

**Over 40 Nigerian security personnel arrested for arming terrorists** **PAGE 13**

**12-yr-old Nigerian-American invents air filter, gets \$11.5m funding** **PAGE 2**

# The New Daily Prime

## Ondo Poll: Tinubu calls for peaceful election

**PAGE 4**

**Oscar Awards: Shettima rallies support for 'Mai Martaba'**  
**PAGE 11**

**I hawk pure water for survival – First-Class Nigerian graduate** **PAGE 3**

**Presidency to Atiku: We're done with you**  
**PAGE 10**

**Super Eagles goalkeeper, Stanley Nwabali loses dad** **PAGE 28**



**NJC suspends Rivers, Anambra High Court judges** **PAGE 3**

# 12-yr-old Nigerian-American invents air filter, gets \$11.5m funding

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

A 12 years old Nigerian girl from Connecticut, USA, Eniola Shokunbi has designed an air filter to reduce spread of airborne diseases in US schools.

The design targets creating low-cost air filters for classrooms. The Connecticut State Bond Commission approved \$11.5 million in funding for the design.

In her fifth grade at Commodore MacDonough STEM Academy in Middletown, they were tasked with creating a solution to enhance safety in schools during potential future pandemics.

Therefore, to combat airborne viruses like COVID-19, she developed a simple but effective air filter system.

Shokunbi's air filter design showcases both innovation and cost-effectiveness. The unit is constructed using a simple combination of components: a box fan, four furnace filters, duct tape, and cardboard.

This ingenious assembly results in a remarkably low production cost of

approximately \$60 per unit. This makes it a highly affordable alternative to commercial air purifiers.

Eniola Shokunbi said: "The air goes through all the sides, and it comes out of the top. So it filters in and out."

With support from scientists at the University of Connecticut, UConn, Shokunbi's design underwent rigorous testing.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), confirmed that the device effectively eliminates over 99% of airborne viruses, showcasing its potential to significantly improve classroom safety.

The recent approval by the State Bond Commission allocates \$11.5 million for the implementation of these air filters across Connecticut schools.



This funding is part of UConn's SAFE-CT: Supplemental Air Filtration for Education Program, which aims to ensure that every public school classroom has access to these vital air purification systems.

Shokunbi's vision extends beyond Connecticut; she aspires to see her air filters implemented in classrooms nationwide.

Eniola Shokunbi said, "A lot of people don't realize that the only thing standing between them and getting sick is science."

Also, she emphasized the importance of investing in scientific solutions for children's health.



By Dave Oludare Oso

The National Coordinator of the National Counter-Terrorism Centre, Major General Adamu Laka, has said that the new terror group, Lakurawa, would be wiped out very soon.

Laka, who spoke in Abuja while reacting to the recent wave of terror

## Lakurawa has less than 200 members, would be routed soon – Military

activities in Sokoto and other parts of the North-West, attributed to the new terror group, disclosed that the terror group has less than two hundred members.

He said the military and other security agencies under the coordination of the National Security Adviser, Nuhu Ribadu, are on top of the situation and the group will be wiped out in no distant future.

According to him, since the emergence of the group, the Minister of Defence, the Chief of Defence Staff, and other service chiefs have implemented

several concrete steps towards wiping out the group.

On how the group berthed in the North-West, the Counter-Terrorism coordinator explained that people invited them to come and provide security against bandits.

According to him, after providing the security for some time, they have turned around to imposing and collecting taxes from the people.

"This cannot happen and will not be allowed in a sovereign country," Laka

# NJC suspends Rivers, Anambra High Court judges

By Dave Oludare Oso

The National Judicial Council (NJC) has suspended Justice G. C Aguma of the High Court of Rivers State and Justice A.O Nwabunike of the Anambra State High Court from performing judicial functions.

The two judicial officers were suspended without pay for one year and placed on a watchlist for two years thereafter.

The NJC Deputy Director (Information), Kemi Babalola-Ogedengbe, said in a statement on Friday that the decision was taken at the 107th Meeting of the NJC, which was chaired by the Chief Justice of Nigeria, Hon. Justice Kudirat Kekere-Ekun on November 13 and 14, 2024.

According to the statement, a total of five serving judicial officers were sanctioned for various acts of misconduct.

The Council also recommended two Heads of Court for compulsory



Suspended Justices G. C Aguma of the High Court of Rivers State and A.O Nwabunike of the Anambra State High Court

retirement over age falsification. They are the Chief Judge of Imo State, Hon. Justice T. E. Chukwuemeka Chikeka and the Grand Kadi of Yobe State, Hon. Kadi Babagana Mahdi. The Council equally considered the report of its Preliminary Complaints Assessment Committee, which reviewed 30 petitions and raised six

committees for further investigation. While 22 were dismissed for lacking in merit, two were sub-judice. The Council also raised a committee to investigate all complaints and petitions against Hon. Justice O. A. Ojo, Chief Judge, Osun State.

More details to follow...

## I hawk pure water for survival – First-Class Nigerian graduate

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

A first-class graduate from Umaru Musa Yar'Adua University in Katsina State, Sham'unu Ishaq, has resorted to selling sachet water on the streets to make a living, over a year after his graduation. Despite earning top honours in his Bachelor of Science in Education, Biology, Ishaq has struggled to secure meaningful employment since completing his degree on July 5, 2023. In a video clip circulating online, Ishaq shared his story of disappointment and hardship. He explained how his academic achievements have yet to translate into job opportunities, forcing him to become a street hawker to survive. His plight has drawn attention to the struggles faced by many graduates across Nigeria who, despite their qualifications, remain unemployed or underemployed. "I graduated and had no job and I started

hawking pure water sachets for survival," Ishaq said, describing the challenging conditions he faces in Katsina.

"Here in Katsina, there is nowhere to even do something to improve my life." Displaying his notification of results in the video, Ishaq explained that his daily income barely meets his basic needs. "The selling of the sachet water business is not even enough. Sometimes the only thing I do with the money is to eat from it; I can't save anything," he admitted.

Ishaq appealed directly to Katsina State Governor Dikko Umar Radda, highlighting the impact of his financial struggles. "As he can see, I graduated from university with no job and poverty is even trying to kill me," he said, mentioning the strain of meeting his family's needs without stable income. "This pure water hawking is the only business I relied on for survival for



now," he continued, urging support from all Nigerians. "I need help, not necessarily from the state government alone but from all Nigerians, be it south, east, north or west, I just need help." Emphasizing his readiness to work, Ishaq added, "I can do any kind of job."

# Ondo Poll: Tinubu calls for peaceful election

By Friday Omosola

**A**head of the upcoming off-cycle governorship election in Ondo State on Saturday, President Bola Tinubu has urged all political stakeholders and voters to maintain peace and decorum while fulfilling their civic duties without fear, both before and after the polls.

In a statement issued by his Special Adviser on Information and Strategy, Bayo Onanuga, President Tinubu expressed his expectation for a democratic process that will truly reflect the will of the people and their power to freely choose their leaders.

The President commended the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) for its thorough preparations for the election, particularly noting the timely distribution of sensitive materials across all 18 local government areas of the state.

He also acknowledged the deployment of security personnel to maintain law and order, expressing



appreciation for the assurances given by the Inspector-General of Police and the Chief of Defence Staff that their forces will act professionally and under the Electoral Act to ensure a credible electoral process.

President Tinubu reminded all political stakeholders, particularly the candidates, that the privilege to

govern is bestowed by the people, and this right must be respected, not undermined.

He stressed that it is in the best interest of all Nigerians to ensure a free and fair election, further consolidating over 25 years of democratic governance.

## But for God, exchange rate'll be \$1/10,000 – Pastor Adeboye

By Dave Oludare Oso

**P**astor E.A. Adeboye, the General Overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), has said that if not for divine intervention, there would have been a severe devaluation of the naira, whereby the exchange rate could have surged to ₦10,000 per dollar.

During his message at the Special Holy Ghost Congress held in Abuja, Adeboye addressed Nigeria's economic struggles, attributing them partly to the nation's dependence on imported fuel.

He emphasized that, despite Nigeria's substantial oil wealth, the persistent reliance on fuel imports continues to strain the economy.

The cleric expressed concern over the billions of naira invested in refineries

that remain largely non-functional, highlighting the burden this places on Nigeria's financial stability.

He further discussed the government's recent removal of fuel subsidies, a measure aimed at reducing financial strain but one that has sparked discontent among those who previously benefited from the subsidy regime.

Adeboye suggested that this move has compounded economic challenges.

"We need help, and it's not human help; it's divine help," he stated.

"Before our current president took office, we were aware that the root of our financial issues lay in the importation of petrol. Despite having oil, we continued to import petrol and waste billions on refineries that did not operate effectively.



"When the president cancelled the subsidy on petrol imports, those who benefited from it became upset and created more problems."

As the naira continued to decline rapidly, Adeboye said that he prayed and was grateful that others joined him in prayer.

"If God hadn't intervened, \$1 could have been worth ₦10,000 by now. This illustrates how much we need prayers," he said.

# Judge criticises delay tactics in Agunloye's \$6bn fraud case

By Friday Omosola

On Thursday, Justice Jude Onwuegbuzie of the Federal High Court, Abuja, expressed frustration over the delay tactics employed by Adeola Adedipe, counsel for former Minister of Power, Olu Agunloye, in the ongoing trial concerning alleged \$6 billion fraud.

Agunloye, who is facing prosecution by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) on seven counts of official corruption and fraudulent awarding of the Mambilla Power Project contract, has been accused of involvement in the \$6 billion scheme.

During the proceedings, the judge criticized Adedipe for repeatedly citing Agunloye's health and age as reasons for delays, as well as filing multiple motions that hindered the progress of the trial.

Addressing the defense counsel, Justice Onwuegbuzie firmly stated, "My principle of justice is no delay. The last

time you raised the issue of amicus curiae, it wasted the court's time. In my court, I do not read processes. If you need time to serve them, ensure they are submitted in a timely manner, and your colleague must be notified as well. There must be mutual respect—do not serve processes in court."

At the start of the session, prosecuting counsel, Abba Mohammed, informed the court that the day's business was the adoption of the prosecution's application to amend the charges, filed on 30 October.

