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# Binance Executive reveals lawmakers who demanded \$150m bribe

By Dave Oludare Oso

## ...Top Reps members indicted

**T**igran Gambaryan, the head of financial crime compliance at Binance, has publicly named three Nigerian lawmakers who allegedly demanded a \$150 million bribe from him.

The revelation comes months after his detention by Nigerian authorities.

Gambaryan, alongside another Binance executive, was detained in Nigeria earlier this year. The Nigerian government accused the cryptocurrency exchange of money laundering and enabling financial crimes within the country.

His detention became a diplomatic issue, with the United States government eventually stepping in to secure his release.

Meanwhile, in a post shared on X (formerly Twitter) on Friday, Gambaryan named three lawmakers whom he claims demanded the hefty bribe in exchange for dropping the charges against Binance.

Those named are Peter Akpanke, Philip Agbese, (Deputy Spokesperson of the House of Representatives) and Ginger Obinna Onwusibe (Chairman of the House Committee on Anti-Corruption)

Gambaryan claims that the bribery request took place during a meeting with members of the House of Representatives. According to him, the meeting was staged to look official, but he quickly realized it was a setup.

He said, "The DSS was involved in the House of Representatives matter. We met with them at their office on Friday, January 5, 2024, as a prerequisite to our meeting with the House of



Representatives. They alluded to the fact that we had to comply with whatever the House members instructed us to do.

At the House meeting, there were three members present. Two of them were Peter Akpanke and Philip Agbese, both working under the leadership of Ginger Obinna Onwusibe. There was a third House member, but I don't recall his name. They set up fake cameras and media to make the meeting appear official, but the cameras weren't even plugged in. As you may already know, this ended with them asking for a \$150 million bribe, paid in cryptocurrency into their personal wallets. A Mickey Mouse operation at its best.

@NuhuRibadu invited us to the official meeting and worked through Sa'ad Abubakar. Another key figure in this situation was Hamma Adama Belloji. Ogunjobi was just a pawn; they used him too. This was sold as a friendly meeting with the NSA, the head of the SEC, and the CBN governor and include the discussion of the bribe that was solicited by the house of representatives.

The \$26 billion figure they kept pushing

publicly as some mystery money escaping Nigeria is complete bullshit. This information was provided in response to their request and was simply cumulative trade data for Nigerians on the platform. This money didn't leave Nigeria—it was just people buying and selling crypto. For example, if you trade \$100 a hundred times, that's \$10,000 in trade volume, but in reality, you only used \$100. Again, just another example of them lying to cover up their BS investigation.

They lied about Nadeem escaping during mosque prayers. In reality, he returned and escaped afterward. I don't know exactly how he managed to flee. He emailed me in November, but we haven't discussed the details of his escape. It's possible he paid someone off, but I have no proof. If Belloji had simply checked his passport for a visa, he would have realized that Nadeem did not use that passport to travel to Nigeria.

They sent a letter to the U.S. Embassy and the British High Commission, falsely claiming that we were voluntarily participating in strategic talks. This was a blatant lie.



# THE NEW DAILY PRIME RATE CARD

## PUBLIC NOTICE COLOUR

## PRODUCT COLOUR

**EFFECTIVE FROM  
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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
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### POLITICAL COLOUR

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14X2	78,222.50
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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
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3X2	16,763.00
2X2	10,877.00
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10X4	149,440.00
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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

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HALF PAGE	124,236.00
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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
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CENTRESPREAD B&W	800,000.00
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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
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# We're not selling substandard fuel, buying from Dangote – NNPC

By Dave Oludare Oso

The Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL) has fought back accusations that the premium motor spirit (petrol) it sells to the public is substandard with a high burn rate.

Dismissing the claims, NNPC spokesperson, Olufemi Soneye, in a statement on Saturday said it was reacting to a viral video claiming that its petrol does not last long in fuel tanks.

The social media was awash of a video where a content creator claimed he bought a litre of Dangote petrol from MRS filling station in Alapere, Lagos, at N925 and the same litre at NNPC in Ojodu Berger at the rate of N945.

According to him, he poured the fuel into separate power generators, and the one running on NNPC fuel stopped after 17 minutes, while the Dangote petrol lasted until 33 minutes.

But the NNPC said the petrol purchased from its filling station was from the Dangote refinery.

“The NNPC Ltd strongly refutes the false and misleading allegations made in a viral video circulating online, which claims that NNPC fuel does not last.

“This assertion is baseless and entirely unfounded, originating from unverified and amateur research that lacks credibility, accuracy, and professional oversight,” the statement said.



The company emphasised that its fuel “is carefully formulated with one of the best compositions, ensuring optimal efficiency, durability, and environmental sustainability for consumers.”

Furthermore, the NNPC stressed that a significant percentage of the Premium Motor Spirit sold at its stations in Lagos was sourced from the Dangote refinery.

“It is important to emphasise that a significant percentage of Premium Motor Spirit sold at NNPC retail stations in Lagos—where this deceptive video was created—is sourced from the Dangote Refinery, a strategic partner in promoting local production and energy security.

“Dangote Refinery adheres to strict industry standards, guaranteeing the quality of petroleum products supplied to our consumers,” the NNPC declared.

It added that the “misleading video” represents yet another desperate attempt by economic saboteurs to misinform the public and tarnish NNPC’s reputation.

“We will not tolerate deliberate misinformation designed to undermine our operations and mislead Nigerians.

“Henceforth, NNPC Ltd will take firm legal action against individuals or groups who intentionally spread falsehoods about our brand and operations. Those engaged in such malicious activities will be held fully accountable under the law,” it was stressed.

The energy firm urged the public to disregard such “fabricated content” and rely on verified sources for accurate information, saying it remains steadfast in its mission to ensure fuel availability, affordability, and quality for all Nigerians while maintaining global industry standards.

# INEC wants cash possession at polling units limited to N50,000

By Dave Oludare Oso

In a bid to whittle down electoral malpractices, especially vote buying during elections, Nigeria's electoral umpire, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has called for the enactment of laws prohibiting possession of large sums of money at polling units.

INEC's director of litigation and prosecution, Tanimu Muhammed made the suggestion during a consultative meeting attended by INEC officials, security operatives, and members of the Senate and House of Representatives on Friday.

Muhammed, said during the meeting that politicians often carry large amounts of money on election day, claiming it is for party agents and logistical expenses, whereas they intend to buy votes or induce INEC officials with it.

Muhammed proposed that individuals should not be allowed to carry more than N50,000 around polling areas during elections.

Maintaining that unrestricted cash at polling units has encouraged vote buying and compromised the integrity of elections, the lawmaker said there is a need to create an electoral offences commission for prosecution of electoral violations.

He said, "Vote-buying remains one of the biggest threats to credible



elections in Nigeria.

"We need legislation that not only criminalizes this practice but also puts preventive measures in place."

Also speaking, Oluwatoyin Babalola, resident electoral commissioner in Ondo State, said limiting possession of cash at polling units will make it harder for politicians to financially induce voters.

Babalola said the cash limit will enable security agencies to know what constitutes violations of the electoral law.

On his part, Abayomi Shogunle, the commissioner of police in charge of election planning and evaluation, said police are often hindered by logistical challenges in the enforcement of electoral laws.

"We face major logistical challenges, from deploying officers to remote

areas to ensuring real-time communication during elections," he said.

"These are issues that need to be addressed if we are to effectively enforce electoral laws."

Responding to the concerns, Adebayo Balogun, chairman of the house committee on electoral matters, said all the concerns will be addressed in the future electoral reforms.

Balogun said a new version of the electoral act will be enacted to replace the Electoral Act of 2022.

"The 2022 Electoral Act was a significant step forward, but its implementation in the last general elections showed areas that need improvement," the lawmaker said.

"We are committed to strengthening our electoral laws to reflect the realities of our democracy."



# Nigeria's First Lady elected to OAFLAD steering committee

By Friday Omosola

**N**igeria's First Lady, Oluremi Tinubu, has been elected as a member of the Steering Committee of the Organisation of African First Ladies for Development (OAFLAD), the highest decision-making body of the organization.

