

Obi advocates for inclusive public engagement in the tax reform debate Pg 2



Obasanjo responds to Gowon's: I never knew you asked Abacha not to kill me PAGE 6



The New Daily Prime

Presidency denies plans to scrap key agencies, clarifies tax reform objectives PAGE 5



Workers in six states poised for strike over unpaid N70,000 minimum wage PAGE 6



Tanker drivers and Port Harcourt refinery clash over overloading allegations PAGE 8

WORLD

PAGE 18

President Biden pardons his son Hunter Biden

ENTERTAINMENT

Davido shares father's wisdom PAGE 13



Obi advocates for inclusive public engagement in the tax reform debate

By Friday Omosola

The 2023 presidential candidate of the Labour Party, LP, Peter Obi, has called for robust public engagement and transparency in the ongoing discussions about tax reform in Nigeria.

In a statement posted to the public, Obi emphasised the critical need for a participatory approach to policymaking, particularly for reforms of this magnitude.

“Tax reform is a critical issue, and there is nothing wrong with pursuing it,” Obi stated. “However, such reform must be subject to robust and informed public debate.

“A public hearing on tax reform is essential, allowing Nigerians from all walks of life to engage meaningfully. This is how we build public trust and ensure inclusivity in policymaking”, the former governor of Anambra State said.

Peter Obi

Peter Obi [PHOTO CREDIT: Google]

Obi argued that matters as impactful as tax reform require extensive deliberation and must not be rushed.

Public hearings, he added, would provide a platform for diverse opinions and enable the broadest spectrum of public



input to shape government policies.

He further stressed that while revenue generation is important, policymakers must also consider the overall impact of reforms on the nation and the sustainability of its regions.

“It is insufficient to focus solely on the benefits to the government. We must also take into account the overall impact on the nation and the sustainability of all its regions,” he noted.

Obi underscored the importance of trust and legitimacy in governance, highlighting that

even well-intentioned reforms might fail without public buy-in and adequate sensitization.

“Trust and legitimacy are the foundation of effective governance, and without them, even the best-intended reforms may fail,” he warned.

Obi called for prioritising transparency, deliberation, and public engagement in Nigeria’s policy journey. “This is how we build a truly participatory democracy. A new Nigeria is possible!”

MATTERS ARISING: Why is PH refinery blending petrol instead of refining crude?

By Agency Reporter

On November 26, the old Port Harcourt refinery commenced crude oil processing and also began the loading of petroleum products for trucks after years of being moribund.

The NNPC said the petroleum products loaded from the refinery's gantry were premium motor spirit (PMS), also called petrol; automotive gas oil (AGO), otherwise called diesel, and kerosene.

The NNPC also disclosed that the refinery began daily production of straight-run petrol (naphtha), which is blended into 1.4 million litres of petrol.

The national oil firm said the refinery incorporates crack C5, a blending component from Indorama Petrochemicals — its sister company — to produce "gasoline that meets required specifications".

This has raised questions as to why the Port Harcourt refinery is blending for petrol when it should be refining crude.

'PH REFINERY'S CRACKING UNIT NOT WORKING'

Speaking to TheCable, Joe Nwkwue, former president of the Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE), said blending is "nothing strange" to refineries.

Nwkwue said the cracking unit of the refinery "is not operational" hence the production of naphtha, which needs to be blended to specification.

He said "refineries blend products to achieve specific requirements".

On the blending component of the refinery, Nwkwue said crack C5 is a product of hydrocarbon cracking that



is typically used to blend petrol to achieve the required octane rating.

On the current production capacity of the refinery, he said the plant "has only a crude distillation unit (CDU) and catalytic reforming unit (CRU)".

"It is not a high complexity refinery and the crack spread would not be great, meaning it will produce more of low-value products like low pour fuel oil (LPFO) and automotive gas oil (AGO)," he said.

'BLENDING NOT AN UNCOMMON PRACTICE IN REFINERIES'

On his part, Wumi Iledare, a professor of petroleum economics, said naphtha is used to achieve the grade specified to meet regulatory requirements.

Explaining the rationale for blending, the professor said "if the complexity rating of the old refinery is short of the required octane rating, blending enhances the quality".

"Of course, it is not an uncommon practice in refineries," he said.

"It is a refinery but naphtha just happens to be an input required in addition to the crude oil, electricity, and other inputs to meet the required products."

Iledare said the utilisation rate for optimal production at refineries is "90-95 percent to make economic sense but it would take several calendar days to reach that goal".

He, however, said optimisation is a "one day at a time" approach.

'BLENDING MUST MEET ACCEPTABLE STANDARDS'

For the refinery to be economically viable, Iledare said there must have been favourable economic indicators "such as payback period (PBP), good enough earning power and profitability indicators in favour of the rehabilitation process".

Also speaking, Jide Pratt, an oil executive, said while "it is not illegal to blend", the outcome must be tested to meet acceptable standards of the Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Agency (NMDPRA).

Presidency denies plans to scrap key agencies, clarifies tax reform objectives

By Friday Omosola

The Presidency has dismissed widespread misinformation surrounding the Tax Reform Bills currently under consideration by the National Assembly, assuring Nigerians that no provisions within the proposed legislation will lead to the scrapping of key government agencies or impoverish any region.

In a statement released on December 2 by Bayo Onanuga, Special Adviser to the President on Information and Strategy, the Presidency described the rumours as politically motivated attempts to mislead the public and polarize the nation.

Onanuga emphasised that the reforms aim to streamline Nigeria's tax administration, ease the financial burden on businesses, and create a more competitive economic environment.

Onanuga clarified that contrary to claims, the legislation does not propose the dissolution of agencies such as the National Agency for Science and Engineering Infrastructure (NASENI), Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND), or the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA).

He explained that one of the central objectives of the reform was to replace multiple taxes with a single consolidated tax. This measure is intended to alleviate the overburdened private sector and boost Nigeria's investment appeal.

"Businesses, investors, and private sector players have long lamented the



numerous taxes levied upon them, which complicate the economic environment and drive many to relocate operations abroad," he said.

According to Onanuga, the proposal in Section 59(3) of the Nigeria Tax Bill, the new tax system will gradually phase out earmarked taxes for certain agencies by 2030, allowing them to transition to alternative funding sources, including budgetary allocations.

He stressed that changing an agency's funding source does not equate to abolishing it, noting that globally competitive nations do not rely on earmarked taxes for funding education, science, or technology agencies.

He added that President Bola Tinubu called on Nigerians, including political leaders, traditional rulers, civil society groups, and other stakeholders, to participate in the forthcoming public hearings organised by the National Assembly.

