

**I sacked Secondus as PDP Chairman because of Fubara - Wike**

PAGE 6



**Terrorism Allegation By Niger: ECOWAS backs Nigeria, other member states**

PAGE 2

# The New Daily Prime

**Farage threatens legal action over membership row with Badenoch**

PAGE 22



**Terrorist shouts 'Allahu Akbar' murders woman, 83, in Israel**

PAGE 28

**WORLD PAGE 25**

**US gay couple jailed 200 years for raping adopted sons**



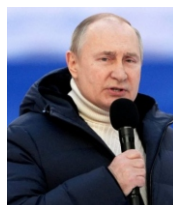
**PICTORIAL: Wike, sons pay Christmas visit to Tinubu in Lagos**

PAGES 10



**No possibility of 3rd world war - Putin**

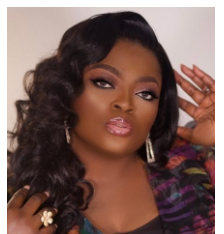
PAGE 28



**ENTERTAINMENT**

**'Everybody Loves Jenifa' earns N783m in 2 weeks**

PAGE 16



**Catholic priest, Tobias Okonkwo shot dead in Anambra**

PAGE 15

# Terrorism Allegation By Niger: ECOWAS backs Nigeria, other member states

By Dave Oludare Oso

The Economic of West African States (ECOWAS) has said it is solidly behind Nigeria and other member states being accused by Niger Republic of sponsoring terrorist attacks against it.

Niger Republic had accused Nigeria and other ECOWAS members of colluding with France to destabilise the country.

However, ECOWAS in a statement on Thursday described the allegations as “unfounded.”

“The Commission of the Economic and West African Staes (ECOWAS) expresses deep concern over allegations being made against Nigeria and other ECOWAS member states.

“The Commission stands firmly by Nigeria and ECOWAS member states against allegations that they are sponsoring terrorism.

“For years, Nigeria has supported peace and security of



several countries not only in the West African subregion but also on the African continent.

“The recent successes recorded by the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), which Nigeria leads, demonstrate the country’s commitment to peace and security across the region.

“ECOWAS therefore, refutes any suggestion that such a generous and magnanimous country would become a state-sponsor of terrorism,” the statement read in part.

ECOWAS then called on all states in the region to promote dialogue and stability and refrain from making accusations that are not supported by any

evidence.

The Federal Government had on Thursday denied Niger Republic’s allegation.

The Minister of Information and National Orientation, Mohammed Idris, made the rebuttal in a statement, amid claims by Niger Republic’s military leader, General Abdourahamane Tchiani, that Nigeria was working with France against his country.

“These claims exist solely in the realm of imagination. Nigeria has never engaged in any alliance, overt or covert, with France—or any other country—to destabilize Niger Republic,” the statement read.



# THE NEW DAILY PRIME RATE CARD

**EFFECTIVE FROM  
DECEMBER 1, 2024**

## PUBLIC NOTICE COLOUR

## PRODUCT COLOUR

**EFFECTIVE FROM  
DECEMBER 1, 2024**

SIZE	TOTAL RATE
FULL PAGE	372,500.00
HALF PAGE	213,000.00
QUARTER PAGE	106,500.00
14X2	118,000.00
10X6	261,585.50
10X5	255,238.00
10X4	206,890.50
10X3	179,608.00
9X6	254,977.00
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
4X4	60,166.50
4X3	36,499.50
4X2	29,333.50
3X3	28,000.00
3X2	17,400.00
2X2	13,000.00
2X1	8,600.00
1X1	4,400.00

SIZE	TOTAL RATE
FULL PAGE	329,868.50
HALF PAGE	192,500.00
QUARTER PAGE	100,000.00
14X2	109,500.00
10X6	242,500.00
10X5	237,500.00
10X4	192,500.00
10X3	171,000.00
9X6	232,500.00
9X5	206,000.00
9X4	177,500.00
9X3	150,000.00
8X6	216,000.00
8X3	98,500.00
7X4	164,002.00
6X4	94,010.50
6X3	78,500.00
6X2	47,500.00
5X5	100,000.00
5X4	61,500.00
5X3	57,819.00
5X2	40,379.50
4X4	55,000.00
4X3	31,000.00
4X2	22,003.50
3X2	17,260.00
2X2	12,945.00
2X1	8,630.00
1X1	4,315.00

### POLITICAL COLOUR

SIZE	RATE
CENTRESPREAD	1,200,000.00
DOUBLE SPREAD	885,000.00
FULL PAGE	420,000.00
HALF PAGE	213,250.00
QUARTER PAGE	115,012.50

### POLITICAL BLACK & WHITE

SIZE	RATE
CENTRESPREAD	1,050,000.00
DOUBLE SPREAD	745,000.00
FULL PAGE	315,777.50
HALF PAGE	184,700.00
QUARTER PAGE	95,222.50

### CORPORATE BLACK & WHITE

SIZE	TOTAL RATE
FULL PAGE	254,533.50
HALF PAGE	142,787.50
QUARTER PAGE	80,706.50
14X2	78,222.50
10X6	217,830.00
10X5	192,305.50
10X4	142,787.50
10X3	121,355.50
9X6	192,305.50
9X3	107,757.50
8X6	170,725.00
8X3	70,390.00
7X4	58,666.50
6X4	67,048.00
6X3	53,361.50
6X2	37,694.00
5X6	83,850.00
5X4	55,900.00
5X3	43,705.00
5X2	27,938.00
4X4	44,493.00
4X3	33,524.00
4X2	22,550.00
3X2	16,763.00
2X2	10,877.00
2X1	5,588.50
1X1	2,795.50

### PUBLIC NOTICE BLACK & WHITE

SIZE	TOTAL RATE
FULL PAGE	280,690.00
HALF PAGE	164,178.00
QUARTER PAGE	84,641.50
10X6	228,000.00
10X5	201,600.00
10X4	149,440.00
10X3	127,108.00
9X6	201,600.00
9X5	169,050.00
9X4	137,875.00
9X3	112,875.00
8X6	179,368.00
8X5	143,500.00
8X4	93,500.00
8X3	82,434.50
7X4	111,173.50
6X4	82,434.50
6X3	59,250.00
6X2	40,000.00
5X6	98,749.50
5X4	65,833.00
5X3	49,375.00
5X2	32,916.50
4X4	52,666.50
4X3	39,499.50
4X2	26,333.50
3X2	19,750.00
2X2	13,000.00
2X1	6,500.00
1X1	3,292.00

### PRODUCT BLACK & WHITE

SIZE	TOTAL RATE
FULL PAGE	210,795.50
HALF PAGE	124,236.00
QUARTER PAGE	70,950.00
14X2	76,128.35
10X6	194,961.00
10X5	162,222.445
10X4	103,963.00
10X3	N/A
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
4x4	N/A
4X3	N/A
4X2	17,737.50
3x3	23,458.00
3X2	14,923.00
2X2	10,200.00
2X1	5,439.50
1X1	2,700.00

### SPECIAL POSITIONS

2X6 FRONT PAGE	700,000.00
2X6 BACK PAGE	300,000.00
2X6 INSIDE PAGE	155,000.00
3X6 FRONT PAGE	1,200,000.00
4X6 FRONT PAGE	2,250,000.00
5X6 FRONT PAGE	3,350,000.00
10X6 FRONT PAGE	8,250,000.00
EARPIECE FRONT PAGE(1.5X2)	246,500.00
EARPIECE INSIDE PAGE(1.5X2)	117,875.00
EARPIECE BACK PAGE	236,796.50
CENTRE SPREAD COLOUR (PUBLIC NOTICE)	1,027,000.00
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
DOUBLE SPREAD COLOUR	721,500.00
DOUBLE SPREAD HALF COLOUR	432,881.00
DOUBLE SPREAD STRIP COLOUR	144,294.00
CENTRE SPREAD B&W	835,000.00
CENTRE SPREAD HALF PAGE B & W	550,000.00
DOUBLE SPREAD B & W	725,000.00
DOUBLE SPREAD HALF B & W	425,000.00
FULL WRAP AROUND	15,000,000.00
HALF WRAP AROUND	8,500,000.00
HALF PAGE FRONT	5,500,000.00

### ALLURE RATE

SIZE	RATE	TOTAL
CENTRESPREAD		967,500.00
DOUBLE SPREAD		806,250.00
ALLURE COVER		750,000.00
(IBC) Inside Back Cover		376,250.00
(IFC) Inside Front Cover		430,000.00
(BC) Back Cover		483,750.00
Full Page		430,000.00
10X5		295,625.00
Half Page		225,000.00
EVENT		250,000.00

### PICTURE & CAPTION

SIZE	RATE	7.5% VAT	TOTAL
PHOTO NEWS PAGE 2	50,000.00	3,750.00	53,750.00
PHOTO NEWS (3X3)	30,000.00	2,250.00	32,250.00
PHOTO NEWS (4X4)	53,333.30	4,250.00	57,583.30
PRESS RELEASE (4X4)	30,000.00	2,250.00	32,250.00
EVENT COVERAGE	100,000.00	7,500.00	107,500.00
FEATURES	200,000.00	15,000.00	215,000.00

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

**SERIES DISCOUNT**  
5 PAGES 2.5%  
10 PAGES 5%  
15 PAGES & ABOVE 7.5%

**SURCHARGE**  
PAGE 3 (100%)  
PAGE 4, 5, 7 AND 8 (50%)  
PAGE 2 (75%)

**LOOSE INSERT**  
LEAFLET, POSTERS 1,000 COPIES  
SPECIAL INSERTS (8 PAGES) COPIES  
SPECIAL INSERTS (4 PAGES) 1,000 COPIES  
HANDLING CHARGES FOR LESS THAN 35,000 COPIES  
HANDLING CHARGES MORE THAN 35,000 COPIES

**CLASSIFIED ADVERT RATES**  
CHANGE OF NAME  
GUIDE BLACK & WHITE  
GUIDE COLOUR

25,000.00  
45,000.00  
30,000.00  
75,000.00  
100,000.00

2,000.00  
3,750.00  
4,250.00

#### CONTACT US

Correspondent Address:  
Real Group Plaza, No.1 Junaid Dosumu  
Street, CBD, Alausa, Ikeja, Lagos  
Call the Editor on: 07025014298, 09014323792

E-mail Address:  
[info@newdailyprime.news](mailto:info@newdailyprime.news)  
Terms and Conditions apply

**ALL RATES ARE VAT INCLUSIVE**

# 11 reportedly killed in fresh Benue attacks

By **Dave Oludare Oso**

**G**unmen have reportedly killed at least 11 people in an attack on some communities in Nyiev-ya, Kwande Local Government Area of Benue State.