Busola Kukoyi, Senior Special Assistant on Media to Mrs Tinubu, disclosed this in a statement on Saturday.

Her election took place during the 29th Ordinary General Assembly of OAFLAD, currently ongoing in Addis Ababa, on the sidelines of the 38th Ordinary Session of the African Union Summit.



She joins the eight-member Steering Committee as one of two representatives

from West Africa.

Other elected member nations include Sierra Leone, whose First Lady is the newly elected President of OAFLAD, along with Angola (Vice President), Malawi, Kenya, Ethiopia, Equatorial Guinea, and Congo.

Mrs Tinubu will serve a two-year tenure in this new role.

Already a prominent voice within OAFLAD, she is expected to further champion the organization's advocacy initiatives, contributing to the realization of its 2025–2030 Strategic Framework.

# Poly students kick against converting Yaba Tech to university

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

**T**he National Association of Polytechnic Students (NAPS) has kicked against the plans of the government to convert Yaba College of Technology (YABATECH), Lagos, into a university.

Recall that the Minister of Education, Dr. Tunji Alausa, on Friday announced that President Bola Tinubu has approved the conversion of YABATECH into a university. NNPC debunks viral video, reveals Dangote refinery as main fuel supplier

He noted that because the polytechnic has over 200 doctorate-holding staff, it is well-equipped for the transition.

However, the Association of Polytechnic Students disagreed with the government.

It rejected the proposed conversion of Yabatech, arguing that the move would undermine the essence of polytechnic



education.

NAPS President, Eshiofune Oghayan, in a statement released in Kaduna on Saturday, criticised the decision.

He also emphasized that converting polytechnics into universities would erode their core mission of providing hands-on, industrial-based training.

The statement reads in part, “We reject the proposed conversion of YABATECH into a university. Polytechnic institutions like YABATECH play a crucial role in bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and industrial application.

They emphasise hands-on experience, problem-solving, and innovation, which are essential for Nigeria's industrialization and economic diversification.”

He further proposed that the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), be elevated into a Polytechnic Education Commission.

He stated that this would strengthen polytechnic education by ensuring better funding, policy implementation and clear career progression pathways for graduates.

# Nigeria rejects Binance executive's claims, reveals \$5M offer

By Friday Omosola

The Nigerian government has refuted allegations made by Tigran Gambaryan, Binance's Head of Financial Crime, dismissing them as baseless and misleading.

Gambaryan, a U.S. citizen, spent eight months in detention in Nigeria over financial crime charges before his release, which came after intervention from the United States government.

In a statement posted on X, Gambaryan alleged that his detention led to former U.S. President Joe Biden canceling a scheduled meeting with President Bola Tinubu during the 2024 UN General Assembly (UNGA).

He also accused National Security Adviser Nuhu Ribadu of orchestrating his arrest and claimed that the U.S. government scaled down Nigeria's delegation for the event.

Additionally, he alleged that three Nigerian lawmakers attempted to extort \$150 million from Binance.

**READ ALSO:** Binance Executive reveals lawmakers who demanded \$150m bribe

Responding to the accusations, the Federal Government urged the public to disregard them, labeling them as an attempt to manipulate public perception.

Minister of Information and National Orientation, Mohammed Idris, dismissed Gambaryan's statements as deliberate misinformation.

He also revealed that Binance offered a \$5 million payment, implying an attempt to negotiate its way out of legal trouble.

"The Federal Government of Nigeria notes with concern the outrageous allegations, misinformation, and



defamatory statements being disseminated by Tigran Gambaryan, an American personnel of Binance who was recently tried in Nigeria for financial crimes," the statement read.

"The government rejected Binance's offer of a \$5 million down payment in exchange for Mr. Gambaryan's freedom, in favour of a more beneficial settlement with the American government."

Minister Idris emphasised that the government found it necessary to clarify the situation to prevent misinformation from spreading.

He also refuted Gambaryan's allegations of bribery, stating that his trip to Nigeria was voluntary and had no official endorsement from any government agency.

Idris further noted that authorities launched an investigation as soon as the claims surfaced to ensure transparency and accountability.

"The initial visit by Mr. Gambarya and his colleagues to Nigeria was discretionary

on their part and the government was not officially involved.

"However, when the attention of the government was called to an alleged bribery demand during that trip, an investigation was immediately opened into it though there was no formal complaint by anyone," he stated.

Nigerian authorities took Tigran Gambaryan and his associate, Nadeem Anjarwalla, into custody.

Anjarwalla, a 37-year-old British-Kenyan national and Binance's regional manager for Africa, faced legal action alongside Gambaryan.

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) accused both men of laundering \$35 million.

However, on March 22, 2024, Anjarwalla managed to flee from detention.

# Hoodlums attack Sowore, journalists at Lagos City Marathon

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

**P**ublisher of the online medium, Sahara Reporters, Omoyele Sowore, was reportedly attacked on Saturday morning by suspected thugs at the Lagos City Marathon.

Sowore, a presidential candidate of the African Action Congress (AAC) in the 2023 elections, was reportedly attacked by the thugs alongside crew members of his media outfit, while participating in the marathon.

According to reports, the thugs also attacked some other journalists from various outlets covering the



event, with many of them injured and their cameras and other gadgets destroyed and stolen.

In a video seen by NEW DAILY PRIME, the hoodlums could be

seen physically assaulting Sowore, his crew members and the journalists.

One of the thugs was seen grabbing the neck of a journalist who was holding his camera.

Some people are insinuating that the journalist-cum-politician's ordeal could be as a result of his loud opposition and criticism of the federal government being headed by President Bola Tinubu or his ongoing battle with the Inspector General of Police, Kayode Egbetokun, who he has described as an 'illegal IGP'.

# Djiboutian, Mahamoud Youssef elected new AU commission chairman

By Dave Oludare Oso

**D**jibouti's foreign minister, Mahamoud Youssef, has been elected as the new chairperson of the African Union (AU) Commission.

In the election that took place on Saturday, Youssef won after seven rounds of voting by the union's 49 member states.

He won the election with 33 votes in the final round, constituting the required two-thirds.

Kenya's former prime minister, Raila Odinga, and Richard Randriamandrato, Madagascar's ex-economy and finance and



foreign affairs minister vied for the AU top position in the tightly contested race, however, Youssef secured a win in the final voting round.

The multilingual politician who speaks Arabic, English, and French was perceived as an outside shot compared to fellow contenders from larger African nations.

The Djiboutian replaces Moussa Faki of Chad, who has held the AU chairperson position for eight years.

He is expected to steer the AU through complex issues around peace and security, trade, and institutional reforms while advocating for Africa's position on the global stage.



# Missing Kwara varsity student found dead in Islamic cleric's house

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

A missing final-year student of Kwara State College of Education, Lawal Hafsoh Yetunde, has been found dead at an Islamic Cleric's house in Ilorin, the Kwara State capital.

Yetunde was tragically killed for ritual purposes in Ilorin after being lured by the Islamic cleric, Abdulrahman Mohad Ballo, who she met on Facebook.

The Kwara State Police Command revealed on Saturday that a suspect, said to be the son of a prominent Muslim cleric in the Isalekoto community, is now in police custody at the police command headquarters in Ilorin.

According to reports, the deceased student was attending a naming ceremony when she received a call from a friend. She left her food to answer the call and subsequently disappeared. Her family and



friends launched a search but could not locate her.

Her father, Ibrahim Lawal reported her missing on Tuesday at the Oja-Oba Police Division in Ilorin.

The police requested her phone number and used it to track her last call, which led

them to a suspect residing in the Ofa Garage area of Ilorin, though his family home is in Isalekoto.

Upon arrest, the suspect initially denied any knowledge of Hafsoh's whereabouts. However, during a search of his house, he confessed that she had visited him but died from an asthma attack after he invited her over.

Further investigation revealed a gruesome scene: Hafsoh's body was found dismembered and hidden in a bowl, alongside tools allegedly used to dismember her.

The suspect, now in custody at the Kwara State Police Headquarters, is believed to have met Hafsoh on Facebook, where he obtained her phone number and lured her to his residence.