The hearings offer an opportunity to

provide constructive feedback on how best to reform Nigeria's tax system.

He also urged commentators to prioritize fact-based discussions over divisive rhetoric. "Leaders should be measured in their utterances to avoid inflaming passions or polarizing the country unnecessarily," the statement advised.

He underscored the urgent need for tax reforms, arguing that the current outdated system hampers economic growth and development.

Onanuga assured Nigerians that the proposed changes are designed to improve the quality of life for all citizens, particularly the disadvantaged fostering national prosperity.

He encouraged the public to stay informed, seek clarity, and contribute meaningfully to discussions on the bills rather than succumbing to politically motivated misrepresentations.

Police refute Amnesty International's claims on #EndBadGovernance protests, launch investigation

By Friday Omosola

The Nigeria Police Force (NPF) has rejected a report by Amnesty International alleging police misconduct during the #EndBadGovernance protests in August 2024.

The 34-page document accused the police of excessive force, wrongful arrests, and culpability in the deaths of protesters.

In response, the police in a statement by Olumuyiwa Adejobi labelled the claims as “falsified, confusing, and inconsistent with official incident reports.”

Adejobi emphasised police adherence to established rules of engagement during the protests.

According to the statement, the Inspector-General of Police (IGP), Kayode Egbetokun, had instructed police commands nationwide to manage the protests peacefully, barring the use of live ammunition unless the situation escalated into severe riots.

He provided specific accounts of violent incidents during the protests to refute Amnesty's claims.

“In Borno State, for instance, an attack by suspected Boko Haram/ISWAP operatives resulted in four deaths and 34 injuries after an improvised explosive device (IED) was detonated amid the protesters.

“Separately, in another incident, two fatalities were recorded when an unregistered vehicle rammed into demonstrators. These deaths, the



police clarified, were not attributable to law enforcement actions.”

He said additional unrest was reported in Kano, Kaduna, Jigawa, Nasarawa, and Niger States, where protesters allegedly vandalized property, displayed foreign flags, and attacked security personnel.

He added that in such situations, the police resorted to using tear gas—a globally accepted crowd-control measure—to disperse unruly gatherings without firing live ammunition.

Olumuyiwa said during the protests, arrests were made targeting individuals involved in treason, arson, looting, and other criminal activities.

He said the police insisted that those detained were treated under the law.

:In a reconciliatory gesture, the Federal Government later pardoned all

arrested individuals, highlighting its commitment to national unity.”

In response to Amnesty International's report, he noted that the IGP has ordered a comprehensive investigation into the allegations.

He said Commissioners of Police from the affected states are required to submit detailed reports within a week to determine any deviations from standard procedures.

He expressed that the police reaffirmed its dedication to safeguarding citizens' rights and improving operational standards through objective evaluations.

“The police called for constructive engagement, urging all stakeholders to avoid spreading misinformation that could undermine the Force's efforts to ensure public safety and uphold the rule of law.”

Obasanjo responds to Gowon's: I never knew you asked Abacha not to kill me **By Gbenga Oluranti OLALEYE**

Former President Olusegun Obasanjo has expressed his gratitude to General Yakubu Gowon (rtd.) after Gowon revealed that he had personally pleaded with the late General Sani Abacha to spare Obasanjo's life during the latter's imprisonment.

Gowon made the revelation during the Plateau Interdenominational Unity Christmas Carols and Praise Festival in Jos, where he spoke of his efforts to prevent Obasanjo's execution.

He explained that he wrote a letter to Abacha, appealing for clemency for Obasanjo, who had been incarcerated by the Abacha regime on charges of plotting a coup to overthrow the military dictator.

Gowon mentioned that he had sent the letter through his wife, who delivered it to Abacha in the night, urging



Abacha to act with mercy as a leader chosen by God to do good.

Obasanjo, reacting to this disclosure the following day at the same event, admitted that he was unaware of Gowon's efforts until the revelation. He expressed his appreciation, acknowledging that many people, both within Nigeria and internationally, had worked for his release during his three years in

prison.

Obasanjo went on to thank Gowon specifically for his personal involvement, emphasising how important it was to learn of his intervention.

Obasanjo, who was released from prison following Abacha's death in 1998, went on to become Nigeria's president in 1999. He noted that after his release, he had made efforts to personally thank those who contributed to his freedom, but Gowon's actions had been a surprise to him.

Obasanjo also took the opportunity to commend Plateau State Governor Caleb Mutfwang for his efforts in development and peace initiatives in the state, encouraging him to continue his work for the betterment of the people.

Gov Otu approves N70,000 minimum wage for workers **By Friday Omosola**

Cross River State Governor, Basse Otu, has approved a new minimum wage of N70,000 for state workers, marking a significant step toward improving their welfare.

In a statement shared on his X page on Monday, Governor Otu explained that the decision was the outcome of an agreement between the state government and organised labour on implementing the revised national minimum wage.

The governor announced that the agreement includes a consequential adjustment for all salary levels, which will take effect from December 1, 2024.

Reaffirming his administration's dedication to worker welfare, Governor Otu stated: "Following a



productive closed-door meeting with Labour leaders today, I am pleased to announce the approval of N70,000 as the new minimum wage for workers in our dear state, along with consequential adjustments.

"The welfare of our workers remains a top priority for this administration. Together, we will build a better Cross River State."

Police arraign 113 foreign nationals as IGP reaffirms commitment to tackling cybercrime

By Friday Omosola

The Nigeria Police Force has made a significant breakthrough in its fight against cybercrime, with the arraignment of 113 foreign nationals involved in sophisticated cyber-related criminal activities.

This was announced by the police spokesperson, Olumuyiwa Adejobi on Monday.

The Inspector-General of Police (IGP), Kayode Egbetokun reaffirmed the police's expertise and commitment to securing Nigeria's cyberspace.

The suspects, who were apprehended on November 3, in Jahi, a suburb of the Federal Capital Territory, were part of an international syndicate engaging in crimes such as internet fraud, marketing scams, and unauthorized data breaches.

The arrest followed an operation led by the National Cybercrime Centre (NPF-NCCC) and Zone 7 Command of the Nigeria Police Force.

During the operation, investigators recovered an extensive array of high-tech equipment used in the suspects' cybercrime activities.

These included laptops, smartphones, servers, drones, routers, game consoles, and other advanced cyber tools.

Additional items such as international passports, identity



cards, and travel documents were also seized, suggesting links to illegal immigration and human trafficking networks.

The arrested suspects have been charged before the Federal High Court in Abuja. The charges range from computer-related fraud and unlawful access to data to money laundering and conspiracy.