The attacks were perpetrated on December 25 when the people were celebrating Christmas with their families.

A resident in the community confirmed the attack in a telephone conversation on Thursday.

The resident, who preferred to be anonymous, told Channels Television that they received a distress message that “Nyiev-ya is under attack.”

the resident said, “The terrorist herders came this afternoon (December 25), and invaded Ubutu and GSS Anwase, killing and burning houses.

“Daniel Jam’s son was killed by the terrorists. Pray for our community for God’s and Government intervention.”

While the killing was going on in Tse Azege community, another resident also informed that an attack was also ongoing in Ityuluv, in Nyiev-ya community.

“If there is anything the chairman or the government can



do, let it be fast. The news coming from Kwande is still not pleasant. Terrorist herders have continued with their onslaught against our people today, (December 25),” he said.

The President General of Mzough U Tiv, (MUT) Worldwide, CP Iorbee Ighag (retired), who hails from Kwande LGA, said the community head in the area confirmed the attack.

He described the attack as unprovoked and said several people were killed on Christmas Day.

“11 people were reportedly killed during the attack on Kwande LGA yesterday. The attack was unprovoked but the attackers who were herdsman invaded the communities and attacked the people.

“Many are still missing. Leaders of the affected communities have reported the attack at the police station.”

Another native, Solomon Amande, whose community was affected, confirmed the death of 11 persons.

He claimed the killings were carried out by armed herders and militia groups.

The Benue State Police Command is yet to react to the latest attacks in both Katsina-Ala and Kwande local government areas.

When contacted, the Command’s spokesperson, Sewuese Anene, said she had no information on the incidents.



# FG signs MoU with Japan to enhance rice production

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

The National Cereals Research Institute (NCRI), Badeggi, Niger State, has formalised a partnership with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to enhance rice seed production systems across Nigeria.

The collaboration, cemented through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), underscores a commitment to strengthening the nation's agricultural development goals.

Focus on Advanced Equipment and Capacity Building

As part of the agreement, NCRI will acquire state-of-the-art equipment for rice cultivation, production, testing, inspection, and post-harvest processing. These technological advancements will enable the institute to produce high-quality certified rice seeds, a critical component in addressing challenges within the rice production value chain.



Strategic Impact on Nigeria's Agriculture

This partnership represents a strategic step in tackling inefficiencies in Nigeria's rice production, with a focus on increasing yield and improving overall productivity.

By boosting the availability of certified seeds, the initiative aims to support the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security's objectives of achieving food security and self-sufficiency.

A Shared Vision for Growth

The MoU signing ceremony brought together key stakeholders from NCRI, JICA, and the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, highlighting the collaborative spirit underpinning this initiative.

Both organisations expressed optimism about the partnership's potential to revolutionise rice production in Nigeria.

The partnership with JICA is expected to significantly contribute to modernising Nigeria's agricultural sector, enhancing productivity, and strengthening the country's position in the global rice market.

# FG summons airline CEOs over flight delays, cancellations

By Dave Oludare Oso

Following the consistent flight delays and cancellations during the festive season, the Director-General of the Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA), Chris Najomo, has convened a meeting with airlines' Chief Executive Officers (CEOs).

Disclosing this on his X handle on Thursday, the Director of Public Affairs and Consumer Protection, NCAA, Michael Achimugu said Najomo is cutting short an important assignment to meet with all the CEOs of domestic airlines in Nigeria on Friday.

Recounting an experience he had while trying to catch his flight, Achimugu said, "I walked into the scene this evening while trying to catch a flight myself. Passengers were really angry and threatened to become violent.

"I personally addressed them and engaged for about 20 minutes, explaining that I would confirm from the Nigerian Meteorological Agency, NiMET, if the weather was truly bad. I also explained that the airline does not have liability in the event of force majeure."



According to him, despite this, he took certain measures to address the concerns of passengers.

"I insisted that the airline provide transportation back to the Central area for all passengers. I paid for nearby accommodation (Peace Media Hotel) for a few elderly passengers who looked too weak after the lengthy wait.

"The airline agreed to pay 50 per cent compensation to the passengers and agreed to also refund those who sought a

refund. "I told the passengers that they could redeem that 50 per cent by cash rather than rebate if they wanted.

"I opened my phone and let as many passengers as possible to scan the NCAA QR code for passengers complaints, and told them to contact me if the airline fails to resolve their complaints by tomorrow morning," Achimugu explained.

The director recalled that a few days ago the NCAA announced it would enforce action against five airlines, adding that this will be the first time in more than 10 years that the Consumer Protection Department of the NCAA is taking such action.

He further stated that he had written to NiMET to begin sending daily weather reports directly to his office, which would enable me to ascertain quickly if an airline lies about weather.

Achimugu said three days ago, he voted some money from his salary to some indigent passengers owed refunds by a certain airline whose current situation is critical.

# I sacked Secondus as PDP Chairman because of Fubara – Wike

By Friday Omosola

**N**yesom Wike, Minister of Federal Capital Territory (FCT), has revealed why he orchestrated the removal of Uche Secondus as National Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

The minister spoke as a special guest of honour at an end of year thanksgiving organised on Thursday by the PDP stakeholders in Ahoada East and Ahoada West at Ukpata community in Ekpeye Kingdom.

The thanksgiving was put together by former Deputy Speaker, House of Representatives, Chibudum Nwuche; Chairman, Rivers State PDP Elders' Council, Chief Ferdinand Alabraba; members of House of Representatives from the area, Solomon Bob and Victor Obuzor, and member of the state House of Assembly, Dame Queen Williams.

The former governor also called Celestine Omehia an imbecile for saying that he had attracted nothing to Rivers as a minister.

The Minister disclosed that he kicked Secondus out of office as the PDP National Chairman because he hatched a plot to make his cousin and former deputy governor, Tele Ikuru, Rivers governor in place of Siminalayi Fubara.

He said Celestine Omehia was stopped from becoming a governor of Rivers through the backdoor, adding that the PDP chieftain lacked knowledge of the functions of an FCT Minister.

He said though he could not bring infrastructural projects to Rivers as the FCT Minister, he has been helping Rivers people.

Wike added that no governor had



attracted more appointments to his state than him in the present administration of President Bola Tinubu.

“I heard Secondus said the other day in Bori, I awarded the Bori Internal Road. I paid 50 per cent, and thinking that we have a governor that we all agreed to continue, Secondus was saying that his enemies; who are the enemies of the governor?”

“Secondus that refused him to be governor. I kicked out Secondus as PDP chairman when he wanted to make his cousin Tele Ikuru to be governor.

“Today, he is saying now that we are enemies.

“He was the one who refused the man to be governor. He wanted his cousin to be governor.

“He has now become the governor's friend and we have now become the enemies. To God be the glory.”

On Omehia, Wike said: “He said they should ask me what have I done for Rivers State. That is why I say he is an imbecile.

“I am not a minister of a ministry, I am a minister of the Federal Capital Territory.

“When I was Minister of Education,

he would have challenged me: ‘what did you bring to Rivers State?’

“As Minister of Education, I brought Faculty of Law to University of Port Harcourt. I gave grants to Ken Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic, I gave grant to Ignatius Ajuru University, the Federal government College, Port Harcourt, Federal Government Girls College, Abuloma; I renovated them to be what a school is supposed to be.

“That is what I thought he should be asking me.

“Now I am the minister of the FCT, I cannot bring road to Rivers State, I cannot take FCT money to Rivers State but I can help Rivers people. And I have been helping Rivers people.

“Let it be on record that by the instrumentality of Mr President, there is no governor in this state that attracted more political appointments in this state than myself. Go and count it.

“By the instrumentality of Mr President by his grace, by his love for us, he said, go and give me these names for political appointments.

”So, Mr Omehia, are you not aware that Rivers people have more political appointments than even when you are serving somebody? Are you not aware?”



# Jonathan condoles Jigawa gov over son, mother's death

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

**F**ormer President Goodluck Jonathan has extended his heartfelt condolences to Governor Umar Namadi of Jigawa State following the tragic death of his son, Abdulwahab, who passed away in a car accident just 24 hours after the governor lost his mother, Maryam Namadi.

In a statement issued on Friday, December 27, in Abuja, Jonathan expressed his profound sadness over the double tragedy, describing the losses as shocking and deeply painful.

“I convey my deepest condolences to you and your family over the tragic loss of your beloved mother and son within such a short period. I am profoundly saddened by this devastating news, and my thoughts and prayers are with you during this difficult time,” Jonathan said.



Reflecting on the irreplaceable nature of both losses, the former president remarked, “Losing a cherished mother is an irreplaceable loss, as is the untimely demise of a beloved son. I cannot imagine the depth of pain you must be enduring.”

Jonathan prayed for divine strength and comfort for the governor and his family.

Abdulwahab, 24, died in a road accident on Thursday, December 26, while en route to Kafin-Hausa Local Government Area of Jigawa State to offer condolences over the death of his grandmother, Maryam

Namadi, who had been buried just a day earlier.

