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N2trn allocations: Stop paying gov's LG funds, ALGON, NULGE tell FG

By Dave Oludare Oso

Verified reports indicate that the Federation Accounts Allocation Committee (FAAC) disbursed a total of N2.08 trillion in allocations to local government councils between July and December 2024.

NEW DAILY PRIME observed that despite the July 2024 Supreme Court ruling granting full financial autonomy to the 774 local government areas (LGAs) in the country, the allocations were still paid to state government accounts.

This development, it was learnt, has angered officials and members of the Association of the Local Governments of Nigeria (ALGON) and National Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE).

The landmark Supreme Court ruling directed that funds meant for LGs should be paid directly into their accounts, bypassing state governments, in an effort to promote autonomy and ensure that the funds allocated to local governments were properly utilised.

Nearly six months after the judgment, the Federal Government had not effected direct payment of allocations to the local governments, as directed by the apex court.

According to reports, the Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Wale Edun, said the Federal Government was yet to commence direct payment to the respective LGs due to some "practical impediments."

Edun added that a committee had been set up by the Federal Government to look at the practicability of the judgment.

The Federal Government, it was learnt, faced challenges implementing the ruling on local government financial autonomy, with concerns over its impact on salary payments and operational viability.

An analysis of communiqués released after the monthly meeting of Federation Accounts Allocation Committee showed that from July to December 2024, the total distributable revenue amounted to



N8.351 trillion, which was shared among the Federal Government, States, and Local Government Councils. The disbursements for each month were as follows:

In July 2024, the total revenue shared was N1.354tn. The Federal Government received N459.776bn, while the States received N461.979bn and the Local Government Councils received N337.019bn.

In August 2024, the total distributable revenue increased to N1.358tn. The Federal Government received N431.079bn, the States N473.477bn, and the LGCs N343.703bn, a slight increase of N6.684bn from the previous month. This represents a 2 per cent increase in the amount allocated to LGCs.

September 2024 saw a decrease in the total distributable revenue, which fell to N1.203tn. The Federal Government received N374.925bn, the States N422.861bn, and the Local Government Councils N306.533bn. This marked a significant drop of N37.170bn in LGC allocations compared to August 2024, a decrease of 10.1 per cent.

In October 2024, the total distributable revenue rose to N1.298tn. The Federal Government received N424.867bn, the States received N453.724bn, and the LGCs received N329.864bn. This marked an increase of N23.331bn, representing a 7.6 per cent rise in allocations to the LGCs from September.

The trend continued in November 2024,

with the total distributable revenue increasing to N1.411tn. The Federal Government received N433.021bn, the States received N490.696bn, and the Local Government Councils received N355.621bn. This represented an increase of N25.757bn, or 7.8 per cent, compared to the previous month for LGC.

In December 2024, the total distributable revenue reached N1.727tn, the highest amount of the six-month period. The Federal Government received N581.856bn, the States N549.792bn, and the Local Government Councils received N402.553bn. This was the largest allocation to the LGs, with an increase of N46.932bn, which equated to a 13.2 per cent rise from November.

Over the six-month period, the total amount allocated to the Local Government Councils was N2.075tn out of the N8.351tn total distributable revenue. This allocation represents approximately 24.9 per cent of the total revenue shared.

It was further observed that there was a 72.06 per cent increase in the allocations to local governments between July to December 2024 when compared to the same period of the previous year.

This means that there was an increase of N869bn from the N1.206tn allocated to local government councils within the same period last year.

The month of December saw the highest allocation to LGCs, marking a significant 13.2 per cent increase from the previous month. This sharp rise in December followed a steady upward trajectory in LGC allocations, with the biggest percentage increase seen in the final month of the year.

Despite these large disbursements, the question of whether the Supreme Court's directive will be fully implemented remains unanswered.

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In July this year, the Supreme Court declared that it is unconstitutional for state governors to hold funds allocated for local government administrations.

The seven-man panel, in the judgment delivered by Justice Emmanuel Agim, declared that the 774 local government councils in the country should manage their funds themselves.

The apex court held that the power of the government is portioned into three arms of government, the federal, the state and the local government.

The court further declared that a state government has no power to appoint a caretaker committee and a local government council is only recognisable with a democratically elected government.

The judgment held that the use of a caretaker committee amounts to the state government taking control of the local government and is in violation of the 1999 Constitution.

The court ruled that state governments are perpetuating a dangerous trend by refusing to allow democratically elected local government councils to function, instead appointing their loyalists who can only be removed by them.

The court stated that it is the local government that should receive and manage funds meant for local government.

The judgment held that the local government council funds must be paid to only democratically elected local government councils stating that "anything other than this will be taken as a gross misconduct."

The Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Prince Lateef Fagbemi (SAN), earlier issued a stern warning to state governors bypassing the Supreme Court judgment on local government autonomy, threatening to seek a contempt of court suit if the defiance continues.

Fagbemi also cautioned local government chairmen across the country against mismanaging or looting public funds.

The AGF stressed that the autonomy

granted to local governments by the Supreme Court is to empower the grassroots and not for carting public funds into private pockets as such attitude will not go unpunished.

LG UNIONS REACT

ALGON Secretary-General, Mohammed Abubakar, while speaking on the delay in the direct payment of federal allocation to local governments, lamented the non-implementation of the Supreme Court ruling.

He said, "Sincerely, we are all in the dark as we stand now. People who don't want this LG autonomy to work are having a field day. Ordinarily, the Supreme Court judgment should not be left unattended. We are in the dark, to the extent that we cannot pinpoint what the government is trying to achieve by not enforcing the Supreme Court judgment allowing allocation to be paid directly to local government accounts.

"The Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees and ALGON had made their submissions that the LGs accounts should be opened across board and submitted to the Office of The Accountant-General for the allocation to be disbursed directly.

"But the governors are claiming that they already utilised funds for the interest of the local governments.

They also argued that the local governments' money is not enough to take care of all the health and the primary school teachers. But we are saying they should allow the implementation first, then we can make a case for whatever deficiencies we have.

"In a situation where you don't act but worry about some issues raised by the governors, which include that they have incurred a lot of loans on behalf of the local governments, then we may not have a way forward. So, these are the bottlenecks that we understand are causing these delays, but again there can be a way out of these issues and we have proffered some solutions to the committee. It is best known to the committee why it has not carried out the advice we gave to them."

Also, the Ogun State Chairman of the

Nigerian Union of Local Government Employees, Bayo Adefesobi, on Monday blamed the Federal Government for the non-implementation of the court judgment.

"We have not seen the implementation of LG autonomy in Ogun State just as it is across the country. The blame for the non-implementation should go to the Federal Government that made the pronouncement but refused to follow up on its decision.

"Once the Federal Government pays the allocation into the respective accounts of the local governments, the chairmen will access the funds and use them for grassroots development. So, we all await the Federal Government to do the needful."

The Chairman, Kwara State chapter of NULGE, Seun Oyinlade, expressed disappointment over the non-implementation of the LG autonomy six months after the judgment.

He said "All the 16 local governments in the state did not receive their allocations directly from the Federal Government. If the councils had received direct allocation from the Federal Government, there would have been no need for the JAAC meeting held with the council officials before the payment of LG workers' salaries for the month of November."

Speaking with one of our correspondents, ex-chairman of Atakumosa West LG in Osun State, Francis Famurewa, lamented the fate of the lgs, saying despite being elected, LG chairmen were made to take instructions from the state's Commissioner for Local Government Affairs, an appointee of the governor.

Asked if he was satisfied with the situation of the LGs, Famurewa said, "Nobody will be satisfied with the current situation where local governments are appendages of the state.

"Most of the time, they are not just appendages, they are under the control of the Ministry of Local Government. When I was in office as chairman, we were more under the Commissioner for Local Government, which was a terrible scenario."