# Black-clad gunmen kidnap Ohanaeze Youth Council President, Igboayaka

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has defended its recent policy imposing charges on cash withdrawals from Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) of banks other than a customer's own.

Speaking on Channels Television's 'Sunrise' programme on Saturday, CBN's Acting Director of Financial Policy and Regulation, John Onojah stated that the move will benefit both financial institutions and their customers.

Onojah added that the policy aims to address cash shortages at ATMs while allowing banks to recover operational costs.

"We have secured commitments from banks to ensure that ATMs remain



stocked with cash at all times. At a minimum, customers should be able to withdraw up to N20,000 without issues," Onojah assured.

He further noted that the policy would extend ATM availability even in remote areas, including machines not

located on bank premises.

According to him, deploying ATMs requires significant investment, and the charges will help financial institutions recover costs while maintaining efficient services.

"The reality is that installing and maintaining ATMs is capital-intensive. While we ensure that customers have continuous access to cash, banks also need to offset the expenses of running these machines," he added.

Onojah clarified that the charges apply only when customers withdraw cash from ATMs belonging to other banks, emphasising that withdrawals from one's own bank's ATM remain free of charge.

# Binance: Nigerian lawmakers, Gambaryan fight dirty over \$150m bribe

By Alade Adisa

The last has not been heard about the face-off between three Nigerian lawmakers and some executives of Binance, a cryptocurrency exchange that allows users to buy, sell, and trade cryptocurrencies, as allegations and counter-allegations between the parties continued at the weekend.

Tigran Gambaryan, an executive of Binance, who was detained in the country last year before being released, had accused some members of the House of Representatives of demanding \$150 million bribe from him to secure his release.

He alleged that the lawmakers demanded that the money be paid in form of cryptocurrency and initially did not mention the names of the bribe demanding federal legislators.

At the weekend, he went on his social media handle, X, formerly Twitter, to list the alleged bribe seekers.

However, on Saturday, the Chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on Financial Crimes, Mr. Ginger Obinna Onwusibe, one of the people mentioned by Gambaryan, issued a statement denying any culpability in the matter.

In a statement titled 'Limited Reaction to False, Malicious, and Defamatory Publications Against Me by Tigran Gambaryan of Binance,' Onwusibe refuted any claims of coordination between his committee and the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA), the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), or the Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU).

The lawmaker said that the allegations originated from Tigran Gambaryan, Binance's Head of Financial Crime Compliance, who shared these claims on social media and with international media outlets such as NPR and WIRED.



Onwusibe explained that his committee's investigation into Binance was prompted by a petition from a civil society organisation alleging financial and economic crimes.

He outlined the timeline of events, stating that Binance had requested a pre-hearing meeting prior to the official public hearing.

This meeting was held on 8 January 2024 in his absence, as he was on official duty elsewhere. The official hearing was scheduled for 10 January 2024, but Binance's CEO, Richard Teng, failed to attend, leading to multiple rescheduled dates, which were also disregarded.

Following Binance's continued non-compliance, Onwusibe filed a defamation lawsuit against the company and its CEO, seeking \$3 billion in damages. This case, filed in September 2024, is currently pending before the High Court of the Federal Capital Territory in Abuja.

The statement also referenced Binance's history of legal issues, including fines and convictions in the U.S., Canada, India, and Uzbekistan for violations related to money laundering and unlicensed operations. Onwusibe alleged that Binance had resorted to blackmail and misinformation to evade accountability in Nigeria.

He reaffirmed his commitment to clearing his name through legal means, insisting that neither he nor his committee solicited bribes at any point during the investigation.

"My attention has been drawn to the publication by Mr. Tigran Gambaryan, Head of Financial Crime Compliance at Binance, on his X (formerly Twitter) handle on Friday, 14 February 2025.

"I have been inundated with thousands of phone calls, WhatsApp messages, SMS texts, and visits from colleagues and others at the National Assembly.

"I initially chose not to respond because the issues raised are subjudice, being the subject of a pending court action I initiated against Binance and its CEO, Mr. Richard Teng.

"I categorically deny any coordination between our Congressional investigation and the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA), the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), or the Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU).

"No one in the ONSA, including the NSA, Mr. Nuhu Ribadu, directed us to demand bribes from Binance, and no such bribes were ever demanded.



# Pardon expelled student, give her 2nd chance, lawmaker begs UNIZIK

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

A member of the House of Representatives, Hon. Bamidele Salam has made a passionate appeal to the Nnamdi Azikiwe University (UNIZIK) to reconsider the expulsion of a student, Goddy-Mbakwe Chimamaka Precious involved in an assault case, describing the punishment as too harsh.

The lawmaker, representing Ede North, Ede South, Egbedore, and Ejigbo Federal Constituency of Osun State in a post on Friday, urged the university to offer the student a second chance as he shared a personal experience.

On Friday, authorities of the Nnamdi Azikiwe University expelled Precious for assaulting a lecturer from the Department of Theatre and Film Studies.

The announcement was made by the Acting Registrar, Victor Modebelu.

According to him, the decision followed the recommendation of the Student Disciplinary Committee, which found the student's actions to be a gross violation of the institution's disciplinary regulations, specifically Regulation 4 (SDR).

## How the incident happened

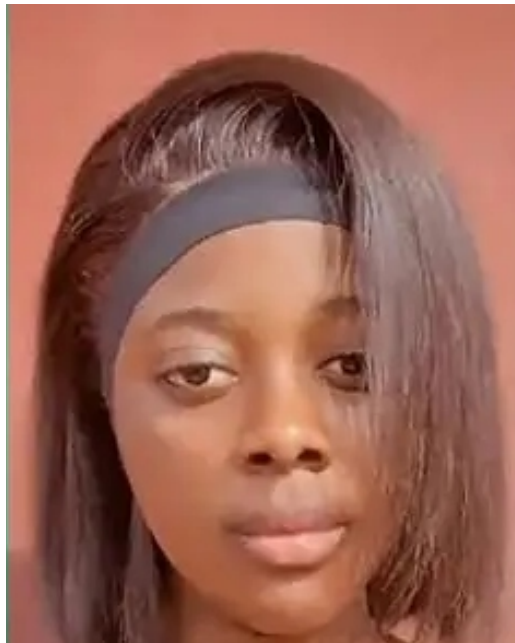
The incident, which gained widespread attention after a video surfaced online on Tuesday, reportedly involved Precious attacking the lecturer identified as Dr. Chukwudi Okoye.

The student attacked the lecturer after he interrupted her while she was recording a TikTok video in the university hallway.

Online videos show the student, Precious, filming when Okoye, a Theatre Arts lecturer walked by. He tapped her and said, "Excuse me."

The student reacted angrily, giving him a disapproving look and complaining to someone off-camera, "Can you imagine, he just hit me."

The footage shows the student



aggressively fighting the lecturer, tearing the right side of his brown traditional outfit. She held onto him tightly, while Mr. Okoye, who appears to be in his 50s with slightly grey hair, did not fight back.

Photos online reveal deep bite marks on the lecturer's arms, and another image shows him receiving medical treatment, reportedly at the school clinic.

## Reps member makes a case for student

Meanwhile, Hon. Bamidele, in his appeal on Friday evening, recounted his own experience as a student leader in 1992 when he and four others were expelled from their university for "gross misconduct and insubordination" to constituted authority.

He explained that such terms were often used during the military regime to suppress student activism and civil rights advocacy. Reflecting on the impact of his expulsion, he expressed gratitude for overcoming the setback, stating that it could have ended his education and future prospects.

The lawmaker noted that while the student in question deserves punishment, expulsion should not be the final decision. He described the student as a "silly girl" and presumed first-time offender,

pleading for her punishment to be reduced if she shows remorse and a willingness to change.

He also argued that expulsion could ruin her life and future opportunities, urging the university to avoid throwing her "into the wilderness of life."

He said; "She certainly deserves to be punished but for some reasons, I don't like expulsion as a punishment for any student. I and four other students Union leaders were expelled from a university in 1992.

"I was in my final year. Our offenses were "gross misconduct and insubordination to constituted Authority." Those were terms generally used to describe students activism against the then-military rule and it's repression of civil rights.

