



Sacked Lagos Speaker, Obasa sue Meranda, Lagos Assembly, seeks reinstatement Pg 10



Arresting my father would be the biggest mistake, Bashir el-Rufai warns Pg 11

The New Daily Prime

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US vice-president launches blistering attack on Europe's leaders in Munich conference

 Pg 27

Britain announces new sanctions against Putin allies Pg 29



Zbaba's family declares son missing, seeks DSS help Pg 18



UNIZIK expels student who assaulted lecturer over TikTok video Pg 14



Valentine's Day: This will be my last one unmarried - DJ Cuppy Pg 17

Judge orders US to restore funds for foreign aid programs Pg 29



Tinubu, Buhari, Obi mourn Adebajo

By Friday Omosola

President Bola Tinubu, former President Muhammadu Buhari, and the 2023 Labour Party (LP) presidential candidate, Peter Obi, have expressed deep sorrow over the passing of Afenifere chieftain Ayo Adebajo.

In separate statements, they described Adebajo's death as a profound loss to Nigeria.

The New Daily Prime earlier reported that Adebajo passed away on Friday at the age of 96.

Tinubu said he received the news with immense sadness, emphasising that Nigeria had lost a political icon whose decades-long struggle for justice, democracy, and national unity had left an enduring legacy.

He noted that those who knew Adebajo drew wisdom from him and deeply valued the democratic principles he championed throughout his life.

“His principled voice, which resonated through decades of political activism, will be deeply missed. As a nation, we will miss his regular interventions in national affairs, which enriched our political discourse.

“Though we mourn his departure, we are also grateful to God for blessing him with a long, remarkable, purposeful life—96 years of unrelenting advocacy for progress and equity.

He described the lawyer, statesman, and politician as one of the last remaining nationalists and independence heroes who laid the foundation of our country.

Tinubu noted that Adebajo's courage shone brightest during moments of national crisis.



He recalled that when democracy was at risk following the annulment of the June 12, 1993, presidential election, Adebajo emerged as a leading voice against military dictatorship by joining the National Democratic Coalition (NADECO).

According to him, the late Adebajo played a pivotal role in galvanizing a movement that became the bedrock of the collective struggle to reclaim democracy.

“His unwavering commitment to truth and justice extended to my journey as a governorship candidate in 1999. Baba Adebajo's steadfast support was instrumental in my election as Governor of Lagos State under the platform of the Alliance for Democracy.

“Though our political paths diverged in later years, my respect and admiration for him never wavered. Until his death, I shared a deep personal bond with Baba Adebajo; he was like a father figure. I extend my heartfelt condolences to his family, the Afenifere family, the governors of the Southwest, past and present, and all Nigerians who shared his vision.

“Let us take solace in the enduring legacy of a man who dedicated his life to the service of others—a legacy that will

continue to inspire generations to come. May the soul of this great patriot find eternal rest, and may his ideals, which he so passionately envisioned, forever resonate in our country.”

Buhari, in a statement by his spokesperson Garba Shehu, described Adebajo as a distinguished political figure whose legacy spanned law, politics, and socio-cultural activism.

Expressing his condolences, Buhari extended sympathies to Adebajo's family, admirers, and the people and government of Ogun State.

He also prayed for the peaceful repose of the deceased and strength for those mourning his passing.

Similarly, Obi, former Anambra State governor a post on his X page, hailed Adebajo as a formidable pillar in the struggle for a new Nigeria.

The 63-year-old described his death as a profound loss to the nation and all who uphold justice, equity, and truth.

Obi further noted that as the leader of Afenifere, Adebajo remained a steadfast advocate for a united and progressive Nigeria.

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Tinubu arrives in Ethiopia for AU Summit

By Friday Omosola

President Bola Tinubu has arrived in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to attend the 38th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of African Union (AU) Heads of State and Government.

The New Daily Prime earlier reported that Tinubu left Abuja on 5 February for Paris, France, on a private visit before proceeding to Addis Ababa.

The President touched down in the Ethiopian capital yesterday night, where he was welcomed by Ethiopian deputy chief of protocol, Eshetu Legesse, Nigeria's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Yusuf Tuggar, and Ambassador Nasir Aminu, Nigeria's chargé d'affaires in Ethiopia.

Following his arrival, Ambassador Tuggar briefed President Tinubu on the summit's agenda and key diplomatic milestones for Nigeria, with discussions lasting into the early hours of Friday.

Among the achievements highlighted was the successful re-election of Ambassador



Bankole Adeoye as AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace, and Security.

Additionally, Nigeria retained its seat on the AU Peace and Security Council, reaffirming its influential role in regional stability.

Present at the briefing were several key ministers, including Wale Edun (Finance), Abubakar Badaru (Defence), Jumoke Odunwole (Trade and Investment), Festus Keyamo (Aviation), Muhammed Idris (Information and National Orientation), Balarabe Abbas Lawal (Environment), and Doris Uzoka-Anite (State for Finance).

This year's AU Summit, themed "Justice for Africans and People of African Descent Through Reparations," emphasizes the need for reparatory justice and efforts towards racial reconciliation.

President Tinubu is expected to address the AU Peace and Security Council's summit-level meeting, where deliberations will focus on pressing security concerns, particularly the intensifying conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

He is scheduled to return to Abuja on Monday, February 17.

Shettima hails NEDC's investment in education, green tech

By Friday Omosola

Vice President Kashim Shettima has praised the North East Development Commission (NEDC) for prioritising education and green technology, describing these efforts as transformative for the region's future.

He spoke yesterday at the Presidential Villa in Abuja, where he met with NEDC officials for a briefing on the Accelerated Senior Secondary Education Programme (ASSEP).

Shettima emphasised that posterity would judge the commission kindly for its commitment beyond infrastructure development.

“Education remains the greatest equalizer, allowing even the son of a peasant to rise to greatness. The ASSEP initiative is a game changer, bringing digital tools like Virtual Reality (VR) headsets into classrooms and revolutionizing learning for both students and teachers,” he said.

He highlighted ASSEP's ability to train hundreds of teachers across multiple institutions, positioning it as one of the commission's most impactful interventions.

“The world is investing in digital education because of its benefits, from personalized learning to improved knowledge retention. By leveraging VR and other technologies, we can make remote learning more accessible and effective,” Shettima added.

The Vice President urged greater



collaboration between the NEDC, the Federal Ministry of Regional Development, and other stakeholders to enhance efficiency.

Shettima also commended NEDC's leadership for maintaining financial discipline despite public pressure.

“Many expect the NEDC to spend recklessly, but its leadership has shown commitment to accountability and results,” he noted.

Emphasising the urgent need for educational investments, Shettima painted a stark picture of poverty levels in the North East, comparing it to some of the poorest regions in the world.

“If the North East were a country, it would be poorer than Chad and Niger. The region needs targeted interventions to break the cycle of poverty and insecurity,” he stressed.

Minister of State for Regional

Development, Uba Maigari Ahmadu, reaffirmed the administration's commitment to strengthening education through scholarships, infrastructure upgrades, and digital learning tools.

NEDC Managing Director Mohammed Alkali outlined the commission's education-focused initiatives, including teacher training programs, ICT training centres, and the establishment of mega schools in each senatorial district.

“We have formalized partnerships with institutions like the National Teachers Institute and set up dedicated training centres to ensure continuous learning and capacity building,” Alkali stated.

The meeting ended with the presentation of Virtual Reality headsets to Vice President Shettima, marking a symbolic step in the commission's push for digital education transformation.

FG forms task teams for property audit ground rent

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye



The Federal Ministry of Housing and Urban Development has announced the formation of task teams in each state to conduct audits of the Ministry's properties and lands, as well as manage the collection of ground rent.

Dr Shuaib Belgore, the Ministry's Permanent Secretary, disclosed this development on Friday after an interactive session with the Federal Controllers of Housing from all 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory. The session took place at the Ministry's headquarters in Abuja.