The double loss has drawn widespread sympathy and condolences from across Nigeria, with many describing the events as deeply sorrowful.

Several governors from Nigeria's North-East region have also expressed their sympathies, highlighting the gravity of the governor's loss.

The incidents have become a poignant reminder of life's unpredictability, leaving many in prayer for the Namadi family during this challenging time.

# VeryDarkMan faces backlash over alleged N180m NGO hack

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

Popular social media commentator Martins Otse, widely known as VeryDarkMan, has sparked controversy after claiming that ₦180 million was stolen from his NGO account in a hacking incident.

In a video shared on Instagram on Friday, December 27, Otse alleged that the funds had been transferred to an unknown account, leaving only ₦20 million in the account.

However, his explanation has been met with widespread skepticism, with many social media users questioning the credibility of his claims.

## Public Reactions

Doubts were voiced on various platforms, with users questioning the plausibility of the incident.

Dr J (#truebenny001) tweeted: “Was the money in the website or the bank?”

Basito (#Itzbasito) added: “VeryDarkMan said ₦180m is missing from the ₦200m donation for his NGO. See scope o, like say we be primary school students.”

Others questioned banking protocols:

Mikay (#stephen\_mikay) commented: “It is not possible! Banks set limits to certain



transactions. ₦180m cannot go out of a bank account at once without verbal confirmation from the signatories!”

Some users noted Otse’s critical nature when addressing others’ controversies.

Star Girl (#lil\_maamiiii) remarked: “If it were someone else sharing this VeryDarkMan story, by now he would have set his ring light, with his dirty sachet water and black singlet, analysing God knows what. Lmaooo.”

God (#BRILLIANT\_ARIN) joked: “VeryDarkMan said they hacked and stole ₦180m from his NGO website lmao. That’s a familiar method: set camera, blow up, then begin to use foolish scope for the fools who are their stan/audience.”

Calls for Cybersecurity Awareness  
Amid the skepticism, some

highlighted the importance of cybersecurity in Nigeria.

Vincent The Therapist (#mrhighfoster) emphasised: “This is why cybersecurity should be taken seriously in Nigeria. When you know you have a public account receiving a large amount of money, you should enforce its security.”

He added that cybersecurity is a vital skill for the future to prevent such incidents.

As the controversy unfolds, netizens continue to demand clarity and accountability from Martins Otse.

The incident has reignited conversations around transparency, banking security, and the responsibilities of public figures managing significant donations.



# Tinubu mourns ex-Indian Prime Minister, Singh

By Friday Omosola

President Bola Tinubu has condoled with the government and people of India over the death of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. Singh died yesterday at the age of 92. Tinubu in a statement released by his Special Adviser on Information and Strategy, Bayo Onanuga, described Singh as a distinguished leader whose contributions to India's development and the strengthening of Nigeria-India relations will remain significant.

Singh, who served as India's Prime Minister from 2004 to 2014, paid a visit to Nigeria in 2007, during which he addressed a joint session of the National Assembly—a rare honour accorded to select global leaders. Tinubu highlighted the enduring impact of the Strategic Partnership

between Nigeria and India established during Singh's tenure.

This partnership, he said, has continued to drive political and economic progress for both nations.

The Nigerian leader also lauded Singh's efforts in fostering cooperation in areas such as defence, trade, culture, education, health, science and technology, and ICT.

He noted that the former Prime Minister's role in advancing India's



economic reforms during challenging global times was a testament to his visionary leadership.

The president further described Singh as a selfless leader and a renowned economist and prayed that the late Prime Minister's legacy would inspire future generations of Indians to continue his commitment to service.

# Troops slay two notorious bandit commanders, Muchelli, Ma'oli

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

As part of their continued offensive against terrorist elements in the North West part of Nigeria, troops of Operation Fansan Yamma have killed notorious bandit leaders in Katsina and Zamfara states.

Troops successfully conducted an operation in Mai Sheka village, Kunchin Kalgo town, in Katsina State, neutralizing an unascertained number of terrorists, including a notorious kingpin, Alhaji Ma'oli.

According to Zagazola Makama, a Lake Chad Basin counterterrorism and insurgency expert, intelligence sources said Ma'oli was responsible for imposing levies and engaging in criminal activities in Unguwan Rogo, Mai Sheka, Magazawa,



Unguwar Dan Halima, Unguwar Dan Mairo, and Katangan Yamma. Similarly in Zamfara State, troops of Counter Terrorism Team 7 (CT 7) on patrol along the Bilbis-Danjigba axis under Tsafe Local Government Area encountered bandits during a fighting patrol on December 25.

During the engagement, Kachalla Muchelli, a notorious bandit

commander identified as the leader of the Kuchi Kalgo camp, was neutralized.

The publication said: "Military sources confirmed that these operations form part of ongoing efforts to eliminate banditry and terrorism in the region."

# PICTORIAL: Wike, sons pay Christmas visit to Tinubu in Lagos

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



The Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike, alongside his sons, visited President Bola

Tinubu in Lagos on Thursday to mark the Christmas season.

at the President's private residence, was described as a gesture of goodwill and festivity.

The visit, which took place





# Police nab 153 suspected robbers in Oyo

By Gbenga Oluranti OLALEYE

The Oyo State Police Command has announced the arrest of 153 suspected armed robbers across various locations in the state over the past six months.

During a press briefing held at the command's headquarters in Eleyele, Ibadan on Friday, the Commissioner of Police, Ayodele Sonubi, detailed the progress made in combating crime within the state.

According to Sonubi, the police successfully recovered 12 stolen vehicles of various brands and 12 motorcycles/tricycles from the suspects.

The arrests and recoveries underscore the command's commitment to ensuring the safety and security of Oyo State residents.

Further investigations into the cases are ongoing as the command works to bring the culprits to justice.

Sonubi said, "The state police command is pleased to inform residents that within the past six months and 11 days, it has recorded significant successes in reducing crime rates across the state.

"This was attained through a combination of intelligence-led operations, community engagements and proactive policing.



"From June 16 to this day, 153 armed robbery suspects were arrested, 12 stolen vehicles and 12 motorcycles/tricycles were recovered while 48 firearms and 1,396 rounds of various calibre of ammunition were retrieved from the possession of criminals."

The CP, who also paraded 36 suspects for various criminal offences, added that they were picked up at various locations in the 33 Local Government Areas of the state.

He stressed that their offences range from armed robbery to kidnapping, hijacking and diversion of trucks loaded with various items, and other vices.

Sonubi, therefore, directed Area Commanders, Divisional Police Officers, Heads of Department/formations and Tactical Commanders to deploy adequate personnel and resources across the state.

"As we gradually bid 2024 farewell, I have ordered that all Area Commanders, Divisional

Police Officers, Heads of Department/formations and Tactical Commanders deploy adequate personnel and resources throughout the length and breadth of the state, particularly at all critical infrastructures, recreational facilities, media houses, banks, correctional centres, public spaces, places of worship and all adjoining highways and routes within and outside the state.

"Similarly, I have directed that all Area Commanders, Divisional Police Officers and Tactical Commanders to increase layers of supervision around their subordinates, particularly men on the field who daily interface with commuters and other civilian populations.

"The command's monitoring and X-squad units have also been tasked to deal decisively with any officer whose actions or inactions bring about embarrassment to the command and by extension the police force, through extortion, incivilities and other professional misconducts," Sonubi said.

# Christmas: Oshiomhole distributes 11,000 bags of rice to constituents

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Adams Oshiomhole, the All Progressives Congress senator representing Edo-North District, has distributed 11,000 bags of rice to residents in the district to celebrate Christmas.

NAN reports that 10kg, 25kg, and 50kg of rice were distributed to the six local government areas of the Edo-North District.

Speaking during the distribution to the various local governments on Wednesday, Oshiomhole said the donation is part of palliative measures for the people of the district.

The senator admonished Christians and Nigerians to promote peace and love during the celebration.

“This rice is not for party members alone; mechanic, tailors, and vigilante groups should also benefit from the kind gesture.

“I will never take your support for granted, and I assure you I will continue to provide leadership for a better Afemai land,” he said.

Oshiomhole, a former governor of Edo State, acknowledged that Nigerians were going through a tough



time but appealed for patience with President Bola Tinubu’s administration. “Things would get better,” he said.

“I am aware that things are tough and things are tougher at the grassroots. Continue to have faith in the APC-led federal government, and Nigeria will be great again.

# Army urges funseekers to prioritise safety during yuletide celebrations

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

The Nigerian Army has called on funseekers to remain vigilant and adopt safety measures during the festive season to ensure a joyous and casualty-free celebration.

Speaking at the “Ikeja Cantonment End of Year Funfair” on Wednesday, December 25, the Commander of the 9 Brigade, Brigadier General Oyekola, highlighted the importance of maintaining safety and security during the Yuletide season.

“As we gather to celebrate the Yuletide season, I urge everyone to exercise caution and prioritise their safety and security,” Brig. Gen. Oyekola said.

“Let us ensure that our festivities are joyful and celebratory, without any casualties or unfortunate incidents. By being mindful of our surroundings and taking necessary precautions, we can



create a secure and enjoyable environment for ourselves and our loved ones.”

The cautionary message comes in the wake of three tragic stampedes this year in Ibadan, Oyo State, Anambra State, and Abuja, which claimed over 50 lives.

The end-of-year event, organised at the Ikeja Cantonment, was a festive

gathering aimed at providing entertainment and joy to the children and families of military personnel residing in the area.

Approximately 2,500 children participated in the funfair, which featured performances by an emerging artiste, a variety of refreshments, and cash prizes for winners of games.

A heartwarming moment unfolded when the children sang for Brig. Gen. Oyekola, who expressed his gratitude and commended the organisers for creating a memorable experience.

