

**We've successfully sentenced 325 terrorists to death, life imprisonment - FG** **PAGE 2**

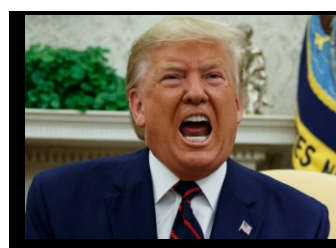


**I don't enjoy inflicting pain on Nigerians - Tinubu** **PAGE 4**



# The New Daily Prime

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# We've successfully sentenced 325 terrorists to death, life imprisonment – FG

By Dave Oludare Oso

The Nigerian government has achieved a significant milestone in its counter-terrorism efforts, securing over 325 convictions of terrorists through dedicated trials conducted at the Kainji Detention Facility in Niger State.

A report from National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC), operating within the Office of the National Security Adviser noted that this achievement demonstrates the government's unwavering commitment to justice and national security.

The convictions stem from the recently concluded Phase 5 and Phase 6 trials, overseen by Federal High Court judges and facilitated under the auspices of the NCTC.

The report gave a comprehensive account of the activities of government in tackling insecurity below.

## Phase 5 and Phase 6 Trials: A Breakdown

The Phase 5 trial, which took place in July 2024, addressed 143 cases, resulting in 125 convictions. These convictions were followed by the Phase 6 trial, conducted from December 9 to 13, 2024, where 237 cases were heard, leading to 200 convictions.

Sentences varied based on the gravity of the crimes, with penalties including:

- Death sentences for perpetrators of heinous acts such as mass killings and abductions.
- Life imprisonment for individuals



convicted of financing terrorism.

- Prison terms ranging from 20 to 70 years for other offenses tied to terrorist activities.

## Justice for Victims of Atrocities

The government highlighted that the trials were particularly focused on addressing egregious crimes, such as:

- Attacks on women and children.
- The destruction of places of worship and cultural heritage.
- The slaughter of innocent civilians.
- The abduction of women and children during an assault on the Gina Kara Kai community in Borno State.

Those found guilty of these acts received the most severe sentences, reflecting the gravity of their offences.

## Dismantling Terrorism Financing Networks

A crucial aspect of the trials involved tackling the financial networks that enable terrorism. Several individuals convicted of financing terrorist groups were sentenced to life imprisonment, showcasing the

government's determination to dismantle the funding channels that sustain such activities.

## Commitment to International Standards

The trials were presided over by five Federal High Court judges and conducted with strict adherence to international standards of justice. Measures were put in place to ensure the safety of judicial officers, witnesses, and other stakeholders involved in the proceedings.

“These trials are a reflection of Nigeria's commitment to global best practices in prosecuting terrorism and upholding international human rights conventions,” the statement from the NCTC read.

## Building Peace and Stability

The Nigerian government reiterated that these trials are part of its broader efforts to secure peace and stability in regions affected by terrorism.

“This milestone underscores the Federal Government's commitment to justice for victims of terrorism and the protection of lives and property across the country,” the statement concluded.

By prosecuting and convicting terrorists, the government aims to restore trust in the judiciary and reinforce its commitment to safeguarding the nation from terror-related threats.

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9X4	193,500.00
9X3	166,223.50
8X6	225,368.50
8X3	106,934.50
7X4	180,173.50
6X4	100,434.50
6X3	82,750.00
6X2	52,499.50
5X6	123,749.50
5X5	110,000.00
5X4	76,833.00
5X3	66,875.00
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# I don't enjoy inflicting pain on Nigerians – Tinubu

By Dave Oludare Oso

President Bola Tinubu has acknowledged the difficult economic conditions in Nigeria, urging citizens to endure what he described as “unintentional hardship” caused by ongoing reforms.

Speaking at the 48th convocation ceremony of Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) in Ile-Ife, Osun State, Tinubu, represented by Tope Fasua, the Special Adviser on Economy to the Vice President, assured Nigerians that the reforms are designed to benefit everyone in the long run.

“I do not take pleasure in inflicting pain on Nigerians,” the President said, emphasizing that the current challenges are a necessary phase for sustainable national development.

He expressed optimism, stating, “There is light at the end of the tunnel.”

Tinubu also noted that his administration has embraced both the assets and liabilities inherited from previous governments, affirming his commitment to navigating the country through its economic challenges.

He said: “I am not unaware of the harsh economic situation of our country, neither do I take pleasure in inflicting pains and anguish on my compatriots.



“However, we were faced with the stark reality of results of some policies hitherto executed by past administrations, but which had no direct positive impact on the generality of our people.

“We have gladly accepted the assets and liability of our heroes past without any intention of apportioning blames or pointing an accusing finger at any individual or group of people.

“As we are trying to fix, reconfigure and correct past mistakes and errors, we implore all Nigerians to cooperate with us, endure this unintentional hardship so that, like the graduates of today, we all can celebrate and be celebrated at the end of the day.

“I am certainly seeing the light at the end of our tunnel,” he added.

In his address the Chancellor of the University, Etsu Nupe, Alhaji Yahaya Abubakar, stressed that the backbone of every nation is its investment in education, which will drive its developmental drive among competing global world.

Also, the Pro-Chancellor, Professor Siyan Oyeweso charged the 977 postgraduates to deploy the knowledge to continue to build a nation full of opportunities for the coming generation.

Highlight of the event is the conferment of honorary doctorate on the First Lady, Senator Oluremi Tinubu, Dr Akin Ogunbiyi, Professor Anthony Adegbulugbe, MTN Nigeria CEO, Karl Toriola and Daere Afonya-A Akobo.

# Supreme Court decides Tinubu's fate in new disqualification suit Monday

By Dave Oludare Oso

The Supreme Court will on Monday, December 16, determine the fate of President Bola Tinubu in a fresh suit seeking his removal from office as Nigeria's leader.

The new suit marked SC/CV/667/2023 is praying the apex court to sack Tinubu on two major grounds of alleged non-qualification to hold office as Nigeria's president and usurpation of the same office against the law of the country.

A candidate in the 2019 presidential election on the platform of Hope Democratic Party (HDP), Chief Ambrose Albert Owuru, filed the fresh suit directly at the Supreme Court.

Defendants in the suit are former President Muhammadu Buhari, Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Independent National Electoral Commission INEC and Tinubu as 1st to 4th defendants, respectively.

Owuru, a British-trained lawyer, who was called to the Nigerian Bar in 1982, is insisting that he won the 2019 presidential poll but that his tenure was allegedly usurped by Buhari for eight years.

He claimed that his suit at the Supreme Court which would have kicked Buhari out of office was technically jettisoned by the apex court due to mix-up in the hearing dates.

On the other hand, he prayed the apex



court to disqualify Tinubu on account of forfeiture of \$460,000 to the United States of America over alleged involvement in drug trafficking related offence.

Besides the alleged forfeiture of the sum in relation to drug trafficking, the former presidential candidate also accused Tinubu of being an active agent of CIA, a position he said, prohibits Tinubu from holding the office of the President of Nigeria.

Upon his declaration as winner of the 2019 presidential poll and disqualification of Tinubu for not being qualified to hold the office of Nigeria's president, Owuru is asking the Supreme Court to pronounce him as Nigeria's president and as well order his immediate inauguration to reclaim his 'usurped mandate'

Meanwhile the apex court has fixed Monday, December 16, for definite hearing into the suit.

The hearing notice in respect of the new suit reads: "Please kindly take note that SC/CV/667/2023 Chief

Ambrose Albert Owuru & Anor VS President Muhammadu Buhari & 3 Ors at the Supreme Court of Nigeria sitting at Abuja is slated for the hearing of Motions on Monday 16/12/2024."

Reports stated that Tinubu has been served with the hearing notice through the Office of the Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice.

It was gathered that Chief Wole Olanipekun, SAN, may defend Tinubu in the suit on Monday.

It could be recalled that the Court of Appeal had at one time imposed a fine of N40 million on Owuru, to be paid to Tinubu, INEC and others, for filing a frivolous suit against them though NEW DAILY PRIME could not ascertain if the fine had been settled before Owuru filed the new suit.



# Emulate Ghana's democratic tradition Tinubu charges W' African leaders

By Friday Omosola

President Bola Tinubu has called on West African leaders, to emulate Ghana's exemplary democratic practices, emphasizing the importance of peaceful transitions and national unity in fostering regional stability.