"But for God's mercies, it could have been the end of my schooling and meaningful life.

"So, I will plead on behalf of this silly girl, whom I presume to be a first-time offender, that if she shows some remorse and willingness to change, that expulsion should be commuted to a lesser punishment so that we don't throw her to the wilderness of life."

# Armed robbers raid UI hostel, cart away phones, valuables

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

**A**rmed robbers attacked Obafemi Awolowo Hall of Residence in the University of Ibadan in Oyo State on Saturday morning, dispossessing students of their valuables worth thousands of naira during the raid.

FIJ quoted sources as saying that the assailants gained access into the hall between 4 am and 5 am, targeting at least two rooms on the ground floor of C Block, which houses returning students.

The robbers first disabled security measures by removing corridor and bathroom light bulbs before forcing their way into the rooms.

A student resident, who asked not to be named, described the chaotic scene thus: “They didn’t get to my block, but I heard people saying one of them had a gun. What I know for sure is that they stole phones and accessories from some students. The school management and members of Abefele (the university security team) came here earlier. Our security men are not exactly agile, so it’s easy to imagine how the thieves got in.”

Another student recounted how the thieves were spotted: “They were two men. They entered through the gate facing Awo Mount Zion. I don’t know how they left, but an Awoite screamed when she saw them, and that’s how people woke up and came out. I heard they stole six phones.”

In a statement released by hall



management, officials confirmed the robbery, stating: “At about 4 am, two thieves broke into the hall and robbed some residents of Block C. The thieves were reportedly armed and mostly stole mobile phones. There was no record of physical assault on any of the victims.”

The statement added that investigations were underway in collaboration with Abefele and the police.

Some students, however, noted that while the robbers did not appear visibly armed, they issued threats, warning female occupants that they would be hit if they did not cooperate.

Similarly, the university’s Public Relations Officer, confirmed the incident, saying, “I called the warden, and the warden said it really happened. It was a single person who had two of the ropes and had their

phones, and one of the phones was being tracked.”

The PRO added that discussions were ongoing with police authorities regarding the investigation.

This is not the first time Obafemi Awolowo Hall has been targeted. In 2019, armed robbers raided the hostel, shooting sporadically before stealing valuables, including phones and cash. At least two students were injured in that attack. The hall, popularly known as Awo Hall, is the closest hostel to The Polytechnic, Ibadan.

That same year, Abdulsalami Abubakar Hall — home to postgraduate students — was also attacked. Around 2 am, about 15 armed robbers invaded the female wing and stole valuables. Two male students were injured as the intruders attempted to flee after being spotted.



# ISWAP kill 3 soldiers, steal gun trucks in Borno Army base

By Helen Okechukwu

**T**errorists from Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) terrorists have killed three Nigerian Army personnel following an attack on a military base in Borno State.

The insurgents also made away with two gun trucks in the process.

According to SaharaReporters, the terrorists attacked the military facility in Isige town, Gwoza Local Government Area of the state.

A source said that the terror group razed many buildings and took away two gun trucks during the attack.

The names of the army personnel killed is being withholding as their families are yet to be informed.

“There was an attack recently in Borno, one Staff Sergeant with two private soldiers were killed. However, the army authorities are silent over the attack which happened at a base in Isige Town, Gwoza Local Government Area of Borno State.

“They burnt one military vehicle while they went away with two gun trucks, later reinforcement came from nearby unit but by then the Boko Haram fighters have left.”

This is coming a few weeks after the



terror group launched a brutal attack on the military’s Forward Operating Base in the Damboa Local Government Area of same Borno State, killing a yet-to-be confirmed number of soldiers, with many still missing.

“25 Taskforce Bde was attacked during the weekend with so many casualties, so far we have recovered over seven bodies,” the source had told newsmen.

“The terror group invaded the camp FOB Sabon Gari around 4am on Saturday, using various weapons,” it added.

ISWAP subsequently claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement.

Also attached to the statement were pictures of members shooting sporadically towards the military facility.

Since the death of JAS leader, Abubakar Shekau, ISWAP has been consolidating its grip in locations around Lake Chad.

The sect’s membership has swollen with the defection of hundreds of Boko Haram fighters under Shekau.

The Nigerian Army has repeatedly claimed that insurgency had been largely defeated and frequently underplays any losses.

The terror group has caused over 100,000 deaths and displaced millions of people mainly in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states.

# LOST AND FOUND? 2Baba spotted shopping with Natasha amid missing claims

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Legendary musician, Innocent '2Baba' Idibia and his new love interest, Edo State lawmaker, Natasha Osawaru have been spotted in a video doing some shopping at a hair shop, amid missing claims by his family.

It would be recalled that in a video that recently surfaced online, 2Face's mother had expressed her disapproval of his current relationship, especially since his divorce process with his estranged wife, Annie had not been finalized.

Additionally, the family had petitioned the Directorate of State Services (DSS), claiming that the singer had gone missing.

However, a video that popped up online on Saturday showed the 'African Queen' crooner and the Edo State House of Assembly member at a hair shop doing some shopping.

Expectedly, the video has sparked mixed reactions from social media users.

Read some reactions below ...

nickey\_pearls said: "lol when I tell you, if he wanted to he will, this is he!!!!"



sleem\_porshe asked: "How many faces this Natasha get?"

postsofmich queried; "Missing person dey shop???"

glitz\_farms stated: "When he fades away for people eye, huh he go rest..."

jaycee\_talks remarked: "Mummy mummy, come and see him here"

bigbims22 said: "Oga, your mama dey find you o"

sisi\_thebigtycoon wrote: "Allegedly them dey find you for house o, go meet your mama "

originalweightlossdietcoffee said: "How many face this Natasha

woman get abeg? I don see over 20 different faces. Which face make we hold say na she? "

royals\_garden\_\_ remarked: "Nor be this boy him mama say he lost "

The founding member of a trio that formed the famous Plantation Boys group, which included Blackface and Face, had been in constant news since the news of his split from wife, Anne Macaulay broke weeks back and the man attracted more attention by announcing his love and engagement to the lawmaker, who is from the famous Igbimedion Family.

The lawmaker is even reported to be pregnant for the singer who has not less than three other baby mamas.



# Tems, Idris Elba, Wyclef Jean join SXSW London event

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Grammy-winning Nigerian artist Tems will take the stage at the first-ever South by Southwest (SXSW) festival in London this summer, joining global stars.

She joins an impressive lineup of international stars set to headline the highly anticipated European edition of the renowned festival.

Tems has quickly risen to global stardom with her unique blend of Afrobeats, R&B, and soul. Her powerful voice and emotionally charged lyrics have earned her international recognition, making her a sought-after performer at major music festivals. Her presence at SXSW London adds to the festival's reputation as a global platform for emerging and established artists.

Star-studded lineup confirmed

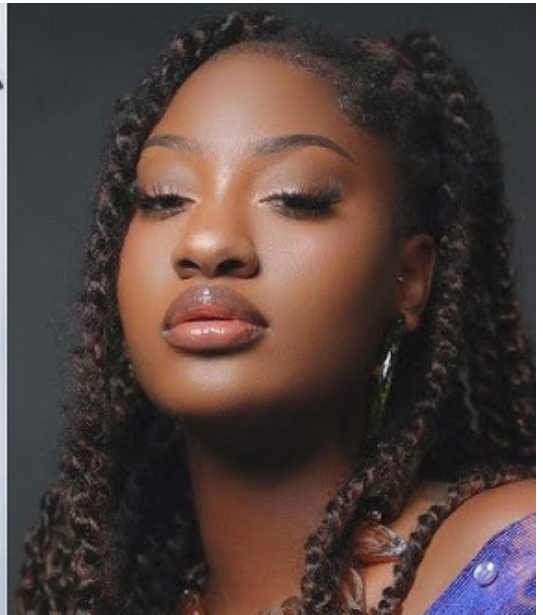
Other big names confirmed for the event include actor and musician Idris Elba, rapper and producer Wyclef Jean, comedian Katherine Ryan, and wellness expert Deepak Chopra. Their participation underscores the festival's commitment to bringing together influential figures from various industries.