The Nigerian Army continues to emphasise the need for heightened awareness and vigilance during public celebrations, ensuring that all Nigerians can safely enjoy the festivities.



# Opposition knocks APC as Lagosians queue for palliatives at Tinubu's residence

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

The opposition Labour Party (LP), Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), and others have condemned the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) over the worsening poverty in Nigeria.

Their criticism followed a viral video showing large crowds queuing for foodstuffs at President Bola Tinubu's residence on Bourdillon Road, Lagos, on Christmas Eve.

The footage, shared by Senator Ali Ndume on his official X account, drew widespread attention.

"Queues for presidential handouts at Bourdillon on Christmas Eve highlight a sobering reality. Poverty knows no tribe, religion, politics, or region. It is a universal challenge that demands collective action and sustainable solutions," Ndume remarked.

The incident comes amid rising hardship across the country, including recent stampedes at food distribution events in Oyo, Anambra, and Abuja, which claimed over 50 lives.

## Opposition Criticisms

Labour Party's National Publicity Secretary, Obiora Ifoh, expressed concern about the growing poverty, accusing the APC of turning Nigerians into beggars.

"The statistics are out there for everyone to see. Imagine buying a bag of rice for N100,000 during Christmas. It's now clear to the blind and audible to the deaf that there is hunger in the land," Ifoh stated.

LP's 2023 presidential candidate, Peter Obi, also lamented the dire economic situation, blaming



Tinubu's policies.

"It's heartbreaking to see a nation with so much promise struggling to provide for its people," Obi said through his media aide, Umar Ibrahim.

The PDP's Deputy National Youth Leader, Timothy Osadolor, accused Tinubu's administration of "weaponising poverty."

"Nigerians may reach a point of desperation where they turn against the political elite. This presidency has reduced the dignity of the common man to a pauper state," he warned.

The National Publicity Secretary of the Young People's Party, Egbeola Martins, called for an urgent review of the government's economic policies, particularly the subsidy removal, which he described as "anti-masses."

## APC's Defence

In response, APC National Publicity Director Bala Ibrahim dismissed the criticisms, defending Tinubu's actions as consistent with his longstanding generosity.

"Tinubu has been doing this for ages. This is not new. The only difference is that now, as President, his generosity is under greater scrutiny," Ibrahim said.

He accused the opposition of attempting to incite Nigerians against Tinubu, stating, "The critics grandstand, but if Tinubu extended this generosity to them, they would queue up too. This is a man who genuinely feels for the ordinary citizen."

Ibrahim argued that the President's actions reflect his commitment to alleviating hardship rather than a political manoeuvre, citing Tinubu's history of philanthropy.

As poverty and unemployment rates soar, with over 40% of Nigerians living below the poverty line, the call for economic reforms grows louder. Critics insist that immediate action is needed to prevent the nation from sliding further into economic despair.

The APC government continues to face mounting pressure to address these challenges and implement sustainable solutions for the benefit of the populace.

# Sokoto accidental airstrike: Villagers harbouring terrorists – Military; Atiku, others demand probe

By Dave Oludare Oso

In response to the Christmas day bombing of civilians in two communities in the Silame Local Government Area of Sokoto State by the Nigerian Air Force, the Chief of Defence Staff, General Christopher Musa, has warned civilians against harbouring terrorists and criminals.

The CDS, who spoke during his visit to the troops of Operation FASAN YANMA at 8 Division Headquarters in Sokoto, said any community that persists in such acts (harbouring terrorists) should be ready to face the consequences of their actions.

NEW DAILY PRIME reported that an airstrike intended to neutralise Lakurawa terrorists, mistakenly hit Gidan Sama and Rumtuwa communities, killing at least 10 villagers and leaving several others wounded on Christmas eve.

However, several Nigerians, notable among whom are former Vice President Atiku Abubakar, Governor Ahmed Aliyu of Sokoto State, and ex-Sokoto governor, Aminu Tambuwal, have called for an impartial investigation into the incident.

But speaking to journalists on the accidental bombing, Musa hinted that the villagers were to blame for allegedly harbouring terrorists, insisting that the military would not take any responsibility for attacks on any community hobnobbing with the militants.

He stated, "I want to call on everyone not to harbour any suspected criminals in their midst, be it Lakurawa or bandits. They should expose them and leave their vicinity.

"The military is not going to take it lightly with any criminals disturbing the peace of the nation, we are dealing with them and we are coming for the rest.

"We have individuals that still harbour them and once you do that, you are making yourself a legitimate target. We appeal, do not harbour them, do not live with them to avoid being a legitimate target.

"Please, do not hang around them, do not give them any support in whatever ways



because once you do that, you are making yourself a target."

The Defence Chief added, "The incident that happened yesterday was an operation we did, we did a follow-up and we try as much as we can to avoid any mistakes; if there are other mistakes that came up in the operation, we will investigate.

"We did our homework, we have the video of everything that happened and we are going to investigate."

While calling on the media not to give the bandits or other criminal elements much publicity, the CDS said the country would not allow any foreign military base on Nigerian soil.

He called Niger, Chad, Benin and other neighbouring countries to cooperate with Nigeria in dealing with the enemies of peace.

Speaking to the troops of Operation FASAN YAMMA, during the luncheon, he said, "I want to extend my heartfelt appreciation to every one of you for your unwavering dedication and sacrifices in ensuring the safety and security of Nigeria, particularly in your deployment to the Joint Task Force Northwest Operation FANSAN YAMMA.

"Despite the inherent challenges, your daily commitment to duty in the field remains a source of inspiration to us all and further exemplifies the true spirit of patriotism required for defeating the threats to our nation's peace and stability.

"The recent deployment of the Special Operations Brigade and some combat enablers to dislodge and eliminate the

Lakurawa terrorists from their camps in Sokoto and Kebbi states, and the successes so far achieved is a testament to our commitment to resolving and combating all security threats across the theatres of operations.

"Accordingly, and under my leadership, the Armed Forces of Nigeria will continue to sustain its operational tempo and posture across military deployments both home and abroad," he reassured.

He encouraged the troops to gear up for the challenges ahead by ensuring victory across all the theatres of operations.

"The coming year presents us with an opportunity to make significant progress in overcoming the challenges confronting our nation.

"Together, we must strive to ensure that the Year 2025 is marked by transformative victories in all our operational theatres, particularly in Operation FANSAN YAMMA," he noted.

The CDS pledged the necessary support and resources to the troops to carry out their tasks effectively.

Musa later visited the military hospital to check on some troops receiving treatment.

Meanwhile, Governor Aliyu has visited the Gidan Sama and Rumtuwa communities to assess the damage and offer condolences to the victims' families.

The governor announced a donation of N20 million and 100 bags of assorted food items for the grieving families.



# Tax Reforms: Tinubu calling for anarchy – Gov Mohammed

By Dave Oludare Oso

**G**overnor Bala Mohammed of Bauchi State, has urged President Bola Tinubu to backtrack on the tax policy reforms as it could lead to anarchy.

He made the call during the Christmas Day celebration organised in Bauchi on Thursday.

According to him, the policy does not in any way favour the North, adding that the governors would not be able to pay salaries.

He said, “To the tax reforms – it is not a good policy for northern Nigeria because we are not going to get money to pay you salaries.

“They must listen, otherwise, they are calling for anarchy and that is not good. We voted for the president in the state and other states.

“They must listen to us. They must not come up with a policy that favours only one state in the country.

“It is not about religion. It is not about tribe. It is about national unity. It is about national hegemony.

“We are all about good leadership, and we will continue to urge them for the time being, but if the situation persists, they will see our real



colour. We are going to fight for it.”

He also called on Christians to pray for Nigeria.

According to him, religion should not be a tool to divide the people.

He said, “We join our Christian brothers to celebrate this day, the birthday of Jesus Christ. And we use this opportunity as the government of Bauchi State, to thank the people, to thank the Christians for their support over the years, especially for my dear party, the PDP and my humble self.

“Even when I was in ANPP, Christians helped me and voted for me, and they voted for me despite my limitations and my gaps.

“I appreciate your support all through, even when we came for the second term. You deserve our appreciation because you have earned it.

“You are my brothers and sisters because I am a special breed of person. Most of you are my tribesmen.

“We come from the same source, we only believe differently. You are free to practice your religion. I am free to practice my religion. There is no compulsion in religion.

“I call on you to pray for Nigeria. Pray for all the leaders of Nigeria, including my humble self because Nigeria needs prayers. We are facing a lot of difficulties. There is a lot of wahala. There is a lot of anger, and it is something that we have to pray for God to obliterate it. We have to say it but certainly, it is not to insult anybody,” he said.

Governor Mohammed’s plea comes following several economic policies by the Bola Tinubu’s administration which have forced hardship on the masses.

# Catholic priest, Tobias Okonkwo shot dead in Anambra

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

**R**ev. Fr. Tobias Chukwujekwu Okonkwo, a priest with the Catholic Diocese of Nnewi has been shot dead by yet to identified gunmen in Ihiala, Anambra State.

Fr Tobias, who was also a pharmacist was shot dead on Boxing Day, December 26, the Catholic Diocese of Nnewi said in a statement on Friday.

According to a statement signed by Rev. Fr. Raphael Ezeogu, Chancellor of the Nnewi Diocese, Fr. Tobias was killed between 7pm and 8pm along the Onitsha-Owerri Expressway.

The Diocese described the death of the priest as a devastating loss, but expressed faith in divine consolation.



Born on August 11, 1984, Fr. Tobias was ordained as a priest on July 11, 2015.

According to the statement, he was serving as the Manager of the Schools of Nursing, Midwifery, and Medical Laboratory at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Ihiala before he was brutally murdered.

“The Catholic Diocese of Nnewi has called on the faithful to offer prayers and Holy Masses for the eternal rest of Fr. Tobias and to console his bereaved family.

“Funeral arrangements will be announced in due course.