Speaking at the 66th Ordinary Session of ECOWAS in Abuja, P Tinubu hailed Ghana's recent presidential and parliamentary elections, highlighting the concession by the ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP) and Vice President Mahamudu Bawumia to President-elect John Dramani Mahama of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) as a sign of political maturity.

"This gesture, like what we achieved in Nigeria in 2015, demonstrates respect for the will of the people and a commitment to democratic values. I urge all of us in the region to prioritize national unity and ensure peaceful political transitions as a standard for democracy across Africa," Tinubu said.

He also commended Ghanaian President Nana Akufo-Addo for his leadership and contribution to ECOWAS during his tenure, describing him as a dedicated Pan-Africanist.

Similarly, he lauded Ghana's Foreign Minister, Shirley Ayokor Botchwey, for her efforts in leading ECOWAS reforms and wished her success in her new role as Commonwealth Secretary-General.

Explaining ECOWAS's progress during his tenure as Chair, Tinubu listed key achievements, including advancements in regional trade through the ECOWAS Trade



Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS) and infrastructure projects like the West African Gas Pipeline and the West Africa Power Pool.

"Our efforts in modernizing border posts, enhancing trade, and promoting regional connectivity reflect our commitment to integration and economic growth," Tinubu noted.

He also acknowledged ECOWAS's success in peace keeping missions in The Gambia and Guinea-Bissau, as well as previous operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone, as evidence of the bloc's capacity to address regional challenges.

The President also echoed the necessity of security and improved living standards for citizens, calling for renewed dedication to ECOWAS's founding principles of economic integration, peace, and prosperity ahead of the bloc's 50th anniversary in 2025.

"Security is not a luxury but a necessity. Enhancing the living standards of our people is not an aspiration but an obligation," he said.

The President of the ECOWAS Commission, Omar Touray, commended Nigeria for its financial contributions under President Tinubu's leadership, noting that the country had fully paid its 2023 community levy and substantial portions for 2024.

The summit was attended by the Presidents of Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, and Senegal, alongside representatives from Sierra Leone, Benin, Togo, and Cape Verde.

The session ended with a renewed call for member states to fulfil their financial obligations and remain committed to the shared vision of a peaceful, integrated, and prosperous West Africa.

# Nigeria hits record-breaking revenue generation milestone

By Dave Oludare Oso

Special Adviser, Media and Public Communications for State House, Daniel Bwala has disclosed that Nigeria recorded an unprecedented revenue generation milestone.

In a post on his X account on Saturday, the presidential spokesman wrote "A gross total revenue of N3.143 trillion is the highest-ever recorded since FAAC allocations began.

"Kudos to President @officialabat for blocking loopholes and freeing up funds for rapid development.

"States and local governments are now receiving unprecedented allocations, and it's time for Nigerians to enjoy the dividends of these reforms.

"I enjoin our state governors to make



judicious use of these increments in allocations in service of our people.

"The time to harvest the different gains of the Renewed Hope is nigh; continue keeping faith with the Prophet of the Renewed Hope Prophecy."

NEW DAILY PRIME reported that the Federation Account Allocation Committee (FAAC) has distributed a whopping N1.727 trillion to the federal, state, and local governments as federation allocation for November 2024.

The Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Wale Edun disclosed this during FAAC's December 2024 meeting, which he chaired.

According to him, the allocation, drawn from a gross total revenue of N3.143 trillion, included contributions from Gross Statutory Revenue, Value Added Tax (VAT), Electronic Money Transfer Levy (EMTL), and Exchange Difference (ED).

# Detained Imo Radio presenter, Nonsonkwa, granted bail

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

A Federal High Court sitting in Owerri has granted bail to a presenter on Imo Radio, Chinonso Uba, popularly known as Nonsonkwa, who has been in detention for 54 days.

The bail application was approved by Justice C.U. Nnodim on Friday following extensive legal arguments by Uba's defence team.

Nonsonkwa was arrested on October 20, 2024, reportedly on the orders of the Imo State Government.

He was charged with cyberstalking, defamation of character, and other offences, sparking widespread discussions about his detention and the legal process.



His defence team, led by Barrister Alex Williams, included notable lawyers such as Kissinger Ikeokwu, IBB Madubuko, Charles Mgbenkonye, and Ifeanyi Chukwuocha.

The legal team has been commended for their commitment to upholding the

presenter's rights throughout the case.

Justice Nnodim's decision to grant bail has been welcomed by supporters of the radio presenter and advocates for press freedom.



# Activists, NGOs rally against GMO foods in Nigeria

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

A coalition of activists and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), under the umbrella of 'GMO-Free Nigeria,' has taken to the streets to protest the introduction of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) foods in Nigeria.

The nationwide rallies, which held in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, aimed to oppose the Federal Government's efforts to promote GMO products in the country.

The activists, who marched to the Rivers State Government House, presented a six-point demand in a petition, calling for a ban on GMOs, including seeds and processed foods containing GMO ingredients.

They also demanded the revocation of all permits granted to GMOs, investment in agro-ecology, rural infrastructure, and the deployment of extension services.



According to Joyce Brown, Director of Programmes at Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF), GMOs pose serious threats to human health, the environment, food systems, and the agricultural sector.

She noted that scientists extract genes

from bacteria, which produce toxins, and insert them into crops, such as beans, to act as pesticides.

The group disputed the government's claim that GMOs are necessary to improve food security and increase productivity.

They cited the example of cotton farmers in Nigeria, who have not seen significant increases in yields despite using GMO seeds for over six years.

The rally, which was part of a nationwide campaign, aimed to raise awareness about the dangers of GMOs and to call on the government to ban them.

Similar rallies were held in other states, including Edo, Katsina, Plateau, Oyo, Lagos, Cross Rivers, Enugu, Jigawa, and the Federal Capital Territory.

# Ogun truck driver, motor boy arrested for beating man to death

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

A truck driver, Olalere Timileyin, and his motor boy have been arrested by operatives of the Ogun State Police Command for the killing of a man at Obada Oko, Abeokuta, the state capital.

SP Omolola Odutola, the spokesperson for the state police command, who disclosed this in a statement sent to journalists on Saturday, said Timileyin and his motor boy caused the death of a man after beating him (deceased) for allegedly stealing a tarpaulin.

Odutola stated that one Alao Fadipe of Iyana Ikereku at about 3 am on Friday, December 13, reported to the police how he saw some individuals fighting on the road in front of his house.

Fadipe reportedly told the police that



upon getting to the scene, he observed that Timileyin, a truck driver and his motor-boy engaged with a cement factory in Itori, Ewekoro Local Government Area of the state were allegedly assaulting a man for stealing tarpaulin until he lost consciousness.

Odutola explained further, "Acting on the complaint, detectives from Obada

Oko responded and arrested the driver and his motor-boy at the location.

"The injured man was promptly taken to the State Hospital, Ijaye, for medical care, but sadly passed away during treatment.

"The body has been sent to the morgue for an autopsy. The suspects are currently being interrogated, and efforts are underway to reach the deceased's family.

"The case will be forwarded to SCIID Elewera for further investigation."

The state command has also warned residents against street fights or any act of violence that could lead to a breach of peace during this yuletide and beyond.



# SERAP sues Tinubu over Humanitarian Ministry's alleged misuse of N57bn

By Friday Omosola

**T**he Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) has sued 57 President Bola Tinubu.

over alleged mismanagement of N57 billion by the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Alleviation

The human rights body, in a statement on its website today, said it sued Tinubu over his administration's failure to investigate the alleged disappearance of over N57 billion from the said ministry in 2021.

The lawsuit, filed at the Federal High Court in Lagos, also names the Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Lateef Fagbemi as a respondent.

SERAP is urging the court to compel President Tinubu to direct Fagbemi to collaborate with anti-corruption agencies to investigate and prosecute those responsible for the missing funds.

According to SERAP, the allegations stem from the 2021 audit report recently released by the Office of the Auditor-General of the Federation.



The report highlighted several financial discrepancies, including over N54 billion meant for N-Power stipends that was not paid to beneficiaries, and over N2.6 billion allocated for the school feeding program during COVID-19 that was never executed.