THE NEW DAILY PRIME RATE CARD

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9X5	225,738.00
9X4	193,500.00
9X3	166,223.50
8X6	225,368.50
8X3	106,934.50
7X4	180,173.50
6X4	100,434.50
6X3	82,750.00
6X2	52,499.50
5X6	123,749.50
5X5	110,000.00
5X4	76,833.00
5X3	66,875.00
5X2	42,916.50
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3X3	28,000.00
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7X4	164,002.00
6X4	94,010.50
6X3	78,500.00
6X2	47,500.00
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5X4	61,500.00
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10X4	142,787.50
10X3	121,355.50
9X6	192,305.50
9X3	107,757.50
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1X1	2,795.50

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10X5	162,222.445
10X4	103,963.00
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9X6	162,222.445
9X5	168,191.50
9X4	N/A
8X6	N/A
8X3	N/A
7X4	72,676.00
6X4	65,000.00
6X3	41,124.50
6X2	29,858.00
5X6	71,378.00
5X4	42,825.00
5X3	29,858.00
5X2	22,841.00
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4X3	N/A
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3x3	23,458.00
3X2	14,923.00
2X2	10,200.00
2X1	5,439.50
1X1	2,700.00

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5X6 FRONT PAGE	3,350,000.00
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EARPIECE FRONT PAGE(1.5X2)	246,500.00
EARPIECE INSIDE PAGE(1.5X2)	117,875.00
EARPIECE BACK PAGE	236,796.50
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CENTRE SPREAD COLOUR (PRODUCT)	929,000.00
CENTRESPREAD B&W	800,000.00
CENTRE SPREAD HALF COLOUR	575,000.00
CENTRESPREAD STRIP COLOUR	191,668.50
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FG renames University of Abuja after Yakubu Gowon

By **Gbenga Oluranti OLALEYE**

The Federal Government has renamed the University of Abuja after former military Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon.

Henceforth, the institution will be known as Yakubu Gowon University.

Minister of Information and National Orientation, Mohammed Idris announced the name change shortly after the last Federal Executive Council meeting for the year 2024, chaired by President Bola Tinubu.

The minister said the decision was taken in recognition of the enormous contribution of Gowon to nation building.

Yakubu Gowon is Nigeria's former military head of state. He ruled the country from 1966 to 1975.

The University of Abuja, established in 1988, is a leading federal university in Nigeria. UNIABUJA is situated in the nation's capital, it was founded



with a dual-mode structure, offering both conventional academic programs and distance learning education.

The university began academic activities in 1990 and has grown significantly, boasting faculties across a wide range of disciplines, including sciences, arts, law, education, and medicine.

Its primary campus is located along the Airport Road in Gwagwalada, Abuja, with a mission to provide quality education and advance learning.

Also during the address by the Minister, he disclosed that President Bola Tinubu has approved free transportation nationwide ahead of Christmas celebration.

He said the Federal Government will commence a nationwide free train services from the 20th of December to 5th of January 2025.

Idris stated that FEC will be on recess from 18 of December until 6th of January 2025.

Tinubu approves nationwide free train rides for two weeks

By **Elizabeth Jenrola Oso**

President Bola Tinubu has approved free train rides for Nigerians between December 20, 2024, to January 5, 2025.

The Minister of Information and National Orientation, Mohammed Idris, told State House correspondents in Abuja on Monday that the gesture was to help Nigerians deal with transportation costs during the Christmas and New Year celebrations.

He said, "As we did last year, there will be free train service to all Nigerians from

December 20 up until January 5, free train service nationwide.

"This is consistent with the President's desire to cushion the effect of transportation, especially to the most vulnerable Nigerians.

"Recall that this also happened in the last Christmas period and the Sallah period. And the President has also approved that this year."

Idris, also said the Federal Government



had resolved to change the name of the University of Abuja to Yakubu Gowon University.

He said that the resolution would be forwarded to the National Assembly for formal approval.

No plans for French military base in Nigeria – DHQ

By Dave Oludare Oso

Contrary to news circulating in the media, the Defence Headquarters (DHQ) has said that the French military has no plans to set up a base in Nigeria.

This comes as a human rights activist, Mahdi Shehu, lampooned the government for denying the development in a social media post on Saturday.

Shehu, in the post, which had a video, claimed that some French military officers had arrived in Borno State as part of the process to set up the base.

The rights activist wrote, “Last week, the Chief of Defence Staff denied any plan to establish French military bases in Nigeria.

“Yesterday, the Chief of Army Staff received the first contingent of French soldiers and immediately deployed them to Maiduguri to ‘HELP NIGERIA IN FIGHTING BOKO HARAM.’

“The same Boko Haram they claimed to have decimated and are scampering for safety.”

“Before the blinking of an eye, a FRANCE military base will be physically seen in Maiduguri, perhaps before the new year, so that they will ‘FIGHT’ Boko Haram and



begin to explore and prospect huge mineral resources and surely begin to exploit, harass, intimidate, kill, incapacitate, and annihilate the local people, which is typical of France’s presence in Africa.”

However, the Director of Defence Media Operations, Maj. Gen. Edward Buba, has dismissed the claim as fake and mischievous.

In a statement on Monday, Gen. Buba stated, “The attention of the Defence Headquarters has been drawn to online reports alleging the arrival of the first contingent of French soldiers in Maiduguri towards establishing a French military base in North-East Nigeria.

“The Armed Forces of Nigeria hereby state unequivocally that this information is fake, totally

false, and mischievous. It would be recalled that the Chief of Defence Staff, General Christopher Musa, recently addressed this matter in various media forums, where he debunked such news and speculations.

“Accordingly, the general public is urged to disregard these claims and speculations that are still circulating in some quarters. It is clear that these are the antics of mischief makers.

“Nevertheless, the military will continue to carry out its constitutional responsibilities most professionally and ensure the territorial integrity of our nation. Kindly disseminate, please.”

EFCC arrests 192 foreigners, 600 others over cybercrime, romance scam in Lagos

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

In what is easily the largest such operation in its history, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has announced the arrest of 192 foreign nationals and about 600 Nigerians for their alleged involvement in cryptocurrency investment fraud, cybercrime, and romance scams.

Among those arrested are 148 Chinese nationals, 40 Filipinos, two Khazartans, one Pakistani, and one Indonesian.

The suspects were apprehended in a sting operation at their hideout, a seven-storey building known as the Big Leaf Building, located at No. 7, Oyin Jolayemi Street, Victoria Island, Lagos on Monday.

The EFCC revealed that the operation was the result of actionable intelligence and months of surveillance on the activities of the syndicate.

The Executive Chairman of the Agency, Ola Olukoyede during a media briefing at the Lagos Zonal Directorate of the Commission on Monday.

Confirming this groundbreaking achievement, Olukoyede revealed that the suspects were apprehended following a successful operation at their hideout, a seven-story building known as Big Leaf Building, located at No. 7, Oyin Jolayemi Street, Victoria Island, Lagos.

Representing the Chairman, the Director, of Public Affairs, Wilson Uwujaren stated that the foreign nationals used the facility, which could be mistaken for a corporate headquarters of a financial establishment, to train their Nigerian accomplices on how to initiate romance and investment scams while using Nigerian identities to perpetrate their criminal activities.

Highlighting more on their operation, the EFCC Chair said the Nigerian



accomplices, were assigned WhatsApp accounts linked to foreign telephone numbers, especially from Germany and Italy, to engage victims in romantic conversations as well as phantom business and investment discussions to trick them into shopping on the purported online investment shopping platform called <http://yooto.com>.