The Diocese urged authorities to investigate the incident and bring the perpetrators to justice.

“As the Catholic community mourns the loss of this dedicated priest, they take comfort in the statement: “Where sorrow increases, divine consolation increases all the more.”

# ‘Everybody Loves Jenifa’ earns N783m in 2 weeks

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

**F**unke Akindele’s new film, *Everybody Loves Jenifa*, is making waves in Nollywood, solidifying her status as an award-winning actress and filmmaker.

In just two weeks, the film grossed an astonishing N783 million, setting new benchmarks in Nigerian cinema. It has become the highest-grossing Nollywood film of 2024 and made history by earning N107 million in a single day — the largest one-day gross ever recorded in the industry.

The film, which continues to captivate audiences, is showing in cinemas nationwide and internationally.

From Lagos to London, and from New York to New Zealand, viewers are flocking to watch this cinematic masterpiece. Fans in Australia, Canada, and other parts of the world have also joined in celebrating this milestone achievement.

## Global triumph for Nollywood

This international success marks a turning point for Nollywood. While Nigerian movies have grown steadily in global recognition, *Everybody Loves Jenifa* has raised the bar. The movie recently achieved another feat: it became the first Nollywood film to earn \$100,000 in diaspora sales. This achievement further solidifies Funke Akindele’s position as a trailblazer in the Nigerian film industry.

## Gratitude and acknowledgments

Akindele has been vocal about her gratitude for the support she has received. Taking to Instagram, she shared a heartfelt message with her fans and collaborators. “We did it, guys,” she wrote. “\$100,000 in diaspora sales and counting, the first Nollywood film to hit this milestone.”

She continued, thanking her cast, fans, and the diaspora community for their unwavering support. “I’m beyond grateful to my incredible cast, the unstoppable Jenifans, my amazing colleagues, the diasporan community, and everyone who’s been part of this



journey. You’re the real MVPs.”

Akindele emphasized that the love and encouragement from her supporters have been the driving force behind her success. “Your love and support have been the fuel behind this dream. I couldn’t have done this without you. THANK YOU from the bottom of my heart,” she added.

## Why *Everybody Loves Jenifa* resonates

The film’s success is no accident. *Everybody Loves Jenifa* combines humor, emotion, and relatable storytelling to create a cinematic experience that appeals to a wide audience.

The movie builds on the beloved *Jenifa* franchise, which has long been a favourite in Nollywood. Funke Akindele’s ability to evolve the character of *Jenifa* while staying true to her essence has struck a chord with fans, both old and new.

Critics have praised the film for its witty script, exceptional performances, and top-notch production quality. The relatable themes of resilience, self-discovery, and community have also contributed to its widespread appeal.

Moreover, Akindele’s knack for blending comedy with important social messages makes her work stand out in the competitive Nollywood landscape.

## The Road Ahead

With *Everybody Loves Jenifa* smashing records, many are wondering what’s next for Funke Akindele.

The actress and filmmaker, known for her work ethic and creativity, is likely to continue pushing boundaries. Her success serves as an inspiration to other filmmakers in Nigeria and beyond, proving that Nollywood has the potential to compete on the global stage.

## A Moment to Celebrate

For Funke Akindele, this moment is about more than just box office numbers. It’s a celebration of hard work, creativity, and the power of community. Her ability to connect with audiences across cultures and continents is a testament to her talent and vision.

As *Everybody Loves Jenifa* continues to dominate cinemas, fans and industry insiders alike are watching closely. This record-breaking film is not just a win for Funke Akindele but also for Nollywood as a whole. It’s a reminder that Nigerian cinema has the talent and stories to captivate the world.

Funke Akindele’s journey is far from over, and with milestones like this, the future looks brighter than ever. For now, audiences everywhere can enjoy the magic of *Everybody Loves Jenifa* — a film that is breaking records and hearts in equal measure.



# Teni, Young Jonn shine at Lagos Festival finale

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

The first Lagos Shopping Festival concluded on Dec 26, 2024, featuring unforgettable performances by top Nigerian artists like Young Jonn, Teni, and EmmaOMG.

Thousands of enthusiastic shoppers and partygoers descended upon the Mobolaji Johnson Arena in Onikan, Lagos, braving the chilly weather to enjoy a unique blend of shopping, music, and entertainment.

The Festival exceeded expectations, becoming one of the standout events of Lagos' December calendar, with memories etched in the minds of all who attended.

Star-studded lineup lights up the festival

Over three consecutive nights, the Lagos Shopping Festival delivered electrifying performances from some of Nigeria's biggest stars. The lineup featured renowned artists such as Adekunle Gold, Wande Coal, BNXN, and Ayo Maff, who thrilled audiences with their energetic sets.

The grand finale saw unforgettable performances from Young Jonn, Teni, and EmmaOMG, with renowned DJs like DJ Neptune, D'Incredible, DJ Dips, and DJ YK Mule keeping the crowd dancing into the early hours. The concerts created an electric atmosphere that left attendees buzzing long after the event concluded.

Bridging entertainment and commerce



One of the key highlights of the Festival was its ability to blend entertainment with commerce. Powered by the Lagos State Government in collaboration with Chain Reactions Africa, the event provided a platform for Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) to showcase their products to a vast audience.

Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu praised the Festival for fostering collaborations that benefit small businesses, innovators, and the creative industry.

He emphasized that the Festival's value-driven partnerships had the potential to drive growth and boost Lagos' economy, positioning the city as a model for inclusive development.

Success and seamless organization  
The 72-hour, non-stop Festival was

a resounding success, running smoothly without any major incidents or medical emergencies. This achievement highlighted the event organizers' strong organizational skills and meticulous planning.

Governor Sanwo-Olu commended Chain Reactions Africa for their efforts, which demonstrated Lagos' capability to host large-scale events with minimal disruption.

The success of the Festival showcased Lagos' potential as a hub for innovative, inclusive, and thriving experiences that set a benchmark for other states in Nigeria to follow.

The Lagos Shopping Festival not only entertained but also connected businesses and communities, leaving a lasting impression on all who participated.

# Tejumola hails AMVCAs as entries open for 11th edition

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

MultiChoice's West Africa Content Head calls the AMVCAs a symbol of excellence, celebrating African creativity in film and television.

Busola Tejumola emphasized the awards' significance in highlighting African storytelling's diversity and creativity.

Tejumola shared this sentiment during the announcement of the call for entries for the 11th edition of the AMVCAs.

She stated, "The AMVCAs have become a beacon of excellence, celebrating the vibrancy and diversity of African storytelling. We are excited to once again open the doors for talented creatives across the continent to showcase their remarkable work to the world."

Africa Magic, in collaboration with MultiChoice, officially opened submissions on Monday, December 23, 2024.

Creators have until Friday, January 31, 2025, to send in their work for consideration. This year's event promises to once again celebrate the best of African talent and creativity in the film and television industry.

**Platform for storytellers**

The AMVCAs have established themselves as Africa's most prestigious platform for recognizing excellence in film and television. Over the years, they have become a cornerstone of the industry, shining a spotlight on African filmmakers, producers, and storytellers.

Filmmakers, producers, production companies, and creators are invited to submit their works for this landmark event. Eligible entries include films,



made-for-television movies, and television series that were broadcast or publicly screened between December 1, 2023, and December 31, 2024. This submission window ensures a fair opportunity for works from across the continent to compete for recognition.

**Encouraging creativity across Africa**

The AMVCAs not only celebrate excellence but also encourage innovation and creativity in African filmmaking. By providing a platform for recognition, the awards inspire creators to push boundaries and tell stories that resonate with audiences worldwide.

For filmmakers, participating in the AMVCAs is more than just competing for awards. It is an opportunity to gain exposure, network with industry leaders, and cement their place in the global entertainment landscape. The recognition that comes with being an AMVCA nominee or winner can open doors to new opportunities and collaborations.

**How to submit entries**

Submitting entries for the 11th edition of the AMVCAs is a straightforward process. Filmmakers are required to

submit works that meet the eligibility criteria within the specified timeframe. The organizers have made the submission process accessible to ensure participation from creatives across the continent.

Participants can visit the official Africa Magic website for detailed guidelines and instructions on how to submit their works. The submission platform is user-friendly, allowing creators to easily upload their content for consideration.

**Celebration of African diversity**

The AMVCAs are more than just an awards ceremony; they are a celebration of Africa's rich and diverse cultures. Through the power of storytelling, filmmakers bring to life the traditions, values, and experiences of people from different parts of the continent.

The awards play a crucial role in promoting African narratives and showcasing them to the world. By recognizing outstanding contributions to film and television, the AMVCAs elevate African stories and ensure they receive the attention they deserve on the global stage.



# Fred Leonard defends marriage, slams social media rumours

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Actor and filmmaker Frederick Leonard has issued a strong rebuttal to the rumors circulating about his marriage to Peggy Ovire.

In an emotional and forceful Instagram post, Leonard addressed the spread of falsehoods and the invasion of their privacy, condemning bloggers and social media users who have targeted their relationship. His message was clear: their marriage is a private matter that does not warrant public scrutiny.

Defending personal choices and autonomy

In his Instagram post, Leonard made it a point to emphasize that neither he nor Peggy owes anyone explanations for their personal decisions. "This marriage is not your business," he wrote. "What goes on in this marriage will not make your lives better or put food on your table." Leonard criticized the rise in what he described as "stupidity," pointing out that people are directing their energy toward things that do not concern them. His message was straightforward: focus on your own life rather than interfering in the lives of others.

Leonard also defended his wife's autonomy, asserting that she has the right to make her own decisions without judgment or assumptions. "She can post Christmas photos without me in them," he stated. "She can take breaks and not wear her ring. I bought the ring, and I'm not complaining. She can go on vacation without me—it's not your business." Leonard made it clear that Peggy's choices are hers alone, and no one else has the right to impose judgment on her actions.