In response, the defense filed a

counter-affidavit and requested an adjournment to allow the prosecution to review the document. Justice Onwuegbuzie adjourned the matter until 28 November for a ruling on the application.



# Gas explosion at Katsina filling station damages six vehicles, "no loss of Life"

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

A gas cylinder explosion at a filling station in Jibia Local Government Area of Katsina State has left six vehicles severely damaged, the state police command confirmed on Friday, November 15.

According to a statement by the police spokesman, Abubakar Sadiq-Aliyu, the explosion occurred on Friday when a loud blast was heard by police officers at the Jibia Divisional Police Headquarters.

The Divisional Police Officer immediately led a team of officers to the scene, joined by military personnel, to assess and control the situation.

The explosion took place at the Tamal filling station, located along the Kagadama-Magamar Jibia Road, where a truck loaded with gas cylinders was reported to be engulfed in flames.

The joint security team quickly took action to prevent further damage,

successfully extinguishing the fire before it could spread more widely.

Despite the extensive damage to six vehicles at the filling station, authorities reported that there were no fatalities. Sadiq-Aliyu emphasized that the quick response of the security teams helped avert a potential tragedy.

Katsina State Commissioner of Police, Aliyu Abubakar-Musa, has instructed that a full investigation be conducted to determine the cause of the explosion. He assured that further updates would be provided as the inquiry progresses.

The explosion at Tamal filling station has raised concerns about the safety protocols in handling flammable materials at gas stations, and authorities are focused on uncovering any lapses that may have contributed to the incident.



# EFCC, ICPC, NFIU not illegal, Supreme Court rules

By Agency Reporter



In a landmark judgment, the Supreme Court has declined to declare the operations of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), and the Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU) illegal.

In a unanimous decision on Friday, a seven-man panel of the apex court, led by Uwani Abba-Aji, dismissed the suit that 19 states filed to query the legal validity of the process that led to the establishment of the anti-graft agency in 2002.

According to the court, the EFCC Establishment Act did not require any form of ratification by Houses of Assembly of the 36 states of the federation since it was not a treaty but a convention.

The Supreme Court said, “A convention would have been ratified by member states and the National Assembly can make laws from it, which will be binding on all the states in Nigeria as it is in the case of EFCC Establishment Act.

“In a country like Nigeria, the federating units do not have absolute power. The NFIU guideline is to present a benchmark and not to control the funds.

“Where an Act of law is made by NASS like the NFIU and its guideline, it is binding on all. Any act that has been competently enacted by the NASS cannot be said to be inconsistent.

“Where the NASS has enacted several laws on corruption, money laundering, etc, no

state has the right to make law to compete with it. The investigative power of the EFCC cannot be said to be in conflict with legislative powers of the state assembly.

“I must agree with the AGF that the plaintiffs’ argument, that is, the Houses of Assembly of the plaintiffs’ states, is not tenable in law.”

It, therefore, resolved all the issues against the states.

It will be recalled that the EFCC was established by an Act of the National Assembly on December 12, 2002, by the then administration of former President Olusegun Obasanjo.

Following the appointment and confirmation of its pioneer Executive Chairman, Mallam Nuhu Ribadu and other administrative officers, by the Senate, the Commission commenced its operational activities on April 13, 2003, though its Establishment Act was later amended in 2004.

However, in the suit before the apex court, the states, through their respective Attorneys General, argued that section 12 of the 1999 Constitution, as amended, was not complied with before the EFCC began its operations.

According to the plaintiffs, it was a mandatory provision of the Constitution that majority of the Houses of Assembly of States must vote and agree to the passage of the EFCC Act, insisting that it was not something that only the National Assembly was legally allowed to do.

They told the Supreme Court that none of the states was carried along before the EFCC was established by the then President Obasanjo’s

administration.

They argued that the Supreme Court had in a decided case-law in Dr. Joseph Nwobike Vs Federal Republic of Nigeria, held that it was a United Nation Convention against corruption that was reduced into the EFCC Establishment Act and that in enacting this law in 2004, the provision of Section 12 of the 1999 Constitution, as amended, was not followed.

The plaintiffs maintained that since the due process was not followed before the EFCC Establishment Act was enacted, it cannot be applicable in states that never approved of it, in accordance with provisions of the 1999 Constitution, as amended.

They argued that any agency that was formed as a result of the Act, ought to be regarded as an illegal institution.

The states relied on the fact that since the 1999 Constitution, as amended, is the supreme law of the land, any Act of the National Assembly that is inconsistent with the Constitution, ought to be declared a nullity.

Although the suit, marked SC/CV/178/2023, was originally brought before the court by Kogi State, some states applied and were joined as co-plaintiffs, while others filed applications for their own suit to be consolidated with the matter.

The Federal Government had on October 22 when the parties adopted their briefs of argument, urged the apex court to dismiss the suit for want of merit.

FG, which was represented by the Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Prince Lateef Fagbemi, SAN, challenged the competence of the legal action which it described as a threat to the ongoing fight against corruption and financial crimes in the country.

The AGF maintained that contrary to the contention of the states, the EFCC was validly established in line with the provision of section 15(5) of the 1999 Constitution, as amended.

Fagbemi, SAN, equally refuted the claim of the plaintiffs that the Act that established the EFCC was an offshoot of an international convention that was not properly domesticated in Nigeria.

# LASUTH CMD calls for reforms to Improve maternal health

By Helen Okechukwu

The Chief Medical Director of the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH), Professor Adetokunbo Fabamwo, has called for legal and systemic reforms to address Nigeria's maternal health crisis.

Speaking at the 6th Abimbola Aina Omololu-Mulele Annual Lecture in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Professor Fabamwo emphasized the urgent need to reform the country's restrictive abortion laws.

The lecture held at the historic Old Great Hall of the College of Medicine, Idi-Araba, titled "The Tortuous Road to Maternal Mortality Reduction in Nigeria: Avoidable Stranglehold on Liberal Abortion Laws," was shared via their X handle today.

The event was chaired by Emeritus Professor Osato Frank Giwa-Osagie. The gathering celebrated the enduring legacy of Chief Abimbola Aina Omololu-Mulele while providing a platform to tackle critical issues in women's health.

It underscored the importance of addressing barriers in obstetrics and gynaecology to improve health outcomes for women across Nigeria.

With Nigeria's maternal mortality rate standing at an alarming 1,500 deaths per 100,000 live births, Professor Fabamwo has highlighted the preventable nature of many of these tragedies.

Speaking passionately on the issue, he identified the country's restrictive abortion laws as a significant factor driving unsafe practices that result in unnecessary deaths.

Professor Fabamwo noted that these laws, originally intended to safeguard women, often push them into dangerous, clandestine procedures.

This has become a public health emergency and a moral crisis, with illegal abortions accounting for approximately 13% of maternal deaths in Nigeria.

The fear of legal repercussions, he



emphasized, compels many women to risk unsafe methods rather than seek proper medical care.

Currently, Nigerian law permits abortion only in cases of rape, incest, or when the mother's life is in danger—restrictions Professor Fabamwo described as outdated and misaligned with global health and human rights standards.

He called for the decriminalization of abortion and an expansion of reproductive health services to provide safe, legal access, thereby reducing maternal mortality.

Additionally, he stressed the critical need for broader access to family planning, quality maternal healthcare, and comprehensive sexual and reproductive health education.

These measures, he argued, are essential to improving women's health outcomes and addressing the maternal health crisis in Nigeria.

**Collaborative Call-in Action**

Emeritus Professor Giwa-Osagie, chairing the event, urged collective efforts to tackle Nigeria's reproductive health challenges. Representing UNILAG Vice-Chancellor Prof. Folasade Ogunsola, Board of Trustees Chairman Prof. Oluwole Familoni echoed this, emphasizing collaboration to honor Chief (Mrs.) Omololu-Mulele's legacy.

Prof. Adewale Oke, the Provost of the College of Medicine represented by Prof. Oluwafemi Odebiyi, and Prof.

Bosede Afolabi, Head of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, highlighted the need for government support, sustained funding, and global partnerships to address maternal health issues.

Dr. Omololu, representing the donor family, thanked UNILAG and the College of Medicine for sustaining the lecture series, honoring Chief Omololu-Mulele's vision, and advocating solutions for maternal health.

"We are grateful to Professor Fabamwo and all the distinguished professionals here today. Your work continues to move us closer to a future where every woman has access to safe and quality care," he said.

The event has significant figures, including Nigeria's first female professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Prof. Kofoworola Surubomi Ogedengbe, and the President of the Society of Gynaecology and Obstetrics of Nigeria (SOGON), Prof. Oluwarotimi Ireti Akinola.

Two researchers Dr. Ayokunle Olumodeji and Dr. Tersur T. Salau were recognized for their significant contribution to maternal health.

However, Dr. Olumodeji was awarded for his research on HPV rapid testing for early cervical cancer detection, while Dr. Salau was honored for his work on fat-soluble vitamins in managing endometriosis pain and advancing women's health in Nigeria.

# Tinubu, Shettima, others present as Lagbaja buried

By **Dave Oludare Oso**



President Bola Tinubu and Vice President Kashim Shettima were among other top government functionaries present as the late Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lieutenant General Toareed Lagbaja, 56, was laid to rest in Abuja on Friday. The Nigerian military committed his remains to Mother Earth at the National Military Cemetery in Abuja on Friday.

A funeral service was held in his honour at the National Christian Centre Abuja, earlier before interment.

Joining the president and his vice were the Senate President, Godswill Akpabio, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Tajudeen Abbas, Service Chiefs, family members of the deceased, heads of security agencies, among others dignitaries.

The remains of the COAS had arrived in Abuja on Thursday after which a Service of Songs was held in his honour at the parade ground of the Army Headquarters Garrison, Mogadishu Barracks, Abuja.

Lagbaja, who died on November 5, according to the federal government suffered from a prolonged undisclosed ailment.

Rumoured to have died earlier, the federal government announced his death 24 hours after decorating an acting COAS, Lt.-Gen Olufemi Oluyede.

This development suggested preparation for the announcement of Lagbaja's long-sSpeculated death.

Born on February 28, 1968, Lt. General Lagbaja was appointed Chief of Army Staff on June 19, 2023, by President Tinubu.

He began his military career in 1992 and rose through the ranks to the pinnacle of his profession. In his 32-year-old career, he occupied some crucial positions.