According to Olukoyede, “Each floor is furnished with advanced desktop computers. Notably, investigators found 500 SIM cards from local telecom providers on the 5th floor alone, which were purchased for illicit activities”

“The Nigerian accomplices, hired by foreign masterminds, used these resources to scam victims through phishing, primarily targeting individuals from the US, Canada, Mexico, and various European countries.”

“They usually arm them with desktop computers and mobile devices and create fake profiles for them.

“The Nigerian accomplices are equally provided with logs that allow them access to foreign communication lines and victims, which they chat with on WhatsApp, Instagram and Telegram.”

“For those who show interest, activation

fees for an account on the platform start from \$ 35 USD. “Investigation revealed that the criterion for recruiting these young Nigerians is proficiency in the use of computers, especially typing skills.

“Once the Nigerians can win the confidence of would-be victims, the foreigners would take over the actual task of defrauding the victims and proceed to block their Nigerian accomplices from the network”

Furthermore, Olukoyede added that the operation indicates that Nigerians are behind major fraud emanating from the country, an act he condemned.

“Foreigners are taking advantage of our nation’s unfortunate reputation as a haven of frauds to establish a foothold here to disguise their atrocious criminal enterprises. But, as this operation has shown, there will be no hiding places for criminals in Nigeria,” he said.

The EFCC boss assured that the Commission is collaborating with its international partners to uncover the full scope of the scam, identify accomplices, and determine if there are any links to organized global fraud networks.

Tinubu canvasses media's support for tax reform bills

By Friday Omosola

President Bola Tinubu has called on the media to rally behind his administration's proposed tax reform bills, emphasising their significance in fostering national prosperity and sustainable development.

Speaking at the 2024 Nigerian Media Merit Awards (NNMA) held at the Muson Centre, Lagos, the President, represented by the Minister of Information and National Orientation, Mohammed Idris, described the reforms as a crucial step toward creating enduring wealth and prosperity for all Nigerians.

Acknowledging divergent opinions on the proposed reforms, Tinubu stressed the need for a national consensus on overhauling Nigeria's tax administration system.

He expressed optimism about finding common ground through ongoing dialogue.

"Our policies are deliberate and well-thought-out. We are steering Nigeria toward restoration through a comprehensive approach addressing economic diversification, human capital development, infrastructure expansion, wealth creation, and inclusive growth," Tinubu stated.

He highlighted that the tax bills before the National Assembly aim to simplify the tax structure, ease the burden on vulnerable citizens, increase state revenues, and encourage business growth through targeted incentives.

Tinubu linked the reforms to other transformative policies under his Renewed Hope Agenda, including



subsidy removal, exchange rate unification, and resource redistribution.

He noted that these initiatives have already begun to yield results, citing the Federation Accounts Allocation Committee's recent record-breaking revenue distribution.

"These revenues are funding impactful initiatives such as the consumer credit scheme, student loan fund, MSME clinics, the 3 million technical talent programme, the presidential CNG initiative, and extensive road infrastructure projects," he said.

Tinubu also underscored his administration's commitment to ensuring financial autonomy for local governments, enhancing service delivery at the grassroots.

He therefore urged the media to amplify the narratives surrounding these reforms to counter misinformation and improve public understanding, noting their vital role in guiding citizens with accurate and purposeful information.

"While my administration guarantees

the press's fundamental rights, this freedom must be exercised responsibly, especially in this digital era, where falsehoods often spread faster than truths," Tinubu said.

Congratulating the winners of the 2024 NNMA Awards, Tinubu lauded the Nigerian media's contributions to democracy, recognizing journalists' courage and professionalism both locally and globally.

In a bid to combat misinformation and hate speech, the President announced the recent approval of funding for the UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Institute (MIL).

The institute, to be established at the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) in Abuja, will equip Nigerians with critical skills to identify credible sources and counter fake news, fostering a more informed society.

Tinubu reaffirmed his administration's commitment to safeguarding media freedom, urging journalists to continue serving as defenders of democracy and agents of positive change.

APC dismisses threat of opposition's 2027 strategy amid Obasanjo, Kwankwaso, Duke's meeting

By Gbenga Oluranti OLALEYE

The ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) has dismissed the recent visit by former presidential candidate Senator Rabiu Kwankwaso, ex- Cross River State Governor Donald Duke, and other political figures to the Abeokuta, Ogun State home of ex-President Olusegun Obasanjo, as inconsequential in terms of challenging the APC's hold on power in the upcoming 2027 elections.

The visit, which took place over the weekend, raised eyebrows as it was widely speculated to be a strategic meeting ahead of the 2027 general elections.

Although the specifics of their discussions remain confidential, sources close to the leaders indicated that the gathering was part of a broader effort to explore alternatives to the ruling APC and the opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

In recent weeks, the debate surrounding the 2027 elections has intensified. Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Senator George Akume, sparked a debate when he called for the re-election of President Bola Tinubu, asserting that there would be no vacancy in Aso Rock until 2031, the end of Tinubu's second term. The opposition, however, has repeatedly rejected this idea, vowing to unseat the APC in 2027.

Kwankwaso, a significant political force in Kano State, and Duke, a former presidential aspirant in 2007, met with Obasanjo, who has been vocal in his criticism of Tinubu's administration, particularly regarding allegations of corruption and Nigeria's growing debt burden. Obasanjo has also been actively engaging various



political figures, seeking alternatives to the ruling party.

In a post-meeting statement, Kwankwaso confirmed the visit, stating, "I was pleased to be in the company of my friend, His Excellency Donald Duke, and other associates to pay a courtesy call on former President Olusegun Obasanjo at his residence in Abeokuta. Deliberations on significant national issues, including the future of politics and governance in Nigeria, defined the conversation. We are grateful to Baba for his warm reception, support, and hospitality."

However, the APC quickly downplayed the significance of the meeting. National Publicity Director of the APC, Bala Ibrahim, dismissed the opposition's efforts to challenge the APC's dominance. He emphasised that President Tinubu's political stature had surpassed that of the opposition figures, including Obasanjo, Kwankwaso, Duke, and others.

"I hold Obasanjo in high esteem, but

when it comes to the politics of Nigeria, particularly contemporary politics, Tinubu is not their mate. Tinubu is head and shoulders above them," Ibrahim stated in an interview with The PUNCH.

He pointed out that the individuals involved in the meeting had already been defeated in previous elections, including Obasanjo's support for ex-President Goodluck Jonathan in 2015 and Peter Obi in 2023, both of whom were bested by Tinubu.

Ibrahim concluded, "They can have marathon meetings and meet till the end of time, but they will not present any threat to the government of APC. These are people who were trashed in the last election. If they are bringing angels, it's a different story. But if it is these same spent forces, their meeting cannot bring any good outcome."

With the opposition preparing for what promises to be a heated political battle ahead of 2027, the APC remains confident in its strength under President Tinubu's leadership.

Three bodies recovered, 23 still missing in Agatu boat mishap—NEMA

By Helen Okechukwu

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) has disclosed that at least three bodies have been recovered from the boat mishap that occurred around 7pm on December 14 at the Agatu Local Government Area, Benue State.

It would be recalled that, the New Daily Post had reported that a boat ferrying traders returning from Ocholonya Market, from Agatu to Nasarawa State, capsized, leaving at least 20 people dead.

In a statement yesterday, the NEMA said about 23 people still remained unaccounted for as the search operation was still ongoing.



The NEMA said, “The victims of this unfortunate event were primarily traders from Odenyi Magaji and other communities in Nasarawa State.”

“Around 76 traders were returning home when their boat struck a

submerged tree, which the operator failed to notice. The collision caused the boat to capsize, throwing all passengers into the river.”

The report stated that out of 76 alleged traders who were involved in the boat mishap, 49 have been rescued, with an additional one person who swam to safety bringing the figure of survivors to 50.