The report also uncovered alleged diversion of funds earmarked for COVID-19 palliatives, payments to contractors without documentation, and personal donations amounting to millions of naira.

SERAP argued that addressing these allegations is crucial to ending impunity, recovering misappropriated

funds, and ensuring justice for millions of Nigerians affected by systemic corruption.

“The allegations amount to stealing from the poor,” the organisation stated in its filing.

SERAP further emphasised that the government has a constitutional responsibility to check corruption and protect public resources.

It also cited Nigeria's obligations under international anti-corruption conventions, including the United Nations Convention against Corruption, which mandates effective sanctions for such offenses.

No date has been set for the hearing of the case.

# 20 dead as boat capsizes on River Benue

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

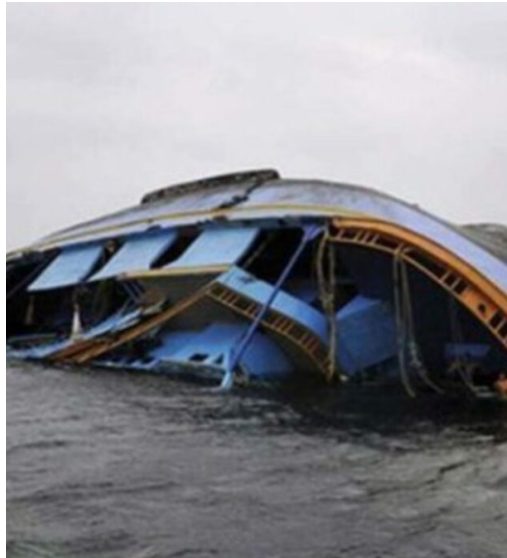
At least 20 people were reportedly killed after a boat capsized on the River Benue on Saturday.

According to reports, the canoe tumbled as it was crossing from Ocholonya in Agatu LGA to Odenyi in Nasarawa Toto LGA of Nasarawa State.

Daily Post quoted an eyewitness, Fada Awatsu as saying, “The wooden boat was loaded with goods and passengers after concluding their activities at Ocholonya market.

“It was overloaded and shortly after takeoff there was uproar by passengers in the boat and it eventually overturned and sank into the river.”

The passengers were from Agatu, Agbashi, Ajima, Okpata, Rukubi,



Ondoli, Odadu in Doma LGA.

Other sources said the victims were mostly women and children who were returning home from the market.

So far, 19 corpses have been recovered from the accident, while rescue efforts is ongoing to salvage others.

When contacted, the Chairman of Agatu Local Government Area, Melvin Ejeh confirmed the unfortunate incident.

He said, “the victims were returning from Ocholonya market to their village in nearby Nasarawa state.

“The view of the sailor was obstructed by shrubs in the river and when the canoe hit the trees, it crashed and capsized.”

Ejeh said over 20 bodies have been recovered and rescue operations is still ongoing.

He said he will send officials of the council to commiserate with the families of the deceased.

# 2027: We didn't give Jonathan presidential ticket – PDP

By Dave Oludare Oso

Contrary to the news making the rounds, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), has debunked reports that it invited former President Goodluck Jonathan to join the 2027 presidential race on its platform.

Deputy National Publicity Secretary of the party, Ibrahim Abdullahi, debunked the reports in an interview with BBC Hausa, explaining that the party did not issue its presidential ticket to Jonathan.

He said reports that PDP has ceded its presidential ticket to the former President, or invited him to contest the 2027 presidential election, were not true.

Abdullahi said, “What happened is this: I had an interview with a journalist where we discussed some issues.

“But in the course of the interview, he mentioned President Jonathan, asking about our opinion of him, because there are



reports that he is being urged to run for the presidency.”

He further explained that he responded by saying that he (Jonathan) is eligible to contest the election because he is a Nigerian and has the right to do so by the provisions of the law, and he still has one more term left.

Abdullahi stated that there is nothing wrong with Jonathan contesting the presidential election because he is eligible

in the face of the law.

He added that PDP had done enough for Jonathan and as a member of the party, there was no way the party would woo him.

The PDP deputy spokesman further explained that the party leadership is yet to discuss the issue with Jonathan, noting that there are 12 governors and many other prominent politicians who are eligible and competent to contest the presidential election on the party's platform.

He observed that it wasn't long ago that Dame Patience, Jonathan's wife said nothing would make her husband run for the presidency, stressing that he didn't leave behind or forget anything in the Presidential Villa for people to think that he would come back to contest the position again.



# PDP responsible for Nigeria's slide into one-party state – Okechukwu

By Dave Oludare Oso

Former Director-General of the Voice of Nigeria (VON), Osita Okechukwu has said that contrary to the oft-said accusation, the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, should be held responsible for Nigeria's slide towards becoming a one-party state, not the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC.)

The former VON boss made this statement on Sunday in Enugu while reacting to insinuations that APC and, by extension, President Bola Tinubu, were responsible for the weak opposition in the country.

Okechukwu described the insinuations that the ruling APC was the architect of the emerging one-party state as misplaced, saying PDP members had been afflicted by the same 'humongous culture of impunity' it planted in the country's political culture in their 16 years of being power.

Okechukwu, a founding member of the



APC, said Nigeria will naturally slide into a one-party state, as PDP, the country's major opposition party with more than 10 governors, has been afflicted by the stomach infrastructure syndrome.

"One, without being immodest, can recall how Alhaji Buba Galadima, the then National Secretary of CPC, was arrested and hounded on eve of the 2007 general

elections and offered all manner of carrots to abandon CPC and, by extension former President Muhammadu Buhari," he said.

He reminisced that since the APC merger in 2013, PDP members had converted APC to a rehabilitation centre instead of adopting the prerequisite ingredients of opposition – resilience, grit and patience.

He stated that it was the culture of impunity that made PDP to off-handedly jettison the rotation convention of President from the North to the South and even Section 7 of its Constitution, which made rotation mandatory.

"Imagine the breach of rotation convention by the PDP leadership, not minding the unintended consequences, with the erroneous thought that His Excellency, Atiku Abubakar, will unlock the northern electorate from their dormitory to vote PDP in the 2023 presidential election.

## Benue boosts security with 5,000 officers

By Friday Omosola

Governor, Hyacinth Alia of Benue State has strengthened the state's security with the inauguration of 5,000 personnel of the State Civil Protection Guards.

This was disclosed on the Facebook page of the governor yesterday.

Also, in a bold initiative to enhance the operational capacity of security agencies, the state government also donated 100 new Hilux vehicles and 600 Special Combatant motorcycles.

The governor equally unveiled the Operation "Anyam Nyor" Joint Security Task Force, an initiative designed to fortify Benue's State security framework and decisively tackle criminality across the state.

Alia further stressed the importance of the measures put in place in ensuring



that residents live, work, and farm in peace.

The governor called on all criminal elements in the state to embrace the ongoing Amnesty Programme championed by the Benue State Amnesty Committee.

The committee, chaired by the Tor Tiv and the Catholic Bishop of Katsina-

Ala Diocese, offers a pathway for reintegration into society.

Governor Alia expressed gratitude to President Bola Tinubu, the National Security Adviser, Service Chiefs, and the Inspector-General of Police for their steadfast support.

He also acknowledged the critical contributions of the Benue State Traditional Council, led by the Tor Tiv, His Royal Majesty Orchivirigh James Ortese Iorzua Ayatse, and the Ochi Idoma, His Royal Majesty John Elaigwu Odogbo, in fostering peace and stability in the state..

Furthermore, he commended the leadership of the All Progressives Congress (APC), his fellow governors, and security partners for their collaboration and encouragement.

# NDLEA intercepts N3.3bn meth, loud in auto parts from Canada

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) has intercepted N3.3 billion worth of methamphetamine and loud, a strong synthetic strain of cannabis, meant for distribution during the Christmas and New Year festive season in Nigeria, concealed in automobile spare parts imported from Canada.