The newly formed task teams will consist of the Federal Controller in each state, state government representatives, and officials from the Federal Housing Authority, with the

Surveyor-General of the Federation serving as the Chairman. Belgore stressed that the initiative would improve oversight and efficiency in managing the Ministry's assets.

"Field audits and professional oversight will ensure quality and efficiency," Belgore stated, emphasising the importance of regular supervision and open communication between controllers to keep the Ministry updated on housing activities across states.

To support the task teams, Belgore confirmed that necessary resources would be provided, and a portion of the revenue from ground rent collection would be allocated for fieldwork and evaluation.

The Permanent Secretary also

acknowledged the human resource challenges within the Ministry, particularly as many officers approach retirement.

He revealed plans to bring in experienced professionals and introduce training and mentoring programmes, with Federal Controllers playing a pivotal role in mentoring new officers.

During the meeting, the Federal Controllers raised concerns about the need for contract renewals for facility managers overseeing housing projects, warning that failure to do so could expose these sites to vandalism.

The session was convened to strengthen collaboration between the Ministry's headquarters and its state-level offices.

Tinubu upgrades YABATECH to university

By Agency Reporter

President Bola Tinubu has approved the upgrade of Yaba College of Technology (YABATECH) to a university.

The announcement was made on Friday by the Minister of Education, Dr. Tunji Alausa, during a working visit to the college in Yaba, Lagos.

After inspecting and commissioning several projects at the institution, Dr. Alausa shared the long-awaited news in an interactive session with the management, staff, and students.

“The Rector mentioned earlier that the staff, students, and management of this college have been praying and fasting for it to be converted into a university. Somehow, you have ambushed me with this question, but I must let you know that when I discussed the issue with President Bola Tinubu, he did not hesitate in giving his approval. I am now waiting for the official memo and other necessary protocols from the appropriate quarters,” Alausa stated.

The Minister emphasized YABATECH’s legacy and academic strength, noting that with over 200 doctorate degree holders among its staff, the institution is more than ready to transition into a university.

“All credit goes to President Tinubu, who prioritizes education and is committed to providing the best opportunities for the youth, who are the future leaders of this country,” he added.

Commitment to Technical Education and Economic Growth

Dr. Alausa commended the college’s maintenance culture, which has kept its facilities in good condition despite their age.

“I commend your pursuit of excellence.



We need innovation and investment in technology for national development, and I assure you that the federal government will support you,” he affirmed.

He also highlighted that one of the key focuses of the Tinubu administration is technical and vocational education, with an added emphasis on entrepreneurship to curb the Japa Syndrome—a term used to describe the mass migration of Nigerians abroad in search of better opportunities.

“We are taking Artificial Intelligence, robotics, coding, and other technological advancements seriously. If our youths become proficient in these areas, they can work for global firms while residing in Nigeria and earning foreign exchange. This will help reduce the trend where people leave the country for menial jobs abroad,” he stated.

Dr. Alausa acknowledged that for over three decades, Nigeria shifted its focus away from technical and vocational education (TVET) and instead prioritized producing graduates who primarily sought white-collar jobs. However, he assured that this focus has

now changed.

“Countries in Europe and other parts of the world have successfully incorporated TVET as a core part of their education systems, and that is the direction we are heading. We need an education system that supports manufacturing, technological innovations, and entrepreneurship, which will, in turn, lead to a stronger private sector and overall national development,” he explained.

YABATECH’s Readiness for University Status

Earlier in the event, Rector Dr. Ibrahim Abdul reaffirmed that with over 200 PhD holders, YABATECH is fully prepared to become a university.

“While we pray for this transition, we don’t want to become just another university. We aim to be a university of Technical and Vocational Education, driving innovation, problem-solving, and societal advancement. We have the manpower, and we only need the government’s support to achieve this vision,” Dr. Abdul stated.

Shettima reaffirms FG's commitment to workers' welfare, wage reforms By Friday Omosola

Vice President Kashim Shettima has reiterated the federal government's (FG) dedication to improving workers' welfare, implementing wage reforms, and fostering inclusive economic policies.

He made this assertion yesterday during a meeting with the Director-General of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Gilbert Hougbo, alongside the Minister of Labour and Employment, Alhaji Muhammad Dinyadi.

Shettima praised Nigeria's labour movement for its contributions to national development, emphasising President Bola Tinubu's commitment to the well-being of Nigerian workers.

"We raised the minimum wage, and most states have started implementing it. Some have even gone beyond the N70,000 agreed at the national level. I commend the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) for their statesmanship and commitment to workers' rights," he stated.

Shettima highlighted Nigeria's youthful population as a major advantage in the evolving global workforce, stressing the need for the right policies to harness the demographic potential.

"One in four black men is a Nigerian, and by 2050, we will surpass the United States to become the third most populous nation on earth.

"The average age in Nigeria is 16.9 years. We have a demographic bulge, but



with the right policies, we can transform it into a demographic dividend rather than a demographic disaster," he noted.

Speaking on the impact of digital transformation, Shettima expressed confidence in the preparedness of Nigerian youth to adapt to emerging job markets.

"Our young people are digitally more literate than us. While some traditional jobs may disappear, new opportunities will emerge, and we will equip our youth with the skills to thrive in the evolving global economy," he added.

The Vice President assured the ILO delegation of Nigeria's commitment to inclusive labour policies, fair wages, and economic growth.

He reaffirmed the government's readiness to engage with labour unions for national progress.

"We are all patriots and partners in building a stronger Nigeria," he emphasised.

He also assured Hougbo that President

Tinubu would be briefed on the ILO's requests upon his return.

"The President is very much at home with the labour ecosystem," he said.

In his remarks, Hougbo appreciated Nigeria's support for his election as ILO DG, acknowledging the country's crucial role in mobilizing African constituents.

He noted that his visit had provided an opportunity to engage with social partners, including the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and the Trade Union Congress (TUC), describing their discussions as fruitful.

He urged the FG to expedite the reform of the labour code and sought the Vice President's support for the revival of the National Labour Advisory Council (NLAC) to enhance social dialogue among labour stakeholders.

"Given the dynamism of the labour market in Nigeria, its population, ambition, and role in Africa, having the NLAC revived will be beneficial to all," he stated.

Minister says 'Power Rangers' underway to safeguard electricity assets

By Dave Oludare Oso

In a bid to safeguard critical national electricity assets, the Federal Government has announced plans to establish a special security unit, dubbed "Power Rangers," the Minister of Interior, Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo has disclosed.

The minister, who announced the plans during an interview on Channels Television's Sunrise Daily on Friday, said, "We have decided now with the Minister of Power to have what we call the 'power rangers.'"

Tunji-Ojo explained that the new unit will be comprised of officers from the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) and tasked with preventing vandalism of power installations across the country.

Amid rising cases of power outages caused by vandalism, the minister said the government recognised the need for a sector-specific security solution.

"What we had before we came was the generalisation of national assets. But we said no, you cannot have one specific medication that can treat all illnesses.



"So you have to analyse every sector, the power sector, the water sector, the education sector, the health sector; and be able to create arms of Civil Defence under the same umbrella," he stated.

The minister added that the decision was influenced by the success of the Mines Marshalls, which were introduced by the government in March 2024 to address security issues in the mining sector.

Although the creation of the "Power Rangers" has been confirmed, no date has been set for their official unveiling or launch.

"We've already agreed on the

modus operandi and as I speak to you, the offices are being screened," he said.

He further explained that officers will be stationed in all 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory to ensure nationwide protection of power installations.

He said this is because "there is no state without a power infrastructure; it is just like the solid mineral sector.

"We are already in the process of onboarding those officers; we have to profile them, look at their capacity, look at their competence, look at their area of specialisation, look at a lot of considerations, even physical strength."

Sacked Lagos Speaker, Obasa sue Meranda, Lagos Assembly, seeks reinstatement

By Dave Oludare Oso

Former Lagos State House of Assembly Speaker, Mudashiru Obasa has taken his battle for reinstatement to the courts.