“Search and rescue operations are ongoing, with local community members and other stakeholders working tirelessly to locate the missing passengers,” the agency added

Benin Republic electoral officials in Nigeria to learn from INEC

By Dave Oludare Oso

A delegation of Benin Republic’s Autonomous National Electoral Commission (CENA) has visited the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) on a study tour.

The 12-member delegation, led by Sacca Lafia, CENA president, included national commissioners, directors, and senior staff.

They were received on Monday by INEC chairman, Mahmood Yakubu alongside other commission members at INEC headquarters in Abuja.

Lafia said the visit was aimed at learning from Nigeria’s electoral processes and best practices as Benin Republic prepares for its upcoming 2026 elections.

Speaking at the event, Yakubu highlighted the significance of the visit and the unique challenges CENA faces ahead of the polls.



“Early last month, we received a letter from CENA indicating its interest to undertake a study visit to INEC Nigeria as they prepare for what they described as their most complex election in 2026,” he said.

Yakubu explained that CENA will, for the first time, conduct three elections in three months. Legislative and local elections are scheduled for January 2026, with the presidential election to follow in April 2026.

He said INEC had prepared a detailed programme to address the delegation’s

interests.

“In particular, CENA is interested in the legal framework for elections in Nigeria, the design and printing of election materials and forms, the recruitment and training of poll officials, election budgeting and mode of payment to different service providers, security during elections, the use of technology, the accreditation of local and international observers, engagement with electoral stakeholders and other aspects of Nigeria’s electoral experience,” Yakubu said.

He said INEC officials from various departments will brief the delegation during their visit, covering all aspects of the electoral process.

Yakubu assured the team of full access to resources and documentation to support their preparation for the 2026 elections.

Obi seeks more funding for education, health

By Friday Omosola

Former Anambra State Governor and the 2023 presidential candidate of the Labour Party (LP), Mr Peter Obi, has urged government at all levels, to allocate more funds to the education and health sectors, describing them as critical to the nation's development.

In a statement shared on his X page today, Obi emphasised the need for the government to prioritise the country's future by making substantial investments in the two sectors.

He made this appeal during a visit to the Madonna College of Health Technology in Olokoro, Abia State, and the Women Fellowship Pastoral Project in Umuahia.

He affirmed his commitment to champion the causes of education,



healthcare, and poverty alleviation through consistent advocacy and support for these critical sectors.

"Madonna College of Health trains health professionals who will contribute, in many ways, to a better health sector in the nation.

"With our health sector in Nigeria suffering from severe shortage of

health professionals, institutions like these that serve to bridge the gap by contributing immeasurably to the training of health professionals should be supported to do more", he added.

Obi further urged the students to view themselves not only as academics but as vital contributors to national development and transformative agents working toward a better future for humanity.

"This, I believe, will help them make productive contributions to society. I appreciate the proprietor, the management, and the staff of the College for their good work. Together, we all will build the new Nigeria we all deserve. It is possible", he stressed.

Security operatives kill four kidnappers, arrest 5 others in Imo

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

The Police Command in Imo State has announced that it has killed four suspected kidnappers in Ezioha, Ezizama community in Mbaitoli LGA of the state.

The state police spokesperson, Henry Okoye, in a statement on Monday, said the operatives also arrested five other suspects and recovered explosive devices, eight motorcycles and communication equipment during the raid on Sunday.

Okoye noted that the feat was achieved by the joint effort of Operation Udoka, consisting of the police, Department of State Services (DSS) and Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC).

Aboki Danjuma, the commissioner of police in the state, reiterated the command's resolve in protecting the lives and properties in the state.

"The Commissioner of Police, Aboki



Danjuma, and other service commanders conducted an assessment of an ongoing operation in Ezioha, Ezizama autonomous community, in Mbaitoli LGA, targeting an ESN camp responsible for violent attacks and kidnappings in the region," the statement reads

"The operation, which also covers Njaba and other affected areas, highlights the state's commitment to safeguarding all its communities.

"During this operation, security forces

successfully neutralized four suspected terrorists and arrested five others following a protracted gunfight with the terrorists.

"In addition, eight motorcycles, several dangerous weapons including explosive devices, and communication equipment linked to IPOB/ESN members were recovered.

"CP Aboki Danjuma reassured the people of Imo that the security agencies commended the professionalism of the joint security operatives and stressed the importance of public cooperation in aiding the fight against crime by providing valuable intelligence.

"CP Aboki Danjuma reassured the people of Imo that the security agencies are working tirelessly to protect the state. He called on all citizens to work in partnership with law enforcement to ensure a peaceful and secure environment throughout the holiday season."

Supreme Court dismisses lawsuit seeking Tinubu's removal over CIA, drug claims

By Helen Okechukwu

The Supreme Court of Nigeria has dismissed a lawsuit aimed at removing President Bola Tinubu from office. The suit, filed by Ambrose Owuru, the presidential candidate of the Hope Democratic Party (HDP) in the 2019 general election, was based on allegations linking Tinubu to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of the United States and drug-related offences.

In a unanimous ruling delivered by a five-member panel of justices led by Justice Uwani Abba-Aji, the court declared the suit frivolous and imposed a N5 million fine on Owuru. The court also warned the Registry not to accept any further frivolous claims from the plaintiff.

Owuru had filed the suit directly at the apex court, alleging that President Tinubu was an agent of the CIA, and thus unfit to hold the office of president. He further argued that Tinubu should be disqualified from office due to his forfeiture of \$460,000 in a drug-related case in the United States.

Owuru called on the Supreme Court to invoke Section 157 of the 1999 Constitution (as amended) to oust Tinubu, claiming the president was under the influence of foreign authorities.

In his suit, marked SC/CV/667/2023, Owuru also named former President Muhammadu Buhari as a defendant. Before he filed the case, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) had deregistered Owuru's political party, HDP.

When the case was heard on Monday, Owuru represented himself in court,



wearing a lawyer's wig and gown. The plaintiff has a history of filing legal actions aimed at challenging the outcomes of elections. Notably, in May 2023, the Abuja Division of the Court of Appeal imposed a N40 million fine on Owuru for filing a "frivolous" lawsuit in an attempt to prevent Tinubu from being sworn in as president.

Earlier, Owuru had also sought to prevent former President Buhari's inauguration, alleging that INEC had assisted Buhari in manipulating the results of the 2019 presidential election. Owuru claimed that INEC's last-minute postponement of the election, originally scheduled for 16th February 2019, gave Buhari an unfair advantage.

He contended that he had won a referendum, monitored by both local and international observers, and secured over 50 million votes—surpassing the total votes of all other candidates, including Buhari.

Owuru, a British-trained lawyer

called to the Nigerian Bar in 1982, claimed that Buhari's presidency was illegal and that his mandate had been stolen. He argued that he was the rightful winner of the 2019 election and that upon Tinubu's disqualification, the Supreme Court should declare him president and order his immediate inauguration to reclaim his alleged stolen mandate.

In addition to President Tinubu and Buhari, the Attorney General of the Federation, the Minister of Justice, and INEC were named as defendants in the case.

This dismissal represents the latest in a series of failed legal actions by Owuru against the Nigerian government, and the Supreme Court's decision effectively clears the way for President Tinubu to continue his tenure in office.

Nigerian scams Indian woman of N9m with fake marriage proposal, arrested

By Friday Omosola

A Nigerian national, who was identified as Johnson, has been arrested in Delhi for duping an Indian woman from Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh with a fake marriage proposal.

Police operatives from Rajnandgaon apprehended Johnson, who is accused of swindling the woman of lakhs of rupees under the pretense of marriage.

According to the police, Johnson had been living in Delhi secretly, even after the expiration of his visa and he created a fake profile on a matrimonial website where the victim's profile was also listed.

The suspect initially attracted the woman's attention and convinced her that he was a UK-based businessman planning to expand his business to India.