The arraignment marks the culmination of extensive investigations, which exposed the syndicate's activities spanning cybercrime and other transnational crimes.

The IGP emphasised the force's

commitment to leveraging technology and international partnerships to combat cybercrime.

“We will continue to collaborate with international law enforcement agencies and embassies to prosecute cybercriminals and dismantle transnational criminal networks,” he said.

Mr Egbetokun said the police remain resolute in its mission to protect citizens in both physical and digital spaces and assured the public that they are well-equipped to address the challenges posed by the evolving nature of cybercrime.

Tanker drivers and Port Harcourt refinery clash over overloading allegations

By Gbenga Oluranti OLALEYE

There is a growing dispute between the Port Harcourt Refining Company (PHRC) and the Petroleum Tanker Drivers (PTD) regarding the loading of petroleum products at the refinery.

PHRC has accused tanker drivers of causing delays in loading operations, while PTD, represented by its umbrella body, the Nigeria Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers (NUPENG), has dismissed the claims as misleading.

PHRC has expressed frustration over the slow pace of loading at the refinery, attributing the issue to the reluctance of tanker drivers to take on loads.

In response, NUPENG's General Secretary, Afolabi Olawale, has denied the accusation, stating that the refinery's management is being "economical with the truth."

According to Olawale, tanker drivers are only notified when there are products available for loading by the Nigeria Association of Road Transport Owners (NARTO). He emphasised that drivers are always ready to load when informed by NARTO, and not simply due to the refinery's operations.

Meanwhile, other stakeholders in the petroleum sector, including the Major Energy Marketers Association of Nigeria (MEMAN), the Petroleum Products Retail Outlets Owners Association of Nigeria (PETROAN), and the Independent Petroleum Marketers Association of Nigeria (IPMAN), have expressed their readiness to engage with the refinery



and commence the lifting of products.

Operations appeared to be ongoing at the Port Harcourt refinery. The facility was processing petroleum products, and a source within the refinery confirmed that production had continued uninterrupted since earlier in the week.

At the loading bay, three trucks were seen being loaded with petroleum products, and seven more were waiting to be processed. Of the 18 available loading points, only three were in use, with tankers displaying the NNPC insignia seen within the premises.

Worlu Joel, the Terminal Manager of Port Harcourt Refinery, reassured that the Petroleum Products Marketing Company (PPMC), a division of the refinery, had maintained smooth operations, with a capacity to load 100 trucks per hour.

He explained that while 11 loading points were functional, only three were in use for the sake of efficiency, with each loading arm capable of processing three trucks every 15 minutes. Joel noted that there was no shortage of product and encouraged tanker drivers to come and load,

claiming that the refinery had been ready to operate since the previous day.

Despite this, tanker drivers were slow to respond, according to PHRC management. Joel stated that if 100 trucks had been made available on Thursday, the refinery could have evacuated them within five hours. He attributed the delay to tanker drivers' absence, particularly due to the weekend.

NUPENG's Olawale disagreed, countering that it was not the drivers' fault, but rather the lack of coordination between the refinery and those responsible for notifying drivers.

In response to the refinery's claims, various industry bodies reiterated their intent to engage with the Port Harcourt refinery. MEMAN's CEO, Clement Isong, stated that all available sources of product supply would be explored to meet market demand. Similarly, PETROAN Chairman Billy Gillis-Harry confirmed that the association had submitted an application to the refinery and was awaiting a response to begin business dealings.

World AIDS Day: Gov Aiyedatiwa calls for action to end HIV/AIDS by 2030

By Friday Omosola

Ondo State Governor, Lucky Aiyedatiwa, has renewed calls for intensified efforts to eradicate HIV/AIDS by 2030.

Speaking on Monday during an awareness walk organized by the Ondo State Agency for the Control of AIDS (ODSACA), the governor urged stakeholders to sustain the fight against the epidemic while supporting people living with the virus.

The awareness walk, part of the 2024 World AIDS Day commemoration, began at the Government House, Alagbaka, and concluded at the MKO Abiola Democracy Park, Akure. This year's theme, "Take the Right Path: Sustain the HIV Response and Stop HIV among children to end AIDS in Nigeria by 2030," underscored the urgency of tackling the disease through education, prevention, and community engagement.

Governor Aiyedatiwa reaffirmed his administration's dedication to ending HIV/AIDS, highlighting initiatives such as procuring HIV test kits for health facilities, monitoring family life and HIV education in schools, and disseminating prevention messages via radio and television.

"Our goal is zero new HIV infections by 2030. As a people-



centred government, we will continue to implement policies and create environments that promote HIV prevention and provide care for those affected."

He also called for stronger partnerships among civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, and religious groups to bolster the state's efforts.

Dayo Adegbulu, Project Manager of ODSACA, echoed the governor's sentiments, emphasising collective responsibility in combating the epidemic.

He warned against the stigmatisation of individuals living with HIV/AIDS,

reminding citizens that Ondo State has enacted laws to protect against discrimination.

Adegbulu encouraged residents to report cases of stigmatisation, noting that a supportive community is crucial to achieving the state's 2030 goals.

The event attracted diverse participants, including non-governmental organizations, civil society groups, National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members, students, and other stakeholders.

Gov Mutfwang reaffirms commitment to supporting Nigerian Army

By Agency Reporter

Plateau State Governor Caleb Mutfwang has reiterated his administration's unwavering support for the Nigerian Army, emphasising its pivotal role in ensuring a safe and secure environment.

In a statement issued by Gyang Bere, the Director of Press and Public Affairs to the governor, Mutfwang, represented by Ziphion Chrysanthus, Liaison Director for MDAs and Security Agencies, conveyed this assurance during the Centenary Celebration of the Nigerian Army Depot.

The event, which marked 100 years of excellence in training Nigeria's finest soldiers, took place at the RSM Hama Kim Parade Ground in Zaria, Kaduna State.

The ceremony also featured the Passing Out Parade of the 87 Regular Recruits Intake, a significant milestone aimed at bolstering national security.

Governor Mutfwang congratulated the Nigerian Army for its remarkable contributions to the nation's security architecture and lauded its dedication to producing highly skilled personnel capable of defending Nigeria's sovereignty.

He underscored the indispensable role of peace and security in driving economic growth and national development.

He highlighted the induction of the new recruits as a crucial step in enhancing the Army's operational capacity to combat insecurity and foster national stability.



Governor Caleb Mutfwang being represented by Ziphion Chrysanthus, Liaison Director for MDAs and Security Agencies, conveyed this assurance during the Centenary Celebration of the Nigerian Army Depot [PHOTO CREDIT: X]

Expressing optimism, he noted that this milestone would further strengthen ongoing efforts to address security challenges across the country.