Lagbaja enrolled in the Nigerian Defence Academy in 1987. He was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Nigerian Infantry Corps, as a member of the 39th Regular Course, on September 19, 1992.

Throughout his service, Lt. General Lagbaja demonstrated exceptional leadership and commitment, serving as a platoon commander in the 93 Battalion and the 72 Special Forces Battalion.

The president while announcing his death said the late COAS played pivotal roles in numerous internal

security operations, including Operation ZAKI in Benue State, Lafiya Dole in Borno, Udoka in Southeast Nigeria, and Operation Forest Sanity across Kaduna and Niger states.

“An alumnus of the prestigious U.S. Army War College, he earned a Master’s degree in Strategic Studies, demonstrating his dedication to professional growth and excellence in military leadership.

“Lt. General Lagbaja is survived by his beloved wife, Mariya, and their two children,” the president said.

The death of Lagbaja marks the second big loss recorded by the military in over three years.

In May 2021, the Army lost its COAS, Ibrahim Attahiru, in a plane crash in Kaduna State.

Attahiru died alongside 10 others in an aircraft billed to land at the Nigerian Air Force Base in the Mando area of Kaduna before it diverted and attempted to land at the Kaduna International Airport.



## Governor Okpebholo appoints Gani Audu as Chief of Staff

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

Edo State Governor, Senator Monday Okpebholo, has announced the appointment of Gani Audu as his new Chief of Staff.

The appointment, which takes immediate effect, was officially communicated in a statement issued on Friday, November 15, by the Secretary to the State Government, Musa Ikhilor.

According to the statement, Audu's appointment is aimed at driving meaningful reforms and contributing to the development of the state under Governor Okpebholo's administration.

"It is hereby announced for the information of the general public, particularly the good people of Edo State, that Governor Monday Okpebholo has approved the appointment of Gani Audu as his Chief of Staff. The appointment takes immediate effect," the statement read.

**Background and Qualifications of Gani Audu**

Gani Audu, born on August 18, 1969, is a seasoned public servant with a wealth of experience in governance and leadership.

He holds a Higher National Diploma (HND) from Auchu Polytechnic (1994),



a Postgraduate Diploma (PGD) in Business Administration from Benson Idahosa University (2011), and an M.Sc. in Intelligence and Global Security from Baze University, Abuja, which he earned in 2024.

Audu's political career spans several years, with notable positions in local and state government. He served as the Chairman of Etsako West Local Government Council from 2004 to 2010, and as a member of the Edo State House of Assembly, representing Etsako West Constituency 1 from 2015 to 2023.

In addition to his administrative roles, Audu was the deputy governorship

candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC) during the 2020 Edo State Governorship elections, further highlighting his active involvement in the state's political landscape.

Governor Okpebholo's decision to appoint Gani Audu as Chief of Staff reflects his commitment to advancing reform and fostering progress in Edo State.

As Chief of Staff, Audu will play a key role in supporting the Governor's vision for the state, providing strategic advice, and helping to implement policies aimed at improving governance and public service delivery.

The appointment has been welcomed by many, with expectations that Audu's extensive political experience and leadership background will contribute significantly to the state's development trajectory.

Edo State residents and stakeholders will be watching closely as Audu embarks on this new role, with hopes for effective governance and continued progress under the Okpebholo administration.

## Wike suspends FCDA boss, Ahmad indefinitely

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Secretary, Federal Capital Territory Minister, Nyesom Wike has announced the indefinite suspension of the Executive Secretary, Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA), Engr. Shehu Hadi Ahmad, has been suspended indefinitely.

Lere Olayinka, Senior Special Assistant on Public Communications and New Media to the Minister, disclosed this in a statement on Thursday evening.

While no reason was given for the decision, Ahmad was directed to hand over to the Director, Engineering Services in the FCDA.

The statement read, "The Executive

Secretary, Federal Capital Territory Minister, Nyesom Wike has announced the indefinite suspension of the Executive Secretary, Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA), Engr. Shehu Hadi Ahmad, has been suspended indefinitely.

According to the statement, the suspension of Ahmad is with immediate effect. It continued, "The suspended Executive Secretary has consequently been directed to hand over to the Director of Engineering Services, Engr in the FCDA."



# NiDCOM rescues 13 more trafficked Nigerian girls from Ghana

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

The Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM) has successfully repatriated 13 trafficked Nigerian girls from Ghana, bringing the total number of rescued victims to 163 since July 2024.

In a statement released on Friday, November 15 by NiDCOM spokesperson Abdur-Rahman Balogun, the commission highlighted the continued efforts to combat human trafficking, emphasising the collaborative nature of the operation that involved key stakeholders including the Ghanaian Anti-Human Trafficking Police, Rescue Live Foundation International, and NIDO Ghana, with NiDCOM providing vital support.

The rescued girls, aged between 19 and 30, were reportedly lured to Ghana with promises of employment but were instead forced into exploitative conditions. They were subjected to labor under harsh circumstances, bound by secrecy oaths and controlled by traffickers who profited from their plight.

NiDCOM Chairman/CEO Abike Dabiri-Erewa expressed gratitude for



the successful operation, recognising the crucial role played by the First Lady, Senator Oluremi Tinubu, and Ebonyi State Governor, Francis Nwifuru, in facilitating the girls' return. Dabiri-Erewa reiterated the commission's unwavering commitment to protecting Nigerians abroad, aligning with President Bola Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda to address human trafficking and safeguard citizens' rights.

The victims, hailing from various Nigerian states, including Ebonyi, Benue, Kaduna, and Rivers, were able to surrender voluntarily after hearing about

previous rescue efforts in locations like Kpone Katamanso and Tema, Ghana.

Akinboye Akinsola, NiDCOM's representative, accompanied the girls back to Nigeria, while Callistus Elozieuwa of the Rescue Live Foundation International and NIDO Ghana offered temporary shelter to the victims before their return. Elozieuwa underscored the importance of international cooperation in dismantling trafficking networks.

In a statement, Valentine Uzo, Senior Special Assistant to the Governor of Ebonyi State, assured that state authorities had already set in motion plans for the victims' rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

NiDCOM's latest success is part of its broader ongoing efforts to protect vulnerable Nigerians abroad and hold traffickers accountable, while offering survivors the support they need to rebuild their lives.

## Presidency to Atiku: We're done with you

By Dave Oludare Oso

Against the backdrop of his relentless attacks on the President Bola Tinubu's administration, the Presidency has said it will no longer trade words with the presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the 2023 election, Atiku Abubakar.

Speaking on Thursday, through the Special Adviser to the President on Public Communication and Orientation, Sunday Dare, the presidency said the focus of the Tinubu's government was to deliver

bring succour to the people.

The government, reacting to the recent comments by the former Vice President where he advised President Tinubu to forget about the 2027 permutations and focus on governance, said there was no need to dignify the Turakin Adamawa with a response any longer.

Part of the statement read, "We have a country to run, we are done with Atiku. Mr. President, Bola Ahmed Tinubu was elected by Nigerians to run this country and that is the focus right now to bring succour to our people, to deliver on the



reforms that are ongoing, that is what is important for now and that's the focus."

# Oscar Awards: Shettima rallies support for 'Mai Martaba'

By Friday Omosola

Vice President Kashim Shettima has pledged the federal government's full backing for Nigeria's campaign to secure an Academy Award, offering access to the \$618 million Investment in Digital and Creative Enterprises Programme (iDICE).

This support is aimed at propelling Nigeria's Oscar entry, 'Mai Martaba', directed by Prince Daniel, to clinch a nomination in the Best International Feature Film category at the 2025 Academy Awards.

Speaking at a meeting with the 'Mai Martaba' team, led by the Minister of Arts, Culture, Tourism, and Creative Economy, Hannatu Musawa, at the Presidential Villa in Abuja on Thursday, Shettima expressed his excitement about the project.

He described the day as "a good day to be a Nigerian," and stressed the importance of national unity through the film industry. "We will make sure that the kaleidoscope that represents all the colours in our nation is carried along. Let's fuse into one and support this project," he said, urging Nigerians to come together for the success of the film.

"There is more that binds than divides us. We are essentially one people," he added.

Shettima emphasised the significance of the iDICE programme, which aims to boost investment in digital and creative industries, giving creators access to the fund.

READ ALSO: Tinubu, Shettima, others present as Lagbaja buried  
He also encouraged Musawa to lead the charge in mobilizing resources for Nigeria's Oscar bid.

"By the end of the century, Nigeria will be the most populous nation on earth. There is beauty in numbers. I want to reiterate my unflinching support for us to get the Oscars," he affirmed.

Mai Martaba explores themes of power, love, and female leadership in an ancient African kingdom, and has



already been selected as Nigeria's official entry for the 2025 Oscars.

The film is seen as a significant step forward in Nigeria's quest for global recognition in the film industry.

READ ALSO: Ondo Poll: Tinubu behind governors to sustain APC commitment – Shettima

Minister Musawa spoke of ongoing efforts to build the creative sector, revealing agreements with countries like South Korea, the UK, Japan, China, and France to promote co-productions.

She highlighted the global interest in Nigerian talent and creativity, noting that the creative industry holds the potential to surpass oil in contributing to the nation's GDP.

"We're working with investors who have already committed to building the creative industry. The whole world is interested in Nigeria – not because of our oil, but because of our talent, content, and creativity," Musawa said.

Musawa also addressed the funding challenges facing the industry, stressing the need for better infrastructure to support high-quality productions.

She emphasised that every Nigerian, regardless of their background, has the potential to create content and contribute to the industry.

Prince Daniel, director of Mai Martaba, spoke about the rapid growth of Nigeria's creative sector. He pointed

out that broadcasting now contributes more to Nigeria's GDP than oil, generating significant employment opportunities and contributing to the nation's economic growth.

"Broadcasting contributes 12.3% to GDP. The creative industry and broadcasting in April 2020 did more than oil and mining combined," he said. "We've created over 500 jobs and provided work for almost 100 people. We're excited because we want to go for the next Oscars."

Daniel also acknowledged the importance of federal government support in securing an Oscar. Drawing parallels with South Africa's Oscar win for Tsotsi in 2006, he emphasised that backing from the government is crucial for successful lobbying and international exposure.