John allegedly contacted the woman through his associate, claiming that he



was stranded at the Delhi airport and needed money to exchange the UK currency he had.

The Additional Superintendent of Police at Rajnandgaon, Rahul Dev Sharma said, "He blackmailed the woman and cheated her of ₹15,72,000 (approximately ₹9,100,000) with the help of his accomplice."

Later, when the victim tried calling him, she found his phone has been switched off.

Realizing that she had been scammed, the woman lodged a case of fraud with the Dongargarh Police cyber cell.

Sharma stated, "We started an investigation on the complaint of the applicant. With the help of a cyber cell, it was found that the accused lives in Delhi. Our team raided his Delhi accommodation and arrested him."

"Accused Johnson is a national of Nigeria. He has cheated on many girls so far. We are trying to gather further information through interrogation."

The police also noted that Johnson is around 40 years old.

Authorities recovered a laptop and four mobile phones from the accused, and his bank account has been frozen.

Bandit leader who killed Sokoto traditional ruler nabbed

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Notorious bandit leader and arms dealer, Bako Wurgi, alias Baka NaGarba, has been arrested by troops of the 1 Brigade of the Nigerian army.

Military sources said Wurgi is suspected to be behind the murder of Isa Bawa, the emir of Gobir in Sokoto State.

In July, the traditional ruler was abducted by suspected bandits at the Kwanar Maharba area in Sokoto while returning from an event and was killed three weeks later.

In a viral video, the traditional ruler was shown tied up by the bandits, pleading with the state government to pay the ransom to the bandits for his



release.

According to Zagazola Makama, a counter-insurgency publication focused on the Lake Chad region, the suspected mastermind of the abduction was arrested on December 14 around 10 p.m. following intelligence reports that he was receiving treatment at a hospital in Shinkafi town, Zamfara State.

The report said Wurgi was being treated for injuries he sustained during a clash with a rival group and the army discovered he was on his way to a hospital with multiple cuts and gunshot wounds.

The publication said two of Wurgi's accomplices fled the scene but troops arrested the person who assisted in transporting him in a tricycle.

Funke Akindele's Jenifa film shatters record, earns N206M

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Released Dec 13, 2024, Funke Akindele's film earned N206M on opening weekend, surpassing expectations and setting a new Nollywood record.

In a heartfelt Instagram post, Funke Akindele expressed her gratitude, writing, "Thank you Lord!!! Thank you, Nigeria!!! Thank you!!!!!!!!!!!"

ELJ's debut Friday alone earned N45.22 million, marking a 30% increase in first-day admissions compared to her previous hit, "A Tribe Called Judah." This remarkable performance highlights the growing anticipation and strong fanbase Funke Akindele continues to command.

The film's opening weekend, with 38,353 tickets sold, now stands as the highest-grossing opening weekend in Nollywood history, setting a new benchmark for box office success in the industry.

According to Akindele's Instagram update, ELJ also shattered the record for the highest-grossing single day in Nollywood, earning N87.8 million in just one day.

These impressive figures reflect the growing demand for quality Nollywood productions and Akindele's ability to captivate audiences with her unique storytelling.

The film's success extends far beyond Nigeria, with its international debut across 30 countries via Nile Group Entertainment, further boosting its global reach and positioning Nollywood on a larger international stage.

What makes ELJ's achievements even more remarkable is that they were accomplished despite missing screenings at major cinemas like Genesis Cinemas and a part of the day at Silverbird Cinemas.

These challenges did not hinder the film's success, instead proving the enduring appeal of Akindele's character Jenifa and the universal themes explored in the film—identity, family, and resilience—that resonate deeply with a diverse audience.

ELJ's success underscores Funke Akindele's exceptional talent and contribution to Nollywood. Her ability to consistently create content that resonates with audiences has helped elevate Nollywood's global reputation.

With ELJ breaking box office records, Akindele continues to set the standard for Nollywood excellence, solidifying her position as a key figure in Nigerian cinema.

The film's popularity is not only a testament to Akindele's star power but also highlights the growing audience base for Nollywood films.

ELJ's success reflects the changing landscape of Nigerian cinema, as more local films are gaining traction and recognition both at home and abroad.

Funke Akindele's ability to blend humor, drama, and cultural relevance has made her a household name and ensured that her projects consistently resonate with audiences.

Additionally, ELJ's success reflects the broader trend of Nollywood's growing dominance in the African film industry. With increasing investment, improved production standards, and a wider distribution network, Nollywood is becoming a global force to reckon with.



Funke Akindele's track record of delivering commercially successful films further reinforces her leadership role in this transformation.

The film's success also highlights the power of word-of-mouth marketing in Nollywood. Despite the absence of screenings at key cinemas, fans of Jenifa eagerly spread the word about ELJ, contributing to its exceptional ticket sales.

This underscores the loyalty of Akindele's fanbase, who continue to support her projects despite any setbacks.

As Nollywood continues to grow, Funke Akindele's achievements with ELJ demonstrate the potential for Nigerian films to break international barriers and capture global audiences.

The record-breaking success of Everybody Loves Jenifa is not just a personal milestone for Akindele, but also a significant moment for Nollywood, marking a new chapter in its quest for global recognition and respect.

Zlatan Ibile Criticizes Mockery Over Fake Designers

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Zlatan Ibile condemns shaming others for wearing fake designer items, urging empathy and understanding for those unable to afford luxury fashion.

In a video circulating widely online, Zlatan addressed the issue with a straightforward and relatable message. He said, "Let those buying fake products keep buying them until they have the means to afford the originals. Someone wearing fake today might wear original tomorrow."

Recently, there has been an increase in public figures calling out others for wearing counterfeit designer items. These incidents often spark online debates and attract significant attention. Zlatan's comments seem to respond directly to this growing trend, which he believes is unnecessary and harmful.

One of the most notable examples occurred when fashion entrepreneur Rahman Jago publicly criticized veteran singer Oritse Femi for wearing counterfeit high-end fashion. The incident drew mixed reactions from fans, with some agreeing with Jago while others criticized the approach as being elitist and disrespectful.

Similarly, Olayinka Ashogbon, founder of the popular clothing brand Ashluxe, made headlines when he called out singer Lyta for wearing fake replicas of his designs. This confrontation also fueled discussions about the accessibility of luxury fashion and the pressures on celebrities to maintain a certain image.

Zlatan's comments reflect a broader understanding of the financial struggles many people face. In his view, mocking those who wear fake items due to financial limitations is both insensitive and counterproductive. He emphasized the idea that personal growth and financial improvement take time.

By saying that someone wearing fake today could wear originals tomorrow, Zlatan highlights the possibility of progress. His words resonate with the struggles of many who aspire to achieve

financial stability and success but are not there yet.

Zlatan's message also serves as a critique of certain behaviors within the fashion and entertainment industries. As a fashion entrepreneur himself, he understands the importance of authenticity and originality in the fashion world. However, he believes that shaming others does not align with the spirit of creativity and inclusivity that fashion should embody.

Instead of publicly ridiculing people, Zlatan suggests a more supportive and empathetic approach. He indirectly encourages fashion entrepreneurs to focus on creating accessible and inspiring designs rather than gatekeeping luxury fashion.

Following Zlatan's comments, reactions from fans and social media users have been divided. Some praised his stance, calling it a breath of fresh air in an industry often criticized for its superficiality. They lauded his understanding and encouragement of self-improvement.

Others, however, questioned whether his approach might inadvertently normalize the acceptance of counterfeit products. They argue that counterfeiting undermines the integrity of the fashion industry and the hard work of designers.

Despite the differing opinions, Zlatan's message has sparked important conversations about financial inequality, the pressures of public image, and the role of empathy in the fashion and entertainment industries.