The governor urged the newly graduated recruits from Plateau State to uphold the highest standards of discipline, professionalism, and the values instilled during their training.

He encouraged them to excel in their military careers while embodying the Plateau people's virtues of tolerance, love, hard work, and dedication.

Parents of the graduating recruits expressed profound gratitude to

Governor Mutfwang for his support, which included a cash donation to ease the new soldiers' transition into their respective military formations.

The Centenary Celebration also underscored the legacy of excellence upheld by the Depot Nigerian Army, which has remained a cornerstone of national security for over a century.

The occasion reaffirmed its enduring commitment to training world-class soldiers dedicated to safeguarding Nigeria's future.

Workers in 6 states poised for strike over unpaid N70,000 minimum wage

By Gbenga Oluranti OLALEYE

Workers in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Cross River, Nasarawa, Ebonyi, Kaduna, and Zamfara states are set to embark on a strike from Monday, December 2, following the failure of state authorities to implement the N70,000 new minimum wage.

This strike is a response to the ongoing inability of various state governments to negotiate and finalize the payment of the national minimum wage.

The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) had earlier directed workers in 14 states, including the FCT, to begin an industrial action, demanding the payment of the new wage.

In response, the FCT NLC council had announced an indefinite strike starting December 1, 2024, which could extend until further instructions are given. The Chairman of the FCT NLC, Stephen Knabayi, criticised the area council chairmen for failing to address the demand for the implementation of the new minimum wage.

Similarly, Nasarawa State workers have been instructed to strike starting Monday, though a tentative agreement to pay N70,500 had been reached. However, the lack of signed documentation has led to uncertainty, with the strike set to go ahead unless formal agreements are signed by midnight.

In Kaduna State, the government has already started paying the new



minimum wage, offering workers a gross salary of N72,000 as of November.

Despite this, the state NLC has confirmed its intention to proceed with the strike, claiming that the government has yet to address other issues, such as the demand for consequential adjustments to salaries.

Kaduna State's government, on the other hand, maintains that it is in full compliance with the minimum wage law, highlighting the strain on state finances due to the increase in the wage bill.

In Ebonyi, the state government announced the N70,000 minimum wage in September 2024, but there has been no subsequent action to implement it. This has led the NLC

to order a warning strike from December 1, lasting one week.

Similarly, workers in Zamfara and Cross River states have reported delays or failures in the implementation of the wage, with both states set to join the strike.

In Cross River, negotiations late Sunday night reportedly led to an agreement to pay the new wage, though the status of the strike remains unclear pending confirmation from NLC and TUC officials.

The ongoing industrial action reflects broader discontent among Nigerian workers over the slow pace of wage implementation, particularly amidst rising inflation and economic hardship.

Davido shares father's wisdom

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Davido reflects on father's faith lessons amid life's triumphs and tragedies

Grammy-nominated Afrobeats star Davido credits his father's teachings on faith and resilience for shaping his life and outlook, sharing insights on Rolling Out.

Raised by a devout father who is both a prominent businessman and a respected elder in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Davido revealed that his childhood was steeped in lessons about faith and trust in God. Among these lessons, one piece of advice from his father stood out: "Never question God's plans."

Faith amid tragedy

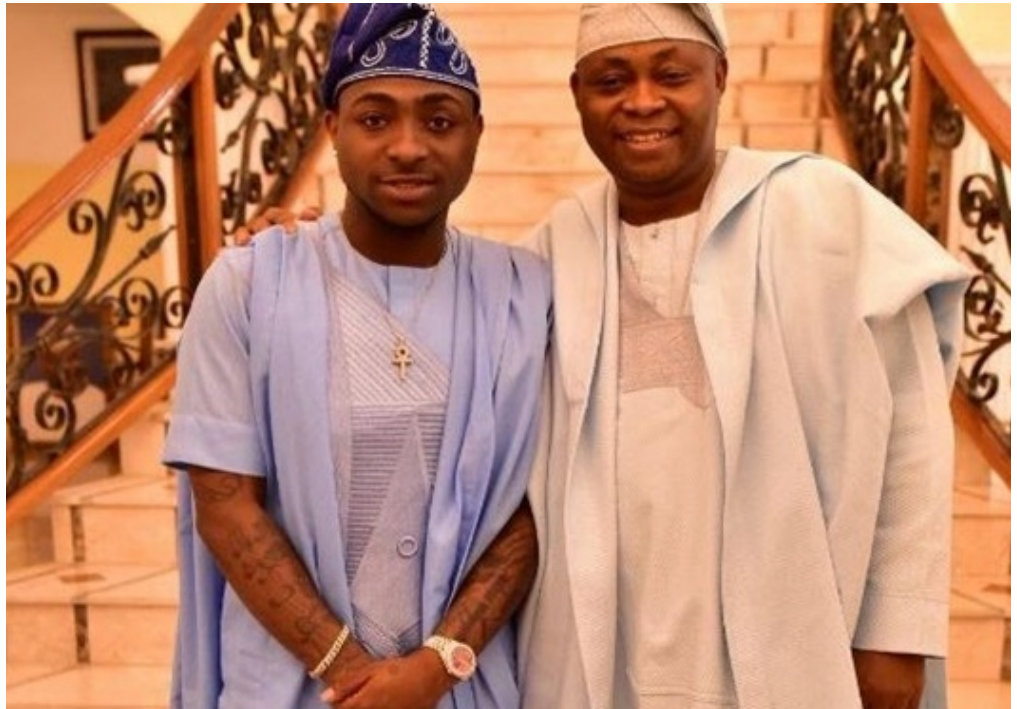
This teaching, Davido explained, became a cornerstone of his resilience, particularly as he faced the devastating loss of his son, Ifeanyi. The tragedy tested his faith, but his father's wisdom provided a foundation for healing and hope.

"I used to struggle with the idea of not questioning God," Davido admitted during the podcast. "When bad things happened, I couldn't understand why. I'd ask, 'Why do bad things happen to good people?' But my dad always reminded me that God has a plan, even when it doesn't make sense at the moment."

He shared how his father's words initially felt difficult to accept. Yet over time, life's unexpected blessings helped him see the bigger picture.

Blessings amid challenges

Despite the pain of losing his son, he has experienced a series of remarkable milestones. Within a year of Ifeanyi's passing, the artist welcomed twins into his family, released a career-defining album, and earned his first Grammy nominations.