Idris Elba, known for his acting roles in films like *Beasts of No Nation* and *Luther*, has also made a name for himself as a DJ and music producer. Wyclef Jean, a former member of The Fugees, has had a successful solo career, blending hip-hop, reggae, and world music. Meanwhile, Katherine Ryan, a celebrated comedian and actress, will add humour to the event. Deepak Chopra, a globally recognized wellness advocate, will provide insights on mindfulness and personal growth.

A festival of innovation and culture

SXSW London, set to take place in Shoreditch, will showcase a dynamic mix of music, film, technology, and culture. Organizers describe the event as a "festival of convergence," where industry leaders and creative minds will explore the latest trends and innovations shaping the future.

The original SXSW, held annually in Austin, Texas, is known for its groundbreaking blend of entertainment, technology, and thought leadership. The London edition will bring that



same energy, offering attendees an immersive experience filled with performances, discussions, and networking opportunities.

Jenn Nkiru's film retrospective

A major highlight of the festival will be its Screen Festival, which will host the first-ever U.K. retrospective of Grammy-winning artist and filmmaker Jenn Nkiru. Known for her visually striking and socially conscious work, Nkiru has created films that challenge norms and inspire change. Her past projects include collaborations with Beyoncé and Jay-Z, further cementing her influence in the industry.

This retrospective will give audiences a chance to explore Nkiru's artistic evolution, making it a must-see event for film lovers and creatives alike.

What to expect at SXSW London

Organizers promise that SXSW London will deliver everything fans love about the Austin festival, including inspiring talks, live music performances, and exclusive film screenings. However, the London edition will also introduce fresh elements, with a greater focus on visual arts and fashion.

With a diverse lineup spanning multiple creative fields, the event aims to provide a platform for emerging voices while celebrating established industry leaders. Attendees can expect a mix of performances, panel discussions, workshops, and

networking events that highlight the latest cultural and technological trends.

Why London?

The decision to launch SXSW in London reflects the city's growing role as a global creative hub. London has long been a melting pot of cultures, attracting musicians, filmmakers, and tech innovators from around the world. Its thriving creative industries and rich cultural scene make it an ideal location for an event that celebrates artistic expression and innovation.

A milestone for Tems

For Tems, this performance marks another major step in her international career. The Nigerian singer-songwriter has gained global recognition through collaborations with stars like Drake, Future, and Beyoncé. Her ability to blend African rhythms with contemporary sounds has made her a standout artist in the global music scene.

Tems' participation in SXSW London reinforces her influence as one of Africa's leading musical talents. Her journey from Lagos to the world stage continues to inspire a new generation of African artists looking to break into international markets.

A historic event in the making

As anticipation builds for the festival, fans and industry insiders are eager to see how SXSW London will merge its Austin roots with new, Europe-focused themes.

# Sabinus accused of extra marital affair, domestic abuse

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Popular blogger, Cutie Juls has accused renowned skit maker, Emmanuel Chukwuemeka, widely known as Sabinus, of alleged extramarital affair and domestic abuse.

In the latest Instagram post, Cutie Juls accused Sabinus of domestic violence against his wife, Ciana Chapman, and paying bloggers to discredit her.

Recall that the couple tied the knot in 2023 and welcomed their first child in 2024.

Furthermore, Cutie Juls alleged that Sabinus has a side chic named Boma, and claims that renowned rapper, Odumodublvcck is aware of the affair.



According to the blogger, Boma is also involved with a man named Ighalo, describing Sabinus as a dimwit.

Cutie Juls claims that Sabinus' wife earlier reached out to her via an Instagram DM, appealing for her to

delete an earlier post, seemingly indicating she wanted it under the wraps.

The post reads, “@mrfunny na only you dey cheat. Na only you still beats this woman you constantly cheat on. Na only you still dey pay bloggers to discredit grandma.

“This is sabinus side chick, her name is Boma. Even @odumodublvcck knows about their relationship. Funny thing is the babe still dey do Ighalo also.”

However, neither Sabinus nor his management team addressing the claim, generating anxiety among his wide followership.

# Jay-Z, Sean ‘Diddy’ Combs rape accuser drops case

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

An anonymous woman who accused Shawn “Jay-Z” Carter and Sean “Diddy” Combs of raping her in 2000 when she was 13 dismissed her civil lawsuit on Friday against the hip-hop moguls.

A filing in federal court in Manhattan said the plaintiff, referred to as Jane Doe, voluntarily dismissed the case with prejudice, meaning she cannot bring it again.

Tony Buzbee, a lawyer for the woman, declined to comment.

Combs is in a Brooklyn jail awaiting a scheduled 5 May criminal trial on racketeering and sex-trafficking charges.

He still faces dozens of other civil lawsuits by women and men, including



many represented by Buzbee's firm, who have accused him of sexual assault and other misconduct.

Combs has pleaded not guilty in the criminal case, and maintained his innocence in all of the cases.

The Doe lawsuit was the only one to name Carter as a defendant, and he had vociferously denied the woman's claims.

“Today is a victory,” Carter said in a statement posted online by his entertainment company, Roc Nation on Saturday, Feb. 15. “The frivolous, fictitious and appalling allegations have been dismissed. This civil suit was without merit and never going anywhere.”

Carter said the case also had caused trauma for his wife, Beyoncé, and their children.

In a joint statement, Combs's lawyers maintained that their client had never sexually assaulted or trafficked anyone.



# Do not let imperfections affect you — Omotola Jalade-Ekeinde

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

**N**ollywood star Omotola Jalade-Ekeinde has opened up about her journey to self-acceptance after undergoing emergency surgery last year.

The award-winning actress, known for her confidence and elegance, shared her experience in a heartfelt Instagram post.

In a video posted on her social media, Omotola showcased a scar on her stomach, a lasting mark from the medical procedure. She admitted that seeing the scar initially made her feel insecure. However, she quickly shifted her perspective, choosing self-love over self-doubt.

The actress, who has long been admired for her poise and beauty, reminded her fans that true confidence comes from within. She encouraged them to embrace their imperfections, focusing on their strengths rather than their flaws.

## Overcoming Insecurity

Reflecting on her experience, Omotola revealed that her stomach had always been one of her favorite features. Seeing it altered by surgery was an emotional moment.

“Last year, I had an emergency surgery,” she wrote. “One of my best parts of my body is my tummy. Oh well, not so perfect now.”

She recalled a particular moment during a photoshoot when she



instinctively grabbed her top. A small voice in her head whispered, “There’s nothing to show anymore.”

But instead of dwelling on the thought, she silenced the doubt. “Not me! That thing that’ll shake my confidence has not been created,” she declared.

Rather than feeling defeated, Omotola chose to smile and dance. She reminded herself that being alive was what truly mattered. “It’s just scars,” she wrote, emphasizing that everyone carries marks—whether physical or emotional.

## A Message of Self-Love

Omotola used her story to send an uplifting message to her followers. She encouraged them to embrace their scars, whether visible or hidden. Life’s challenges, she noted, do not define a person’s worth.

“Some people’s scars are physical,

and some are emotional,” she shared. “But today, smile, dance, and be proud. You’re still here, and you look darn good too!”

She ended her post with a powerful question: “What if I’m not perfect? Would you still love me?”

## Fans Applaud Her Strength

Omotola’s post quickly gained attention, with fans and colleagues flooding the comments with words of support. Many praised her for her honesty and resilience. Some shared their own experiences with self-acceptance, thanking her for inspiring them.

Her story serves as a reminder that beauty is not about perfection but about confidence and self-love. By embracing her scars, Omotola has once again proven why she remains one of Nollywood’s most beloved stars.

# Tope Alabi, Moses Bliss, Mercy Chinwo to star at Praise The Almighty

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Popular Nigerian gospel singer Tope Alabi is preparing to host the 15th edition of her annual worship event, Praise the Almighty.

The much-anticipated gathering is scheduled for Sunday, February 16, 2025, at the Nigeria Police Force College in Ikeja, Lagos.

Alabi, a celebrated voice in Nigeria's gospel music scene, is known for her deeply spiritual songs in the Yoruba language.