The issue of counterfeit fashion extends beyond celebrity disputes. Globally, the counterfeit industry is a multi-billion-dollar problem that affects brands, designers, and consumers alike. While some argue that replicas allow people to enjoy luxury aesthetics at a fraction of the cost, others point out the ethical concerns and economic consequences associated



with counterfeit production.

In Nigeria, where economic disparities are stark, the prevalence of counterfeit goods reflects the struggles of many citizens trying to navigate societal expectations. For celebrities, the pressure to maintain a luxurious image often leads to scrutiny and, in some cases, public ridicule when they fall short.

Zlatan's stance encourages a shift in perspective. By focusing on personal growth and financial progress, his comments challenge the culture of public shaming and highlight the importance of understanding and support.

His message is particularly relevant in an industry where appearances often overshadow authenticity. Zlatan's advocacy for empathy reminds both celebrities and fans to prioritize character and progress over superficial judgments.

As the conversation around counterfeit fashion continues, Zlatan's remarks stand out as a call for compassion and respect. By reminding everyone that success and financial stability are journeys, not destinations, he offers a refreshing perspective on a contentious issue.

Rather than mocking others for what they lack, Zlatan's message inspires people to focus on their growth and uplift those around them. His words serve as a reminder that genuine success is not just about material possessions but also about the relationships and understanding we build along the way.

In a world where public image often defines a person's worth, Zlatan's call for empathy and support carries significant weight. It challenges societal norms and encourages a more inclusive and understanding approach to fashion and life.

Shina Peters: Tried dodging bishop ordination, God intervened

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Shina Peters, 66, a Nigerian juju icon, reveals his ordination as a Cherubim and Seraphim bishop, citing his gospel-inspired music's spiritual impact.

According to Peters, his journey to becoming a bishop was not planned. He revealed that the decision came after a divine instruction was given to the church leaders.

"The Almighty God told the leaders of the church that I should be made the first bishop in the C&S Church," he said.

The veteran musician further explained that his consistent use of hymns in his music played a significant role in this divine message.

"For decades, I have incorporated hymns into my songs and performances," Peters explained. "Through this, I have won many souls for Christ. My music has always been inspired by spiritual hymns, and I believe it resonates deeply with people."

Despite the honour, Peters admitted that he initially tried to avoid the ordination. "I tried to dodge the ordination for a while," he confessed. "But God eventually got me arrested. It became clear that I couldn't run from His calling."

The juju legend's ordination marks a unique milestone in the Cherubim and Seraphim Church. As the first bishop from the music industry, Peters sees his new role as a way to further bridge the gap between religion and entertainment.

He believes that his musical career has always been a ministry, and this



new position will help amplify his efforts to spread the gospel.

Shina Peters' fans and church members have reacted positively to the news. Many see his ordination as a testament to the power of faith and the influence of gospel-inspired music.

Over the years, Peters has built a reputation not only for his talent but also for his unwavering dedication to using music as a tool for spiritual upliftment.

Afro Juju Star Shina Peters
His songs, rooted in traditional African sounds, often carry messages of hope, love, and faith. By blending these elements with hymns, Peters has created a unique musical style that appeals to both secular and religious audiences.

This rare combination has helped him maintain relevance in the music industry for decades.

Reflecting on his journey, Peters expressed gratitude for the

recognition and responsibility. "I am humbled by this calling," he said. "It is not just a title; it is a responsibility to lead, inspire, and continue serving God through my music."

The singer also hinted at future plans to use his new role to mentor young musicians and promote gospel-inspired creativity

. He believes that music has the power to transform lives, and he hopes to encourage others to use their talents for a higher purpose.

As Shina Peters embraces this new chapter, he remains committed to his mission of winning souls for Christ through music.

For him, becoming a bishop is not an end but a continuation of his lifelong dedication to faith and artistry. His story serves as an inspiration, highlighting

2024 in view: Must watch films for the season

By Agency Reporter

December 2024 is shaping up to be a thrilling month for Nollywood fans, as cinemas prepare to showcase some of the most anticipated films to round off the year.

Last year's record-breaking 'A Tribe Called Judah', which earned over 1 billion views, highlights how December Nollywood movies have become a tradition for clients.

This festive season, producers have flooded social media with teasers and promotional campaigns, leaving no doubt that this December will be packed with excitement.

Everybody Loves Jenifa.

The hilarious and heartwarming Jenifa franchise is back, with one of the greatest installments from the Funke Akindele movie.

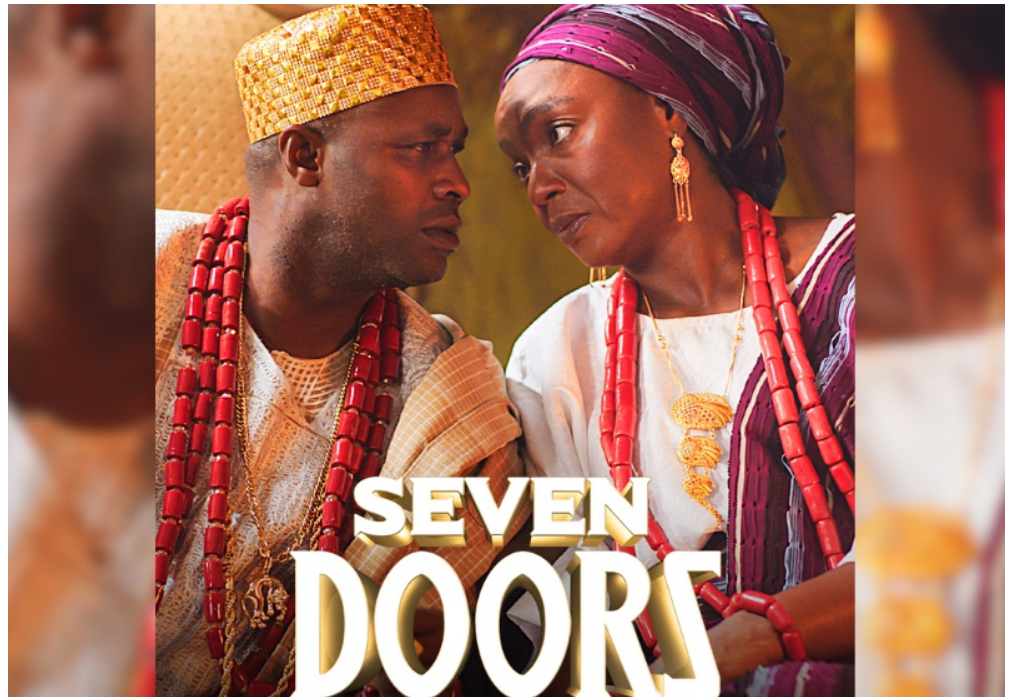
The all star movie follows Jennifer on a new journey as a now established humanitarian.

Directed by Akindele and Tunde Olaoye, this sequel brings back fan favourites like Falz, Nancy Isime, Jackie Appiah, Layi Wasabi and Patience Ozokwor.

Alakada: Bad and Boujee.

Toyin Abraham is back with the fifth installment of the Alakada series, continuing the hilarious escapades of Yetunde, a character beloved for her outrageous lies about her contacts and connections.

Produced by Abraham herself, the movie features casts like Bimbo Ademoye, Ik Ogbonna, Chimezie Imo, Olumide Oworu, and the music Icon, King Sunny Ade.



Packed with humour and relatability, this movie comedy is sure to be a festive favourite.

Christmas in Lagos.

Jade Osiberu serves up a holiday romance in this film. The movie is set against the lively backdrop of Lagos famous 'Detty December'.

A young lady known as Fiyin, who after a heartbreak begins to develop feelings for her best friend Elo.

However, the movie takes a turn after Elo returns to Nigeria, ready to propose to his secret girlfriend, Yagazie.