Chairperson of the Nigerian Official Selection Committee for the Oscars, Stephanie Linus, echoed Daniel's sentiments. She stated that the Oscar campaign is not just about recognition but about building Nigeria's presence on the global stage.

"This isn't just about international recognition. We need to start building our presence on the global stage now, not in one or two years," Linus said.

The Oscars represent the biggest platform for celebrating cinema. With strong government support and the growing global interest in Nigerian cinema, Mai Martaba is set to be a key player in Nigeria's pursuit of Oscar glory.

# FEC approves \$2.2bn new borrowing plan

By Dave Oludare Oso

The Federal Executive Council (FEC) has approved fresh external borrowing of \$2.2 billion, made up of \$1.7 billion and SUKUK financing of \$500 million.

This approval is to strengthen the country's finances and enhance economic reforms.

The Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Wale Edun, made this known on Thursday after the Executive Council meeting on Thursday, presided over by President Bola Tinubu at the Council Chamber, State House.

Edun, who stated that he submitted two memos disclosed that the external borrowing approval when finally given by the National Assembly will grant Nigeria access to the international capital market for some combination of the Euro bond and SUKUK financing.

He said, "And the first one was to complete the borrowing program of the federal government in terms of the external borrowing with the approval of the \$2.2 billion financing program made up of access to the international capital market for some combination of the Euro bond offer and the Sukuk bond offer. Perhaps a Euro bond of about \$1.7 billion and Sukuk financing of another \$500 million is the actual makeup of the financing which will be done as soon as the National Assembly has considered."

He added that Nigeria had showcased the resilience of its financial markets, capacity, and increased complexity through the domestic issuance of dollar bonds which according to him attracted Nigerian investors.

Edun stressed that for Nigeria being able to access the international capital market is an indication of the nation's acceptance and support for President Bola Tinubu's macro-economic programmes.

The Minister said, "This being able to access the international capital



market is also a sign of the acceptance and the support for the macroeconomic programme of Mr. President and indeed his entire administration. As we know the economic programme, that economic recovery and revival programme to turn around the economy, is focused on macroeconomics the macroeconomic pillars of market pricing of the PMS and market pricing of foreign exchange."

He added that the approval was part of the Nigerian 2024 Appropriation Act as amended.

In addition to the borrowing approval, the Minister of Finance disclosed that the council also endorsed the creation of a N250 billion real estate investment fund, which aims to tackle Nigeria's 22 million housing deficit and provide long-term, affordable mortgage financing for Nigerians.

According to Edun, the initiative will provide Nigerians with the opportunity to secure mortgages at interest rates significantly lower than the current

market rates, which can exceed 30%, with tenures that could extend up to 20 years or more.

"Approval has been granted for the Ministry of Finance Incorporated (MOFI) real estate investment fund. This fund will serve as the basis for the revival of long-term mortgage financing in the Nigerian economy.

"The MOFI Real Estate Investment Fund will initially amount to N250 billion and will provide low-cost, long-term mortgages to Nigerians who wish to acquire homes. It will help address part of the 22 million-unit housing deficit.

"Of course, it will create jobs, stimulate economic growth, and pave the way for other private sector investors to participate in the housing construction industry, with significant benefits for the broader economy.

"The concept is long-term. Investors will have the opportunity to earn market rates of interest and returns on investment, blended with seed funding of N150 billion," the Minister added.

# DISTURBING TREND: Over 40 Nigerian security personnel arrested for arming terrorists

By Agency Reporter

A shocking trend of security personnel selling arms and ammunition to terrorists has reached a boiling point in Nigeria, with over 40 mobile policemen and soldiers arrested in recent months across the country.

This disturbing phenomenon was uncovered during discreet investigations into the proliferation of weapons used by terrorists and bandits, conducted by intelligence agencies in collaboration with the Nigerian Army Military Police.

The alarming revelation underscores a critical breach in Nigeria's internal security, where individuals sworn to protect the nation are instead fueling violence and aiding criminal elements.

The National Security Adviser (NSA), Nuhu Ribadu, had previously raised concerns over the illegal sale of arms by security agents to bandits and terrorists. Speaking at an event organized by the National Centre for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (NCCSALW) in Abuja, Ribadu condemned the betrayal by these personnel.

Apparently pained and infuriated at the same time, Ribadu had stated, "The worst human being is a policeman or a soldier who takes arms from his formation and sells them to bad people, enabling them to kill his own colleagues and fellow citizens."

He stressed the urgent need to halt these practices, warning that they not only embolden terrorists but also exacerbate insecurity in Nigeria and the broader West African region.

The involvement of security personnel in arming terrorists not



only compromises national security but also undermines regional efforts to combat terrorism.

This situation has also added to the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in view of the growing threat of terrorism in Nigeria, where the country is struggling to contain the infiltration of terrorists groups from countries like Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso.

Intelligence sources confirmed to Zagazola Makama that these individuals were apprehended during discreet investigations into the proliferation of weapons used by criminal elements, including terrorists and bandits in the North East, North West, North Central and South East part of the country.

## Details of the Illicit Network

Investigations revealed that some of the arrested security personnel had amassed significant wealth from their illicit acts. A soldier was discovered to have over ₦50 million in his account from arms sales, while a mobile policeman had accumulated over ₦80 million.

N500,000 to N750,000 while other weapons like anti-aircraft gun are sold from N1 million and above.

These transactions highlight an organized and lucrative network of illicit arms trading between rogue soldier elements and the police.

The proliferation of these weapons has worsened insecurity in regions such as the North-East, North-West, North-Central, and South-East, where bandits, terrorists, and separatist groups continue to launch deadly attacks on communities.

## Calls for Action

It is advised that DHQ should check involvement of security personnel in arms racketeering with a view to nipping the aspect in the bud while ONSA should direct the National Centre for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (NCCSALW) to investigate the arms trade and dismantle the networks facilitating these transactions.

By Zagazola Makama

AK47 rifle are being sold ranging from

# EFCC arraigns company's MD for alleged N9m Visa scam

By Friday Omosola

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) Port Harcourt Zonal Directorate has arraigned Echendu Ndubuisi Endy, the Managing Director of Echendu GPC Limited, before Justice E. A. Obile of the Federal High Court in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

He faces charges for allegedly defrauding victims of N9 million by falsely claiming to secure travel visas for them.

Endy was charged with three counts of visa fraud and obtaining money under false pretenses, offenses that violate Section 1(1)(a) & (b) of the advance fee fraud and other fraud related offences act, 2006, punishable under Section 1(3) of the same act.

One of the count charges reads: "That you, Echendu Ndubuisi Endy while being the Managing Director of Echendu GPC Limited between 23rd day of April 2024 to 2nd May 2024 in Port Harcourt, within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court, with intent to defraud did obtain the total sum of N4 million only from Mr Darlington Abuchi under the pretense that you had the capacity to procure United Kingdom work permit visa to enable him work and stay in United Kingdom which pretense you knew to be false and thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 1(1) a & b of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Fraud Related Offences Act, 2006 and punishable under Section 1(3) of the same Act."

Another count reads: "That you, Echendu Ndubuisi Endy while being the Managing Director of Echendu GPC Limited between 16th day of August 2023 to 14th September 2023 in Port Harcourt,



within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court, with intent to defraud did obtain the total sum of N3 million from Mrs Ngozi Nzechukwu under the pretense that you had the capacity to procure United Kingdom work permit visa to enable her work and stay in United Kingdom which pretense you knew to be false and thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 1(1) a & b of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Fraud Related Offences Act, 2006 and punishable under Section 1(3) of the same Act". He pleaded 'not guilty' to the charges when they were read to him. Following this, prosecution counsel K. A. Yunus requested that the court set a date for the commencement of the trial and that the defendant be remanded in the custody of the Nigeria Correctional Service (NCS).

In response, defense counsel P. U. Alikor informed the court that he

had applied for the defendant's bail and requested that the court grant bail to allow him time to prepare for the trial.

In his ruling, Justice Obile ordered that the defendant be remanded at the Port Harcourt Correctional Centre.

The case was adjourned to November 28, 2024, for the hearing of the bail application.

Endy was arrested in October 2024 for allegedly being involved in a visa scam and obtaining money under false pretenses, as reported to the Commission by three separate petitioners.

He is accused of collecting a total of N9 million from the petitioners with the promise of securing travel visas and caregiving jobs for them in the United Kingdom.

However, he neither procured the visas nor refunded the money.

# Police nab three for stealing phones from accident victims

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

General Michael Langley, the Commander of the United States Africa Command, has visited the Chief of Defence Staff, General Christopher Musa, at the Defence Headquarters in Abuja.

The Director of Defence Information, Brigadier General Tukur Gusau, noted that the AFRICOM Commander was accompanied by the US Ambassador to Nigeria, Richard Mills, in a statement released on Wednesday.

Gusau, who said Langley commended the Defence Headquarters' strategy in combating insecurity, stated, "General Langley praised Nigeria's approach to tackling insecurity within the country and its strategic leadership role in the sub-region. He also congratulated the Chief of Defence Staff on his appointment as Chairman of the

Committee of ECOWAS Chiefs of Defence Staff." Gusau added that the CDS pledged to collaborate with other nations to eliminate terrorism in West Africa.

He further noted that Musa requested the United States' support in the procurement of weapons and other equipment.

Gusau said, "In his response, the CDS thanked the AFRICOM Commander for taking the time to visit Nigeria and assured him of the Armed Forces' commitment to cooperate with other nations in the sub-region to eradicate all forms of terrorism and crime.



"General Musa also sought greater defence cooperation with the United States, particularly in training, intelligence sharing, and facilitating the procurement of necessary platforms from the US."

# Tinubu appoints Atiku's ex-spokesman, Bwala as media adviser

By Dave Oludare Oso

In an appointment that will surprise many, the President, Bola Tinubu has appointed Daniel Bwala as his Special Adviser on Media and Public Communications for the State House.

The President's Special Adviser on Information and Strategy, Bayo Onanuga, made the announcement on Thursday.

In the statement, Onanuga also disclosed the appointment of three new directors-general for key government agencies.

Bwala was a very close ally and spokesman of former Vice President Atiku Abubakar, and was a visible supporter of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) during the 2023 presidential election, which Atiku lost to Tinubu.

Bwala made headlines and stirred significant public discourse when he shifting his political allegiance to Tinubu shortly after the election.