Over the years, her music has touched countless lives, making Praise the Almighty a highly awaited event for many worshippers.

She took to Instagram to share the news with her fans, encouraging them to participate in what she described as a powerful and uplifting worship experience.

## A star-studded lineup

This year's edition promises to be extraordinary, with an impressive lineup of gospel ministers and special guests.

Among those expected to grace the stage are renowned artists such as Moses Bliss, Mercy Chinwo, and Apostle Femi Lazarus, along with other gospel ministers who will lead attendees in an evening of worship, praise, and thanksgiving.

Alabi emphasized that the event is not just a concert but an opportunity to honor God's unfailing love and faithfulness.

For the past 14 years, Praise the Almighty has drawn thousands of worshippers who come together to sing, pray, and experience the presence of God. This year, she expects an even greater turnout.



A message of faith and gratitude

In her official announcement, Alabi expressed her excitement and gratitude for another opportunity to host the event. She reassured fans that this year's edition would surpass previous ones.

"Good news! Praise the Almighty 2025 will be happening on February 16, 2025. We thank God for the previous years, and we are assured in Christ that it will be even more amazing than before. We are just a few months away. Pray, plan, and prepare to attend," she wrote on Instagram.

Her message resonated with fans, many of whom flooded the comment section with words of anticipation and excitement.

Some shared testimonies of how past editions had impacted their lives, while others expressed their eagerness to attend the upcoming gathering.

## A legacy of worship

Since its inception, Praise the Almighty has become a significant event in Nigeria's gospel music calendar. It serves as a platform for believers to come together in unity, lifting their voices in

heartfelt praise.

Alabi's dedication to spreading the gospel through music has solidified her reputation as one of the most influential gospel artists in Nigeria.

With just weeks to go, preparations are in full swing to ensure a seamless and spiritually fulfilling experience for all attendees.

The venue, the Nigeria Police Force College, has hosted the event in past years and is expected to welcome thousands of worshippers once again.

As the countdown begins, Alabi and her team continue to urge fans to mark their calendars and make plans to attend.

With a lineup of anointed ministers, a spirit-filled atmosphere, and an unwavering focus on God, Praise the Almighty 2025 promises to be a night of unforgettable worship.

For those eager to join, the event is free and open to all. Attendees are encouraged to come with hearts full of expectation, ready to encounter God in a fresh and powerful way.



# What would I do with a poor man? — Sophie Momodu

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

**S**ophie Momodu, the first baby mama of Nigerian music star Davido, has made it clear that she has no interest in dating a poor man.

The beauty and fashion entrepreneur shared this bold statement in episode four of *The Real Housewives of Lagos*, a reality show streaming on Showmax.

During a conversation with fellow cast member Mariam Timmer, Sophie did not mince words about her dating standards. She emphasized that she would never settle for a financially struggling partner. In her own words, she stated, “I am a typical Naija babe. Wetin I wan carry poor man do?”

Her candid remarks quickly became a talking point on social media, sparking discussions about financial expectations in relationships. Many viewers weighed in, with some supporting her stance and others criticizing it as materialistic.

### A woman who knows her worth

Sophie’s comments reflect her belief in financial stability as a key factor in relationships. She reiterated that she does not see a broke man as a suitable match for her.

“I don’t think a broke man will know what to do with a woman like me,” she said, doubling down on her



opinion.

As an independent woman with a thriving career in beauty and fashion, Sophie made it clear that she has standards. While some may view her statement as controversial, others see it as confidence and self-awareness.

### Love and luxury

Beyond her views on wealth and relationships, Sophie also revealed that she is currently in a loving relationship. While she did not disclose the identity of her partner, she expressed deep affection for him.

The discussion about finances and dating preferences quickly became one of the highlights of the episode. Many fans of *The Real Housewives of Lagos* found her honesty refreshing, while others debated

whether financial success should be a dealbreaker in relationships.

### Social media reactions

Following the episode, social media platforms were abuzz with opinions. Some users praised Sophie for setting high standards, while others argued that love should not be based on financial status alone.

“She’s just being real. Nobody wants to suffer in a relationship,” one Twitter user wrote.

Another countered, “Money isn’t everything. True love isn’t about how much someone earns.”

Regardless of public opinion, Sophie Momodu stands firm in her beliefs. For her, a relationship must come with both love and financial security.

# Headies founder criticizes Nigeria's Grammy obsession, urges support

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

**A**yo Animashaun, the founder of The Headies Awards, has expressed disappointment over Nigeria's intense focus on the Grammy Awards.

In a recent interview with Channels TV, he questioned why Nigerians value international recognition more than their own music industry.

He pointed out that the Grammys seem to have a bigger following in Lagos than in America. According to him, Nigerians should shift their attention to local award platforms and industry growth instead of chasing validation from foreign organizations.

Nigerians overvalue international recognition

Animashaun criticized the widespread belief that winning a Grammy is the ultimate achievement for Nigerian artists. He argued that Americans do not think about Nigerian music as much as Nigerians assume. Instead, he urged the industry to prioritize its own progress.

"We actually think they care about us," he said. "But wake up—they don't. We're popping now, so they're giving us one nomination, and the whole country is making noise about it."

The media mogul also noted that Nigerians celebrate international awards more than the countries that host them. He recalled his experience attending major global events, including the Grammys, American Music Awards, BET Awards, World Music Awards, and the Oscars.

"I've been there many times," he said.



"But when I talk to people in those cities, some don't even know the events are happening. Meanwhile, in Nigeria, we know more about their awards than they do."

Local awards deserve more support

Animashaun believes this obsession with foreign validation has harmed Nigeria's music industry. Instead of celebrating homegrown talent and awards, Nigerians invest their energy in foreign platforms that do not reciprocate the same level of interest.

He emphasized that other countries focus on their own industries first. "They'll support their own awards and industry, and we'll keep supporting theirs. So, who will support our own?" he asked.

The Headies founder made it clear that his concerns go beyond just his own award show. He wants Nigerians to recognize the value of their own platforms and cultural contributions. He compared The Headies plaque to the Grammy trophy, stating that The

Headies award is 21-karat gold-plated with copper. "Bring theirs and put it beside ours and see if it's less valuable," he said.

A call to action for the music industry

Animashaun's remarks highlight a long-standing debate in Nigeria's entertainment sector. While international recognition can boost an artist's career, he believes it should not come at the expense of local support.

His comments serve as a wake-up call for industry stakeholders, fans, and media outlets. If Nigerians do not prioritize their own awards and artists, he warned, the country's music industry may continue to rely on external validation rather than building a self-sustaining ecosystem.

Animashaun's message is clear: Nigeria's music industry must focus on itself, celebrate its own achievements, and stop seeking approval from the West.



# USAID funded ISIS, Boko Haram –US lawmaker, Scott Perry

By Dave Oludare Oso

The agency that has been in the crosshair of the duo of President Donald Trump and tech billionaire, Elon Musk for almost a month now, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), has gotten itself in another seemingly intractable mess as it has been accused of funding terrorist organisations, including Boko Haram, ISIS, and Al-Qaeda.

A United States lawmaker, Scott Perry, has made the accusations during the first hearing of the Subcommittee on Delivering on Government Efficiency (DOGE), The Economist reported.

The session, titled, “The War on Waste: Stamping Out the Scourge of Improper Payments and Fraud,” focused on allegations of misappropriations of taxpayer funds.

Perry, a Republican from Pennsylvania said, “Who gets some of that money? Does that name ring a bell to anybody in the room? Because your money, your money, \$697 million annually, plus the shipments of cash funds in Madrasas, ISIS, Al-Qaeda, Boko Haram, ISIS Khorasan, terrorist training camps. That’s what it’s funding.”

He said the USAID’s reported funding of \$136 million for building 120 schools in Pakistan had “zero evidence” of the schools’ construction.

“You are funding terrorism, and it’s coming through USAID. And it’s not just Afghanistan, because Pakistan’s right next door.

“USAID spent \$840 million in the last year, the last 20 years, on Pakistan’s education-related programme.

“It includes \$136 million to build 120 schools, of which there is zero evidence that any of them were built. Why would there be any evidence? The Inspector General can’t get in to see them.