Reflecting on these moments, he said, "At first, I was angry. I didn't want to hear anything about God's plan. But then, everything started to align. The birth of my twins, the success of my album, and even the Grammy nominations it all started to make sense."

These blessings, he explained, gave him clarity and reinforced his belief in the power of faith. They also deepened his understanding of his father's lessons.

Role of a Strong Foundation

Davido credits his father's unwavering faith and wisdom for shaping his ability to navigate life's highs and lows. Growing up in a household that prioritized spirituality gave him a strong foundation to draw upon in times of need.

"My dad is very successful, but he's also deeply rooted in his faith," the singer shared. "He balanced running a business empire with being an elder in the church. That's the environment I grew up in—one where trusting God wasn't optional; it was a way of life."

The 32-year-old also recalled attending a Christian college and being

actively involved in the church as a child. These experiences, combined with his father's teachings, left a lasting impression.

Message of hope

Now, Davido wants to pass on the wisdom he has gained to others. He encouraged his fans and listeners to embrace faith, especially when faced with adversity.

"Life is full of challenges, but you have to believe that God is always working in your favour," he said. "People go through different struggles, but one thing remains constant: God has your back."

His message resonates deeply with his own journey. From personal loss to professional triumphs, Davido's story is a testament to the power of resilience and unwavering faith.

Universal lesson

Davido's reflections offer a reminder that faith can provide strength even in life's darkest moments. His father's advice to trust God's plan may have seemed abstract at first, but it has become a guiding principle for the singer.

Kunle Afolayan: Self-Competition

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Kunle Afolayan declares himself his only competition

Kunle Afolayan declares himself his only competition, sharing his inspiring journey and achievements in Nigerian and global film industries on Instagram.

The post, a montage of significant career milestones, showcased interviews with international media outlets, exclusive event invitations, and a glimpse into the formative years of his cinematic success. Afolayan used the opportunity to reaffirm his dedication to creativity and originality, positioning himself as a filmmaker who stands apart.

From accounting to the silver screen
In the video, Afolayan shared insights into his humble beginnings. Before stepping into the limelight as a filmmaker, he pursued a career in accounting. He detailed how he excelled in the field but later realized his true passion lay elsewhere. Driven by ambition and a love for storytelling, he transitioned into acting and eventually filmmaking.

This decision would prove pivotal, as it marked the beginning of a prolific career that has cemented his legacy in the film industry.

Showcasing a stellar filmography

Afolayan's video paid tribute to his body of work, featuring highlights from critically acclaimed films that have captivated audiences both locally and internationally. His notable projects include:

The Figurine (2009): A supernatural thriller that gained widespread acclaim for its originality and storytelling.

October 1 (2014): A historical drama that explored Nigeria's pre-independence era.

Omugwo (2017): A film that delved into Nigerian cultural traditions



surrounding childbirth.

Mokalik (2019): A coming-of-age story set in a mechanic workshop.

Citation (2020): A thought-provoking film tackling sexual harassment in educational institutions.

Anikulapo (2022): A folklore-inspired drama that earned global recognition.

A Naija Christmas (2021): A festive comedy-drama that showcased the vibrancy of Nigerian culture.

These films underscore Afolayan's ability to craft diverse stories while maintaining a unique voice that resonates with audiences worldwide.

Personal philosophy of creativity

Accompanying the video was a heartfelt caption that revealed Afolayan's guiding philosophy. He described himself as a creative individual focused on building his craft and minding his own business. Rejecting the notion of rivalry, he emphasized that his growth as an artist stems from self-improvement rather than competing with others.

"I am a creative. I like to build, and I mind my own business. I am not in competition with anyone but myself. My name is Kunle Afolayan. I am a filmmaker, and I am a Nigerian," he stated.

Trailblazer in Nigerian cinema

Over the years, Afolayan has emerged as a trailblazer in Nollywood, Nigeria's burgeoning film industry. His commitment to excellence and innovative storytelling has set him apart as one of the most influential voices in African cinema. He has consistently pushed boundaries, exploring diverse genres and themes that reflect Nigeria's rich cultural heritage and contemporary issues.

Through his work, Afolayan has garnered national and international accolades, elevating Nollywood's global reputation. His films have premiered at prestigious festivals, earned critical acclaim, and sparked conversations about the power of African storytelling.

Inspiring next generation

Afolayan's message is not just a reflection of his personal journey but also a call to action for aspiring creatives. His focus on self-growth and originality serves as a reminder that success comes from dedication and authenticity. By staying true to his craft, he has inspired countless filmmakers to pursue their visions without fear of comparison or competition.

Nollywood's Princess Chineke joins U.S. Army

By **Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi**

Princess Chineke's bold career shift: From nollywood stardom to U.S. army service

Nollywood star Princess Chineke trades acting for military life, leaving the spotlight to join the U.S. Army in a surprising career shift.

Princess Chineke's decision to enlist has left her fans and colleagues buzzing with surprise. Many know her as a talented actress with a captivating on-screen presence and a history of success in the fashion and beauty world. She represented her state in the prestigious Most Beautiful Girl in Nigeria (MBGN) pageant, earning acclaim for her elegance and charm. Beyond pageantry, she graced countless billboards, runways, and television commercials, becoming a recognizable face in Nigeria's entertainment scene.

Now, she has traded her glamorous gowns for a soldier's uniform, marking an extraordinary turn in her professional journey.

A star with storied career

Princess Chineke built a notable acting career, earning roles in critically acclaimed Nollywood productions. Fans fondly remember her work in titles like *Battleground*, *Forever in Me*, and *Last Flight to Abuja*. She also starred in beloved television series, including *Super Story*, *Papa Ajasco*, and *Professor Johnbull*. Her versatility shone through in diverse roles, from romantic dramas to gripping thrillers.

Her filmography includes hits such as *Tales of Eve*, *Ada Mbanjo*, *To Love a Sister*, *Masters at War*, and *Royal Maid*. Whether on the small screen or in blockbuster movies, Chineke consistently delivered performances that resonated with audiences.

Despite her thriving career, she has chosen to pursue a new calling, leaving



Nollywood behind to serve in the U.S. Army.

Why the switch?

Chineke's decision, while unexpected, stems from a deep sense of duty and gratitude to her adopted country. Speaking about her enlistment, she expressed pride in her new role.

"I love the prestige that comes with the American military," she said. "As a citizen of this great country that has done so much for me, I feel it's my turn to give back. God bless America."

Her statement reflects her patriotic commitment to the United States, where she has built a new life and found opportunities.

Breaking new ground

Princess Chineke has made history as the first Nollywood actress to join the U.S. Army. Her bold move has sparked admiration and intrigue, as fans and industry peers applaud her courage to embrace such a transformative career shift.