In the other appointments, Mr. Olawale Olopade has been appointed

as the Director-General of the National Sports Commission.

Olopade, known for his vast experience in sports administration, has previously served as Commissioner for Youth and Sports in Ogun State and led the organizing committee for the 2024 National Sports Festival.

Dr. Abisoye Fagade will serve as Director-General of the National Institute for Hospitality and Tourism. Fagade is a seasoned expert in marketing communications and the founder and managing director of Sodium Brand Solutions.

Dr. Adebowale Adedokun has assumed the role of Director-General at the Bureau of Public Procurement. Before this appointment, Adedokun was the Director of Research,



Training, and Strategic Planning within the bureau.

Onanuga stressed that "these appointments underscore President Tinubu's commitment to strengthening leadership and enhancing the efficiency of critical government institutions."

# Ondo Poll: Police declare readiness for election

By Friday Omosola

The Deputy Inspector-General of Police overseeing the Ondo State gubernatorial election, DIG Sylvester Alabi, reaffirmed on Thursday the readiness of the police and other security agencies for Saturday's poll.

Speaking during a press briefing at the Ondo State Police Command Headquarters in Akure, DIG Alabi addressed officers assigned to election duties and members of the press.

He highlighted the extensive deployment of security personnel across the state's 18 Local Government Areas, 203 wards, and 3,933 polling units.

He assured that each polling unit would have at least four police officers working alongside personnel from other election security agencies to ensure a seamless electoral process.

The DIG stressed the importance of

proactive measures, particularly intelligence gathering and firmness, to counter potential security threats and disruptions.

These measures, he said, are crucial for maintaining safety, preventing electoral malpractice such as vote-buying, and upholding the integrity of the election.

"By leveraging intelligence gathering, the police can guarantee a secure, free, and fair electoral process. To this end, the Force has conducted a comprehensive threat analysis and deployed personnel to areas identified as vulnerable during the election," DIG Alabi stated.

He called for collaboration between the police, other security agencies, and the electorate, emphasising the Force's commitment to maintaining law and order throughout the election period.



Adequate contingency plans, he noted, have been put in place to address any issues that might arise before, during, or after the election.

DIG Alabi also urged citizens to comply with the provisions of the Electoral Act 2023 (as amended), INEC guidelines, and other applicable laws.

He warned that electoral offenders and troublemakers would be arrested and prosecuted.

# Pro-Wike lawmakers: Court reserves judgement on Rivers crisis

By Dave Oludare Oso

A mild drama ensued at the Special Court of Appeal Panel hearing on Thursday, during deliberations over the Rivers political crisis that could potentially lead to the removal of 27 members of the Rivers State House of Assembly loyal to FCT minister, Nyesom Wike.

The confusion arose when two senior lawyers separately announced their representation for the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

J. Y. Musa declared his appearance for the PDP faction led by Umar Damagum, while B. F. Folurunsho countered, stating that he had been officially assigned the case by the party's National Legal Adviser. Folurunsho asserted that the National Legal Adviser holds exclusive authority to manage all legal matters concerning the PDP.

The Special Court of Appeal Panel, headed by Justice Onyekachi Otisi, has since reserved judgment on the consolidated appeals against the

earlier decision by Justice Peter Lifu of the Federal High Court, Abuja. This announcement followed the adoption of briefs and final arguments from counsel on both sides.

One of the appeals centers on a prior ruling by Justice Lifu, which prohibited the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) from providing the voters' register to the Rivers State Independent Electoral Commission for state local government elections—polls that have since taken place.

In another contentious ruling, Justice Lifu had granted an ex parte order restraining the PDP's national leadership from dissolving the recently elected party executives in Rivers State, a faction reportedly aligned with FCT Minister Nyesom Wike. The Appeal Panel's final ruling remains eagerly anticipated as the case continues to draw widespread attention.





## Ondo: Three candidates step down for Gov Aiyedatiwa

By Dave Oludare Oso

Just about 24 hours to the Saturday's governorship poll in Ondo State, three candidates have stepped down for the candidate of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa.

Prince Ebenezer Adeniyana, the Chief Press Secretary to Governor Aiyedatiwa, confirmed on Thursday that Dr. Ajibola Falaye, Hon. Jenyo Ataunko, and Olaide Ibrahim of the Accord Party, the National Rescue Movement, and the African Democratic Congress, respectively have dropped their ambition.

Adeniyana said the endorsement came when the three candidates paid a solidarity visit to the governor.

Speaking on behalf of the candidate, Dr. Falaye hinged their decision to back the governor on his commitment to public service, track record, and outstanding performance in office.

"We have been watching him, and his doors are always open to all," Falaye stated, commending the governor for his inclusive approach to governance and for prioritising the welfare of residents.

He pointed to the governor's record on

security, stating, "The state has been experiencing relative peace under his watch, which reflects his commitment to safeguarding the lives of our people."

The Accord Party candidate also noted the shared values of progressive politics and goals that NRM, ADC, and Accord find in alignment with the Aiyedatiwa's administration.

He said, "We see the infrastructural development that has taken place even within this short period. It is clear that the governor is actively working for the people. This Saturday, we will turn our commitment into votes. We will vote for continuity in Ondo State."

In his response, Governor Aiyedatiwa expressed deep gratitude for the endorsement, calling it a quality decision made out of goodwill by the candidates and their parties.

"I didn't call for this, but I am grateful that my colleagues in the race have voluntarily identified with my mandate and are ready



to mobilise their supporters to vote for the APC," the governor said.

Aiyedatiwa warmly welcomed the candidates' decision to unite behind him, describing it as an act of statesmanship.

Acknowledging the short time remaining before the election, the governor said: "There's no time left. I appeal to you all to encourage your members to come out in full force on Saturday and cast their votes for the APC."

This comes as Benue Governor Reverend Father Hyacinth Alia and the Director General of the campaign, Hon. Abiola Makinde, among others, joined Governor Aiyedatiwa to receive the three

## Ondo Poll: Akeredolu family denies endorsement of SDP candidate

By Friday Omosola

The family of the late Governor Oluwarotimi Akeredolu has dismissed reports claiming they endorsed Bamidele Akingboye, the Social Democratic Party (SDP) candidate, in the upcoming Saturday's governorship election.

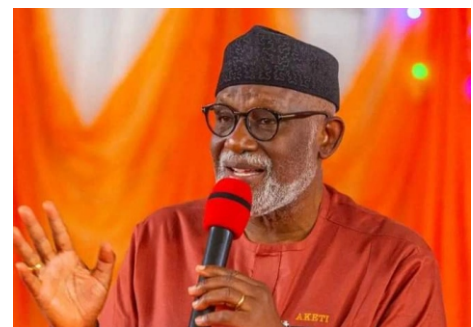
Reports had circulated suggesting that the Akeredolu family, alongside a group called ASEI Human Rights of Nigeria, threw their support behind Akingboye.

However, Vanguard reported that during a press conference in Akure, Oba Adewuyi Babalola, the National President of ASEI Human Rights, who represented the Akeredolu family called on voters to prioritize candidate integrity over party affiliation for the sake of good governance.

In response, the Akeredolu family issued a statement signed by Oluwole Akeredolu, the immediate younger brother of the late governor. The statement refuted the reports, calling them false and misleading. Oluwole further emphasised that he was authorized to speak on behalf of the family, clarifying that no such endorsement had been made.

The statement read: "The Akeredolu Family of Owo, Ondo State is constrained to respond to reports and speculations in the mainstream and online media of the alleged support of the Family for the Social Democratic Party in the forthcoming Ondo State Elections.

"For the avoidance of doubt, Professor Oluwole Akeredolu (the immediate younger brother of the recently departed Arakunrin Oluwarotimi Akeredolu) is the head of the Akeredolu Family and solely authorised to speak on behalf of the Family. Neither he nor any of the principal members of the Family has declared



support for the SDP. The Akeredolu Family has not declared any such support.

"We are not unaware of the activities of Olufemi Akeredolu (the youngest of the brothers of the immediate past Governor of Ondo State) and his association with the SDP. He is an adult, an individual with an inalienable right to freedom of association. He does not speak for the Family, neither is he authorised to do so."

# How Nigeria leather is sustaining Europe's designer brands

By Agency Reporter

A seemingly innocuous “Did you know?” can be the starting point in a journey of discovery that scrapes the veneer off long-held perceptions.

Such as learning that your branded “luxurious Italian leather” handbag has more Nigeria in it than Italy.

Or, for that matter, being told that several famous Italian and Spanish brands source at least part of their leather from tanneries in northern Nigeria.

Leather from Nigeria, especially red Sokoto goatskin, is acknowledged globally for its superior quality.

**DRIVER OF EMPLOYMENT, FOREIGN EXCHANGE**

Although Nigeria has fewer tanneries now than a decade ago, leather continues to be one of the drivers of employment and foreign exchange in Africa's most populous nation.

According to the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics, about 16.6 million agricultural households raise approximately 124 million goats and sheep annually, translating into ready hide availability for the leather industry. Tanneries in northern Nigeria, especially in the commercial hub of Kano, rely almost entirely on small-scale farmers to supply raw material that is processed into leather for export and domestic consumption.

“The leather industry holds immense promise for economic growth and diversification,” Dr Jerry Tagang, lecturer at the Nigerian Institute of Leather and Science Technology (NILEST) in Zaria, tells TRT Afrika.

**90% OF NIGERIAN LEATHER IS EXPORTED**

“The country's abundant raw materials, skilled artisans, and supportive government policies (such as the National Leather and Leather Products Policy) create a fertile ground for the sector to grow.”

While data from the Nigerian Exports Promotion Council suggests that 90% of the leather produced in Nigeria is exported, Dr Tagang says domestic



demand alone is significant enough to sustain the livelihood of thousands of Nigerians.

“Nigeria's leather and leather products industry currently employs over 750,000 workers, with about 500,000 of them being engaged in the finished goods sector,” says Dr Tagang.

“The industry can potentially create more jobs for Nigeria's youth and women, provided the leather value chain is properly explored.”

**COMPETE AT GLOBAL LEVEL**

Many of those in the domestic sector work for Winston Leather, which has diversified into making leather products from merely exporting leather.

In a video posted on the company's TikTok account, CEO Winston Udeagha says the company's leather products are of the same quality as top European brands, albeit cheaper.