“But you know what? We doubled down and spent \$20 million from USAID to create educational television programmes for children unable to attend physical school.

“Yeah, they can’t attend it, because it doesn’t exist. You paid for it.

“Somebody else got the money. You are paying for terrorism. This has got to end.”

USAID is one of the agencies of United States government that had been hardest hit by Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) under Musk’s supervision, and it has been practically shut down by President Trump since his presidential comeback on January 20.

Only on Thursday, a federal judge ordered the Trump administration to reinstate funding for foreign aid contracts and other awards to USAID while litigation moves forward, delivering yet another setback for the president as he seeks to make sweeping changes to the federal government.

U.S. District Judge Amir Ali partially granted a request for a temporary restraining order from a group of organizations that receive funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development, or USAID, and other

agencies, but have since been cut off from federal dollars or had to suspend their work in the wake of Trump’s executive action ordering a 90-day pause on foreign development aid.

The nonprofit organizations argued that Trump’s directive and a subsequent memorandum from Secretary of State, Marco Rubio issued late last month, which temporarily stopped new obligations of funding for foreign assistance programmes and called for stop-work orders, was an unlawful and unconstitutional exercise of executive power.

They warned that the directive has “created chaos in the funding and administration” of USAID and other foreign assistance programmes.

“One cannot overstate the impact of that unlawful course of conduct: on businesses large and small forced to shut down their programs and let employees go; on hungry children across the globe who will go without; on populations around the world facing deadly disease; and on our constitutional order,” lawyers for one group of challengers, led by the Global Health Council, wrote in a court filing.

# Trump, UK Prime Minister set to meet in Washington

By Dave Oludare Oso



US President, Donald Trump and British Prime Minister, Keir Starmer have agreed to hold talks soon in Washington, the White House confirmed Friday.

Trump told reporters at the porch of the White House, “He asked for a meeting, and I agreed. We’re going to have a friendly meeting. We have a lot of good things going on.

“I think he wants to come next week or the weekend.”

Starmer met Trump’s special envoy to the UK, Mark Burnett in London on Thursday “during which he took a call from President Trump and discussed his forthcoming visit to the US,” Downing Street said.

It was at least the third time Starmer and Trump have spoken on the phone since the latter’s election win in November.

Downing Street has been in talks with US counterparts about Starmer visiting Washington for several weeks but neither side have announced a confirmed date.

Trump has already welcomed a few world leaders to the White House, including Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Israeli leader Benjamin Netanyahu.

The Mirror newspaper said Friday there have been discussions about King Charles III making an official visit to the US early next year. The report has not been confirmed.

Starmer’s planned trip comes as Britain faces the looming threat of US trade tariffs.

The UK said this week it was “engaging” with Washington on the detail of the president’s steel tariffs, in

contrast to firm responses by Canada and the European Union.

Seeking to keep Britain’s closest ally onside, Starmer told parliament Wednesday: “The US and the UK share a strong and balanced trading relationship, we invest hugely in each other’s economies and we will continue to work closely with President Trump to boost growth and to create jobs.”

Starmer faces the unenviable task of trying to stay in Trump’s good books while simultaneously seeking deeper relations with the European Union.

The UK government has been at pains not to criticise any of Trump’s early moves, including over the war in Ukraine and Gaza.

That is despite the fact that Starmer has come under personal attack from tech billionaire and Trump ally Elon Musk.



# Elon Musk is father of my five-mth-old child – MAGA influencer

By **Elizabeth Jenrola Oso**



Make America Great Again (MAGA) influencer, Ashley St Clair, has claimed that she has a child with billionaire entrepreneur, Elon Musk.

In a statement posted on X on Saturday, Ms St Clair revealed that she gave birth to the child five months ago but had chosen to keep the news private to protect their family's privacy.

She added that she intends to raise her child in a safe and normal environment, urging the media to respect her child's privacy.

She tweeted, "Five months ago, I welcomed a new baby into the

world. Elon Musk is the father. I have not previously disclosed this to protect our child's privacy and safety, but in recent days it has become clear that tabloid media intends to do so, regardless of the harm it will cause.

"I intend to allow our child to grow in a normal and safe environment. For that reason, I ask that the media honor our child's privacy, and refrain from invasive reporting."

Ms St Clair, 26, is a columnist known for her work with right-wing media and her vocal stance on political and cultural issues within circles supporting the MAGA movement. She is also the

author of *Elephants Are Not Birds*.

The head of Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), who is known for openly expressing his views on social media, has yet to publicly comment on the matter.

The billionaire, who has not confirmed Ms St Clair's claim, already has 12 children with three women. He shares six children with his first wife, Justine Wilson; three with musician, Claire Boucher (Grimes); and three with former Neuralink executive Shivon Zilis.

# German chancellor hits back at US during security conference

By Dave Oludare Oso

German chancellor, Olaf Scholz, on Saturday, shot back strongly in defence of his stance against the far-right, and said his country will not accept people who “intervene in our democracy,” a day after US vice-president JD Vance scolded European leaders over their approach to democracy.

According to Associated Press (AP), the German leader spoke with just eight days before crucial elections in Germany, with polls showing the far-right Alternative for Germany party currently in second.

Vance said on Friday at the Munich Security Conference that he fears free speech is “in retreat” across the continent.

But Scholz had said, “Germany is a very strong democracy, and as a strong democracy, we are absolutely clear that the extreme right should be out of political control and out of political decision making processes, and that there will be no cooperation with them.

“We really reject any idea of cooperation between parties, other parties and this extreme right parties.”



Germany’s chancellor Olaf Scholz speaks during the Munich Security Conference on Saturday. Photograph: Matthias Schröder/AP

A day earlier, Vance said that many Americans saw in Europe “entrenched interests hiding behind ugly Soviet-era words like misinformation and disinformation, who simply don’t like the idea that somebody with an alternative viewpoint might express a different opinion or, God forbid, vote a different way, or even worse, win an election.”

Scholz, shooting back, said “free

speech in Europe means that you are not attacking others in ways that are against legislation and laws we have in our country.” He was alluding to rules in Germany that restrict hate speech, reports the AP.

The comments came as European leaders have been trying to make sense of a tough new line from Washington on issues including democracy and Ukraine’s future, as the Trump administration continues to upend transatlantic conventions that have been in place since after the second world war.



# Federal workers given just 30 minutes to leave before Trump hammer

By Dave Oludare Oso

**A**s many as 200,000 US workers slated to be affected by mass terminations as Musk leads crusade to slash spending

Some federal employees who have been laid off under the President Donald Trump administration's unprecedented plan to slash the federal workforce were reportedly given only 30 minutes to pack their belongings and vacate federal offices.

Federal agencies were ordered by Trump to fire mostly probationary staff, with as many as 200,000 workers set to be affected and some made to rush off the premises, the Washington Post reported.

More layoffs are expected on Friday, Reuters reported, as thousands of employees have already been terminated and the purge is widening.

The large-scale strategy, led by Elon Musk's so called "department of government efficiency," is meant to cut costs by downsizing the federal government.

Trump and Musk have both criticized the federal workforce as being oversized, with Trump calling the federal government "bloated" and filled with "people that are unnecessary."

Musk said on Thursday that the US should "delete entire agencies", comparing them to "weeds" that needed to be rooted out.

But massive layoffs have created chaos for affected federal employees. Thousands of workers were fired in group calls or via pre-recorded messages in recent days, the Post



reported. Others were told they would be laid off by email, but never received such messages.

About 100 employees at the office of personnel management (OPM) were fired in a Microsoft Teams group call, CNN reported, and told they had half an hour to leave the building.

OPM workers were told that they were terminated because they did not accept the Trump administration's deferred resignation plan, the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) union told CNN.

The buyout offers allowed employees who agreed to stop working to be paid through 30 September, although some have questioned if the payment offer is valid.

Everett Kelley, head of the AFGE, which represents 800,000 federal workers, has condemned the layoffs and promised to use "every legal challenge available", in comments to the Post.

"Employees were given no notice, no due process, and no opportunity to defend themselves in a blatant violation of the principles of fairness and merit that are supposed to govern federal employment," said Kelley.