Addressing toxic social media culture

In his post, Leonard didn't hold back in criticizing what he called the toxic environment of social media. He referred to bloggers as "idle and useless" and urged them to stop spreading false narratives about his marriage. "Dear idle and useless bloggers, with your empty-headed followers, leave me and my wife's name out of your contaminated blogs," he wrote. Leonard condemned the spread of misinformation and the constant need for scrutiny that he believes fuels the toxicity on social media.

"It's not your business," he reiterated. "Since we got married, you've been sniffing around like hungry dogs, trying to find something you'll never find." Leonard warned that those spreading such falsehoods would only continue to be frustrated, and he dismissed their efforts as futile. "This will be the last time the Leonards will address blogs and social media idiocy," he declared. "If you decide to continue with your folly, my wife

and I will just relax and laugh. The senseless ones will become a source of entertainment for us."

Defending his career and marriage Leonard also addressed concerns about his career as an actor and how it might be impacted by his marriage. He made it clear that his professional life is separate from his personal choices. "I'm not going to stop kissing in movies just because I'm married or because of what some unenlightened fools will think," he stated. Leonard pointed out that no professional actor around the world adheres to such constraints.

"Stop trying to judge the innocent actresses who star alongside me," he wrote. "They are professionals getting paid to do their job and put food on their tables." Leonard made it clear that his career is not affected by the opinions of those who judge him based on his roles. "For those who choose to judge my true nature as a person by the roles I play in movies, it goes to show how daft you are, and that's not my fault," he added. "It's not my job to boost your I.Q."

# Adekunle: Ilebaye's win – a big deal

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Former Big Brother Naija housemate Adekunle Olopade recently opened up about the deep personal significance of Ilebaye's victory in the All-Stars edition of the show.

In a candid conversation with fellow housemates Kellyrae, Jeff, and Topher, Adekunle revealed the impact his actions during the "Level Up" season had on Ilebaye's journey.

During his time as Head of House, Adekunle was responsible for nominating housemates for eviction.

Reflecting on the decisions he made, Adekunle admitted that his nomination of Ilebaye for eviction led to her early departure from the show in the third week. This contributed to a sense of guilt that lingered with him even after they had left the house.

"In 'Level Up,' I was Head of House, and the system back then allowed the Head of House to nominate housemates for eviction," Adekunle explained. "Ilebaye was one of the individuals I nominated, and she left the show in the third week." His voice carried regret as he recalled the moment.

What made his feelings of guilt even stronger was an encounter with Ilebaye after their exit from the house. "When we left the house, we were trapped in a bus as fans gathered to greet us. I remember seeing Ilebaye standing by the gate, being ignored by fans. This was someone who had been part of our journey, yet no one seemed to acknowledge her. I felt guilty because I was the one who had nominated her for eviction, leading to her exit. Seeing her dismissed like that left a lasting impact on me."

Adekunle admitted that witnessing Ilebaye being overlooked by fans, despite her significant presence on the show, made him reflect on the consequences of his decision. "It hurt me to see her being overlooked. She was



someone who contributed so much during the show, yet it felt like her time in the house was forgotten."

However, Adekunle shared that seeing Ilebaye return for the All-Stars season brought him a sense of relief and joy. "When we came back for the All-Stars season and I saw her, I was filled with happiness. Seeing her win made everything feel complete for me."

The All-Stars edition brought a sense of redemption, not just for Ilebaye but for Adekunle as well. "Ilebaye's win in the All-Stars is personal to me. I'm genuinely happy that she won, and here's why," Adekunle said. "In 'Level Up,' I was Head of House, and our season was different. The Head of House nominated the housemates for eviction. Ilebaye was part of the people I mentioned, and she left in the third week."

This acknowledgment of his past actions added depth to his gratitude for Ilebaye's victory. "When we left the house, we were trapped in a bus because fans wanted to greet us. Then Ilebaye was standing by the gate, and people were walking past her. This was someone who was with us on the show. I felt guilty because I was the one who put her up for eviction and she left. Seeing her dismissed like that left a lasting impact on me."

Adekunle's journey back to the All-Stars season was marked by a sense of hope and redemption. "When I saw her during All-Stars, it felt like everything had come full circle. I was happy to see her back, and even more thrilled to witness her win."

In reflecting on his past actions, Adekunle emphasized the importance of growth and redemption. "At that time, I was just focused on the game, not realizing the impact of my decisions on others. Seeing Ilebaye's strength and resilience in returning and winning made me understand the value of second chances."

The All-Stars season, for Adekunle, was not just about competition but also about reconciling with past mistakes. "Ilebaye's victory means more than just a win. It's a reminder that people deserve to be recognized, not just for what they've contributed, but for the second chances they earn."

Ultimately, Adekunle expressed his joy at witnessing Ilebaye's triumph, as it symbolized a personal journey of reflection, growth, and the power of redemption.



# Drake: Rap will never die

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

**D**rake dismisses claims that rap is “dead,” asserting its endurance during a live chat with streamer Adin Ross. The rapper remains confident in its legacy.

The conversation began when Ross boldly declared, “Rap is dead.” Without hesitation, Drake countered the statement, saying, “It’ll never die. It was a weird NBA season. New season starts in five days.” His response was brief but clear, underscoring his unwavering belief in rap’s enduring legacy.

Drake’s comments come amid ongoing debates about the state of rap music. Earlier this year, Nigerian afrobeats superstar Wizkid stirred controversy by claiming in an international interview that “rap is dead.” His statement sent shockwaves across the music world, sparking heated discussions on social media and among music enthusiasts.

## Controversial claim

Wizkid’s remark didn’t go unnoticed. Many prominent rappers, including Terry Tha Rapman, Zoro, and Ladipoe, publicly disagreed. They argued that rap remains a powerful and evolving genre, pointing to its influence on global culture and music trends. Fans and critics alike joined the conversation, turning the topic into a hot-button issue.

Some saw Wizkid’s comment as an attempt to elevate afrobeats, a genre experiencing massive global success. Others interpreted it as a direct critique of rap’s current direction. Regardless of intent, the statement highlighted a growing conversation about the relevance and adaptability of rap music in a changing industry.

## Drake’s defense of rap

Drake’s response adds weight to the argument that rap is far from obsolete. As one of the genre’s most successful artists, he has consistently pushed boundaries with his music. From hard-hitting rap verses to genre-blending tracks, Drake’s career exemplifies the



versatility and resilience of hip-hop.

By dismissing the “rap is dead” claim, Drake aligns himself with a broader sentiment shared by many in the industry. For artists and fans alike, rap remains a vital form of expression. It continues to address social issues, inspire new generations, and dominate streaming platforms worldwide.

## Why rap will endure

Rap’s staying power lies in its ability to adapt. Over the years, it has evolved from underground movements to mainstream success. Artists experiment with different sounds, merging rap with elements of pop, R&B, and electronic music. This innovation ensures that the genre remains relevant and appealing to a diverse audience.

## Canadian rapper Drake

Moreover, rap serves as a voice for the marginalized. It provides a platform for storytelling, tackling themes like inequality, resilience, and personal struggles. This authenticity resonates deeply with listeners, making rap more than just a musical style—it’s a cultural force.

## The broader context

It’s worth noting that claims about a genre’s decline aren’t new. Throughout music history, critics have frequently questioned the longevity of certain

styles. However, these predictions often fail to account for music’s cyclical nature. Just as rock and jazz have evolved and thrived in new forms, so too has rap.

Today, rap dominates global charts and festivals. Rising stars and established legends alike continue to release music that captivates audiences. From New York to Lagos, Tokyo to Toronto, rap’s influence knows no borders.

## Global perspective

Wizkid’s comments also reflect the rise of afrobeats as a global powerhouse. The genre’s popularity has surged, with artists like Burna Boy, Tems, and Wizkid himself achieving international acclaim. While afrobeats and rap are distinct, they share common roots and often intersect creatively.

This crossover highlights the interconnectedness of modern music. Artists draw inspiration from multiple genres, creating fresh sounds that defy categorization. Rather than competing, genres like rap and afrobeats can coexist and enrich each other.

## Looking ahead

Drake’s confident assertion that rap will “never die” serves as a reminder of the genre’s resilience. As music evolves, rap continues to adapt, proving its relevance time and again. Artists experiment, audiences engage, and the culture thrives.

The ongoing debates about rap’s future underscore its significance. Whether celebrated or criticized, rap remains a focal point of global music conversations. Its impact on culture, fashion, and politics is undeniable, and its story is far from over.

For fans, Drake’s words are a reassurance. For critics, they’re a challenge to reconsider the genre’s depth and potential. One thing is clear: rap is here to stay, and its influence will continue to shape the music world for years to come.

# Farage threatens legal action over membership row with Badenoch

By Dr. Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi

**R**eform UK leader demands an apology from Kemi Badenoch over accusation the party had produced ‘fake’ data

Nigel Farage has warned of possible legal action against Kemi Badenoch, demanding an apology after she accused him of falsifying Reform UK’s membership numbers. Farage, calling the claim “outrageous,” urged Badenoch to retract her statement, describing it as an “intemperate outburst.”

Speaking on a Zoom call, Farage said he would take action within days but had not decided on the specifics.

The dispute began when Farage claimed Reform UK’s membership had surpassed the Conservatives’. Badenoch responded on social media, accusing Reform of using a counter “coded to tick up automatically.” Reform’s chair, Zia Yusuf, provided evidence to the Financial Times showing the party’s membership numbers were legitimate, including data from their Nation Builder platform, which tracks memberships and donations.

Farage criticized the Conservatives for not publicly auditing their own membership figures, alleging that they include people who had left the party or died.

He reaffirmed Reform’s willingness to have its figures independently



audited and urged the Conservatives to do the same.