The Lagos politician has filed a suit at the Lagos State High Court in Ikeja, seeking to be immediately reinstated as the head of the state's House of Assembly.

The suit, filed on February 14, 2025, claims that Obasa was wrongly removed as Lagos Speaker. He has joined the current Speaker, Lasbat Mojisola Meranda, and the Assembly as defendants.



This development comes after weeks of failed political meetings aimed at resolving the crisis. The meetings, which were held between Lagos and Abuja, involved politicians loyal to President Bola Tinubu.

Despite the President's alleged call for lawmakers to return Obasa to office, the crisis has lingered.

Obasa's removal as Speaker on January 13, 2025, was a result of allegations of statutory and financial misconduct, including the controversial withdrawal of ₦43.5 billion for backup vehicles for members and other questionable expenditures.

67.3% candidates pass as NECO releases external SSCE results

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

The National Examination Council (NECO) has released the 2024 Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) External results of 84,799 candidates of which 57,114 scored five credits and above including English language and Mathematics, representing 67.35 percent.

NECO also warned that any supervisor caught involved in exam malpractice will not only be blacklisted, but their names will also be circulated to other exam bodies, including the Joint



Admission and Matriculation Board, JAMB.

The Registrar and Chief Executive Officer of NECO, Prof Dantani Ibrahim Wushishi,

who made this disclosure at organization's headquarters in Minna, said the total number of candidates comprised 44,227 (52.21%) male and 40,522 (47.78%) female.

He explained that the result was released 62 days after the last paper of a total of 29 subjects.

Wushishi disclosed that a total 6,160 candidates were booked for various forms of malpractice as against 8,518 in 2023, a reduction by 27.7 percent.

Arresting my father would be the biggest mistake, Bashir el-Rufai warns

By Dave Oludare Oso

Bashir el-Rufai, son of former Kaduna State governor, Nasir el-Rufai, has warned the federal government that arresting his father would be their biggest mistake.

He gave the warning via a post on social media platform X.

His comments have sparked controversy, especially as he appeared to reference President Bola Tinubu by calling him “Pablo Escobar,” a name associated with the infamous Colombian drug lord.

The warning comes amid speculation that the federal government, through the office of the National Security Adviser (NSA), Nuhu Ribadu is planning to arrest Nasir el-Rufai.

The former governor, who was once a close ally of Tinubu, has been at odds with the administration since his ministerial nomination was rejected by the Senate.



Reports have suggested that his growing criticism of the government has put him in the spotlight for possible political retaliation.

Reacting to these reports, the younger el-Rufai took to X to issue a warning, saying, “Na the biggest mistake Pablo Escobar & his henchmen will make.”

Although he did not mention President Tinubu by name, many social media users interpreted the statement as a direct attack

on the president, given the long-standing controversy surrounding Tinubu’s past involvement in a U.S. narcotics case.

In the 1990s, Tinubu was linked to a drug-related case in the United States, which led to the forfeiture of \$460,000 to U.S. authorities. His political opponents have often used this case against him, despite his insistence that he was never convicted of any crime.

Afenifere Chieftain Adebajo dies at 96

By Friday Omosola

Afenifere chieftain, Pa Ayo Adebajo, has passed away.

In a statement released by his family, they confirmed that he died peacefully on Friday morning at his residence in Lekki, Lagos, at the age of 96.

The family stated that consultations are ongoing with his friends, associates, and various interest groups across Nigeria and beyond to finalize arrangements for a befitting funeral.

They assured that burial details would be communicated in due course.

Additionally, they announced that a



condolence register has been opened at his Lagos residence (8, Ayo Adebajo Close, Lekki Phase 1) and his country home in Isanya Ogbo, near Ijebu Ode, Ogun State.

The statement partly reads: “With a heart full of gratitude for a selfless life spent in

the service of God, the nation and humanity, we announce the passing on of our beloved patriarch, Chief Samuel Ayodele Adebajo.

“He died peacefully this morning, Friday, February 14, 2025 at his Lekki, Lagos Nigeria home at the age of 96.

“The foremost nationalist, elder statesman, distinguished lawyer, very distinct politician, apostle of true federalism, former organising secretary of Action Group and the national leader of Afenifere is survived by his 94 year-old wife, Chief Christy Ayo-Adebajo, children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Nigeria signs gas pipeline deal with Algeria, Niger Republic

By Dave Oludare Oso

Nigeria has signed a pipeline deal which would transport billions of cubic metres of gas 4,128 kilometres (2,565 miles) from Nigeria in West Africa through Niger and on to Algeria.

Officials from the three countries signed the deal in Algiers, Algeria's capital, aimed at accelerating the development of a vast natural gas pipeline toward Europe on Friday.

The Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline (TSGP) deal would also see the gas pumped through the undersea Mediterranean pipeline, Transmed to Italy, or loaded onto liquefied natural gas tankers for export.



“required means for accelerating the development of this major project in a timely manner and at competitive costs,” Algerian Energy Minister Mohamed Arkab said.

While no update was given for the pipeline's cost, which was estimated at launch at \$10 billion, the project has been given new urgency by a surge in gas demand worldwide and soaring prices sparked by Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

The contracts centred on “an update of the feasibility study” and other issues, including non-disclosure agreements among their state energy companies.

The feasibility update will lay out the

Canada speaks on visa denial to Nigeria's defence chief

By Dave Oludare Oso

The Canadian High Commission in Nigeria has responded to remarks made by the Chief of Defence Staff, General Christopher Musa, regarding the alleged denial of visas to him and other top military officers by the Canadian embassy.

According to reports, General Musa and other senior military officials were scheduled to travel to Canada on Wednesday but were denied visas the day before.

Musa recounted the disappointing experience on Thursday while delivering a lecture at the maiden event of the National Association of the Institute for Security Studies (AANISS) in Abuja.

“Every disappointment is a blessing.



Yesterday (Wednesday), I was supposed to be in Canada for an event honoring our veterans, particularly those injured in battle, but we were denied visas,” he stated.

The visa denial sparked strong reactions, including criticism from the National Security Adviser (NSA), Nuhu Ribadu, who bluntly declared that Canada “can go

to hell” for the decision. Similarly, the Minister of Interior, Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo, condemned the move as an act of disrespect toward Nigeria.

However, in a brief statement posted on its official X handle on Friday, the Canadian High Commission stated that, for privacy reasons, it would not comment on the visa applications of the individuals involved.

“The High Commission of Canada in Nigeria is aware of media reports related to planned travel to Canada by senior officials.

“However, for privacy reasons, we are unable to provide any comment on the status of visa applications of specific individuals,” it reads.

JAMB to go tough on underage applicants, says Oloyede

By Alade Adisa

“We will impose some other penalty on them, that it will have been better for them to have stayed for their time, because they are going to waste their money.” – Prof. Ishaq

The Registrar of the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), Prof. Ishaq Oloyede, has announced that there will be strict penalties for underage candidates participating in the ongoing 2025 Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) registration.

While monitoring the registration process across various centers in Lagos on Friday, Oloyede revealed that out of the 780,202 candidates registered so far, 11,512 were underage.

He stated that although JAMB allows



exceptionally brilliant students below the age of 16 to register, this provision has been abused.

“We will impose penalties on them, making it clear that waiting for their appropriate time would have been better. Many of them are simply wasting their money,” Oloyede said.

He further expressed concern over the

growing number of underage applicants.

“By today alone, we have recorded 443 underage candidates. As of this morning, we have registered 18,813 candidates, and out of this number, 443 are underage. Initially, we expected around 30 to 40 underage candidates, but now we have 11,512, which clearly indicates a trend of deceit.”

No Extension for UTME Registration

The JAMB registrar also confirmed that the UTME registration has been seamless, and there will be no extension.

“An extension will not happen because there is no issue with the process. Students are registering daily, surpassing our initial projections. These students are set to proceed to universities.”