So far, at least six agencies have carried out widespread layoffs. The Department of Veteran Affairs, which oversees services and benefits to military veterans, laid off 1,000 probationaries, Reuters reported.

A termination notice to VA employees stated and CNN reported: "The Agency finds, based on your performance, that you have not demonstrated that your further employment at the Agency would be in the public interest."

Termination notices were also sent to employees at the Department of Education, the Small Business Administration (SBA), the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), and the General Services Administration (GSA).

# Zelensky calls for European army after US veepee Vance's criticism

By Dave Oludare Oso

**...Says Ukraine will never accept 'deals reached behind our backs'**



Addressing the Munich Security Conference on Saturday, Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the “time has come for a European army to be created”.

Zelenskyy said that North Korean troops fighting Ukraine are learning “modern warfare”.

“Our army alone is not enough, we need your support,” he said.

Zelenskyy told the audience at the Munich Security Conference that Kyiv has clear intelligence that Russia plans to send troops to Belarus this summer, reports

Reuters.

Zelenskyy has urged European leaders: “I urge you to act for your own sake.” He also asked “If Russia launches attack or false-flag operation, are your armies ready?”

Ukraine’s president Volodymyr Zelenskyy speaks during the Munich Security Conference in Munich, Germany, on Saturday. Photograph: Wolfgang Rattay/Reuters

“We will never accept deals reached behind our backs, without our involvement,”

Zelenskyy has told leaders at the Munich Security Conference on Saturday.

The Ukrainian president said he would not take NATO membership for Ukraine off the table. “We need coordinated diplomacy ... end of this war should be our ‘first shared success.’”

Zelenskyy has told the Munich Security Conference that weapons should be fully produced in Europe. He adds: “Europe must decide its own future.”



# Back off, OpenAI not for sale, Elon Musk told

By Dave Oludare Oso



OpenAI has rejected Elon Musk's offer to buy the company for \$97.4 billion stating that it is not for sale.

The artificial intelligence company's Board chairman, Bret Taylor stated on Saturday that the board has unanimously rejected Musk's offer.

He noted that Musk's offer is his latest attempt to disrupt his competition.

"OpenAI is not for sale, and the board has unanimously rejected Mr. Musk's latest attempt to disrupt his competition.

"Any potential reorganization of OpenAI will strengthen our nonprofit and its mission to ensure AGI (artificial general intelligence) benefits all of humanity," the chairman stated on Friday.

Note that Musk filed court documents on Wednesday saying that he would withdraw the offer to buy OpenAI if its board returns the artificial intelligence pioneer to a non-profit "charity" model.

OpenAI currently operates a hybrid structure, as a non-profit with a money-making subsidiary.

The change to a for-profit model — one that Altman considers crucial for the company's development —

had exacerbated ongoing tensions with Musk.

Musk and Altman were among the 11-person team that founded OpenAI in 2015, with the former providing initial funding of \$45 million.

Three years later, Musk departed the company, with OpenAI citing "a potential future conflict for Elon... as Tesla continues to become more focused on AI."

Musk established his own artificial intelligence company called xAI early in 2023 after OpenAI ignited global fervor over the technology.

# Kenya's Kibet wins Lagos City Marathon

## \$50,000 prize money

By Dave Oludare Oso

**E**dwin Kibet, a Kenyan athlete has emerged as the winner of the men's category at the 2025 Access Bank Lagos City Marathon, held on Saturday.

In what was his second victory in the prestigious race, Kibet clocked an impressive time of 2 hours, 14 minutes, and 19 seconds, earning him the \$50,000 first-place prize.

The Kenyan runner previously won the marathon in 2023 with a time of 2:14:06.

In last year's edition, Kibet finished third behind fellow Kenyan, Bernard Sang, who won with a time of 2:16:49, and Cheprot, who placed second. This year, he dominantly reclaimed his title.

Kenya continued its dominance in the men's race as Kipygon Hehemiah finished second with a time of 2:16:37, while Sang Benard Cheruiyot secured third place in 2:17:17.

The 10th edition of the Access Bank Lagos City Marathon saw over 37,000 athletes compete in both the 10km and 42km races. The race started at Western Avenue, National Stadium Surulere, and finished at Eko Atlantic City, Victoria Island.

Ethiopia's Guta Meseret Hirpa Wins Women's Race

In the women's category, Ethiopia's Guta Meseret Hirpa claimed victory



with a time of 2:37:04, marking her first win in the competition.

She was followed by compatriot, Alemimesh Herpha, who finished second in 2:38:01, while Kenya's Jerono Peris secured third place with the same time of 2:38:01.

Nigerian winners

In the Nigerian category, Nyango Gyang Boyi emerged as the men's winner, finishing in 2:25:41:58. Apart from winning ₦2 million as the first Nigerian to cross the finish line, Boyi also received \$4,000 for finishing 8th overall.

In the women's Nigerian category, Blessing Shambor Solomon secured first place, with Elizabeth Nuhu Power and Patience Dalyop Mwanvwang finishing second and third, respectively. Like Boyi,

Solomon won ₦2 million for her achievement.

Meanwhile, Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu expressed satisfaction with the conduct of the 2025 marathon, promising that the state would provide more support to make the 2026 edition even bigger and better.

This year's marathon featured seven Gold Label runners in the men's category, including two Platinum-level athletes, while the women's race saw five Gold Label runners and one Platinum competitor among the over 30,000 participants.

The Lagos City Marathon, which was upgraded to Gold Label status by World Athletics in 2023, continues to attract elite athletes worldwide, solidifying its reputation as one of Africa's premier road races.



# Man City pound sorry Newcastle with Marmoush's quickfire treble

By Dave Oludare Oso

New star on the block, Omar Marmoush introduced himself as Manchester City's own 'Egyptian king' with a superb 14-minute hat-trick against Newcastle to send Pep Guardiola's side fourth in the Premier League.

Marmoush, who joined City for £59m from Eintracht Frankfurt last month, clearly has a long way to go before he can get close to the authentic Liverpool version – but broke his scoring duck in style after four matches without a goal.

Just 13 minutes and 54 seconds separated the forward's opener – taking advantage of Kieran Trippier's failure to read a long ball from City goalkeeper Ederson – and his third when he swept home first time from 10 yards.

In between, Marmoush applied a neat finish to Ilkay Gundogan's defence-splitting pass into the penalty area. This was the fourth-quickest Premier League hat-trick by a City player – Sergio Aguero netted the fastest with a nine-minute treble in 2015.

After Marmoush's first-half fireworks, substitute James McAtee scored City's fourth in the 84th minute following a flick-on from stand-in skipper Erling Haaland.

Even with a side shorn of defensive trio Manuel Akanji, Ruben Dias and Nathan Ake, it was a throwback to the 'old' City of recent years and the perfect warm-up to Wednesday's do-or-die Champions League return with Real Madrid.

Guardiola will hope the knock Haaland



sustained four minutes from time which triggered his early exit from the game does not prove to be too serious.

For Newcastle, defeat at Etihad Stadium was a familiar experience – they have now lost 16 successive matches at this ground and failed to score on their past six visits.

City fans had waited a long time to see the kind of flowing football their side produced in the first half.

While Marmoush grabbed the headlines – and the match ball at the end of the game – the presence of fellow new arrival Nico Gonzalez in a midfield holding role helped City. Further forward, much of the credit went to Brazilian winger Savinho.

The 20-year-old has been cited by Guardiola as a major reason why Jack Grealish, who was ruled out through injury, has struggled to claim a regular starting spot this term.

From the first whistle, he attacked Newcastle left-back Lewis Hall with intent.

Although his manager repeatedly had to tell him to drop deeper when Ederson was preparing to play out of his six-yard box, once Savinho had the ball at his feet he repeatedly ran at Hall at pace and, at times, slalomed his way down the pitch to incisive effect.

His movement unhinged the visitors and created the space the likes of Phil Foden and Gundogan craved.

It was one of those direct runs and a cutback that allowed Marmoush to complete his hat-trick.

City have now collected 16 points from their past seven games, which is as good a return as they have managed all season – handy given Liverpool are the next visitors to this stadium on 23 February.