“We are part of the ‘made-in-Africa’ brand equity that can compete at the global level,” he tells TRT Afrika.

“So, if you see a bag made in Nigeria now and you see a bag you want to buy from any other country where you go shopping, know that they are on par in terms of quality.”

**EXPORT-FOCUSED TRADE**

The Nigerian Export Promotion Council website states that 71% of leather exports from the country are to Italy and Spain.

Premium goatskin leather mainly goes to Italy, accounting for 68% of the trade in this category. Spain imports 21% of Nigeria's goatskin leather and China sources around 4%.

India takes the lion's share of Nigerian sheep and lamb leather with 36%, followed by China with 22%.

Ali Muhammad Tilashi has been engaged in the trade for about a decade, sending container loads of leather to Italy, Spain, China and India. “Whatever you produce that is of good quality, they will buy,” he says

**VALUE ADDITION**

Even for a small player in the business, Tilashi's export output is about 10 container loads of cargo at a time.

“It is estimated that up to 544 million square feet of light leather (worth US \$272 million) was exported from Nigeria last year,” Dr Tagang tells TRT Afrika.

## Kenyan health leaders pledge support for new initiatives

By Helen Okechukwu

Nurses leaders in Kenya, on Friday, pledged support for the rollout of Social Health Authority (SHA) and Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

This was disclosed after a meeting with the Cabinet Secretary for Health, Dr. Deborah Mlongo Barasa.

Recall that on September 18, 2024, Dr. Barasa announced the official launching of SHA to begin on October 1st, 2024 for sole aim of replacing the National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF), targeting to provide affordable, accessible, and quality healthcare services to all Kenyans.

She added that it will aid in advancing UHC, which aims to grant quality healthcare services to all people, when and where they need them, without financial hardship.

During their visitation, the health leaders highlighted their roles in health reform, describing them as critical roles while emphasising the need to include their leadership roles and empanelment in SHA packages.



Among other needs are representation in health committees and involvement in streamlining the nurse migration process for overseas placements.

Delegations present include Dr. Judith Awinja, Director of Nursing and Midwifery Services at Afya House; Prof. Eunice Ndirangu, Chair of the Nursing Council of Kenya (NCK); Dr. Lister Onsongo, CEO of NCK; and Collins Ajwang', President of the National Nurses Association of Kenya (NNAK).

Other representatives are Catherine Mwaura, Representative of Mid-level Training Institutions; Dr. Albanas Mutisya, Universities Representative; Seth Panyako, Secretary General of the Kenya Union of Nurses; and Rahel Mukhwana, Director of Nursing Services at Kenyatta National Hospital.

## Mpox: Ghana health director confirms new case

By Helen Okechukwu

The Deputy Director of Public Health at the Ghana Health Service (GHS) in charge of Disease Surveillance, Dr. Dennis Laryea, has confirmed a new case of Mpox in the Greater Accra Region, increasing the number to three.

On August 2024, in the Western Region, 25 contacts were identified to have contracted Mpox, making it the first to be recorded.

On October 31, 2024, the mother of the patient was confirmed positive.

Known as monkeypox, the World Health Organization (WHO) revealed that Mpox is a viral illness caused by the monkeypox virus, a species of the genus Orthopoxvirus.

According to a report shared today, the

deputy director said the recently confirmed case was observed last week after investigations were carried out in that region.

“There was one case confirmed in the Greater Accra Region. The region has done their investigations so far. We haven't identified any new cases, even amongst the contacts, but we're still following the map to determine if anybody develops symptoms. I don't have the figures for the contacts off-head, but the case was confirmed last week,” Dr. Laryea stated.

He assured the public and urges them to remain calm as all necessary measures are taken to



monitor for prevention.

Dr. Laryea reemphasized the health commission's efforts in curbing the spread.

# MDCAN declares 7-day warning strike

By Helen Okechukwu



## MEDICAL AND DENTAL CONSULTANTS' OF NIGERIA

Following a previous 21-day warning strike, the Medical and Dental Consultants Association of Nigeria (MDCAN) has issued a fresh seven-day ultimatum for the government to meet their demands.

MDCAN, an association representing professionals with the highest qualifications in the fields of medicine and dentistry, announced that the strike will commence on November 18 and end on November 24 if their requests are not addressed.

In a communiqué issued after its National Executive Council (NEC) meeting held virtually on Monday, the association stated its intent to withdraw its members from all Nigerian universities and hospitals, citing the government's failure to address their demands.

The previous 21-day ultimatum was carried out from October 21 to November 11.

The association is responsible for training medical doctors, providing specialist healthcare services, and conducting research across various medical fields.

MDCAN members work in both government and non-governmental hospitals, as well as tertiary and secondary health facilities nationwide.

The National President, Dr. Mohammad Mohammad, emphasized the exclusion of medical and dental lecturers from the selection process for the Vice-Chancellor position at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State.

He argued that their qualifications have been unfairly sidelined, criticizing the criteria for the appointment.

Among MDCAN's demands is an increase in the retirement age for medical and dental consultants to 70 years, aimed at supporting effective healthcare

delivery and mitigating the impact of doctor migration.

Additionally, they called on the government to align lecturers' pay with the Consolidated Medical Salary Structure (CONMESS) to prevent salary disparities.

The communiqué also called for the immediate removal of the Chairman of the Governing Council of Nnamdi Azikiwe University from his position, citing insubordination.

About MDCAN MDCAN is tasked with training medical doctors, providing specialized healthcare services, and conducting research across various medical fields.

Members of this association work in government and non-government hospitals, as well as in tertiary and secondary health facilities across Nigeria.

# Measles upsurge: Under-five children more at risk – WHO

By Helen Okechukwu



As measles cases witnessed an upsurge globally, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have raised concerns that children below age five suffer the most, leaving them prone to the risk of contracting the viral disease.

The health organization said the viral diseases have been on the increase due to inadequate immunization coverage globally, driving the surge with about 10.3 million cases contracting measles in 2023 and a 20% increase from 2022.

As a preventive disease, they advised that two doses of measles vaccine should be administered to children, noting that more than 22 million children missed their first dose of measles vaccine in 2023.

In raising concern, it was noted that worldwide, about 83% of children received their first dose of measles vaccine last year, and only 74% received the recommended second dose.

Being a highly contagious viral disease that is transmittable with visible symptoms such as fever, cough, runny nose, and distinctive rash on the skin, it is said to have effects leading to pneumonia, brain damage, and even death in children under the age of five, especially on those with weak immune systems if not adequately handled.

To further protect communities and populations from the measles outbreak as one of the world's most

dangerous contagious human viruses, the health organization revealed that 95% or greater of two doses of the measles vaccine is sufficient for each country and community.

Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General, said, "The measles vaccine has saved more lives than any other vaccine in the past 50 years," and "To save even more lives and stop this deadly virus from harming the most vulnerable, we must invest in immunization for every person, no matter where they live."

CDC Director, Mandy Cohen emphasized the effect and danger of the contagious virus, stating that "the number of measles infections is rising around the globe, endangering lives and health," adding that "the measles vaccine is our best protection against the virus, and we must continue to invest in efforts to increase access."

The New Daily Prime gathered that in covering the vaccination coverage gap globally, in 2023, about 57 countries experienced large or disruptive measles outbreaks, greatly affecting all regions except the Americas, and representing a nearly 60% increase from 36 countries in the previous year. The document reviewed by this corepodence read, "The new data show that an estimated 107 500 people, mostly children younger than 5 years of age, died due to measles in 2023. Although this is an 8% decrease from the previous year, far too many children are still dying from this preventable disease. This slight reduction in deaths was mainly because the surge in cases occurred in countries and regions where children with measles are less likely to die, due to better nutritional status and access to health services."

"Even when people survive measles, serious health effects can occur, some of which are lifelong. Infants and young children are at greatest risk of

serious complications from the disease, which include blindness, pneumonia, and encephalitis (an infection causing brain swelling and potentially brain damage)."

Outlining their aim and objectives for the elimination targeted in 2030, the document noted, "As measles cases surge and outbreaks increase, the world's elimination goal, as laid out in Immunisation Agenda 2030, is under threat. Worldwide, 82 countries had achieved or maintained measles elimination at the end of 2023. Just this week, Brazil was reverified as having eliminated measles, making the WHO Americas Region once again free of endemic measles. With the exception of the African Region, at least 1 country in all WHO regions has eliminated the disease."

"Urgent and targeted efforts by countries and partners, particularly in the African and Eastern Mediterranean regions and in fragile, conflict-affected, and vulnerable settings, are needed to vaccinate all children fully with two doses of the measles vaccine. This requires achieving and maintaining high-performing routine immunisation programmes and delivering high-quality, high-coverage campaigns when those programmes are not yet sufficient to protect every child.

"Countries and global immunization partners must also strengthen disease surveillance, including the Global Measles Rubella Laboratory Network (GMRLN). Strong disease surveillance is critical to optimising immunisation programmes and detecting and responding rapidly to measles outbreaks in order to mitigate their size and impact."

## Paul Okoye's wife Ivy Ifeoma discusses P-Square rift

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Ivy Ifeoma, the wife of Paul Okoye commonly known as Rudeboy from the renowned Nigerian music duo P-Square has shed light on the protracted discord between her husband and his twin brother, Peter Okoye, also known as Mr P.

The longstanding feud has been a topic of great interest among fans who have watched the musical sibling duo dismantle over personal and professional disagreements over the years.

Many have expressed a yearning for reconciliation, longing for the harmonious sounds that P-Square once produced during their heyday.

In a recent YouTube Q&A session, Ivy candidly addressed the emotional turmoil surrounding the rift, expressing her disappointment over the unresolved conflicts that led to the duo's bitter separation.

In response to a fan's inquiry regarding Paul Okoye's recent birthday wish to his ex-wife, Anita, Ivy stated, "Ain't nothing wrong with that. He wished her a happy birthday. Is that supposed to be a bad thing?"

This response highlights not only Ivy's supportive stance regarding her husband's actions but also her perspective on personal relationships that transcend barriers, even those forged by past romantic ties.

The complex dynamic of familial relationships was further explored during the session when another fan sought Ivy's insights on what P-Square fans could do to encourage reconciliation between the two brothers.