IGP requests closed-door Senate probe on missing firearms

By Dave Oludare Oso

The Inspector General of Police (IGP), Kayode Egbetokun has requested that the Senate conduct its investigation into the disappearance of 3,907 firearms behind closed doors, citing national security concerns.

In a letter addressed to Senate President Godswill Akpabio, Egbetokun expressed appreciation for the Legislature’s commitment to a thorough probe but stressed the need for confidentiality to prevent misinformation and security risks.

He said; “We appreciate the Senate committee’s efforts in investigating the alleged missing firearms. However, we urge that future hearings on sensitive security matters be held in camera to avoid creating a wrong impression among



Nigerians and the international community.”

The IGP assured lawmakers of his commitment to cooperation, emphasising the importance of collaboration between the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) and the National Assembly to enhance national security and public safety.

Senate President Akpabio acknowledged the IGP’s request, affirming that investigations would proceed both internally within the police and externally by the Senate.

The controversy surrounding the missing firearms stems from the 2019 Audit Report by the Office of the Auditor General of the Federation (AuGF), which revealed that as of January 2020, the NPF had failed to account for 3,907 assault rifles.

During a Senate committee hearing, representatives from the Auditor General’s office presented the findings, prompting intense scrutiny from lawmakers. The police delegation, led by AIG Suleiman Abdul, struggled to provide satisfactory explanations for the missing weapons.

UNIZIK expels student who assaulted lecturer over TikTok video

By Friday Omosola

Nnamdi Azikiwe University (UNIZIK), Awka, has expelled Goddy-Mbakwe Chimamaka Precious for allegedly assaulting a lecturer from the Department of Theatre and Film Studies.

The New Daily Prime gathered that the incident, which gained widespread attention on social media, occurred when Precious reportedly attacked Dr Chukwudi Okoye after he interrupted her TikTok recording on campus.

The expulsion followed a recommendation from the Student Disciplinary Committee and was announced in a statement signed by the institution's Acting Registrar,



Victor Modebelu.

The university found Precious' actions to be a serious violation of its disciplinary regulations.

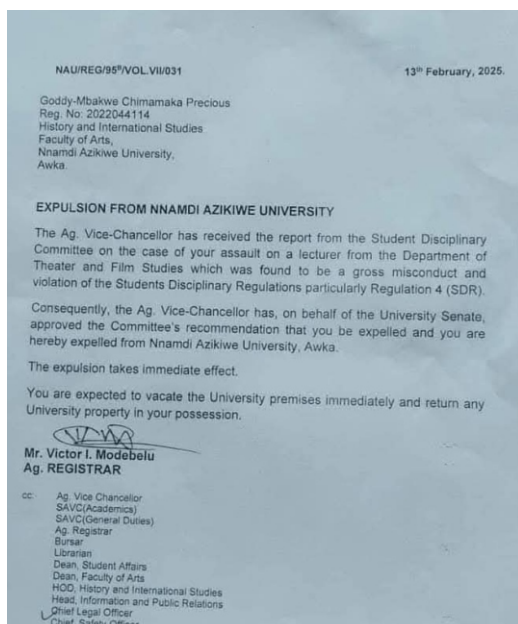
Effective immediately, Precious has been ordered to vacate the campus and return any university property in her possession.

Modebelu emphasised that the decision underscores UNIZIK's commitment to maintaining discipline and addressing rising concerns over student misconduct.

The statement read: "The Ag. Vice-Chancellor has received the report from the Student Disciplinary Committee on the

case of your assault on a lecturer from the Department of Theater and Film Studies which was found to be a gross misconduct and violation of the Students Disciplinary Regulations, particularly Regulation 4 (SOR) Consequently, the Ag Vice-Chancellor has, on behalf of the University Senate, approved the Committee's recommendation that you be expelled and you are hereby expelled from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

"The expulsion takes immediate effect. You are expected to vacate the University premises immediately and return any University property In your possession."



Buhari pardoned Boko Haram fighters, Tinubu can release Kanu - Ohanaeze

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

The Igbo socio-cultural and political group, Ohanaeze Ndigbo, has defended calls for President Bola Tinubu to release the detained leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Nnamdi Kanu, stating that there is nothing wrong with such demands.

Ohanaeze argued that if former President Muhammadu Buhari could pardon thousands of Boko Haram fighters through a government rehabilitation program, then President Tinubu also has the power to grant Kanu's release. In a statement on Friday, the group's Deputy President General, Mazi Okechukwu Isiguzoro, described Kanu as a "prisoner of conscience."

According to reports, Ohanaeze's statement comes in response to an earlier declaration by the Coalition of Northern Groups (CNG), which criticized political figures, including the 2023 Labour Party (LP) presidential candidate, Peter Obi, for advocating Kanu's release.

CNG's National Coordinator, Jamilu Aliyu, accused Obi of promoting ethnic interests by supporting Kanu and warned northern voters against backing any politician associated with IPOB, arguing that such alliances disregard the suffering of Nigerians affected by the group's activities.

However, in his response on Friday, Isiguzoro condemned CNG's stance, accusing the coalition of pursuing a divisive northern agenda that could destabilize Nigeria.

"In a moment of profound concern for our collective national integrity and the protection of all Nigerian citizens, Ohanaeze Ndigbo—the apex sociocultural organization representing the Igbo people—unequivocally condemns the recent vitriol emanating from the Coalition of Northern Groups (CNG).

"This misguided barrage of incendiary rhetoric directed at the Igbo nation constitutes an affront not only to our dignity but to the social fabric of Nigeria. It is a calculated ploy, a part of a sinister



Northern agenda, aimed expressly at destabilizing the fragile harmony that continues to characterize our multicultural society.

"The CNG's assertion that all Igbo leaders should be classified as terrorists because they are advocating for a political resolution regarding the release of Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, a man best described as a prisoner of conscience, is a grave mischaracterization that seeks to instigate division and unrest. This campaign against prominent Igbo figures is conspicuously timed, coinciding with increased insecurity in the Southeast, largely a consequence of the unchecked violence perpetrated by Fulani herdsmen during the previous administration under Muhammadu Buhari.

"It is imperative to recall the historical context—under Buhari's leadership, over 9,800 Boko Haram terrorists were released through purported rehabilitation programs; a controversial policy that only served to exacerbate the rampant insurgency plaguing the Northern region, catapulting terrorism incidents from two states to fifteen. This context raises questions regarding the motives of those now seeking to scapegoat the Igbo people amidst the chaos that continues to bedevil our nation."

Speaking further, Ohanaeze warned against destabilizing the government of President Tinubu just like that of former President Goodluck Jonathan was undermined for selfish reasons.

"Ohanaeze Ndigbo finds the recent attacks by the CNG to be not only unfounded but also emblematic of the broader schemes woven by Northern opposition leaders to use the Igbo people as political pawns in destabilizing the Tinubu administration.

"Such tactics are reminiscent of the cynical manoeuvres employed to undermine former President Goodluck Jonathan, and it is with this historical awareness that we view the current machinations of the CNG. This narrative, designed to provoke conflict between communities, is simplistic and transparent in its motivation," he said.

The statement expressed belief that President Tinubu would listen to appeals from the Igbo community and release Nnamdi Kanu.

"As we witness these troubling developments, we stand firm in our belief that President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, a duly elected leader and a man of discernment, will recognize the importance of fostering peace and understanding among the diverse ethnic groups that make up our nation. We trust that he will honour the overtures from the Igbo community and recognize Mazi Nnamdi Kanu's situation for what it truly is—an issue of conscience rather than hostility," Isiguzoro added.

Ohanaeze further appealed to the National Security Adviser, Nuhu Ribadu, and the Minister of State for Defence, Bello Matawalle, to caution the CNG against making provocative remarks against other regions and ethnicities in Nigeria.

"We therefore call upon the National Security Adviser, Nuhu Ribadu, and the Minister of State for Defence, Bello Matawalle, to provide guidance to the CNG. We urge them to adopt a stance rooted in diplomacy rather than divisiveness, focusing their efforts on alleviating the very real problems of insurgency and banditry that plague the North, rather than directing incendiary rhetoric towards a group that seeks only peaceful solutions.