Transitioning from acting to military service is no small feat. It requires discipline, resilience, and a willingness

to face challenges head-on. For Chineke, the journey symbolizes more than a change in profession—it's a testament to her dedication to growth and purpose.

Inspiration to many

Her enlistment has stirred conversations about reinvention and the power of pursuing one's passions. Many see her story as a reminder that it's never too late to explore new paths. By stepping into the ranks of the U.S. Army, Chineke has become a role model for those who dream of making bold life changes.

Fans have taken to social media to express their support and admiration for the actress. Some commend her bravery, while others celebrate her desire to give back to the country she now calls home.

Legacy in two worlds

While her military career is just beginning, Princess Chineke's legacy in Nollywood remains intact. Her performances will continue to inspire future generations of actors, even as she embarks on this new chapter.

In balancing her passion for the arts with her newfound commitment to service, Chineke has proven that reinvention knows no boundaries. She now stands as a symbol of determination, patriotism, and the courage to forge a unique path.

As Princess Chineke trades movie scripts for training drills, she reminds us all that life is full of unexpected turns. Whether on the silver screen or in the service of her country, she embodies grace, strength, and an unwavering drive to make a difference.

In the words of one of her fans: "She's not just a star; she's a trailblazer. Nollywood will miss her, but the U.S. Army has gained a gem."

Egungun: private tape leaks

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Viral video of Nigerian creator sparks scandal

Leaked explicit video of Nigerian creator Egungun of Lagos sparks controversy online, allegedly shared by a secret partner, fueling heated debates.

The video, which quickly went viral, shows Egungun of Lagos during a private video call. In the clip, he is seen pulling down his boxers to expose himself, while the woman on the other end reciprocates by revealing her private parts. The explicit nature of the recording and its sudden emergence online have sparked waves of reactions, with many questioning how it ended up in the public domain.

Allegations of blackmail

As the scandal unfolded, Egungun's wife took to the social media platform X (formerly Twitter) to address the situation. In her post, she accused the unnamed woman of attempting to blackmail her husband. According to her, the leak was not accidental but a calculated move to tarnish his reputation and extort money.

"People need to be careful who they trust," she wrote. "This is a clear case of blackmail. My husband is the victim here."

Her comments have divided public opinion, with some sympathizing with the family and others condemning Egungun for engaging in such a compromising situation.

Reactions

Social media platforms have been flooded with opinions about the scandal. Some users have criticized Egungun for his actions, calling them irresponsible and a betrayal of his public image as a role model. Others argue that the blame should rest on the



woman for sharing what should have been a private exchange.

One user wrote, "He should have known better. Being a public figure comes with responsibilities. This is embarrassing."

Another countered, "Why aren't we holding the person who leaked the video accountable? She violated his trust."

The debate has highlighted the complexities of privacy and trust in the digital age, especially for public figures whose lives are constantly under scrutiny.

Egungun and wife Posh Otah Implications

Legal experts have weighed in on the matter, pointing out that distributing explicit content without consent constitutes a serious offense in many jurisdictions. In Nigeria, the Cybercrime Act prohibits the sharing of intimate content without permission, and offenders can face significant penalties, including imprisonment.

However, proving intent and securing justice in such cases can be

challenging. The burden of proof often lies with the victim, and cases involving public figures tend to be further complicated by media attention and public opinion.

On the moral front, the incident has raised questions about the ethical responsibilities of individuals in relationships, particularly in the age of technology. With smartphones and social media making it easy to share moments instantly, the risks of misuse and exposure have become alarmingly high.

Price of fame in the digital era

For Egungun of Lagos, this scandal is a stark reminder of the challenges that come with fame in the digital era. Public figures are often held to higher standards and face harsher judgment for their mistakes. While fame brings admiration and opportunities, it also exposes individuals to risks, including blackmail and invasion of privacy.

Experts advise celebrities to exercise caution in their personal lives and be mindful of who they trust with sensitive information. Cybersecurity professionals recommend avoiding explicit exchanges online altogether, as they can easily be recorded and leaked without consent.

What lies ahead?

As the scandal continues to unfold, Egungun of Lagos and his family must navigate a delicate path. Public apologies, damage control, and legal actions may follow, but the impact on his career and personal life remains uncertain.

For now, the content creator has chosen to remain silent, possibly on the advice of legal counsel. Meanwhile, his wife's public defense of him has added another layer to the narrative, showing her support despite the controversy.

Ubi denies being Davido's PA or nanny

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Ubi Franklin refutes claims, clarifies role with Davido

Ubi Franklin denies rumors of being Davido's assistant, clarifying his role as a business administrator supporting the Afrobeats star's career.

The rumors gained traction after a comment surfaced online, questioning Franklin's position within Davido's team. In response, Franklin took to social media to set the record straight. He emphasised that his responsibilities revolve around managing the business aspects of Davido's operations. According to him, his contributions have earned him the moniker "#TheSolutionist," a title given by Davido himself to highlight Franklin's problem-solving abilities.

"Let me state this clearly," Franklin began in his post. "Davido is Africa's biggest artist and the owner of DMW (Davido Music Worldwide). I always say it's easy to judge from the outside, but if you look closely, you'll see that Davido's brand is something anyone would be proud to work for."

Davido's influence

Franklin praised Davido's influence and success, drawing comparisons to political figures in Nigeria. He argued that the singer's reach and impact often surpass those of many state governors, with the only difference being that Davido operates without a government budget.

"Davido is more influential than many governors you admire," Franklin wrote. "The only thing he doesn't have is access to government funds."

Franklin also highlighted the value of working within Davido's organization, which he described as a well-structured and inspiring setup. He credited his role as a business



administrator to his professional qualifications and years of experience, noting that his contributions are vital to the team's overall success.

Rejecting the "Nanny" narrative

The music executive firmly rejected the notion that he is a personal assistant or nanny, labeling such claims as baseless taunts. He expressed his dismay at the ridicule, attributing it to a lack of understanding of his actual role.

"Definitely not his PA or nanny, as some of you have tried to taunt me with," Franklin stated. "If calling me those names makes you happy, so be it. I know my place, and that's on the business end. That's where I'll always be."

Shedding light on Davido's team

Franklin highlighted the accomplishments of other members of Davido's team, including personal assistants and associates. He described them as competent professionals who have achieved remarkable success through their work.

"Some great guys who are Davido's personal assistants are doing jobs most of you can only dream of," Franklin pointed out. "They wear the finest designer watches and clothes, have investments both within and outside Nigeria, and have traveled the world, gaining priceless experiences."

