the TV” in frustration after hearing the jeers. Fortunately, the full-back received a warm send-off during Liverpool’s final match of the campaign at Anfield.

In Madrid, Alexander-Arnold will now work under newly appointed manager Xabi Alonso, a player he idolized growing up. Alonso, a Champions League winner with Liverpool in 2005, was one of the influences on Alexander-Arnold’s passing game.

“I told him that he was a big idol of mine,” said the new Madrid recruit. “Watching him pass a ball made me want to do the same. It influenced how I trained and set standards for myself.”

The move represents both a personal and professional step for Alexander-Arnold, who insists Real Madrid was the only club he would ever consider leaving Liverpool for.

“It wasn’t easy,” he admitted. “I’ve been at Liverpool my whole life. But this was the right time and the right opportunity.”

With a Club World Cup campaign just days away and a new era under Alonso about to begin, Alexander-Arnold has wasted no time showing he’s ready to be part of Real Madrid’s future—both on and off the pitch.

# De Bruyne joins Napoli after ending City era

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

**K**evin De Bruyne has completed a sensational free transfer to Napoli, ending a decade-long chapter at Manchester City that established him as one of the Premier League's greatest ever midfielders. The 33-year-old joins the reigning Serie A champions on a two-year deal, with the option for a third, reuniting with top-flight European football under new head coach Antonio Conte.

After ten years in Manchester, De Bruyne leaves behind a decorated legacy that includes 19 major trophies, 108 goals in 422 appearances, and a reputation for being the heartbeat of Pep Guardiola's most successful teams. His move to Napoli signals not just the end of an era at City, but a bold new challenge in Italy's top division.

"It's been an unbelievable ride and an absolute pleasure," De Bruyne said during his farewell speech at the Etihad. "Manchester has been my home and my family's home for these past 10 years. I'm proud of what we built together."

City fans paid tribute to the Belgian maestro with banners, a statue unveiling, and even a newly named street—'Kevin De Bruyne Crescent'—near the stadium. De Bruyne's departure was confirmed before the end of the season, culminating in an emotional send-off after his final home match against Bournemouth in May.

His new club, Napoli, made their announcement in typically theatrical fashion—releasing a computer-generated image of De Bruyne sitting on a throne wearing a crown, with the words "King Kev is here." The move is a significant coup for the Italian giants, who edged out stiff competition to land the midfield genius, including a serious bid from MLS side Chicago Fire.



Napoli president Aurelio De Laurentiis welcomed De Bruyne in a joint press conference, calling him "one of the best midfielders of his generation" and "a leader who will lift the standard of Italian football."

The signing also signals the club's ambition to remain competitive in both Serie A and the Champions League. With De Bruyne joining former Premier League midfielders Scott McTominay and Billy Gilmour, Napoli now boast a well-rounded and experienced midfield trio with top-level pedigree.

Napoli manager Antonio Conte is expected to build his midfield around De Bruyne, allowing him to operate in his favoured advanced role. Known for his passing range, vision, and ability to control tempo, De Bruyne will be tasked with dictating play and supplying service to Napoli's pacy forward line.

The timing of the transfer benefits both parties. For De Bruyne, the move offers a fresh challenge at the elite level after a physically demanding final season in England. For Napoli, it's a chance to reinforce their squad with a player whose experience and quality could be the difference in tight European contests.

Manchester City, meanwhile, have already moved to fill the creative gap, securing Tijjani Reijnders from AC Milan and Rayan Cherki from Lyon. While neither is a direct replacement for De Bruyne's unique qualities, both bring flair and youth as Guardiola begins shaping a new midfield core.

Tributes from across the football world have poured in, with Guardiola previously describing De Bruyne as the "second-best passer of the ball I've seen—after Messi." De Bruyne's former teammates, including Erling Haaland and Ilkay Gündogan, also posted farewell messages, hailing his influence on and off the pitch.

While the curtain closes on a golden era at Manchester City, a new chapter begins in Naples. De Bruyne's move may be one of the most fascinating of the summer, both for the player's enduring quality and for what it could mean in Europe's ongoing battle for supremacy.

In the twilight of his career, Kevin De Bruyne is far from slowing down—he's just changing scenery.