Ivy's honesty was palpable as she replied, "I personally am not happy about the split. But it is what it is, to be honest."

Her response reflects the peaceful acceptance of a situation that has caused significant distress not just for the brothers but also for their loyal fanbase.

The question posed to Ivy reflected a broader sentiment among fans what can be done to mend the frayed



relationship between the two influential figures in the Nigerian music scene?

Read Also: Paul Okoye alleges Producer of Song Theft

Peter Okoye responds to brother's song ownership

Ivy's response was straightforward and devoid of sugar-coating; "And if you want to know what to do to bring them back together, please go and ask them. Don't ask me because I don't know what to tell you honestly."

This candid admission underscores the intricacies of personal relationships and suggests that reconciliation may be a journey only the brothers can navigate, underscoring her position as an observer rather than a mediator.

She further emphasized her reluctance to delve deeply into this sensitive issue, stating, "And I feel like I've said too much on this topic, so skip."

Ivy's defensive demeanor regarding the subject also indicates her awareness of the media scrutiny surrounding the family, hinting at the pressures stemming from being in the public eye.

The Okoye brothers, once celebrated across the continent and beyond for their musical synergy, have experienced a notable estrangement that has persisted

for several years, with both Paul and Peter carving out independent careers after the breakup of P-Square.

Both artists have made headlines—not just for their music but also for their personal lives, wedding ceremonies, and, inevitably, their conflicts.

This disconnection has caused significant concern among fans who reminisce about the duo's chart-topping tracks, such as "Chop My Money," "Busy Body," and "Forever," which resonated deeply with audiences and showcased their unique talent.

Despite the open dialogue about their rift, there remains a glimmer of hope among fans for reconciliation.

The motional pull of their shared history, both familial and professional, ignites a desire for the brothers to revive their once-flourishing partnership.

Social media platforms are filled with dedicated fans posting messages of support while hoping for a day when Paul and Peter will set aside their differences and reunite on stage once more.

# Kunle Afolayan holds training workshop for upcoming directors

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

The United States (US) Embassy in Nigeria and Kunle Afolayan's KAP Film & Television Academy have entered into a capacity-building partnership on vast areas of interest.

Afolayan announced the partnership at the launch of a workshop for the upcoming directors and cinematographers, which kicked off on November 12 and which will run till November 16 at the KAP Hub, Lagos.

The thespian added that the workshop is aimed at developing the next generation of Nigerian filmmakers and creators by providing direct, hands-on experience with top U.S. industry professionals.

The event, which was attended by the Consular General of the United States Embassy in Nigeria, Will Stevens, renowned cinematographer cum filmmaker, Tunde Kelani, actress Sola Sobowale, renowned film editor,

Steve Sodiya, Ope Ajayi, Seun Soyinka and Olumide Iyanda, is one of the programmes lined up for the partnership.

Speaking about the partnership, Afolayan expressed gratitude to the United States embassy in Nigeria for partnering, supporting and facilitating the experts, who will be handling the workshop.

"We have a partnership which stemmed from my recent trip to the United States where I attended a creative programme supported by the United States embassy consulate in Nigeria. We went to L.A, DC, Virginia and Atlanta to meet with stakeholders and rub minds on film. For this programme, we are focusing on directing and cinematography and we are also lucky that the U.S embassy decided to bring two experts in directing, Angel Williams and cinematography, Erin Wesley."

The American Consular General, Will



Stevens also hailed Kunle Afolayan saying he has made an impact on shaping the narrative with his content and shaping how the world views the Nigerian and African culture through films and partnerships with American entities like Amazon and Netflix.

On the sideline of the event, Afolayan announced that he and his team have completed season two and three of his hit series, 'Anikulapo.' He also revealed that his recent film project, 'Recall,' was recently premiered at the 2024 edition of AFRIFF.

# Denzel Washington reveals upcoming projects, including Black Panther sequel

By Eyitayo Jemimah Ajayi

Hollywood hunk, Denzel Washington has said that he's not done yet, declaring that before he finally calls it quits, "I wanna do things I haven't done."

The renowned actor then talks up some of his ongoing projects, prominent among which is MCU's Black Panther.

In a recent interview with Australia's Today Show, the two-time Oscar winner shared his carefully curated project slate, including Ridley Scott's Gladiator II and Ryan Coogler's next Black Panther film.

When asked about potential pressure or trepidation, Washington expressed none,

emphasizing his focus on collaborating with "the best" filmmakers at this stage in his career.

"For me, it's about the filmmaker," Washington stated. "I'm only interested in working with the best. I don't know how many more films I'm gonna make, probably not that many. I wanna do things I haven't done."

Washington, 69, hinted at eventual retirement after completing several lined-up projects, including; Two more takes on Othello, a film with Steve McQueen, a role in Ryan Coogler's next Black Panther film, a film adaptation of King



Lear.

Notably, Washington has a special connection to the late Chadwick Boseman, who credited Washington's financial support early in his career as pivotal to his success, saying, "There would be no Black Panther without Denzel Washington."

His latest project, Gladiator II, starring Washington, Pedro Pascal, and Joseph Quinn, will be on November 22.

Washington's thoughtful approach to his remaining film projects underscores his commitment to quality and collaboration with exceptional filmmakers.

# I cancelled wedding plans after my engagement- Simi Drey

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

**B**ritish-Nigerian presenter and award-winning actress Simi Drey has shared the deeply personal decision to cancel her marriage plans with a former partner, despite having accepted an engagement.

Simi's heartfelt confessions were disclosed during a recent episode of the popular podcast, "WithChude", where she opened up about the intricacies and challenges of her relationship journey that ultimately led to this significant life choice.

During the interview, Simi shed light on the emotional turmoil that accompanied her engagement.

In her reflection, she articulated a profound sense of dissatisfaction that clouded her happiness, illuminating the internal struggles that prompted her to reconsider her path.

It became clear to her that societal pressures and expectations of marriage, which are often exaggerated in many cultures, including her own, played a significant role in her decision-making process.

Simi candidly stated, "My ex and I didn't have a perfect relationship. He never cheated or was abusive. But you know when you are not 100% fulfilled or happy."

This poignant observation underscores the complexity of relationships where external appearances may suggest stability, yet internally, one could feel an unsettling void.

The multi-talented media personality shared her reflections on the pervasive societal pressure regarding marriage, particularly for women.

"We do live in a part of the world where marriage is heavily emphasized, especially for women. My parents never pressured me, but I remember my friends asking me, 'When will you get married?'"

This statement resonates with many individuals who balance societal expectations against their happiness, revealing the stress these external

pressures can instigate.

Simi recounted the moment her fiancé proposed, revealing her initial feelings of uncertainty. "I remember having this apprehension 'Is he the person I am going to marry?'" she shared.

This sentiment was compounded by advice from her mother, who, upon hearing about the engagement, expressed some hesitation. "I was very close to my mum. When I told her that I was engaged, she said, 'Simi, don't do this.' But I told her everything is fine," Simi recalled, highlighting the struggle between familial expectations and one's own emotions.

In a heartfelt moment, Simi remembered a poignant phone call with her father, remarking, "I called my dad and ended the call in tears of apprehension, not joy." This intense moment reflects the fear and uncertainty that often accompanies significant life choices, particularly in romantic relationships where expectations loom large.

As time progressed, Simi began to realize her need for introspection. "Two months later, I called my fiancé and said that we should work on our relationship first, and then maybe we can think about marriage," she explained.

This attempt to prioritize their relationship over the impending marriage speaks to her desire for a solid foundation rather than just a ceremonial commitment.

However, after a month of reflection, Simi reached a pivotal conclusion about her engagement: "I didn't feel I wanted to marry this man because I wanted to marry with worth."

With this clarity, she made the difficult decision to end the engagement, opening herself up to criticism and scrutiny from those around her.

"I received more criticism from people around me, but I had to be truthful to myself that I wasn't happy in the



relationship," she stated forthrightly. Bravely, Simi embraced her newfound singlehood and the lessons it brought. "It was after I left that reality hit me," she shared.

"I realized that being single and happy is better than being married and miserable." This powerful declaration emphasizes the importance of self-worth and the necessity of being in an environment that fosters mutual respect and admiration.

She powerfully articulated her stance, stating, "If I do not feel respected or feel a man is superior to me because of his title or finances, it is a no."

Through this poignant statement, Simi Drey shines a light on the significance of self-empowerment and emotional integrity, sending a resounding message that personal happiness should remain paramount in any relationship.

As she moves forward, Simi's journey serves as a reminder that prioritizing one's happiness and fulfilment is vital, even when faced with societal pressures to conform.

Her experience stands testament to the idea that relationships should be founded on respect, mutual understanding, and, above all, genuine happiness.



# Why I declined recording deals- Niniola reveals

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

success of her debut single.

Niniola candidly admitted her scepticism regarding the offer, expressing concern that a record label might attempt to alter her unique style.

“At that time, nobody was doing Afro-house,” she noted, underscoring the importance of authenticity and originality in her work.

“A label’s influence can be strong; they have the financing, and that often means they can dictate what you do.”

This emphasis on maintaining her artistic integrity is paramount to Niniola, who regards creative freedom as one of the most significant advantages of her independent status.

“It allows me to explore new ideas without worrying about fitting into a commercial mould,” she said, highlighting how independence has fueled her innovative spirit.

Interestingly, despite her vibrant stage presence and infectious energy during performances, Niniola revealed her introverted nature.

“I’m an introvert at heart, but music brings out the extrovert in me,” she shared. This duality is not uncommon among artists, who often find that their craft serves as a powerful outlet for expression, transcending their boundaries.

Furthermore, Niniola’s chosen path as an independent artist stands as a



Nigerian singer-songwriter Niniola Apata, fondly known for her hit single “Maradona,” has recently opened up about her steadfast decision to remain an independent artist in an industry rife with tempting offers from major record labels.

In a candid interview with TVC, the accomplished musician explained that her deliberate choice stems from a deep understanding of the business dynamics of the music industry something she believes many of her counterparts overlook.

For a decade now, Niniola has embraced the life of an independent artist, navigating her musical journey on her terms

“There are pros and cons to signing with a record label,” she explains. “Having been in this business for so long, I have been fortunate enough to witness the industry’s inner workings, which a lot of artists simply choose to ignore. Too often, they become consumed solely with the art of making music, forgetting about the business side that can significantly impact their careers.”