This statement aimed to underscore the respectability and prestige of working within Davido's organization, challenging the public perception of roles like personal assistants.

Focusing on professionalism

Throughout his clarification, Franklin maintained a focus on professionalism. He stressed that his relationship with Davido is built on mutual respect and shared goals. By managing the business side of Davido's operations, Franklin ensures that the artist can focus on his craft while the administrative aspects are handled efficiently.

Franklin's response also served as a broader commentary on the importance of recognizing and respecting different roles within the entertainment industry. Ubi emphasized that every position, from business administrators to personal assistants, plays a crucial part in supporting an artist's success.

Conclusion

The clarification from Ubi Franklin sheds light on the dynamics of Davido's team and highlights the professionalism that drives the superstar's brand. Franklin's role as a business administrator reflects his dedication to contributing to Davido's success, while his strong response to detractors demonstrates his commitment to setting the record straight.

Nasboi: Post-breakup gift retrieval awkward

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nasboi calls retrieving gifts after breakups embarrassing

Nasboi sparks debate, calling retrieving gifts from exes embarrassing and unbecoming, sharing his views on this common post-breakup dilemma.

The singer and comedian, known for his humorous takes on social issues, expressed his stance in a post on X (formerly Twitter). He wrote, "I think it is embarrassing to collect a gift you bought for your partner after a breakup. I go just leave am for you."

The post immediately gained traction, attracting comments and reactions from fans and followers. Many users applauded his stance, agreeing that reclaiming gifts after a breakup often feels petty and unnecessary. Others, however, argued that context matters, and in some cases, reclaiming valuable items could be justified.

Letting go

Nasboi's statement reflects a broader perspective on maturity in relationships. By choosing to let go of gifts, he emphasizes the importance of moving forward without clinging to material possessions tied to a past relationship. His approach underscores emotional maturity and the value of leaving the past in the past.

The content creator's candid post highlights a situation many people can relate to. Breakups are rarely straightforward, and emotions often run high. Whether it's a thoughtful gift or an expensive item, deciding what to do with shared possessions can lead to awkward conversations or even conflicts.

Nasboi's choice to "just leave am" for his ex-partner demonstrates a desire to avoid unnecessary drama. His words suggest a mindset focused on preserving dignity and peace, even in



emotionally charged situations.

Reactions

As with many debates on social media, opinions on Nasboi's post were divided. Some followers agreed wholeheartedly, commending his attitude as classy and respectful.

One user wrote, "This is the kind of energy we need. Move on and let bygones be bygones." Another commented, "It's embarrassing to fight over gifts. If you gave it out of love, then let it go."

However, not everyone shared this sentiment. Critics argued that some situations might warrant reclaiming gifts, particularly if the item holds significant financial or sentimental value.

One commenter countered, "It depends on the gift. If it's something like a car or a house, should you just let it go? Context is key."

Others raised concerns about fairness, pointing out that the financial stakes in relationships are not always balanced.

"What if the gift was too expensive to just walk away from?" another follower asked.

Broader conversation

Nasboi's post taps into a broader cultural conversation about boundaries, respect, and accountability in relationships. In an era where social media amplifies every opinion, personal decisions like this can spark heated debates and reveal varying perspectives.

Many see gift-giving as an act of love that shouldn't come with strings attached. From this viewpoint, asking for gifts back undermines the spirit in which they were given. On the other hand, others argue that breakups can sometimes call for revisiting certain decisions, including reclaiming items of significant value.

Why it matters

Nasboi's take resonates with many because it aligns with a principle of emotional maturity: letting go. Holding on to material possessions from a past relationship often prolongs emotional entanglement. By walking away without demanding gifts, individuals can focus on healing and starting fresh.

Moreover, his stance challenges societal norms that sometimes prioritize material gain over emotional closure. Nasboi's willingness to let go of gifts reflects a mindset that values peace of mind over possessions.

Nasboi's popularity boosts message Known for his relatable content and witty commentary, Nasboi has a significant following on social media. His ability to mix humor with heartfelt opinions has endeared him to fans across Nigeria and beyond. This latest post adds to his reputation as a voice of reason in discussions about relationships and modern life.

President Biden pardons his son Hunter Biden

By Agency Reporter

President Joe Biden announced Sunday that he has pardoned his son Hunter Biden, who faced sentencing this month for federal tax and gun convictions, marking a reversal as he prepares to leave office.

“Today, I signed a pardon for my son Hunter,” the president said in a statement. It is a “full and unconditional pardon,” according to a copy of the executive grant of clemency.

CLEMENCY CANNOT BE RESCINDED BY PRESIDENT-ELECT TRUMP

This official grant of clemency cannot be rescinded by President-elect Donald Trump.

By pardoning his son, Joe Biden has reneged on a public promise that he made repeatedly before and after dropping out of the 2024 presidential race. The president and his top White House spokesperson said unequivocally, including after Trump won the 2024 election, that he would not pardon Hunter Biden or commute his sentence.

The pardon means Hunter Biden won't be sentenced for his crimes, and it eliminates any chance that he'll be sent to prison, which was a possibility. The judges overseeing his cases will likely cancel the sentencing hearings, which were slated for December 12 in the gun case and December 16 in the tax case.

The broadly crafted pardon explicitly grants clemency for the tax and gun offenses from his existing cases, plus any potential federal crimes that Hunter Biden may have committed “from January 1, 2014 through



December 1, 2024.” This time frame, importantly, covers his entire tenure on the board of Ukrainian gas company Burisma and much of his other overseas work, including in China.

He had faced scrutiny for his controversial foreign business dealings, and Trump has repeatedly said he should be prosecuted for his activities in Ukraine and elsewhere. Hunter Biden's lawyers on Sunday night formally notified the judges in his criminal cases about the pardon — and he said in a sworn affidavit that he has accepted the pardon from his father.

In new court filings, Hunter Biden's lawyers told the judges in both of his cases that the pardon “requires dismissal of the Indictment against him with prejudice and adjournment of all future proceedings in this matter.”

Joe Biden said in his statement that he decided to issue the pardon because his son was “selectively, and unfairly,

prosecuted,” saying that “Hunter was treated differently” from people who commit similar crimes.

The president said his political opponents in Congress “instigated” the charges “to attack me and oppose my election.”

He said in his statement, “I believe in the justice system, but as I have wrestled with this, I also believe raw politics has infected this process and it led to a miscarriage of justice. ... I hope Americans will understand why a father and a President would come to this decision.”