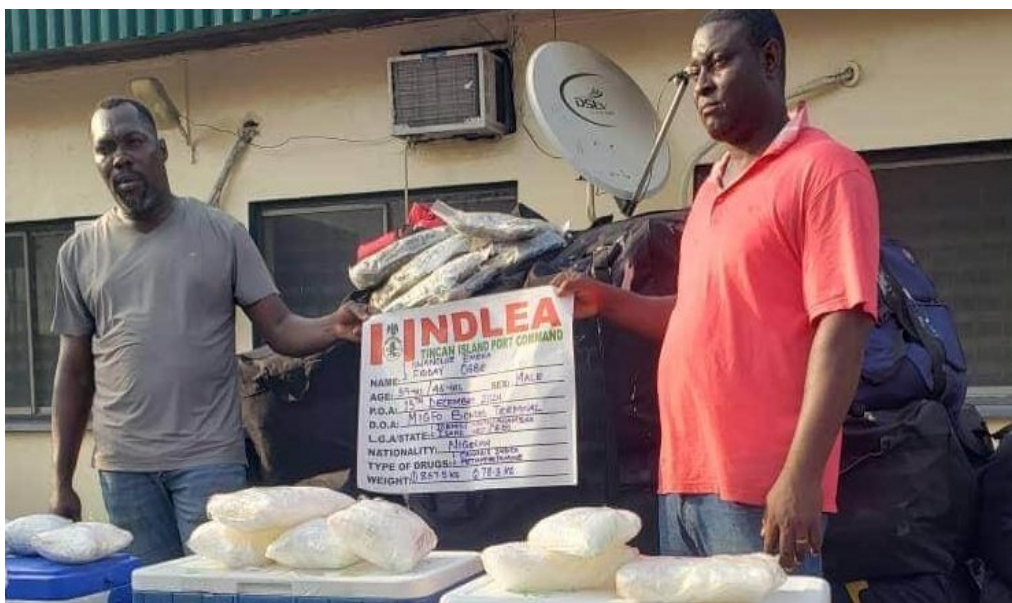
According to reports, the illicit drugs were intercepted by operatives of the NDLEA at the Tincan seaport in Lagos State.

The interception followed months of intelligence-driven tracking of the cargoes across three continents.

For the first time in the history of NDLEA's anti-narcotic operations, two consignments of methamphetamine weighing 83.301 kilograms were on December 12 and 13, 2024 recovered from separate container-bearing vehicles and spare parts coming from Canada and heading to warehouses in the Ladipo automobile parts market in Mushin area of Lagos State.

While one of the containers going to Ladipo Market through the Sifax bonded terminal was examined on December 12, not less than 5.001kg methamphetamine hidden in a bag wrapped in bedsheet that came in a Toyota Camry car was recovered. A businessman, Isaac Onwumere, linked with the consignment was promptly arrested.

The other container bearing automobile spare parts checked on December 13 was found to contain 1,735 parcels of loud packed in 44 jumbo bags with a total weight of 867.5kg and six plastic coolers containing 87 packs of methamphetamine weighing 78.3kg.



Two businessmen: Nwanolue Emeka and Friday Ogbe, have been arrested in connection with the seizure.

The two meth consignments have a combined weight of 83.301kg worth N124.951 million, while the 867.5kg loud is worth N2,168,750,000 in street value.

The seizures were made during a joint examination of the shipments with the Nigeria Customs Service and other port stakeholders.

This followed months of intelligence processing and tracking of the consignments from their ports of loading in Canada to the landing port in Lagos by combined Special Operations Units in NDLEA and the Tincan Port Strategic Command of the Agency.

The first container with 5.001kg meth came under the radar of NDLEA's intelligence network on October 4, 2024 when the preparation for the shipment began in Toronto, Canada, monitored through October 8 when the shipment was received at the rail ramp, loaded on the rail and departed to Montreal, Canada, where it arrived and was unloaded the following day on

October 9.

The consignment was further monitored till it was loaded on a vessel on October 19 through when the vessel arrived and discharged at Antwerp in Belgium on October 30, after which the consignment was trans-shipped and loaded on November 14, before arriving Lagos port on December 1 and released to a bonded terminal two days after.

The second shipment containing 867.5kg Loud and 78.3kg methamphetamine followed the same route.

It came under NDLEA's intelligence tracking on October 8, 2024 when the consignments were delivered to the shipper in Toronto, Canada, loaded on the rail on October 14 and arrived Montreal the following day, October 15, after which they were loaded on a vessel to Europe on October 20.

After arrival and trans-shipment at Antwerp in Belgium on November 6 and 17 respectively, the consignments were tracked till they arrived and discharged from the vessel at Lagos port on December 6, before being moved to the terminal on December 10.



# Wike-APC bromance: Minister not fuelling PDP crisis – Aide

By Dave Oludare Oso

Senior Special Assistant on Public Communications and New Media to the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Lere Olayinka, on Saturday, absolved his principal, Nyesom Wike against allegations of anti-party activities leveled against him by some members of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

It is note-worthy that Wike's romance with the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), since his recruitment into President Bola Tinubu's cabinet has been raising concerns amongst some PDP members, leading to accusation that APC was fueling the leadership crisis rocking the main opposition party.

Recall that Segun Sowunmi, a PDP chieftain and former spokesman of the party's presidential candidate in the 2023 election, Atiku Abubakar in November 2024 claimed that President Tinubu was responsible for PDP's internal wranglings.

According to Sowunmi, Tinubu has no business appointing Wike as Minister of FCT without consulting with the elders of the party.

"When Obasanjo wanted to form a government of national unity, he wrote to the elders of the party but what did Tinubu do, he took one of us and put him in a strategic position and suddenly the whole thing is complicated.

"If he wants everything to be okay, sack Wike and return him to PDP and see if the party will not have stamina and move fast," he said.

Similarly, a group of opposition lawmakers led by a member of the House of Representatives, Ikenga Ugochinyere, on November 25 accused the party's National Working Committee (NWC) of converting PDP



to merely an 'errand platform for the ruling party.'

According to him, "You have a national chairman and secretary who in 24 hours are in Nyesom Wike's bedroom, a minister in the APC government.

"At a time when Nigeria is facing a serious crisis, our opposition is now in the bed of the ruling party."

However, Olayinka countered the critics, insisting that Wike is not working for APC but only serving his nation.

According to him, "Wike is not working for APC, Wike is working for Nigeria. He is working for the government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria."

Olayinka lamented that the critics "failed to understand that there is a difference between the parliamentary system of government and the presidential system of government."

The Minister's spokesperson explained that "it is only in the parliamentary system of government that the formation of the cabinet is restricted to the party that controls the majority in the parliament."

Countering allegations of anti-party activities against the FCT Minister, Olayinka said, "what is anti-party

activity? Someone that informed his party that he was going to be appointed as minister by the ruling party and they didn't raise objections?"

"When it is time to play politics, we play politics. We had an election last year and one person won. That chapter has ended. Right now, it is time for governance. President Tinubu saw the potential in the FCT Minister and gave him an appointment."

Making reference to the recent appointment of Atiku's former aide, Daniel Bwala as Tinubu's Special Adviser on Public Communication and Media, Olayinka said Wike's membership of Tinubu's cabinet makes no difference.

He said, "This is the same way he gave people appointments from other parties, even people who once insulted him.

"What role did Daniel Bwala play in the last election? He was Atiku's spokesman. Atiku funded him and he said several negative things against the president and now he is a special adviser to the president. How is that of Wike different?"

When asked if Wike would support a PDP candidate in the 2027 election, Olayinka simply said, "when we get to the bridge, we will cross it.

# Kemi Badenoch's hate for Nigeria, by Femi Fani-Kayode

By Femi Fani-Kayode

"I find it interesting that everyone defines me as a Nigerian. I identify less with the country than with my specific ethnic group. I have nothing in common with the people from the north of the country, the Boko Haram, where Islamism is. Being Yoruba is my true identity and I refuse to be lumped with the northern people of Nigeria who were our ethnic enemies, all in the name of being called a Nigerian"- Kemi Badenoch.

Kemi Badenoch MP, the leader of the British Conservative Party & Opposition in the UK Parliament, has refused to stop at just denigrating our country but has gone a step further by seeking to divide us on ethnic lines.

She claims that she never regarded herself as being a Nigerian but rather a Yoruba and that she never identified with the people from the Northern part of our country who she collectively describes as being "Boko Haram Islamists" & "terrorists".

This is dangerous rhetoric coming from an impudent & ignorant foreign leader who knows nothing about our country, who does not know her place & who insists on stirring up a storm that she cannot contain & that may eventually consume her.