Niniola thoroughly enjoys the creative autonomy that accompanies her independent status.

This freedom allows her to explore her distinctive sound without external pressures to conform to commercial expectations.

“Being an independent artist gives me the opportunity to do what I want,” she emphasized.

“I’m in charge of my creativity.” Her intuition to remain independent has served her well, especially after a major label sought to sign her following the

testament to her commitment to authenticity and self-determination.

As she continues to evolve as a musician and explore new facets of her artistry, fans eagerly anticipate the next chapter in her dynamic career.

With a growing body of work and an unwavering sense of identity, Niniola is poised to make significant waves in the Nigerian music scene and beyond.

Her journey serves as an inspiring reminder to both aspiring artists and music lovers alike, emphasizing the importance of staying true to one’s passion while navigating the complexities of the

# After Trump's victory, US election falsehoods shift left

By Agency Reporter

Right-wing falsehoods about voter fraud fell off a cliff after Donald Trump's victory in the US election, but American liberals took a page from their playbook to push wild conspiracy theories that have fueled doubt about the democratic process.

The left-wing warping of reality underscores how disinformation is peddled across both sides of the political aisle, feeding information chaos on increasingly unmoderated social media platforms that has made it harder for users to decipher fact from fiction.

The falsehoods promoted on sites including the Elon Musk-owned X and Meta's Threads range from unfounded claims about fraudulent vote tallies in key swing states to allegations that Trump "cheated" to win against his Democratic rival Kamala Harris.

Left-leaning social media users also spread the unfounded theory that Musk — the world's richest man and a vociferous Trump backer — used his Starlink satellite internet company to rig the election by manipulating the vote count, AFP's fact-checkers reported.

"What we're seeing now is an uptick in election fraud claims from the left, particularly in the days following Election Day — and these narratives are being amplified by bot networks," Dan Brahmy, chief executive of the disinformation security company Cyabra, told AFP.

"It's a reminder that disinformation and exploitation tactics don't belong to one political ideology — they're weaponized across the board to influence public perception."

**'SHARED VULNERABILITY'**

The Democratic leadership has not questioned the election's outcome, with both Biden and Harris conceding the loss and deeming the November 5 election free and fair.

But just hours after the election, X was flooded with over 30,000



mentions of the hashtag "Do Not Concede Kamala" alongside the words "rigged," "fraud," or "stolen," according to the misinformation watchdog NewsGuard.

Some pro-Harris influencers implored her to "demand a recount" in posts that garnered millions of views.

Cyabra said it uncovered a "highly coordinated disinformation campaign" on X promoting the false notion that the election was "stolen," a narrative that initially gained traction through a network of fake profiles and was later amplified by real influencers.

Some users deployed a deliberate tactic, misspelling the vice president's name in their hashtags as "Kamila" to evade detection while amassing engagement.

The misspelling tactic, Cyabra said, was used to circumvent platform moderation as it "reduces the likelihood of automated content takedowns."

"The recent shift in election fraud claims reveals a deeper, shared vulnerability" on both sides of the political divide," Brahmy said.

"Narratives that may start as fringe beliefs can, under the right conditions, permeate mainstream discourse, regardless of political alignment."

**'INFORMATION WARFARE'**

Left-leaning social media users picked

up what researchers call the misinformation baton from Trump's right-wing supporters, who vigorously pushed unfounded claims of voter fraud since the Republican's 2020 election defeat.

This time around, right-wing claims flooded social media platforms right up to Election Day, but began tapering off as Trump's decisive victory took shape.

"You could call it a role-reversal," said Sam Howard, NewsGuard's political editor.

"As Trump's win became more apparent, there were fewer fraud claims from the right. But now there is a disbelief on the left that Harris's defeat was legitimate."

Such claims have spread unchecked as many platforms have gutted trust and safety teams and scaled back content moderation efforts once used to tame misinformation.

"Right-wing election deniers were largely placated by the results of the election, but it's not so much that disinformation is no longer a problem or that it has suddenly, miraculously, disappeared," Nora Benavidez, senior counsel at the nonprofit watchdog Free Press, told AFP.

# Russian woman jailed for posts urging to 'destroy' Putin

By Dave Oludare Oso

A Russian military court on Thursday sentenced a woman to eight years in jail for criticising the Ukraine offensive online and calling for the assassination of President Vladimir Putin, state media reported.

Moscow has opened hundreds of criminal cases against those who oppose the Ukraine campaign under strict censorship laws ushered in at the start of the conflict.

Russia's second western district military court found Anastasia Berezhinskaya, 43, guilty of spreading "false information", "discrediting" the armed forces and "justifying terrorism" over a series of posts on Russian social media platform VK.

Berezhinskaya, a theatre director, had railed against Russia's actions in Ukraine, saying Moscow's soldiers were killing civilians and destroying cities in a naked land grab.

Referring to Putin, Berezhinskaya wrote: "Destroy that bastard. Wipe him off the face of the Earth."

She also posted accounts of atrocities carried out by Russian soldiers in Bucha, a town occupied by Russian forces for the first month of the conflict.

In April 2022, the bodies of dozens of civilians, some with their hands tied, were found in the Kyiv suburb after a month-long occupation by Russian forces.

The Kremlin has denied targeting civilians throughout its near three-year campaign and accused Ukraine of staging the scenes at Bucha.

The United Nations has verified more than 11,000 civilian fatalities since the start of the conflict, though they believe the real number is likely much higher.

According to a counter on VK, some of Berezhinskaya's posts had been viewed just 60-130 times as of Thursday. Russia has blocked access to her page inside the country.

The independent Mediazona site



reported she has two children, aged eight and 10.

She has also been diagnosed with a personality disorder, according to case materials cited by Mediazona.

In court she pleaded partially guilty, denying that her comments on Putin were a genuine call to murder the Kremlin leader, it reported.

## 10 dead as fire razes Spanish nursing home

By Dave Oludare Oso

At least 10 people have been killed after a fire broke out at a retirement home in northern Spain in the early hours of Friday morning, Fernando Beltran, the national government's top official in the Aragon region, told reporters.

According to the Spanish news website, Diario Sur, a further two people were seriously injured in the blaze at the residence in the town of Villafranca de Ebro in Zaragoza.

They remain in a critical condition, while several others received treatment for smoke inhalation.

Firefighters were alerted to the blaze at the residence – the Jardines de Villafranca – at 5am (4am UK time) on Friday.

Those who were killed in the fire died from smoke inhalation, Spanish newspaper Herald reported.

The residence is home to 82 elderly residents.

The blaze started in one of the rooms, Fernando Beltran, the national government's top official in the region, told reporters.

All of the victims were elderly residents, he added.

Fire crews, paramedics and police officers remain on site, said a spokesperson for the regional government of Aragon who confirmed the fatalities.



It took firefighters several hours to extinguish the blaze, they said.

The cause of the fire is unknown and is being investigated.

Share

# Super Eagles goalkeeper, Stanley Nwabali loses dad

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Nigeria's Super Eagles goalkeeper, Stanley Nwabali, has shared the heartbreaking news of his father's passing.

Taking on Instagram on Friday, Nwabali posted a brief but poignant message, "Rest in peace, dad," accompanied by a tearful emoji.

The footballer chose to keep the cause of his father's death private, focusing instead on expressing his grief and paying tribute to his late father.

Fans and well-wishers have since flooded his post with messages of condolence and support during this difficult time.

Nwabali's loss serves as a reminder of the human side of athletes beyond their professional careers.



# Super Eagles qualify for AFCON 2025

By Dave Oludare Oso

The Super Eagles of Nigeria have secured their qualification for the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) in Morocco, following Libya's 1-0 victory over Rwanda in Kigali.

This result leaves Rwanda with five points from five matches, rendering them unable to surpass Nigeria in the standings, even if they win their upcoming match against the Super Eagles in Uyo.

Currently, Nigeria leads Group D with 10 points, followed by Benin with six points, Rwanda with five, and Libya at the bottom with four points.

Benin remains in contention for the second qualification spot and will face Nigeria in a crucial match tonight.

Libya is set to host Benin in the final Group D game on Monday.



# Israel's national anthem booed during soccer match in France

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



Some fans at Stade de France booed during the Israeli national anthem, and minor altercations erupted at a UEFA Nations League game between the two countries Thursday.

Increased security and police presence was set up before the match due to attacks on Israeli supporters in Amsterdam when Maccabi Tel Aviv faced Ajax last week.

About 4,000 French security personnel patrolled inside and outside the stadium and on public transit.

The Israeli government also warned its citizens about attending sporting and cultural events due to the attacks in Amsterdam, knowing the soccer match was upcoming.

Reuters reported around 100 Israeli fans were spotted sitting in a corner of Stade de France, which had an attendance of 16,611, not even close to its 80,000-person capacity.

Before the match kicked off, the Israeli national anthem played, and some “boos and whistles” were heard as it played.

Israeli supporters waved yellow balloons, chanting “Free the Hostages” in reference to those still being held by Hamas.

During the match, a fight broke out near where the Israeli fans were sitting, with some throwing punches, according to Reuters.

There was already friction leading into this match, with anti-Israeli protesters waving Palestinian flags among others in the Saint-Denis district of Paris with Team Israel coming to town.

Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations Danny Danon gave an exclusive statement to Fox News Digital Nov. 7 after attacks in Amsterdam.

“We are seeing a pogrom against Jews and Israelis unfold in Amsterdam,” Danon said. “In

2024. This must stop. ‘Globalize the intifada’ was not just a slogan for these terrorist supporters. I urge the Dutch government to help all Israelis and Jewish people immediately. It’s time to respond with force against these barbaric rioters.”

In the United States, the Israeli Embassy to the U.S. posted a graphic video of the violence, saying, “The mob who targeted those innocent Israelis has proudly shared their [violent] acts.”

Rep. Ritchie Torres, D-N.Y., condemned the violence in a post on X.

“The hysterical and hyperbolic demonization of Israel has led to a global outbreak of antisemitic vitriol, vandalism, and violence,” he wrote. “The single most monstrous manifestation of antisemitism is a pogrom that is presently unfolding against hundreds of Jews who were cheering on the Tel Aviv Football Club in Amsterdam.