The president further claimed Hunter Biden was “singled out” for prosecution “only because he is my son” — allegations that were previously raised by Hunter Biden's lawyers and resoundingly rejected by two federal judges. The judge who oversaw his gun trial in Delaware concluded that Hunter Biden's theory of a selective prosecution was “nonsensical under the facts here.”

West Bank: 170 under-18 children killed, 1,400 injured since Oct 2023 —REPORT

By Agency Reporter

Figures show 170 under-18s have been killed in the West Bank and more than 1,400 have been injured in a crackdown since the 7 October attacks, according to DCI Palestine and Save the Children.

The Israel Defence Forces say Palestinian children often participate in violence.

In a West Bank clinic, the father of a nine-year-old Palestinian boy showed us where the bullet shot by an Israeli soldier entered his son's neck and where it left his small body through his spine.

Kareem Sharaab had been outside his home when the Israeli military entered his village in the occupied West Bank.

He'd been sent out to the shops for groceries. The short walk would change his life forever.

His grandfather, Hani, told me what happened next. "There was nothing going on then. No clashes, nothing. The kid was just playing on the road. Out of nowhere, the sound of gunfire, and the voice of children screaming out that Kareem has been injured."



Kareem Sharaab was left paralysed when an Israeli bullet hit his spine.

Hani rushed down to his grandson and carried his body hundreds of yards to an ambulance.

Paramedics fought to staunch the flow of blood and save Kareem. Kareem's father, Shadi, showed us a video of those moments.

"The first time I saw this, I ran to the bathroom to cry. I can't bear it. I can't handle it. It's too much for me," he told me. Kareem's life was saved but he has been left paralysed from

the waist down. He will never walk again. His brothers and sisters are traumatised by what happened, his father added.

"Look, before the incident, my children had normal lives," Shadi said. "Today, they're startled by sounds and terrified when they see soldiers at checkpoints. They can't get the idea out of their minds that a soldier will always shoot at you."

They are one of hundreds of families across the West Bank and East Jerusalem whose lives have been shattered by Israelis shooting their children.

Volkswagen: Electric car crisis spreads to Germany Plans to close factories for the first time, 66,000 workers go on strike

By Agency Reporter

Workers at Volkswagen factories across Germany have begun strikes after the manufacturer threatened to close plants amid falling demand and a slower-than-expected transition to electric vehicles.

Workers on their morning shifts went on strike for two hours, while those on the evening shift plan to leave work early in protest at the carmaker's demands, which include a 10% wage cut.

At Volkswagen's main plant in Wolfsburg, which employs 70,000 people, a two-hour strike means several hundred cars cannot be built, union sources said.

In addition to Wolfsburg and Hanover, which employs a further 14,000 staff, plants affected include Zwickau, VW's EV-only plant, where workers will strike today and tomorrow.

It is the first time the company has threatened to close factories in Germany in its 87-year history as European manufacturers battle foreign competition, high production costs and slow uptake of electric vehicles on the continent.

Sales of VW cars have plummeted in Europe as demand stalls and consumers return to petrol. Globally, sales in the first three months of the year dropped by three per cent as the sales of petrol motors rose by four per cent.

The industry has argued consumer appetite for electric vehicles is still too low.

Stellantis – which owns Vauxhall – earlier this week blamed the mandate as it announced plans to close its van



factory in Luton, putting 1,100 jobs at risk. Chief Executive Carlos Tavares resigned abruptly on Sunday after the group lost around 40% of its value this year.

The boss of Ford's UK arm warned late last month that Britain's car industry is in crisis due to the overwhelming lack of demand for electric cars.

Lisa Brankin, the chairman and managing director of Ford UK, called for the Government to urgently introduce 'incentives' in a bid to stoke interest.

The crisis at Europe's largest carmaker has hit Germany at a time of economic uncertainty and domestic political upheaval, as well as wider turmoil among the region's automakers.

The VW strikes, which could escalate into 24-hour or unlimited stoppages unless a deal is struck in the next round

of wage negotiations, will reduce Volkswagen's output, adding to the impact of declining deliveries and plunging profit.

'How long and how intensive this confrontation needs to be is Volkswagen's responsibility at the negotiating table,' Thorsten Groeger, who leads negotiations on behalf of the IG Metall union, said.

'Anyone who ignores the workforce is playing with fire – and we know how to turn sparks into flames,' he added.

Daniela Cavallo, head of Volkswagen's works council, reiterated that Volkswagen's biggest shareholders, which apart from Lower Saxony include a holding firm controlled by the Porsche and Piech families, may also have to make sacrifices with regard to the annual dividend.

Dozens killed in violent football clash in Guinea's N'Zerekore

By Gbenga Oluranti OLALEYE

Dozens of people were killed on Sunday, December 1, following violent clashes between football fans at a match in N'Zerekore, Guinea's second-largest city, hospital sources reported to AFP.

The scenes at the local hospital were described as horrific, with bodies filling every available space.

"There are bodies lined up as far as the eye can see in the hospital. Others are lying on the floor in the hallways. The morgue is full," said one doctor, who requested anonymity.

Another medical professional confirmed that there were "dozens of dead," while other reports suggested that around 100 people had lost their lives.

The chaos began after a disputed decision by the referee during a tournament match, which led to fans storming the pitch. The violence quickly escalated outside the stadium, with videos shared on social media showing numerous bodies lying on the ground.

Though AFP could not immediately verify the footage, witnesses confirmed the devastating scenes. In the aftermath, angry demonstrators vandalised and set fire to the N'Zerekore police station, further intensifying the unrest.

Local media reports indicated that the match was part of a tournament held in honour of Guinea's military leader, Colonel Mamadi Doumbouya. Doumbouya, who seized power in a coup in 2021, has since positioned himself as the



country's president.

The football tournament is among several such events organised as part of his efforts to maintain political relevance ahead of Guinea's next presidential elections, expected in 2025.

Doumbouya's coup removed former President Alpha Conde from office and has led to a prolonged period of military rule. While Doumbouya pledged to return power to civilian hands by the end of 2024, he has recently signalled that he may extend his grip on power, with growing support from his backers to run for president in the upcoming elections.

Guinea, despite its vast natural resources, remains one of the poorest nations in West Africa, grappling with political instability and authoritarian governance.

Doumbouya's leadership has seen an ongoing crackdown on dissent, with opposition leaders either imprisoned, exiled, or forced into hiding.

The deadly incident in N'Zerekore serves as a grim reminder of the volatile situation in Guinea, where tensions between political factions and the military government continue to simmer.

The southeastern city, home to around 200,000 people, now faces the aftermath of this tragic outbreak of violence at a football match meant to celebrate national unity.