The row, the first direct confrontation between Badenoch and Farage, comes as the Conservatives attempt to recover from their worst electoral defeat in July. Reform UK, expanding its membership base, is gearing up for a significant ground campaign ahead of local elections in May, seeking to establish itself as a credible political force.

Reform’s membership tracker shows nearly 142,500 members compared to the Conservatives’ 131,680, as reported during their recent leadership election.

Critics close to Badenoch dismissed Farage’s claims as a publicity stunt. One source referred to Farage as “Fake Farage,” suggesting the

membership counter’s credibility is questionable. Farage, however, insists the Conservatives will “bitterly regret” their accusations.

The clash underscores broader concerns about the transparency of UK political party membership figures. Unlike the Liberal Democrats, Greens, and Labour, who openly share membership data, the Conservatives have faced criticism for withholding theirs. As Reform grows, it faces pressure to prove its staying power in the political landscape.

The outcome of this dispute could shape the dynamics between Reform UK and the Conservatives, as both parties vie for public trust in a highly competitive political environment.



# Accuser in rape lawsuit against Jay-Z, Diddy can remain anonymous – Judge

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

An Alabama woman who says she was raped by Jay-Z and Sean “Diddy” Combs when she was 13 can proceed anonymously, for now, in her lawsuit against the rap moguls, a New York federal judge ruled Thursday.

In her written order, U.S. District Judge Analisa Torres said the woman can proceed anonymously at this early stage of the litigation, but she may be required to reveal her identity at a later date, if the case proceeds. That would allow defense lawyers to collect facts necessary to prepare for trial. Torres also cited “substantial interest” from the public.

The Manhattan jurist also chastised Alex Spiro — the lawyer representing Jay-Z, whose legal name is Shawn Carter — for what she described as his “relentless filing of combative motions containing inflammatory language and ad hominem attacks” against the plaintiff’s lawyer, calling them “inappropriate, a waste of judicial resources, and a tactic unlikely to benefit his client.”

Torres wrote in her order Thursday that Spiro, who has been on the case less than three weeks, has submitted a “litany of letters and motions attempting to impugn the character of Plaintiff’s lawyer, many of them expounding on the purported ‘urgency’ of this case.”

In response to the ruling, Tony Buzbee, the plaintiff’s attorney, told CBS News in an email Thursday evening that he doesn’t “typically comment on court rulings,” but alleged that “the coordinated and desperate efforts to attack me as counsel for alleged victims are falling flat.”



CBS News has reached out to Carter’s attorneys for comment.

Combs remains jailed in New York awaiting a criminal trial on federal sex trafficking charges. He also faces a wave of sexual assault lawsuits, many of which were filed by Buzbee, a Texas attorney who says his firm represents over 150 people, both men and women, who allege sexual abuse and exploitation by Combs.

The lawsuits allege many individuals were abused at parties in New York, California and Florida after receiving drug-laced drinks.

Combs’ lawyers have dismissed Buzbee’s lawsuits as “shameless publicity stunts, designed to extract payments from celebrities who fear having lies spread about them, just as lies have been spread about Mr. Combs.” Jay-Z has said in a statement that Buzbee is trying to blackmail him to settle the Alabama woman’s allegations.

In her lawsuit, the woman who says she was raped at 13 identifies herself as “Jane Doe.”

She said she was living in Rochester in

2000 when she made her way to New York City and befriended a limousine driver who drove her to an after-party for the MTV Music Awards, where she says she was eventually attacked by Jay-Z and Combs.

Spiro asked the judge to dismiss the entertainer from the woman’s lawsuit and he requested a hearing on the case for the day after he made his requests in writing on Dec. 18.

Citing an interview the plaintiff did with NBC News, Spiro wrote that the broadcast revealed “glaring inconsistencies and outright impossibilities” in the plaintiff’s story. For one thing, the woman said she traveled for five hours from Rochester to watch the music awards show on a jumbotron outside the VMAs even though permits and pictures show there was no jumbotron at the event.

Spiro also noted that the woman’s father has said he does not recall driving from Rochester to pick his daughter up in New York City, as she says he did.

In the interview, the woman admitted to inconsistencies in her story.

# China teaches love to promotes dating and marriage

By Dr. Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi

In a significant effort to foster a birth-friendly society, the Chinese government has introduced a series of incentives to encourage single people to date, marry, and have children. Starting January 1, 2025, couples registering their first marriage, where the woman is aged 35 or younger, will receive a cash reward of 1,500 yuan (\$214). Families having their first, second, or third child will be eligible for subsidies of 2,000 yuan (\$285), 5,000 yuan (\$714), and 8,000 yuan (\$1,142), respectively, provided they meet policy guidelines. Universities have been asked to introduce so-called love courses for single students, and regular articles appear in state media about the benefits of having children.

The initiative, announced by the Lüliang City Civil Affairs Bureau, is part of a comprehensive program to support marriage, childbirth, and education. Authorities are also focusing on improving maternal and child healthcare. This includes standardizing practices in health institutions, training village doctors, upgrading pediatric services in general hospitals, and enhancing the expertise of obstetricians and pediatricians.

China is grappling with an unprecedented demographic challenge as its population declines for the first time in 60 years, with fertility rates at historic lows. In 2022, marriage registrations dropped to 6.83 million, the lowest since 1986. These trends are compounded by economic uncertainty and shifting societal values, as many young people move away from traditional life paths due to a slowing economy, rising unemployment, and mounting financial pressures.

In response, governments across China are intensifying efforts to promote marriage and childbirth. Local officials are cold-calling married women to inquire about their plans for children, universities are



introducing “love courses” to encourage dating among students, and state media frequently publishes articles extolling the benefits of family life and parenthood to influence public attitudes.

Experts caution that these efforts face significant obstacles. Ren Zeping, a prominent economist, has described the crisis as a convergence of three trends: an ageing population, low birth rates, and declining marriage rates. With fewer young people and a rapidly ageing society, the implications for China’s economy and labor force are severe. India officially surpassed China as the world’s most populous nation last year, underscoring the urgency of the issue.

Economic pessimism further exacerbates the problem. Policymakers are grappling with a prolonged property downturn, weak exports, and stagnant consumer confidence, all of which deter family planning. “Having a child is a lifelong responsibility,” noted one expert. “Economic uncertainty is a

strong counterforce to improving the birth rate.”

Despite the relaxation of the one-child policy in 2016, birth rates have fallen every year since, and financial incentives for parents have largely failed to reverse the trend. Cultural shifts, including a greater focus on career ambitions and personal freedom among women, pose additional challenges. “Chinese women’s desire to have children is low,” said Lü Pin, a Chinese feminist writer. “There is no sign this will change, even with increased subsidies and growing concerns about the demographic crisis.”

As Lüliang implements its incentives, many hope the measures will serve as a blueprint for addressing the broader challenges of declining birth rates and a shrinking population. Whether these efforts will be enough to reverse the trends remains uncertain, but they highlight an increasing awareness of the urgency of China’s demographic predicament.



# US gay couple jailed 200 years for raping adopted sons

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

A gay couple resident in Georgia, the United States, William and Zachary Zulock, aged 34 and 36, have been sentenced to life in prison for sexually abusing their adopted sons.

A Walton County court, last week, imposed 100-year sentences on each, without the possibility of parole. The victims, two brothers, are now 12 and 10 years old, The Economic Times reports.

The Zulocks reportedly adopted the boys from a Christian special-needs agency and lived in an Atlanta suburb.

Zachary worked in banking, and William was a government employee.

The abuse reportedly involved forcing the children into sexual acts and creating pornographic videos.

Evidence revealed the Zulocks shared details of the abuse with others, with one instance involving Zachary sending a Snapchat message saying, "I'm going to f-k my son tonight.



Stand by," along with images of the abuse.

The Economic Times reports that the gay couple's crimes became known after a member of a local pedophile ring was caught downloading child pornography.

The arrested suspect revealed the Zulocks' involvement in producing child pornography with their adopted sons.

During their trial, both men pleaded guilty to aggravated child molestation, aggravated sodomy, and sexual exploitation of children.

The District Attorney Randy

McGinley was quoted as saying, "These two defendants truly created a house of horrors and put their extremely dark desires above everything and everyone else."

McGinley further commended the victims' strength, adding, "However, the depth of the defendants' depravity, which is as deep as it gets, is not greater than the resolve of those that fought for justice and the strength of the victims in this case.

"The resolve I have seen from these two young victims over the last two years is truly inspiring."

# Lawmakers impeach Acting South Korean President, Duck-Soo

By **Elizabeth Jenrola Oso**

For decades, South Korea was an example of a vibrant democracy and economy. On Friday, the key United States ally was in uncharted territory when legislators voted to impeach an acting president less than two weeks after ousting the country's previous leader.

The ruling People's Power Party surrounded the speaker's podium following the vote to impeach acting President Han Duck-soo, chanting that the vote was invalid and accusing parliament of committing "tyranny."

On Dec. 14, President Yoon Suk Yeol was himself impeached after attempting to declare martial law. Opinion polls conducted after Yoon's bid to impose military rule show overwhelming public support for his removal.

Choi Sang-mok, the former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy and Finance, replaced Han, becoming South Korea's second acting president in two weeks.

South Korean lawmakers argue with National Assembly Speaker Woo Won-shik over the impeachment of acting president Han Duck-soo. Jung Yeon-Je/AFP via Getty Images

Before the vote, National Assembly Speaker Woo Won-shik said impeaching the acting president required a simple majority of lawmakers present, the same threshold as for impeaching a prime minister.

While the ruling People Power Party argued that a two-thirds majority, the threshold for a presidential impeachment, was necessary, it decided its members would abstain



from voting if only a simple majority was required.

"I respect the decision of the National Assembly and, in accordance with relevant laws, I will suspend my duties to avoid adding further confusion and uncertainty," Han said in a statement shortly after the impeachment motion was passed against him.