PDP forum predicts return of defectors, says party remains strong

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaley

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Forum of Former Speakers has forecasted the return of several politicians who left the party in recent years to join other political platforms.

The Forum reiterated that the PDP remains the most widely accepted, well-organised, and best-positioned party to tackle Nigeria's challenges.

This statement was made on Friday, February 14, after a meeting with the PDP minority leadership in the House of Representatives at the National Assembly Complex in Abuja.

Key attendees included House Minority Leader, Kingsley Chinda; Minority Whip, Ali Isa; Forum Chairman Inuwa Garba; and Secretary, Williams Etor, among others.

Hon. Garba, speaking to journalists after the meeting, expressed confidence that some politicians who defected to the All Progressives Congress (APC) would soon return to the PDP.

He described many defections as illegal, citing constitutional breaches, and stressed that such moves were often driven by personal interests rather than national concerns.



“We believe some of these defections are illegal as they constitute constitutional breaches. Some politicians do not consider what affects their people or the nation; they focus only on personal interests,” Garba said, adding that the party was confident in its ability to regain support.

Garba also pointed out that despite defections, the voters of those who left remained loyal to the party's values.

“You cannot stop some individuals from switching political parties. However, very soon, you will witness a wave of defections back to the PDP because Nigerians are now better informed and aware of what is best for them and the nation,” he added.

He also emphasised that any

politician with credibility today had, at some point, been groomed by the PDP, which he described as the “most widely spread party in Africa.”

He accused the ruling APC of attempting to disrupt the political process, but insisted that such efforts would ultimately fail.

The Forum also urged PDP members to remain steadfast and united in the face of the nation's challenges, calling on party leaders to maintain faith in ongoing efforts to strengthen and unify the party.

This follows recent defections from the PDP, including Senator Ned Nwoko and House of Representatives member Amos Magaji, who joined the APC, raising concerns about the PDP's ability to challenge the ruling party in the 2027 elections.

Valentine's Day: This will be my last one unmarried – DJ Cuppy

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigerian DJ Florence Ifeoluwa Otedola, aka DJ Cuppy, confidently declares this year's Valentine's Day will be her last as an unmarried woman.

Taking to social media, the 32-year-old billionaire heiress expressed her belief that by next year, she will be celebrating the occasion with a husband. She shared her thoughts on Friday via her official X handle, posting a heartfelt message alongside a hopeful prayer.

“Happy #ValentinesDay to me! Manifesting that this is my last one unmarried. Lord, do your thing!” she wrote.

Her post quickly sparked reactions from fans and followers. While some admirers took the opportunity to profess their love, others offered unsolicited advice on relationships and marriage.

Social Media Reactions

DJ Cuppy's post did not go unnoticed, as netizens flooded the comment section with mixed opinions. Some fans showered her with admiration, expressing their willingness to be her future spouse. Others took a more critical approach, advising her to be patient and trust the timing of love.



One user humorously responded, “Cuppy, just say the word, and I’ll marry you today.” Another commenter wrote, “Marriage is not a race; focus on finding the right person, not just the timing.”

DJ Cuppy's love life and public expectations

Over the years, DJ Cuppy has been open about her romantic journey. In 2022, she got engaged to British boxer Ryan Taylor. However, the relationship eventually ended, and she has since embraced singlehood while remaining hopeful about love.

As the daughter of billionaire businessman Femi Otedola, DJ Cuppy is no stranger to public scrutiny. Many fans often speculate about her love life, making her romantic choices a frequent topic of

discussion. Despite this, she continues to share her personal experiences and aspirations with her followers.

Valentine's Day: A celebration of love

Valentine's Day, observed annually on February 14, is a time when people around the world celebrate love and affection. While many couples mark the occasion with romantic gestures, others, like Cuppy, use the day as an opportunity for self-reflection and hopeful manifestations.

Her declaration has once again placed her in the spotlight, fueling conversations about love, marriage, and societal expectations. Whether or not her wish comes true by next year, one thing remains clear—DJ Cuppy is determined to keep manifesting her dreams.

2baba's family declares son missing, seeks DSS help

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

The family of Nigerian music star 2Baba has expressed deep concern over his sudden disappearance and has called on the DSS to intervene and help locate him.

They have called on the Department of State Services (DSS) to intervene and help locate him.

Proposal to lawmaker sparks controversy

The situation escalated after 2Baba recently proposed to his new lover, Natasha Osawaru, a lawmaker in Edo State. A viral video on social media captured the proposal, sparking reactions from fans and family members alike.

Mother strongly opposes the union

According to reports, 2Baba's mother is against the relationship. She has publicly urged Natasha to stay away from her son. In a bold statement, she called out the lawmaker, making it clear that she does not support the union.

Singer goes missing amidst family disputes

The singer, known for his legendary contributions to Nigerian music, has not been seen or heard from since the controversy began. His family is



deeply worried and believes his sudden disappearance is unusual.

Fans demand answers on social media

Fans and industry insiders have also expressed their concerns, with many taking to social media to demand answers. Some speculate that the family conflict might be linked to his whereabouts, while others fear something more serious.

DSS yet to respond to family's plea

The DSS has yet to release an official statement regarding the matter. However, sources close to the family reveal that they are pressing for a formal investigation.

2Baba's legacy and public scrutiny

2Baba, whose real name is Innocent Idibia, has been a household name in Nigeria's entertainment industry for decades. He rose to fame with hit songs and has remained a respected figure in Afrobeat music. His personal life, however, has often been a topic of public debate.

Hopes for a safe return

As the search continues, fans and well-wishers hope for his safe return. Many are eager for clarity on what led to his disappearance and whether it is connected to his recent engagement.

The coming days may reveal more details about the situation. For now, the music world and his family await news, hoping for a positive outcome.

Valentine's night will ruin lives — Mike Bamiloje warns

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Founder of Mount Zion Drama Ministry, Mike Bamiloje, has issued a strong warning about the dangers lurking on Valentine's night.

He cautioned that many young girls could see their destinies and fortunes destroyed before the night ends.

Bamiloje made this statement on Friday as the world marked Valentine's Day, a celebration of love and affection observed annually on February 14.

While many engage in romantic gestures, he expressed concerns about the way the occasion is celebrated in Nigeria.

A night of spiritual and physical exploitation

The drama evangelist sounded the alarm, warning that some young women could be lured into dangerous situations. He suggested that money ritualists might exploit them, while some men's bodily fluids could be collected for sinister purposes.

Sharing his message on Instagram, he wrote in capital letters: "WE WILL KEEP SHOUTING!!!!!!!" His post painted a grim picture of the night's potential dangers.



According to him, many individuals would unknowingly share their beds with spirits and demonic entities disguised as lovers. These encounters, he warned, could lead to spiritual covenants and vows with dark forces.

"Blood will be spilled tonight," he declared. "Covenant Beds will be stained with blood, and men's fluids will be surrendered at shrines in the evil kingdom."

A grim warning for the morning after

Bamiloje emphasized that the consequences of reckless behavior on Valentine's night could be severe. He warned that many young girls might wake up to a harsh reality—stripped of their destinies, fortunes, and life's meaning.

"By tomorrow morning, many will wake up feeling empty, shallow, and lost," he wrote.

His warning reflects deep concerns about the influence of spiritual forces and the dangers of engaging in careless romantic encounters.

A call for caution

Bamiloje's message is not the first of its kind. Over the years, he has consistently used his platform to caution young people against engaging in activities that could have lasting consequences.

His latest warning serves as a reminder for individuals to remain vigilant and make wise choices, especially on nights like Valentine's Day when emotions run high, and risks are often overlooked.

Why I had nose surgery – Zicsaloma

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Popular skit maker and actor Zicsaloma has shared a new update on his rhinoplasty recovery, revealing his reasons for the surgery and addressing misconceptions.