It is rather like saying that she identifies more with the English than she does with the Scots & the Welsh whom she regards as nothing more than homicidal & murderous barbarians that once waged war against her ethnic English compatriots!

All this coming from a young lady of colour that is a political leader in a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural country that lays claim to being the epitome of decency & civilisation! What a strange & inexplicable contradiction this is.

Her intentions are malevolent & insidious & her objective, outside of ridiculing & mocking us, is to divide us & bring us to our knees.

I am constrained to ask, what on earth happened to this creature in her youth and why does she hate Nigeria with such passion?

Did something happen to her when she lived here which she has kept secret?



Was she the victim of some form of deviant behaviour, abuse or perversion that has resulted in trauma, long term psychological damage & mental health issues?

Is this why she sees red and gets her pretty knickers in a twist whenever she hears "Nigeria"?

Why does the mention of the name of our country trigger such compulsive, violent and aggressive emotions and impulses in her?

Given her pathological hatred for Nigerians these are legitimate questions that need to be answered.

She hates us with what the Bible describes as "a perfect hatred" yet in a much publicised and widely read open letter written in 2010 during her first bid to be elected into the UK Parliament she begged the Nigerian community in her constituency to support her.

At that time, when she still needed us, she identified with Nigerians but everything changed after she was elected.

At that point, in her conflicted and confused mind, all Nigerians became demons, all Englanders became angels and her disdain and contempt for us was unmasked!

She hates us with a perfect hatred yet she still has the effrontery and nerve to haul her rotund posterior back to our country with one Hamish, who I am told is her English husband, to watch polo at the Lagos Polo Club.

This is the same country that she has described as being a lawless jungle and corrupt stinking edifice from which no good can come and that is filled with nothing but apes, monsters and the criminally insane.

The truth is that the creature called Kemi Badenoch is nothing but a b\*tch on heat. She needs to be tamed and caged.

She is Auntie Jemima on steroids and the President of the International House Ni\*gers Association.

Her Nigerian passport (if she still has one) ought to be revoked and she should never be allowed to set her leperous foot in our country again.

She should take Vice President Kashim Shettima's counsel seriously and drop Kemi as her name. She should formally wipe her maiden name of Adegoke off the record as well and publicly renounce and disavow her father, mother, siblings and Nigerian lineage and heritage.

She does not want to identify with us and we do not want to identify with her.

She sees us as being corrupt and evil and we see her as being the devil incarnate and the spawn of satan. There can be no fellowship between us.

The truth is that she is no longer a mere irritant or the inconsequential object of our contempt and ridicule but she can now be comfortably and legitimately described as 'public enemy number one' of our beloved nation.

She should stick to the affairs of her UK, face its ruling Labour Party and it's Prime Minister Keir Starmer and leave Nigeria alone!

On a lighter note it is a pity that I stopped playing polo many years ago because if it had been in my days that she attempted to visit the Lagos Polo Club she would not have got past the gate and if she managed to do so our grooms and horseboys would have pasted her self-hating, unpatriotic, ungrateful, treacherous and ever so plain face with Argentinian pony dung before tarring and feathering her.

How times have changed! (FFK)

Femi Fani-Kayode is a lawyer, a former minister of Aviation of Nigeria and a former minister of Culture and Tourism of Nigeria



# Self-sabotage: Dr. Okolo defends Nigeria against cynical narratives

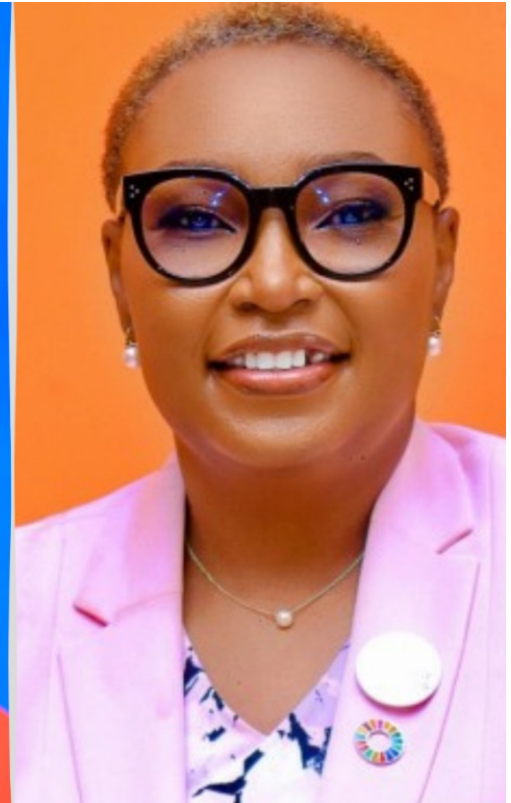
By Dr. Okolo Oteri Eme

**K**emi Badenoch is not the only one who demeans Nigeria to gain acceptance from Caucasians. Unfortunately, this behavior has become the default mode for many Africans, especially Nigerians. I've seen and heard it too many times for it to be dismissed as a coincidence. This attitude might be one of the reasons we have progressed so slowly as a people. We are often too personally competitive to work collectively for group advancement. For some of us, insulting our country and fellow citizens is the only way we know how to gain relevance.

I recall an incident during my MSc class when I openly confronted a fellow Nigerian for trying this same nonsense. The class and the lecturer attempted to support her, but I stood my ground. She went on a tirade about equality and how women's rights are not respected in Nigeria. She even threw in the usual sob story about female genital mutilation, which is now largely discontinued in most communities in Nigeria.

Do we have issues with the rights of women in Nigeria? Yes. But definitely not near anything she was alleging. Here I was, and there she was, both of us having achieved our dreams without any discrimination. Yet, she chose to trample on the country that gave us such opportunities just because she didn't want to return to Nigeria.

I had no intention of staying back in the UK, and even if I did, it would have been on the basis of mutual respect and the value I could add to that society—not some self-centred, inferiority-complex-laden pity party.



A victim mentality is unattractive to anyone. Lies and self-loathing might serve as tools to recruit people into modern-day slavery, attract cheap labour, raise money for projects, or even advance limited political careers. But once all that is done, those who perpetuate these behaviours will be discarded in favor of people with self-esteem—people who are confident in their intelligence, skills, and competence to get ahead in life.

Some might argue that politicians are the primary targets of criticism. However, I am well-exposed and knowledgeable enough to know that humans and politicians are the same everywhere. Development is a process, and Nigeria is making progress. The governance system we've chosen isn't designed for speed, but needless denigration and constant flagellation of the nation will not bring us to El Dorado. Most countries are still struggling to achieve their goals. What drives

incremental change is national pride, commitment, hard work, and unity—not cynicism and self-sabotage.

Just last week, I made a post about this mean-spirited attitude, and some people disagreed with me. You are entitled to your opinions. However, on a personal level, I have no respect for any Nigerian who denigrates this country anywhere. If you feel Nigeria is behind, then keep quiet and let us work towards where we need to be. Your negativity and cynicism drag us backward. You would serve us better by focusing on your hustle in your new zip code—in silence. Let Nigeria breathe!

Dr. Okolo Oteri Eme is an ophthalmologist and the Director of the National Eye Health Directorate at the Federal Ministry of Health, Abuja.

# Ice Prince: “I skipped university over N20,000”

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Ice Prince shared his journey from orphanhood, losing both parents young, to stardom, highlighting struggles and resilience on the Listen podcast.

## Early losses that changed his life

Ice Prince recounted how tragedy struck early in his life. He lost his father at just 11 years old and later his mother when he was 21. These losses left him as the sole breadwinner in a large family, with no parental support or financial safety net.

“I don’t have a mother or father,” Ice Prince said during the podcast. “I’m an only son. That’s quite tough. I was eleven years old when I lost my dad. I was about 21 or 22 when my mum passed away. And I have a huge family that depends on me.”

The absence of parental guidance forced him to mature quickly and navigate life’s challenges independently. “I don’t have an uncle, aunty, godfather, or godmother that I depend on,” he continued. “It has been nothing but God in my life.”

## Struggles with education and menial jobs

Despite his talent and determination, financial difficulties derailed Ice Prince’s educational journey. He revealed that he missed out on attending university because he couldn’t afford the tuition fees. The sum required—N20,000—was out of reach for the young Zamani, despite his best efforts.