This situation raises significant legal and political challenges as South Korea navigates its first impeachment of an acting president.

Han's impeachment coincided with the Constitutional Court's first hearing to review whether to overturn the impeachment and reinstate Yoon or remove him permanently from office, with a decision due in 180 days.

Following the impeachment, Choi said that the government had ordered the military to increase vigilance, citing the possibility that North Korea could exploit the South's political instability to carry out acts of

provocation.

"As a member of the Cabinet, I feel a deep sense of responsibility for the current situation and extend my heartfelt apologies to the people," Choi said.

"At this moment, minimizing confusion in state affairs is of utmost importance," he added, according to the statement his office sent NBC News. "The government will do its best to ensure stability in governance." "We should carry out a watertight preparation against North Korean provocation," he said.

The plan to impeach Han — with 192 of the 300 legislators voted for the motion — was announced by the main opposition Democratic Party of Korea (DPK) on Thursday, after he refused to immediately appoint three justices to fill vacancies at the Constitutional Court.



# Italian journalist, Cecilia Sala arrested in Iran

By **Dave Oludare Oso**

**A**n Italian journalist has been under arrest in Iran for more than a week, Italy's foreign ministry has said.

Cecilia Sala works for Il Foglio newspaper and for podcast company Chora Media.

The foreign ministry said it was following Ms Sala's case with "utmost attention" since she was detained by Tehran police on 19 December.

There was no immediate confirmation of the arrest by Iranian officials.

Chora Media said in a separate statement that Ms Sala was being held in solitary confinement at the Evin prison in Tehran and that no reason had been given for her arrest.

Italy's foreign ministry revealed that Rome's ambassador to Tehran, Paola Amadei, had paid her a visit to check on the conditions in which she was being held, adding that she had been allowed to make two phone calls to her family.

It also said Italy "has been working with Iranian authorities to clarify Cecilia Sala's legal situation."



According to Chora Media, Ms Sala left Rome for Iran on 12 December with a valid journalist visa and had carried out several interviews, producing three episodes of her "Stories" podcast.

It added that she had been due to fly back to Rome on 20 December, but her phone went "silent" after she exchanged a few messages on 19 December.

Ms Cecilia Sala sandwiched by Iranian Policemen during her arrest. Photo: Reuters

Sala's other employer, Il Foglio, has called for her release, saying "journalism is not a crime."

"Cecilia was in Iran, with a regular visa, to report on a country she knows and loves, a

country in which information is suffocated by repression," the newspaper said in a statement on its website.

Last week, Iran summoned the Swiss ambassador in Tehran and a senior Italian diplomat over the arrest of two Iranian nationals, Reuters reported, citing Iranian media.

Iran was rocked by protests in 2022 after the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini in September of that year. Tens of thousands of people were arrested in connection with the "Woman, Life, Freedom" protests.

Mahsa had been arrested for allegedly breaking Iranian laws that require women to wear the hijab and she died in police custody.

# Terrorist shouts 'Allahu Akbar' murders woman, 83, in Israel

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

A 28-year-old terrorist from Tulkarem in Samaria shouted "Allahu Akbar" and then stabbed and mortally wounded a woman near the nursing home where she lived on Kedoshi Hashoah Street in Herzliya on Friday morning.

Magen David Adom emergency personnel treated the victim, Ludmila Lipovsky, 83, and she was evacuated in critical condition to Tel Aviv Sourasky Medical Center (Ichilov Hospital), where doctors pronounced her death.

Security guards from the Israel Postal Company's Brink's courier unit shot the lone attacker, who was then arrested by police.

According to initial reports, he was within the Green Line illegally and had previously served time in an Israeli prison for a security offense. His condition is described as serious.



The terrorist, Ibrahim Shalhob, had been placed under administrative detention three times, most recently from June 2023 to June 2024.

The Israel Security Agency (Shin Bet) said the suspect is "a former security service informant, who was involved in

thwarting terrorist infrastructures in Judea and Samaria, [and] was exposed and transferred for rehabilitation in Israel. The suspect was arrested at the scene and will be transferred for Shin Bet interrogation to continue investigating the circumstances of the attack."

# No possibility of 3rd world war – Putin

By Dave Oludare Oso

In spite of worldwide belief, Russian President Vladimir Putin has dismissed the possibility of a third world war.

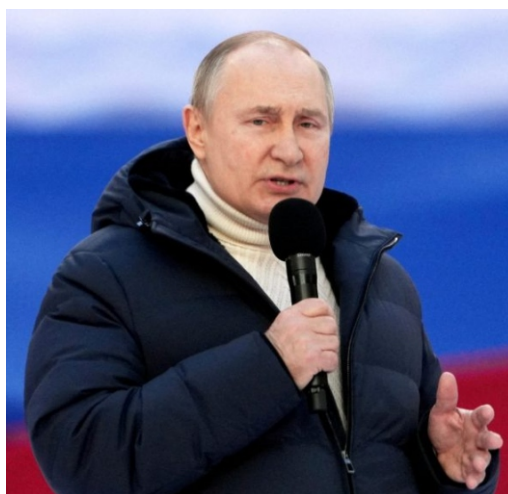
Vladimir Putin has stressed the need for balance in addressing escalating global tensions and conflicts.

Speaking with journalist Pavel Zarubin on December 24, the Russian president cautioned against fear-mongering.

"There's no need to scare anyone," Putin spoke about third world war.

Putin also acknowledged growing dangers and accused Russia's opponents of heightening tensions deliberately.

"If that's what they want, let them escalate further. We will always respond to any challenge," he said.



However, despite Putin's reassurances of not pursuing a full-scale war, those close to him are convinced that he views the current conflict as a holy war and has long since passed the point of no return.

And the Russian ruler will settle for nothing less than the complete subjugation of Ukraine or the country's

destruction.

The terrifying scale of Putin's war aims in Ukraine may seem unthinkable to most rational outside observers, but they make perfect sense when viewed through the prism of his toxic worldview.

Throughout his reign, Putin has been driven by a deep-seated resentment of Russia's post-Soviet decline and a burning desire to revive the country's superpower status. Far from wishing to reestablish the USSR, he embraces traditional Russian nationalism and dreams of recreating the autocratic empire of the Czars.

Putin has made no secret of his Ukraine obsession. Indeed, he has repeatedly sought to explain why he believes Ukrainian statehood is both an accident and a crime.



# Cristiano Ronaldo reveals plans to buy football club after retirement

By Dave Oludare Oso



**F**ive-time Ballon d'Or winner, Cristiano Ronaldo has revealed that he has plans to buy a football club and play the role of owner after he retires.

- Ronaldo does not plan to go into coaching
- Plans to become club owner after retirement
- Ronaldo edging towards the end of his career

## WHAT HAPPENED?

A lot of questions have been placed on Ronaldo with regards to what the future will hold for one of the best footballers to have played the game as he slowly winds down towards the end of his career.

The Portuguese legend has now

revealed that he does not plan to go into coaching but may look to become a club owner following his retirement.

## WHAT RONALDO SAID

Speaking at the Globe Soccer Awards on Friday, Ronaldo said: "I'm not a coach. I'm never going to be a coach, president of the club? No. Maybe owner of the club."

When asked if he plans to become a club owner, Ronaldo replied: "Probably. I will see. It will depend on the moment, the right opportunities. "Have I got any in mind? Not yet, a few maybe."

## THE BIGGER PICTURE

At the moment, there is no real

clue as to which club Ronaldo may look to buy after his retirement as all his former clubs barring Sporting CP may be a little out of his budget despite having a reported net worth of £636 million (\$800m).

However, as per SportBible, Ronaldo could also be offered a chance to buy a club in the Saudi Pro League as the Public Investment Fund (PIF) will be keen to keep him in the country.

## WHAT NEXT FOR RONALDO?

For the moment, Ronaldo is said to have no plans to retire as he aims to play the 2026 World Cup in the United States.

# Man Utd boss Amorim admits he could be sacked after Red Devils' slump

By Dave Oludare Oso



**M**anchester United boss, Ruben Amorim admitted that he could be sacked amid his struggles to reverse Red Devils' slump.

Amorim, who joined Manchester United from Sporting Lisbon for a £9.2 million buyout fee, has endured a challenging start.

Under his tenure, the team has lost five out of their ten matches, prompting concerns about the manager's ability to steer the club back on course.

His appointment came with high expectations, especially considering United's decision to pay an additional £900,000 beyond his buyout clause to secure him mid-season.

However, the results have fallen short of expectations, with the team struggling to adapt to Amorim's methods in the limited time available.

Speaking candidly about the situation, Amorim admitted that no manager at Manchester United can afford to feel secure, given the pressures and stakes involved.

"I know the business that I'm in," said Amorim. "The manager of Manchester United can never, no matter what, be comfortable. I know that if we don't win, regardless, if they pay the buyout or not, I know that every manager is in danger. I like that because that is the job, so I understand the question. You can argue that I have been here one month and I've had four training (sessions), but we are not winning. That is the reality and I'm quite comfortable with that."

Amorim admitted that the transition has been more difficult than expected but is focused on "the job" – to win matches as quickly as possible.

"There's no point talking about that or thinking about that. I'm here and have to focus on the job," he added.

"It's part of football to have these difficult moments. I already knew that was going to be tough. You expect to win more games, to have players with more confidence to sell the idea and to work and improve things. At this moment it's really hard. We have to survive to have time and then to improve the team."

Adding to United's woes, they will face an in-form Newcastle United on Monday without two key players. Captain Bruno Fernandes will miss the match following his red card in the 2-0 loss to Wolves on Boxing Day, while midfielder Manuel Ugarte is suspended after accumulating his fifth booking of the season.

The team's recent run of three consecutive defeats has only amplified the pressure on Amorim. A victory against Newcastle at Old Trafford would be crucial for regaining momentum and easing the scrutiny surrounding the manager's position.