In a new video, he opened up about his decision to have the surgery and addressed misconceptions surrounding the procedure.

Battling insecurities since childhood

Zicsaloma revealed that his struggles with self-image started at a young age. He recalled how his siblings and others often mocked the size of his nose, making him feel self-conscious.

“My siblings constantly insulted my nose, calling it too big and ugly. Among us, I was the only one with this type of nose. It made me feel different,” he shared.

These comments left a lasting impact on his confidence. For years, he wanted to reshape his nose but never had the chance—until recently.

Recovery progress and visible changes

Now, three weeks after surgery, Zicsaloma says he is healing well. He noted a significant improvement compared to his last update, which was recorded just five days after the operation.

“This is three weeks post-op. I’ll take off this cast so you can see how well



my nose has healed. If you noticed, my face is less swollen. The last video I posted was five days after my surgery, and my face was still very swollen. The swelling will continue to reduce,” he explained.

Pleased with the results, he showcased his new nose, adding that it will refine further as time goes on.

Clarifying misconceptions about rhinoplasty

Addressing critics, Zicsaloma dismissed the idea that rhinoplasty is a dangerous or unnecessary procedure. He emphasized that people choose the surgery for different reasons—some for aesthetic improvements, others for medical benefits.

“Some of you don’t even know what rhinoplasty is. Some think it’s a death sentence. People undergo it for different reasons—some for aesthetics, like me, and others for medical reasons, such as breathing issues,” he said.

He also admitted that he had always wished he could alter his nose from a young age. “I’ve always had a very flat nose, and if I could have reconstructed it as a child, I would have.”

Surgery cost and hospital collaboration

Since news of his surgery broke, many fans have speculated about its cost. In his latest video, Zicsaloma addressed these rumors and clarified how the procedure was funded.

“I want the speculation to continue, but for transparency, I didn’t pay for the procedure. It was a collaboration between me and a hospital,” he revealed.

By openly discussing his experience, the comedian hopes to normalize cosmetic surgery and encourage people to make choices that boost their confidence. With his recovery progressing well, Zicsaloma remains excited about his transformation and the journey ahead.

I'm not rebranding anytime soon

– Ruger By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigerian singer Michael Adebayo Olayinka, better known as Ruger, has made it clear that he has no plans to change his signature style or rebrand anytime soon.

Addressing fans during a recent Instagram Live session, the artist emphasized that his music reflects his artistry and personal experiences.

Ruger has built a reputation for his unique sound, catchy melodies, and lyrics that often revolve around love, heartbreak, and relationships. While some artists adjust their music to fit changing industry trends, Ruger remains steadfast in his approach. He insists that his style is intentional and will not be altered to satisfy critics or public opinion.

The 'Heartbreak Master' stays true to his craft

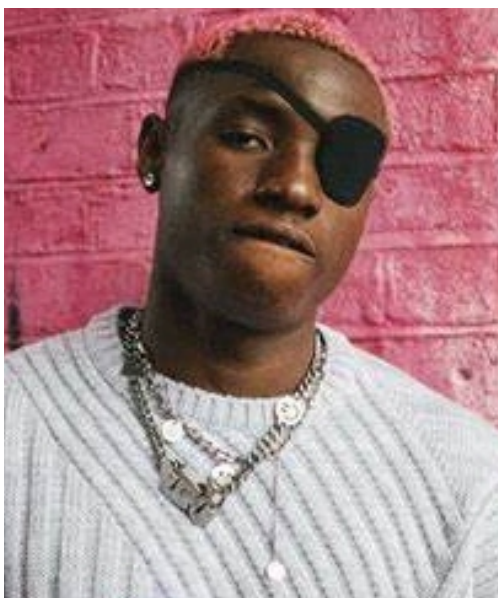
Ruger, widely recognized for his heartbreak-themed songs, confidently declared himself the "heartbreak master" and "toxic relationship master." He assured fans that his lyrics are part of his artistic vision and are not meant to promote negativity or toxic behavior.

"I'm not undergoing any rebranding anytime soon," Ruger stated. "I am the heartbreak master, the toxic relationship master, the scattered relationship master. So, you can't change who I am."

His statement reinforces his commitment to his craft, showing that he is not willing to compromise his authenticity. Many fans appreciate his ability to capture the emotional highs and lows of relationships in his music, making his songs relatable and engaging.

Defending his lyrics and artistic identity

Despite the success of his music, some critics have expressed concerns about the themes in his lyrics. His songs often touch on heartbreak, love, and complicated



relationships, leading some to question whether he promotes toxic love stories. However, Ruger dismissed these claims, insisting that his lyrics are simply a reflection of his storytelling ability.

He made it clear that, despite the way his music is perceived, he deeply respects and values women. He emphasized that his personal relationships are built on kindness, love, and mutual respect.

"People may have opinions about my lyrics, but that doesn't define who I am," Ruger said. "I love women. Women know that I love them. I love women with my whole heart. I'm very nice and sweet to women. Every woman I have been with knows that I am nice and sweet to them."

With these words, Ruger reassured his fans that his music does not reflect his real-life behavior. Instead, it serves as an artistic expression, allowing him to explore different emotions and perspectives through his songwriting.

Commitment to his signature sound

Ruger's rise to fame has been marked by his distinct sound, eye patch, and confident persona. His songs often explore themes of love, heartbreak, and relationships, resonating with a wide audience. His bold

lyrics and unapologetic approach have helped him carve out a unique space in the Nigerian music industry.

In an era where many artists reinvent themselves to stay relevant, Ruger remains committed to his signature sound. His dedication to authenticity has earned him a loyal fan base that appreciates his consistency and originality.

Fans and critics react

Over the years, Ruger has built a strong fan base that appreciates his candid storytelling. His music has connected with listeners who have experienced heartbreak and complicated relationships, making his songs deeply relatable.

However, his lyrical themes have also sparked debates. Some critics argue that his focus on heartbreak and toxic relationships could influence young listeners negatively. Others, however, see his music as a reflection of real-life experiences that many people go through.

Despite the mixed reactions, Ruger continues to thrive in the Afrobeats industry. His ability to spark conversations through his music proves that he has made a lasting impact. Whether people love or criticize his lyrics, they cannot ignore his presence in the industry.

What's next for Ruger?

As Ruger's career progresses, it remains to be seen whether he will evolve or experiment with new sounds. However, for now, he is standing his ground and embracing his identity.

His confidence in his artistic direction suggests that fans can expect more of the same bold, heartfelt music in the future. He has shown that he is not afraid to defend his craft and will continue making music that stays true to his personality and experiences.

Leave my son — 2Baba's mother begs Edo lawmaker

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Rose Idibia, the mother of Nigerian music star 2Baba, has publicly urged Edo lawmaker Natasha Osawuru to stay away from her son.

Her plea follows the release of a viral video showing the singer proposing to Osawuru.

Mother claims son is not in his right mind

In a newly surfaced video, Rose expressed concern over 2Baba's actions, suggesting he is not in the right state of mind due to his ongoing divorce from actress Annie Idibia. She insisted that his recent behavior was out of character and urged Osawuru to step back.

An emotional plea to Nigerian mothers

Addressing Nigerians, Rose made an emotional appeal for support. She called on mothers across the country to help her intervene in the situation.

“Good evening, Nigerians. My name is Mrs. Rose Idibia, the mother of 2Baba,” she said in the video. “This message is for Miss Natasha Osawuru of Edo State. I’m calling on all mothers in Nigeria to help me beg her to free my son. My son is going through a divorce, and he’s clearly not himself right now. I know my son—this is not him.”



Mixed reactions from the public
The video quickly gained attention online, sparking mixed reactions from fans. Some expressed sympathy for Rose, acknowledging the emotional toll of a high-profile divorce. Others questioned the authenticity of the proposal video, with some suggesting it could be a publicity stunt or a misunderstanding.