“I was the guy that spent at least three weeks at home every term because of school fees,” he explained. “I didn’t go to university because of N20,000. I had about two weeks to pay that money, but I couldn’t raise it on time. That was how I lost the admission.”



To make ends meet, Ice Prince took on various menial jobs. These roles were necessary to support himself and contribute to his family’s well-being. Though he did not elaborate on the specific jobs, his story reflects the harsh reality faced by many young Nigerians striving to balance education and survival.

## Inspiration for others

Today, Ice Prince’s journey serves as a source of inspiration. He wants people to see his success as proof that overcoming adversity is possible. “I want people to look at my life and say if I can succeed, then no one has an excuse to fail,” he declared.

His message resonates deeply in a society where many youths face similar challenges, particularly when it comes to access to education and economic opportunities. Ice Prince’s honesty about his struggles highlights the importance of perseverance and faith in the face of hardship.

## Gratitude and faith

Throughout his life, Ice Prince has leaned on his faith to guide him. He

credits his survival and success to divine intervention, describing his journey as one marked by the grace of God. This faith has been his anchor in moments of despair, helping him navigate life’s uncertainties.

“I’ve had no one else to depend on but God,” he said. His words reflect a profound sense of gratitude for the resilience and strength that have carried him through life’s storms.

## Rising above challenges

Ice Prince’s story is not just about loss; it’s about triumph over adversity. From a young boy struggling to pay school fees to a global music icon, his journey underscores the power of determination and hard work. It also sheds light on the challenges faced by many orphans and vulnerable children in Nigeria, where access to quality education and support systems remains limited.

## Call to action

Ice Prince’s narrative also serves as a reminder of the need for societal change. The lack of affordable education and social safety nets often leaves children like him with limited options. His story should inspire policymakers, educators, and philanthropists to create systems that support disadvantaged youths and provide them with opportunities to thrive.

## Legacy of resilience

Through his music and advocacy, Ice Prince continues to inspire millions. His candidness about his past adds depth to his artistry, making his lyrics relatable to those who have faced similar struggles. As he forges ahead in his career, his story will remain a testament to the resilience of the human spirit.



# Tiwa Savage responds to criticism over age and fashion

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

**T**iwa Savage, 44, opens up on Receipts podcast about facing backlash over her fashion choices, calling out age-shaming and societal double standards.

The singer revealed that her outfits, often bold and fashionable, draw sharp criticism from Nigerians who believe her age should dictate a more conservative style.

Savage, however, strongly disagrees with this notion and has made it clear that her choices reflect her confidence and individuality.

During the interview, Savage compared her experiences to those of other global female celebrities, particularly Beyoncé. The American superstar, also in her 40s, is often praised for her youthful looks and daring fashion sense.

Savage pointed out the stark contrast in how society treats them, saying, "They age-shame me every single day. They say, 'A woman of your age, how can you be wearing a bikini?' I can, because I have a body."

Her comments shed light on the cultural differences in how ageing women are perceived. While Beyoncé is celebrated in the U.S. for embodying the phrase "Black don't crack," Savage said Nigerian society tends to view her similar fashion choices with disdain.

Critics often argue that Savage's son might one day question her fashion choices. The singer dismissed such claims, stating she believes her son will grow up admiring her strength and beauty.

"My son is going to be like, 'My mum is a powerful and beautiful woman,'" she said. Savage emphasized that her confidence and self-expression are



qualities she hopes to pass on to her child.

This remark underscores her belief in redefining societal norms. Savage's response challenges the traditional expectations placed on women, particularly mothers, to conform to restrictive standards.

Savage's frustrations reflect the broader struggles faced by women under constant public scrutiny. For female celebrities, especially those in their 40s, the pressure to appear flawless while adhering to societal expectations can be overwhelming.

Savage argued that these standards often stem from deeply ingrained cultural biases, which she refuses to let dictate her choices.

"Nigerians always throw these things at me, like, 'When her son grows up, he's going to see this.' But why shouldn't he see a woman who is confident in her skin?" she asked.

Nigerian Afrobeat Star  
Tiwa Savage

Tiwa Savage's remarks highlight an ongoing debate about how women, particularly in African societies, are expected to dress and behave as they age.

In many cultures, older women are often encouraged to blend into the

background, while younger generations take center stage. Savage, however, believes age should not limit a woman's ability to express herself.

Her statements also align with a growing global movement that encourages women to embrace their bodies and personal style, regardless of age. By speaking out, Savage joins a chorus of women pushing back against outdated stereotypes and encouraging others to do the same.

For Tiwa Savage, fashion is not just about clothes; it's about confidence. Her wardrobe choices are an extension of her personality and creativity. "It's more celebrated when you look good in your older age," she said, lamenting the lack of such appreciation in Nigerian culture.

Savage believes it's time for society to evolve and celebrate women who defy conventional norms.

This isn't the first time Savage has made headlines for her bold statements. Throughout her career, she has been an advocate for female empowerment and self-expression. Her latest comments remind us that every woman has the right to define herself on her terms.

Savage's story is a powerful reflection of many women's challenges, especially in patriarchal societies. Her call for a shift in perception highlights the need for more inclusive conversations about beauty, ageing, and self-expression.

As Tiwa Savage continues to inspire millions with her music and unapologetic approach to life, her message is clear: Women, regardless of age, deserve the freedom to live authentically. Whether in a bikini or a ball gown, confidence is timeless, and society should celebrate it.

# AY Makun's film hits cinemas nationwide next week

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi



**A**ll is set for the release of Ayo Makun, known as AY, and his latest movie, *The Waiter*, an action-comedy film that promises to entertain and thrill audiences.

The movie features a talented ensemble cast, including Richard Mofe-Damijo, Shaffy Bello, Regina Daniels, Williams Uchemba, Deyemi Okanlawon, and Toke Makinwa. *The Waiter* is set to make its debut in cinemas on December 20, 2024.

During a press luncheon held in Lagos, AY, the CEO of Corporate World Entertainment and the film's executive producer, shared the inspiration behind *The Waiter*. "We decided to bring the Akpos brand back home after touring several countries.

The goal was to capture local stories, quality, and relatable content. We have a great story that's fresh and exciting—one that will resonate with audiences.

This is going to be better than anything I've done before. If you want to

produce a quality film, you must invest in the budget, and this is a high-budget production," he explained.

Film director Toka McBaror, who collaborated with him on the project, expressed his excitement about the film.

"When I first read the script, I told him it couldn't be done because of the ambitious imagination of the writer. But he was confident we could make it happen, and I'm glad we took the risk. This project is special to me. After 25 years in the industry, I've never felt this way about a film. *The Waiter* is unlike anything I've worked on before, and I believe audiences will feel the same."

Nigerian Comedian Ayo Makun McBaror's optimism stems from the unique storyline and the passion that both he and AY brought to the film. "I've never really liked my work, but *The Waiter* is different. I'm genuinely excited, and I think audiences will love it too," he added.

With its star-studded cast, engaging storyline, and bold production values, *The Waiter* is set to become a major blockbuster.

Produced by Darlington Abuda, the film aims to blend action and comedy in a way that stands out from typical Nollywood releases.

The narrative follows unique characters navigating humorous yet action-packed situations, promising laughter and suspense in equal measure.

The success of *The Waiter* seems imminent, given the creative efforts of AY, Toka McBaror, and the talented cast.

Audiences are eager to experience the film's blend of humour, thrilling moments, and relatable themes. With *The Waiter*, AY hopes to redefine Nollywood comedy, setting a new standard for quality filmmaking in Nigeria.



# I'm a cultural Christian; I no longer believe in God – Kemi Badenoch

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

The leader of the Conservative Party in the United Kingdom, Kemi Badenoch, has disclosed that she no longer believes in the existence of God.

In a now-viral interview with The Free Press, Badenoch described herself as agnostic and a cultural Christian, explaining that her once-strong religious beliefs have changed over time.

When asked if she believes in God, she responded, "Not anymore. But I am not an atheist, I am agnostic. I used to believe very much but now I describe myself as a cultural Christian.

Responding to a question about



whether the world benefits from belief in God or living as if God exists, Badenoch argued that actions are more significant than beliefs.

According to her, the most important factor is what individuals do with their belief or lack of belief.