With storyline featuring characters like Shaffy Bello, Richard- Mofe Damijo (RMD), Waje, Adekunle Gold, Ayra Star, and Ladipoe, the film is a cocktail of drama, romance and Lagos vibes.

Another captivating movie is 'Thin Line.'

A pastor entangled in an investigation into the sudden death of a prostitute, Annie. His life as a pastor and that of his wife, Pastor Dammy

comes to a halt as they try to defend themselves and also save their marriage.

Directed by Akay Mason, and produced by Mercy Aigbe, the cast include Iyabo Ojo, The Cute Abiola, Yvonne Jegede, Jaiye Kutu, and Adeniyi Johnson.

This film is packed with intrigue, drama, and complex relationships, promising to keep audiences glued to their screen.

Crowning the list is 'Seven Doors'. This Femi Adebayo debut showcases a man's perfect life unravel as he is elected the new King of his village, only for an ancient fury to challenge his reign with blood and fury.

The cast include Adebayo Salami, Muyiwa Ademola, Ronke Oshodi, Gabriel Afolayan, Jide Kosoko, and Yinka Quadiri. It premiered on Dec. 13.

With this dazzling lineup, Nollywood is ready to make this holiday season truly special.

Which movie are you adding to your watchlist?

Trump accuses Biden, Pentagon of covering up drone mystery in NJ, NY:

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso ...Says 'The government knows what is happening'

President-elect Donald Trump on Monday accused President Biden and the Pentagon of hiding information about large drones spotted hovering above New Jersey and New York.

"The government knows what is happening," Trump, 78, said after Biden representatives pleaded ignorance despite thousands of Garden State and New York City residents seeing — and in some instances photographing — the aircraft.

"Look, our military knows where they took off from — if it's a garage, they can go right into that garage. They know where it came from and where it went, and for some reason they don't want to comment," the once and future president said during a wide-ranging, 70-minute press conference in Palm Beach, Fla.

"And I think they'd be better off saying what it is. Our military knows and our president knows. And for some reason, they want to keep people in suspense."

But Trump dodged answering whether he had personally received an intelligence briefing on the drones, which have stoked substantial fear and speculation.

"I don't want to comment on that," he told a reporter.

"I can't imagine it's the enemy," the future commander-in-chief went on at another point.

"Because if it was the enemy, they'd blast it out — even if they were late, they'd blast it."



Large drones have been spotted by New Jersey and New York residents. Doug Hood/Asbury Park Press / USA TODAY NETWORK via Imagn Image

"Something strange is going on," Trump also said. "For some reason they don't want to tell the people, and they should."

He added, in an apparent joke, that he would be canceling his weekend plans to travel to his golf club in Bedminster, NJ.

"They're very close to Bedminster. I think maybe I won't spend the weekend in Bedminster. I've decided to cancel my trip," he said.

Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-NY) has

called for answers about the mysterious sightings. John Roca

White House spokesman John Kirby last week claimed that federal officials "have not been able to, and neither have state and local law enforcement authorities, corroborate any of the reported visual sightings."

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY), by contrast, called for transparency, saying the public had a right to know.

"New Yorkers have tremendous questions about the drones. We are going to get the answers," he said Sunday.

The White House and Pentagon did not immediately respond to The Post's requests for comment.

Shooting at Madison Christian school leaves 3 dead, multiple others injured

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Two people were killed and a suspect was found dead in a shooting at Abundant Life Christian School in Madison, Wisconsin, United States, on Monday morning.

Just before 11 a.m. Madison police responded to a shooting at the private school located at 4901 East Buckeye Road. There was a large police presence at the school with multiple emergency vehicles in the parking lot.

Police said two people died in the shooting, and six other people were injured. Near the end of a media conference, Madison Chief of Police Shon F. Barnes said that four people had been killed but he later clarified that there were two victims.

In a media conference, Madison Chief of Police Shon F. Barnes confirmed officers found the juvenile shooting suspect dead at the scene. Police believe the shooter was a student at the school.

Police said the scene remains active, and the investigation is ongoing. The



school has been cleared and the FBI is working with local officials.

Police are expected to provide an update Monday afternoon.

Parents and guardians should go to the Dean Clinic 1821 S. Stoughton Rd. for reunification, police said.

“Right now, my heart is heavy for my community,” Barnes said. “My heart is heavy for Madison, and we have to come together as a community and figure out what happened here and make sure that it doesn’t happen at any other place that should be a refuge for students in our community.”

Residents have been asked to avoid the area, and roads are closed along 4900 Buckeye Road.

Governor Tony Evers released the following statement on X, formerly known as Twitter, “I am closely monitoring the incident at Abundant Life Christian School in Madison.

We are praying for the kids, educators, and entire Abundant Life school community as we await more information and are grateful for the first responders who are working quickly to respond.”

Ex-FBI informant admits to lying about Biden family’s Ukraine dealings

By Agency Reporter

A former Federal Bureau of Information (FBI) informant on Monday admitted to making up a story about President Joe Biden and his son Hunter taking \$5 million in bribes from a Ukrainian energy firm.

Alexander Smirnov, 44, pleaded guilty to creating a false record in a federal investigation, as well as three counts of tax evasion for failing to pay taxes and penalties on \$2.1 million in income for 2020 through 2022.

The Russian-born Smirnov, a dual US-Israeli citizen, faces up to six years in prison under the terms of a plea agreement he struck with prosecutors.

US District Judge Otis Wright, sitting in Los Angeles, set sentencing for January 8.

Smirnov was indicted for fabricating claims that Ukrainian energy firm Burisma had paid millions of dollars in bribes to Hunter Biden, who was on the Burisma board, and his father, who was the vice president to Barack Obama at the time, to protect it from a criminal investigation.

“The events Defendant first reported to the (FBI) Handler in June 2020 were fabrications,” according to the plea deal filing.

“When he was interviewed by FBI agents in September 2023, Defendant repeated some of his false claims, changed his story as to other



of his claims, and promoted a new false narrative,” it said.