Natasha Osawuru remains silent
So far, Natasha Osawuru has not responded to the plea. Despite growing public interest, the lawmaker has remained silent on the issue.

2Baba's ongoing marriage struggles

2Baba, a veteran of the Nigerian music industry, has not addressed the controversy either. The singer, known for his hit songs and long-standing career, has been in the

spotlight for both his music and personal life.

His marriage to Annie Idibia has faced challenges over the years, with reports of infidelity and family conflicts surfacing multiple times.

What happens next?

Fans and industry observers are now watching closely to see how the situation unfolds. Some believe Rose's intervention could influence 2Baba's next move, while others think the matter is a private family issue that should not be played out in public.

For now, the singer's silence leaves more questions than answers. Will he clarify his relationship with Osawuru? Is his mother's concern justified? As speculation grows, Nigerians continue to debate the unfolding drama.

Portable goes gaga over baby mama's Valentine's post to boyfriend

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Controversial singer, Portable has lashed out at his baby mama, Honey Berry, following her public display of affection with her new boyfriend on Valentine's Day.

It would be recalled that the duo went their separate ways some time ago after a series of public disagreements despite having a child together.

In the spirit of Valentine's Day, Honey Berry shared a romantic video with her new man, captioning it: "My love for you is a journey, starting at forever and ending at never... I love you baby ❤️❤️."

The post didn't sit well with Portable, who is currently running from the Ogun



State government. The singer took to the comment section, expressing his frustration in a series of heated remarks.

He wrote:

"Na trend you wan trend abi you wan die. You dey spoil your son, tomorrow him go swear for you because him papa no do you bad, na you just be aja ADUGBO. God go shame you ALAKADA. Omo oni iya meta, sha bring my son."

Portable further accused Honey Berry of being ungrateful despite his support for her, adding:

"All I do for you. I help you when you come to me. Pain full your body as you don lose your helper. Remove my name from your name, you're nothing. Ajalongbo, house don full . You dey my DM dey thank me."

Afolabi-Brown slams Natasha Osawaru over 2Baba romance

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Morayo Afolabi-Brown criticises Edo lawmaker Natasha Osawaru for allegedly dating Nigerian music star 2Baba, questioning her self-esteem and choices.

Speaking on TVC's Your View, Morayo questioned Natasha's decision, suggesting it reflects low self-esteem.

She expressed disbelief that a public figure like Natasha would consider a relationship with 2Baba, given his history of multiple relationships and children with different women. According to Morayo, Natasha should reconsider her choices and prioritize self-respect over emotions.

"Does She Not See the Red Flags?"

During the discussion, Morayo did not hold back her opinion. She argued that



2Baba's past should be enough to make Natasha rethink any romantic involvement with him.

"Doesn't it reek of low self-esteem to date somebody like 2Baba? How do you, a sitting lawmaker, abandon your core self and fall in love with a man who has been in so much drama?" she questioned.

Morayo went on to say that 2Baba's history should serve as a warning. She

insisted that Natasha should have weighed the consequences before allowing herself to be emotionally involved.

"For me, I'm like, 'Aunty, are you okay? Are you seeing with your two eyes?' This man has enough baggage for you to step back and say, 'No, I'm not going there.'"

A Double Standard in Relationships
The TV host also highlighted what she sees as gender bias in public perception. She pointed out that if a woman had the same history as 2Baba, society would not be as forgiving.

"If you put a woman in 2Baba's shoes, would she ever get away with it? Never. But here he is, moving on and possibly remarrying without consequences," Morayo said.

Nedu exits The Honest Bunch Podcast amid rising controversy

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Popular media personality Chinedu Ani, widely known as Nedu, has announced his sudden departure as the host of The Honest Bunch Podcast.

His exit follows a heated dispute with former friend and social media commentator, VeryDarkMan, who accused him of being a “kiss and tell” personality.

In a statement, Nedu described the past week as overwhelming, marked by intense public scrutiny and personal attacks.

He explained that while he remained committed to open discussions, the relentless negativity had taken a toll on his well-being. As a result, he decided to step down in hopes of ending the controversy and allowing the podcast to continue without distractions.

Nedu breaks his silence

Reflecting on his decision, Nedu said hosting the podcast had been an incredible experience, filled with bold discussions and honest conversations. However, he admitted that the pressures surrounding his role had become unbearable.

“The past week has given me a lot to think about,” he wrote. “The Honest Bunch Podcast was built on fearless conversations and tackling difficult topics. But with that responsibility has come an overwhelming level of scrutiny, antagonism, and baseless accusations. These have begun to take a personal toll on me.”

Acknowledging the impact of recent events, he said stepping away was a necessary decision.



“This is not something I take lightly, but I believe it is the right step—for my peace of mind, my family, and the integrity of the show itself.”

Calls for a positive shift

Nedu emphasized that while he remains committed to meaningful dialogue, the toxic atmosphere surrounding his name has made it clear that stepping back is the best option. He expressed hope that his exit would put an end to the negativity and allow the show to continue thriving.

“I have always believed in honest conversations,” he continued. “But when those conversations lead to relentless attacks and misrepresentation, it’s clear that taking a step back is the best path forward.”

Despite his departure, Nedu reassured his supporters that his passion for thought-provoking discussions remains intact. He hinted at future opportunities that align with his values and thanked everyone who had supported him throughout his journey.

“I wish The Honest Bunch Podcast continued success. I am grateful for everyone who has been part of this

journey with me,” he concluded.

Mixed reactions from fans

Nedu’s sudden resignation has sparked mixed reactions among fans and followers. Some expressed disappointment, saying his presence on the podcast added depth and honesty to discussions. Others applauded his decision, commending him for prioritizing his well-being.

“This is sad news. Nedu was the heart of the podcast,” one fan wrote. “But I respect his decision. Mental health matters.”

Another supporter shared a different perspective: “This was bound to happen. The drama was becoming too much. It’s good he’s stepping back before things get worse.”

The controversy surrounding Nedu’s exit has reignited conversations about the challenges public figures face in maintaining a balance between transparency and privacy. While some argue that being in the spotlight comes with inevitable scrutiny, others believe personal well-being should always come first.

Portable shares photo from hiding, declares faith amid struggles

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigerian singer Portable has resurfaced online, sharing a defiant message from an undisclosed location after his recent clash with the Ogun State government.

The controversial artist, known for his outspoken nature, posted a photo on Instagram, expressing his resilience and unwavering faith despite his ongoing troubles.

“Pain makes me stronger”

In his post, Portable declared that hardship only fuels his strength. He stated that challenges make him stronger, while prayers elevate him. He reassured his fans that no setback could break him.

“Pain makes me stronger. Prayer makes me bigger. Life goes on,” he wrote.

Unshaken faith in God

The singer also reaffirmed his deep faith in God, referencing Eledumare, a Yoruba term for the Almighty. He emphasized his belief that divine power guides him through tough times.

“God never dies. I believe in Eledumare,” he declared.

“I am more important to Nigeria”



Despite facing legal and political troubles, Portable remained confident in his significance to Nigeria. He suggested that his contributions outweighed any opposition against him.

“I am more important to Nigeria than my enemies,” he stated, reinforcing his belief that no force could bring him down.

Fans react to Portable’s post

His post quickly gained attention, sparking mixed reactions from fans and critics. Supporters flooded his comments with words of encouragement, praising his resilience. Others, however, criticized his approach, urging him to face his challenges responsibly.

A history of controversy

He has a history of stirring controversy, often finding himself at odds with authorities. His bold personality and unfiltered statements have made him a polarizing figure in Nigeria’s entertainment industry. While some admire his fearless attitude, others view it as reckless.

What’s next for Portable?

As his legal troubles unfold, many are watching to see how he navigates the situation. Whether his defiance will serve him well or lead to more complications remains to be seen. One thing is clear—he is not backing down.

Nedu was sacked from 'Honest Bunch' podcast, he didn't resign – VeryDarkMan

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Social media activist and social critic, VeryDarkMan, has dismissed reports that Nedu voluntarily resigned from “The Honest Bunch Podcast”, asserting instead that he was sacked.