She stated, "I don't think it matters so

much. What matters is what they do with the belief or lack of belief."

NEW DAILY PRIME reports that Vice President Kashim Shettima recently criticised Badenoch for her remarks about Nigeria in her recent interviews with British media.

# China President, Xi rejects Trump's inauguration invite

By Dave Oludare Oso

Chinese President Xi Jinping has reportedly rejected Donald Trump's invitation for a history-making guest appearance at next month's presidential inauguration.

The snub, reported by CBS News, will come as a blow to the president-elect and his plans for a spectacular swearing-in event on January 20 to mark his return to the White House.

A foreign head of state has never attended a U.S. inauguration, according to State Department records, but Trump has also invited Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, Argentinean President Javier Milei, and El Salvador's President Nayib Bukele to turn it into a global event.

No explanation has been given for Xi's decision not to travel to Washington. The invite was made just after Trump's 2024 presidential election triumph.

"This is an example of President Trump creating an open dialogue with leaders of countries that are not just allies but our adversaries and our competitors, too," his spokeswoman Karoline Leavitt told Fox News on Thursday.

Despite Trump's claims that he has a good relationship with the Chinese leader, his presidency begins with



fears of a trade war with Beijing over punitive tariffs proposed during the presidential election campaign.

China is reportedly considering imposing its own tariffs in a bid to beat Trump to it and force him to the negotiating table.

# Elon Musk amasses \$400bn fortune, sets new record

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

**C**EO of Tesla and founder of SpaceX, Elon Musk has become the first person in history to amass a fortune of more than \$400 billion.

According to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, his net worth currently stands at around \$440 billion (£345 billion), more than that of Microsoft founder, Bill Gates and Amazon's Jeff Bezos combined.

Elon's fortune has boomed in the weeks following Donald Trump's victory in the US presidential election, and a recent share sale at SpaceX played a key role in this milestone, contributing roughly \$50 billion to Musk's wealth and boosting SpaceX's valuation to \$350 billion, making it the world's most valuable private company.

This increase, combined with a surge in Tesla's stock price, pushed Musk's net worth to \$447 billion.

## THE MAN ELON

Elon Musk, FRS is a business magnate, industrial designer and engineer. He is the founder, CEO, CTO and chief designer of SpaceX; early investor, CEO and product architect of Tesla, Inc.; founder of The Boring Company; co-founder of Neuralink; and co-founder and initial co-chairman of OpenAI.

He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society (FRS) in 2018. Also that year, he was ranked 25th on the Forbes list of The World's Most Powerful People, and was ranked joint-first on the Forbes list of the Most Innovative Leaders of 2019. A centi-billionaire, Musk became the richest person in the world in January 2021.

Elon Reeve Musk was born on June



28, 1971, in Pretoria, Transvaal, South Africa. His mother is Maye Musk (née Haldeman), a model and dietitian born in Saskatchewan, Canada, but raised in South Africa.

His father is Errol Musk, a South African electromechanical engineer, pilot, sailor, consultant, and property developer. CEO of Tesla and founder of SpaceX, Elon Musk has become the first person in history to amass a fortune of more than \$400 billion.

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# Legal kids will be deported with undocumented parents – Trump

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

US President-elect, Donald Trump has declared that he would deport kids who are US citizens but born to parents who are not, to avoid separating families.

Trump has repeatedly announced that once he is sworn in, he will begin massive deportation of undocumented immigrants.

Speaking widely about his plans for the mass deportations, Trump said families with undocumented parents who have U.S.-born children would be deported together because he doesn't "want to be breaking up families."

"So the only way you don't break up the family is you keep them together and you have to send them all back," Trump said to NBC News' Kristen Welker on Sunday episode of 'Meet the Press.'

"Even kids who are here legally?" Welker asked.

"Well, what you've got to do if they want to stay with their father — look, we have to have rules and regulations," Trump said.

Welker was asking Trump about the approximately 4 million mixed-status families in America, in which some family members have legal status and others are undocumented.

Trump's answer echoes that of his 'border czar,' Tom Homan, who in a "60 Minutes" interview in October said, "Families can be deported together," in response to a question about how mass deportations can be carried out without separating families.

Later in the "Meet the Press" interview, he doubled down on the idea that families wouldn't be separated.

"We'll send the whole family, very humanely, back to the country where they came. That way the family's not separated," he said.



"The family may decide to say, 'I'd rather have Dad go, and we'll stay here.' And in which case they have that option."

Trump appeared to have a softer stance toward "Dreamers," the hundreds of thousands of people brought to the country as children by undocumented parents and protected from deportation under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, programme.

"The Dreamers are going to come later, and we have to do something about the Dreamers because these are people that have been brought here at a very young age," Trump said.

He said he wanted to "work with Democrats" on a plan for the Dreamers to stay.

Also in the interview, Trump vowed to use an executive action to end birthright citizenship, something that is enshrined in the 14th Amendment of the Constitution.

When asked if that's even possible, he said, "Well, we're going to have to get it

changed. We'll maybe have to go back to the people. But we have to end it."

He incorrectly said that America is the only country to have birthright citizenship — about three dozen countries, including Canada and Mexico provide birthright citizenship.

During Trump's 2024 campaign, he promised to deport undocumented immigrants living in the United States, saying he will focus on "violent criminals" — but seemingly meaning the roughly 11 million undocumented people in the country are all part of that group.

In September at a campaign rally, Trump said deporting undocumented immigrants would be a "bloody story."

His allies have said prison camps will be needed to deport immigrants.

In 2016, Trump said former President Dwight D. Eisenhower's "Operation Wetback," which was named after a slur and deported a reported 1 million immigrants in 1954, was "a very effective chapter," according to "some people."

# Victims 'shocked' after Biden grants clemency to 'kids-for-cash' judge, \$54m embezzler

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Victims of major public corruption cases in Pennsylvania and Illinois are angry that President Joe Biden granted clemency last week to two convicted officials.

The commutations were announced Thursday as part of a historic clemency package for 1,500 convicted criminals who, the White House said, "deserve a second chance."

The two convicted officials whose cases sparked outrage – a crooked Pennsylvania judge and a notorious Illinois fraudster – both had already been released from prison early and put on house arrest during the Covid-19 pandemic. Biden's actions now end that punishment.

The president has already faced bipartisan criticism over his highly controversial pardon of his son Hunter Biden, who was convicted earlier this year of 12 tax and gun crimes.

A Biden administration official told CNN the latest commutations were not individual decisions and instead it was a uniform decision granted to people who met certain criteria, like having a track record of good behavior while on house arrest.

'Got it absolutely wrong'

Former Pennsylvania Judge, Michael Conahan was convicted in 2011 in what was infamously called the "kids-for-cash" scandal, where he took kickbacks from for-profit detention centers in exchange for wrongly sending juveniles to their facilities. The case was widely considered to be one of the worst judicial scandals in Pennsylvania history.

Like all of the other nearly 1,500 people who got commutations from Biden this week, Conahan was freed from prison due to Covid. His house arrest was set to



end in 2026.

The misconduct of Conahan and another Luzerne County judge led the Pennsylvania Supreme Court to throw out 4,000 juvenile convictions, and the discredited state judges were ordered to pay \$200 million to the victims, according to the Associated Press.

Sandy Fonzo – the mother of Edward Kenzakoski, who died by suicide after spending time behind bars as part of the kickback scheme, said she was "shocked... and hurt" after learning of Biden's decision to commute the rest of Conahan's punishment.

"Conahan's actions destroyed families, including mine, and my son's death is a tragic reminder of the consequences of his abuse of power," Fonzo told the Citizens' Voice, a local outlet. "This pardon feels like an injustice for all of us who still suffer. Right now I am processing and doing the best I can to cope with the pain that this has brought back."

Pennsylvania Governor, Josh Shapiro, a Democrat, also said Friday at an unrelated news conference in Biden's hometown of Scranton that, "I do feel strongly that President Biden got it absolutely wrong and created a lot of pain here in northeastern Pennsylvania."

'Justice wasn't served'

There was similar fallout in Illinois, after Biden gave clemency to Rita Crundwell, the former comptroller of Dixon, a city of roughly 15,000 in the northern part of the state.

She pleaded guilty in 2012 to a \$54 million embezzlement scheme, which was believed to be the largest municipal fraud in US history.