Texan jailed 100 years for shootings that killed 1, wounded others

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

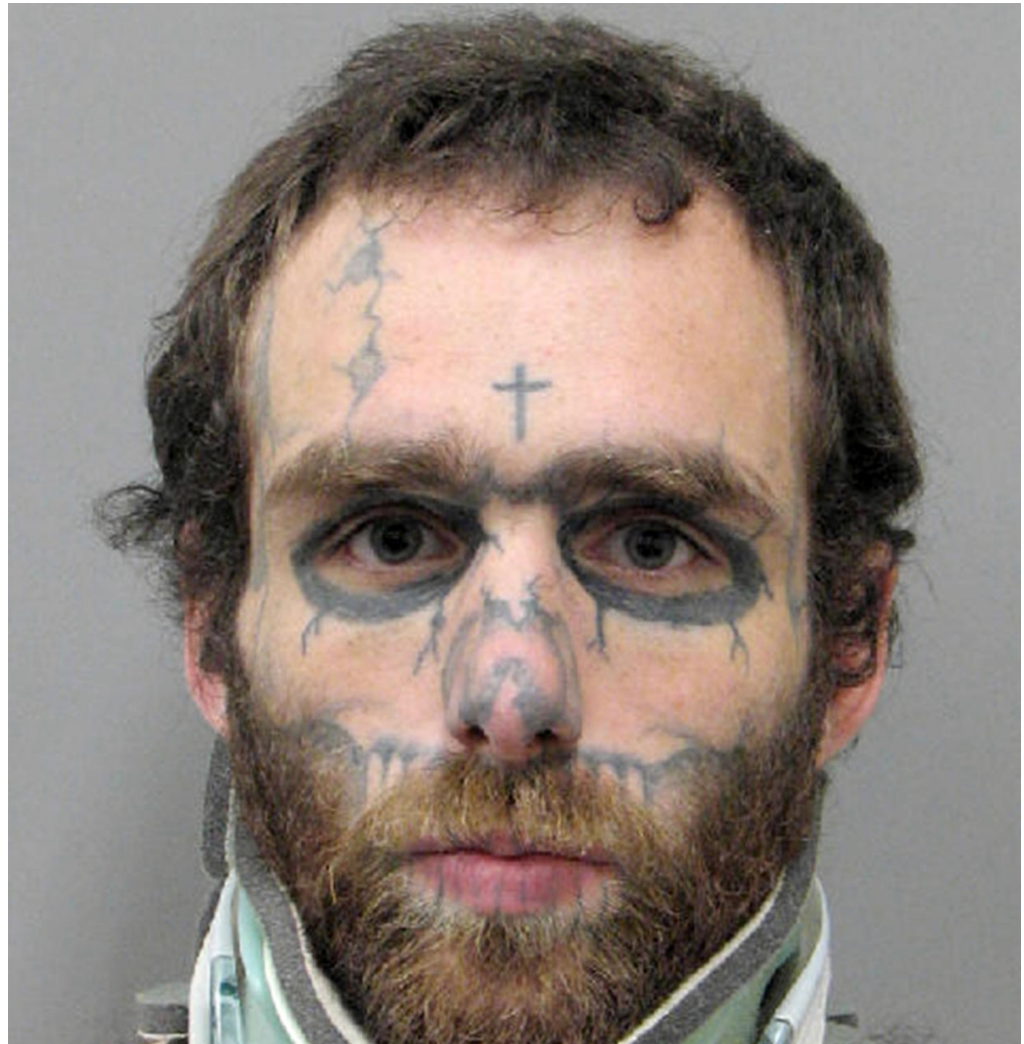
A judge in Las Vegas sentenced a Texas man to 100 years in prison for his role in a two-state shooting rampage on Thanksgiving 2020 that included the killing of a man in Nevada and a shootout with authorities in Arizona.

Christopher McDonnell, 32, pleaded guilty in October to more than 20 felonies including murder, attempted murder, murder conspiracy, weapon charges and being a felon illegally in possession of a firearm.

Clark County District Judge Tierra Jones sentenced him on Friday to a minimum of 100 years in prison, KLAS-TV reported. If he's still alive, he would be eligible for parole in 2120 with credit for time served.

McDonnell of Tyler, Texas, his brother Shawn McDonnell, 34, and Shawn McDonnell's then-wife, Kayleigh Lewis, 29, originally faced dozens of charges.

Police and prosecutors say the trio began an 11-hour rampage on Nov. 26, 2020 that included



apparently random shootings that killed Kevin Mendiola Jr., 22, at a convenience store in Henderson, near Las Vegas, and drive-by gunfire that wounded several other people.

The group then continued into Arizona, where there were additional shootings, including one involving a police officer. All three were arrested after their car rolled over.

Prosecutors said Lewis was the driver as the two brothers fired indiscriminately out of

the vehicle's windows. Shawn McDonnell and Lewis are awaiting trial.

The shooting rampage ended near the Colorado River town of Parker, Arizona, after a chase involving officers from the Arizona Department of Public Safety, the crash of a car with a Texas license plate and the wounding of Shawn McDonnell by troopers wielding assault-style rifles, police said.

Ademola Lookman wins CAF Best Male Footballer award

By Dave Oludare Oso

Super Eagles and Atalanta of Italy forward, Ademola Lookman, has been awarded as winner of the 2024 Confederation of African Football (CAF) men footballer award, following his performance at national team and club football.

“When the stars align, they spell Ademola Lookman. Ladies and gentlemen, your Men’s Player of the Year,” CAF wrote on its official X account on Monday night.

Lookman has won the award, replacing fellow Nigerian compatriot, Victor Osimhen who won it last year.

The Atalanta attacker emerged as the winner after a spectacular year with both club and country.

The forward scored two goals in four matches during the 2023 African Cup of Nations (AFCON) qualification series to



help the Super Eagles qualify for the tournament in grand style.

The 27-year-old was also included in the official team of the tournament for the 2023 AFCON, according to CAF.

Lookman also delivered for his club during the 2023/24 season and was the major reason Atalanta won their first ever European trophy after scoring a historic hat-trick in the final of the Europa League to help his side thrash Bayer Leverkusen 3-0.

Again, Chiamaka Nnadozie scoops CAF Best Goalkeeper award

By Dave Oludare Oso

Nigerian Super Falcons goalkeeper, Chiamaka Nnadozie has emerged as the winner of the Confederation of Africa Football Women’s 2024 award following its performance during the year under review.

The Paris FC and Super Falcons goalkeeper was honoured during the grand ceremony in Marrakech, Morocco on Monday night, after a phenomenal year that saw her deliver consistent, match-winning performances on both the club and international stages.

Nnadozie played a pivotal role in Nigeria’s impressive campaign at the 2024 Women’s Africa Cup of Nations qualifiers and was instrumental in Paris FC’s historic run in the UEFA Women’s Champions League, where her heroics in

penalty shootouts earned global acclaim.

Expressing her joy, Nnadozie said, “This is for every young girl who dares to dream. I am honoured to represent Nigeria and Africa on this stage. This award is a testament to hard work, resilience, and the incredible support I’ve received from my teammates and coaches.”

The impeachment effort in the House of Representatives turned up nothing to substantiate the allegations, however, and ground to a halt.

Hunter Biden was convicted of gun and tax charges earlier this year and pardoned by his father.



CAF Awards 2024: Super Falcons win female national team of the year By Dave Oludare Oso

The Super Falcons have been named the Women's Team of the Year at the CAF 2024 Awards for the second consecutive year.

NFF President, Ibrahim Gusau picked up the award and attributed it to the consistent and excellent efforts being put to develop women's football in Nigeria.

The announcement was made during the prestigious ceremony held on Monday in Marrakech, Morocco, further solidifying the team's dominance and excellence in African football.



This recognition celebrates the Super Falcons' exceptional performances and their remarkable contributions

over the past year as they continued to represent Nigeria at the highest level of women's football on the continent.

I'm not good enough, Guardiola berates self after derby defeat By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

The manager of English Premier League side, Manchester City, Pep Guardiola said he is "not good enough" following his team's latest setback in the derby on Sunday.

Manchester City unravelled in spectacular fashion at the Etihad Stadium as Amad Diallo struck a 90th-minute winner for United just moments after Bruno Fernandes had made it 1-1 from the penalty spot.

The game-changing penalty was conceded by makeshift left-back Matheus Nunes after his poor back-pass put Ederson in trouble.

But Guardiola took responsibility as he reflected on an unprecedented eighth defeat in 11 games afterwards.

"I'm the boss, I'm the manager, I have to find solutions but I don't find solutions," he said after the game.

"This is a big club and when you lose eight [out of 11 games] something is wrong. You can say the schedule is tough or the injuries to players, but no.

"I'm the manager and I'm not good enough, simple as that. I have to find a way to talk to them, to train them in the



way we need to play, to press the way we need to press.

"I'm not good enough. I'm not doing well. That is the truth."

Guardiola signed a new two-year contract in November, saying he did not feel he could leave the club at a difficult time, but the crisis has spiralled since then and he is now facing questions over how and when he can reverse their fortunes.

"I'm here," he said. "I'm responsible. It would be easy for me to say we lost

because of this action or this player or this situation but football is a team game.

"I'm completely convinced in what I'm saying, that I'm not good enough to find a way for them to feel peace in their bodies and their minds. I want it desperately. I'm here to try and I will try again and again but that is the reality."

Guardiola added: "I knew it would be a tough season but I didn't expect so hard."