She was sentenced to almost 20 years in prison, nearly the maximum, though she moved to house arrest during the pandemic.

She was supposed to be on house arrest until 2028, according to the Bureau of Prisons.

"When I heard the news, I was completely shocked in disbelief, I was outraged and felt a complete sense of betrayal from the federal justice system, the White House and the president," Dixon city manager, Danny Langloss told CNN in an interview on Friday.

Langloss, who said he doesn't affiliate with a political party, was the police chief when Crundwell's fraud was uncovered. He said he believes "justice wasn't served here."

"I don't like the idea ... that with several more years of her sentence to complete, she gets to walk free in the community that she betrayed and stole from," Langloss said.

Fallout from the pandemic

Margaret Love, who served in the Justice Department as the US pardon attorney from 1990 to 1997, said the fallout from Biden's latest commutations was a consequence of how the prison population was reduced during Covid – under the Trump administration.



# Brazilian President's brain surgery successful

By Dave Oludare Oso

**B**razilian President, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva was discharged from the hospital on Sunday following a successful surgery to stop a bleeding in his brain.

The 79-year-old leader underwent a second medical procedure to address bleeding on the surface of his brain, earlier this week, following a fall at home.

The procedure, called a middle meningeal artery embolisation, allowed medical professionals to insert a small blockage in his blood vessel using small tubes, in order to prevent bleeding from the artery, located on the outside of the brain.

Doctors confirmed on Sunday that the surgery was successful and stated that Lula could walk and hold meetings while resting at his home in São Paulo until Thursday but advised against international trips.

Speaking at a press conference alongside



his medical team, the president assured the public of his recovery.

"I'm here alive, well, with the urge to work. And I'll tell you something I used to say during the campaign," he said.

"I'm 79 years old, I have the energy of 30 and the enthusiasm of 20 to build this country," Lula added.

During the press conference, Lula also

addressed the recent arrest of General Walter Braga Netto, a former member of Jair Bolsonaro's government and his 2022 vice-presidential running mate.

Netto is under investigation for alleged involvement in a coup plot to keep Bolsonaro in power after his 2022 electoral defeat.

"It is not possible for us to accept disrespect for democracy, disrespect for the constitution, and it is not possible for us to accept that in a generous country like Brazil we have people of high military rank plotting the death of a president, his vice president, and a presiding judge of the supreme electoral court," Lula stated.

Netto was indicted in November alongside Bolsonaro and 35 others for allegedly plotting the coup.

According to a federal police statement, his recent arrest is linked to accusations of obstructing evidence collection.

# Israel shuts down Embassy in Ireland

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

**I**sraeli Foreign Ministry has announced the immediate closure of Israel's embassy in Ireland, accusing the country of propagating anti-Israel policies.

In a statement on Sunday, Israel's foreign minister, Gideon Saar, accused Ireland of "double standards" in its dealings with Israel.

Saar said the decision was reached "in light of the extreme anti-Israel policies of the Irish government."

According to him, "the actions and anti-Semitic rhetoric used by Ireland against Israel are rooted in the delegitimization and demonization of the Jewish state, along with double standards.

"Ireland has crossed every red line in



its relations with Israel," he added.

Ireland has been a vocal critic of Israel's actions in the ongoing Gaza conflict with Hamas which has reportedly resulted in nearly 45,000 fatalities.

Irish Foreign Minister Micheál Martin in a recent statement described Israel's

military actions in Gaza, as "collective punishment of the Palestinian people through the intent and impact of military actions of Israel in Gaza."

Earlier this year, Ireland joined Spain, Slovenia, and Norway in recognising Palestine as an independent state. Ireland is also preparing to support South Africa's genocide case against Israel at the International Court of Justice, advocating for an expanded definition of genocide.

Responding to Israel's latest decision, Irish Prime Minister Simon Harris described it as "deeply regrettable."

In a post on X, Harris said, "I utterly reject the assertion that Ireland is anti-Israel. Ireland is pro-peace, pro-human rights and pro-international law."

# EPL: United defeat City, as Chelsea continue winning run

By Oluwatosin Ologun

**M**anchester United defeated Manchester City during Sunday's English Premier League clash at the Etihad Stadium.

United winger, Amad Diallo struck a last-gasp winner at the Manchester derby to give Manchester United a stunning double-blast to secure a 2-1 victory at neighbours Manchester City that continues Pep Guardiola's champions' wretched run.

In the first half of the match, Josko Gvardiol headed in the opener on 36 minutes as the visitors' struggles defending set pieces were again exposed from a short corner.

It was the stand-out moment in a dour first 45 minutes in which both teams showed anxiety and a lack of quality.

United had the better openings in a similarly lacklustre second period but could not conjure up a response until Diallo won a penalty four minutes from time that allowed Bruno Fernandes to level from the spot.

The Red Devils then sent the visiting fans into ecstasy when Diallo latched on to a long pass, went past Ederson and fired into an empty net at the death.

The result means Man City sit fifth, nine points off leaders Liverpool, having played a game more with just one win from their last 11 matches in all competitions. United rise to 12th with a second league win under new boss Ruben Amorim.

Next up, United visit Tottenham in the League Cup quarter-finals on Thursday before hosting Bournemouth in the league on Sunday. City visit Aston Villa on Saturday.



For long spells, the game lacked quality with United's weakness at set pieces looking like it would prove decisive in terms of which colour of the city would be enjoying the bragging rights.

Step forward, Amad Diallo. The youngster was United's main threat throughout and seized upon an error from Matheus Nunes to win the penalty for Fernandes to level before following his assist with a stunning solo goal.

It was an out-of-the-blue double blast from United and it means a largely forgettable derby will live long in the memory in the red half of Manchester.

As for City, it must feel like it is going from bad to worse for Guardiola. This was an eighth loss in 11 matches and surely kills their hopes of retaining their title. The champions look devoid of belief and even managed to lose a game in which they had laboured towards the finish line against what had been a toothless United.

The pressure is mounting on the Citizens and their manager with it looking more and more likely they

will need to spend well in January to save their season.

## Maresca's Chelsea continue winning run

Chelsea survived a late Brentford fightback to clinch their seventh successive win and close the gap to Premier League leaders, Liverpool, to just two points

The Blues had not beaten Brentford at Stamford Bridge in the league since 1946 but goals from Marc Cucurella and Nicolas Jackson were enough to dispatch a bogey team, despite Bryan Mbeumo's 90th-minute strike giving hope to the visitors.

Cucurella's diving header put Enzo Maresca's side ahead just before half-time, though a string of missed opportunities by the hosts kept the game in the balance and Brentford hit the woodwork, moments before Jackson's well-taken effort doubled Chelsea's advantage.

Mbeumo slotted under the otherwise impressive Robert Sanchez at the start of seven additional minutes but the Bees could not force another chance meaning Chelsea can go top for at least a few hours with a victory over Everton next week.



# I pay attention to everything, I decide, Amorim speaks on Rashford, Garnacho omission

By Oluwatosin Ologun



**M**anchester United manager, Ruben Amorim has fired a warning to any Manchester United player who does not meet his standards.

Amorim also claimed he “pays attention to everything” after Marcus Rashford and Alejandro Garnacho were omitted from his squad for the Manchester derby.

There had been rumours on Saturday night about Manchester United’s starting line-up against Manchester City being leaked well before the official publication.

The team that did the rounds on social media turned out to be spot on, with Garnacho and Rashford not in the starting XI.

Amorim is likely to be far from happy to learn his starting line-up was in the public domain a day before the game – but there is no suggestion that either Rashford or Garnacho were responsible for the leakage.

Speaking to Sky Sports ahead of the game, Amorim said: “We try to evaluate everything, training performance, game performances, engagement with team-mates, push their team-mates up.

“Everything is on the line when we analyse and try to choose the players. It is my selection. Simple.

“I don’t want to send a message it is simply an evaluation and

they know it. The players are really, really smart. Everybody understands my decision and I have to choose. It is simple selection.

“Of course the context is difficult because we have to win games and we have a difficult situation now. I pay attention to everything, the way you eat, the way you put your clothes to go to a game. Everything. I make my evaluation and then I decide.

“There is a communication after the last training. They are alright. They had training this morning (Sunday) and I was there. They trained really well.”