This claim surfaced in a viral post on X, formerly Twitter, where VeryDarkMan, in a fresh statement, insisted that Nedu’s exit was not by choice.

Recall that Nedu recently released an official statement announcing his decision to step away from the podcast.

His departure followed allegations by VeryDarkMan, who accused him of exploiting his platform and comedy skits to seek intimate relationships with women in exchange for fame.



In his resignation statement, Nedu expressed that recent controversies had taken a personal toll, stating:

“The past week has brought a lot into perspective for me. Hosting The Honest Bunch Podcast has been an incredible journey—one built on open conversations, bold perspectives, and the willingness to

tackle difficult topics. However, with that responsibility has come overwhelming scrutiny, antagonism, and unfounded accusations that have now begun to affect me personally.”

“In light of recent events, I have made the difficult decision to step away from the podcast. This is not a

decision I take lightly, but I believe it is necessary—for my peace of mind, my family, and the integrity of the show itself.”

He further expressed hopes that his exit would put an end to the negativity surrounding his name and allow the podcast to thrive.

A Love that changed my life

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

They say the best type of love story is the one that comes quietly and hits you in the guts.

The type that feels like a warm blanket and hot chocolate on a stormy night. The type that settled in your bones and felt just right.

This was how I felt when I first met Kambili*. It felt like I had known him for a long time, like I had seen him in a previous lifetime. There was a connection I felt at that time but I could not quite place it due to fear of how my previous relationship went.

I met Kambili through a mutual friend who thought we would do well together.

When we started talking, I was skeptical about anything happening because I wasn't looking to be in a relationship. But, my curiosity was great, so I texted.

I texted him and we hit it off so well, it was like



magic.

We took a walk to Awba Dam where we spent the evening talking and laughing.

After that day, we went on our very first date to an art exhibition.

It was very fun explaining the art to him. After the exhibition, we stayed in the car and we talked and talked. It was like time was an inconceivable concept when I was with him. It

flowed endlessly.

We would go on to have several dates and hangouts.

And the love slowly deepened and ripened.

But, this love was not here to stay. It was just here to teach what genuine love felt, what it meant for someone to love you wholeheartedly.

It was here to teach me to love myself, how to stand strong and tall.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, we could not continue our love story and we had to go our separate ways.

But, this love will stay with me forever. This love, I will tell my children about. I loved and I loved well.

This is Kambili and I's love story.

US vice-president launches blistering attack on Europe's leaders in Munich conference

By Dave Oludare Oso

US vice-president questions whether European values are worth defending as he rails against 'threat from within'

The US vice-president, JD Vance, has launched a brutal ideological assault on Europe, accusing its leaders of suppressing free speech, failing to halt illegal migration, and running in fear from voters' true beliefs.

In a chastising speech on Friday that openly questioned whether current European values warranted defence by the US, he painted a picture of European politics infected by media censorship, cancelled elections and political correctness.

Arguing that the true threat to Europe stemmed not from external actors such as Russia or China, but Europe's own internal retreat from some of its "most fundamental values", he repeatedly questioned whether the US and Europe any longer had a shared agenda. "What I worry about is the threat from within," Vance said.

Speaking at the Munich Security Conference, the vice-president had been expected to address the critical question of the Ukraine war and security differences between Washington and Europe. Instead, he widely skated over these to give a lecture on what he claimed was the continent's failure to listen to the populist concerns of voters.

Vance said of Donald Trump's re-election: "There is a new sheriff in town." He said: "Democracy will not survive if their people's concerns are deemed invalid or even worse not worth being considered."

The blistering and confrontational



remarks were met with shock at the conference and were later condemned by the EU and Germany, while drawing praise from Russian state television. They signalled a deepening of the transatlantic chasm beyond different perceptions of Russia to an even deeper societal rupture about values and the nature of democracy.

Vance said: "If you are afraid of the voices, the opinions and the conscience that guide your very own people ... If you're running in fear of your own voters, there is nothing America can do for you, nor for that matter is there anything you can do for the American people."

Accusing European politicians, and the organisers of the Munich Security Conference, of refusing to address issues such as migration, he urged a shocked and largely silent hall in Munich to realise they should not exclude politicians representing populist parties.

In Germany, a firewall has long existed preventing mainstream parties from engaging with the far-right Alternative für Deutschland owing to its Nazi origins. But Vance said there was no room for such

firewalls.

"People dismissing voters' concerns, shutting down their media, protects nothing. It is the most surefire way to destroy democracy."

He described "old entrenched interests hiding behind ugly Soviet-era words like misinformation and disinformation" to impose censorship.

Many in the hall were swift to say that Vance had still refused to accept that Trump lost the US presidential election in 2020, a refusal that ultimately resulted in a mob of the president's supporters attacking the US Capitol.

Vance said: "For years we have been told everything we fund and support is in the name of our shared democratic values, everything from our Ukraine policy to digital censorship is billed as a defence of democracy, but when we see European courts cancelling elections and senior officials threatening to cancel others we ought to ask ourselves if we are holding ourselves to an appropriately high standard."

US deports 119 immigrants of different nationalities to Panama

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

People from Afghanistan, Iran, China and other countries flown out as Trump's deportation effort intensifies

The US has sent undocumented immigrants from several Asian countries whose governments have refused to accept them to Panama, in a move signalling an intensification of the Trump administration's deportation effort.

A military plane carrying 119 immigrants from countries including Afghanistan, Iran, Uzbekistan, China, Sri Lanka, Turkey and Pakistan flew from California to Panama City on Wednesday in what was expected to be the first of three migrants flights to the country.

The revelation that Panama has become a destination for immigrants from countries whose governments have not agreed to take them back follows repeated threats by Donald Trump to seize the Panama canal, whose ownership was handed to the Panamanian government in 1999 under the terms of a treaty signed with the US.

The agreement to accept migrants appears to have resulted from a visit to Panama last week by Marco Rubio, the US secretary of state.



José Raúl Mulino, Panama's president, told reporters that the country had received "119 people from diverse nationalities of the world"

The immigrants were being accommodated at a local hotel before being transported to a shelter near the Darién Gap, a jungle area in southern Panama, in a process managed by the International Organization for Migration.

"We hope to get them out of there as soon as possible," Mulino said. "This is another contribution Panama is making on the migration issue."

He said the migrants would eventually be transferred to their countries of origin on flights funded by the US.

Panama is the latest Central American

nation to agree to accept immigrants of other countries expelled from the US after El Salvador and Guatemala offered similar arrangements.

CBS reported that a second flight containing Asian and African deportees was scheduled to have left for Panama on Thursday. The network, citing internal government documents, said the flight would include citizens from Cameroon.

The Darién Gap, dividing Panama from Colombia, has become a busy transit route for immigrants making their way through Central America en route to the US. In 2023, more than half a million immigrants, mostly from Venezuela, crossed the Darién jungle into Panama. The number reduced to 300,000 last year.

Judge orders US to restore funds for foreign aid programs

By Agency Reporters

A federal judge ordered the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump to restore funding for hundreds of foreign aid contractors who argued that they were negatively impacted by a 90-day blanket freeze, a court filing showed late on Thursday.

The order temporarily blocks the Trump administration from canceling foreign aid contracts and awards that were in place before Trump took office on January 20.

It was the first such ruling to reverse Trump's funding freeze on foreign assistance. The ruling came in a lawsuit brought by two health organizations that receive U.S. funding for overseas programs.

Trump has attempted to dismantle government agencies, including the U.S. Agency for International



Development, as he has embarked on a massive reshaping of government and has tasked his billionaire ally Elon Musk with cost-cutting.

The stated purpose in suspending of all foreign aid was to provide the opportunity to review programs for their efficiency and consistency with priorities, U.S. District Judge Amir Ali wrote in a filing in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.

He added: "At least to date, defendants have not offered any explanation for why a blanket suspension of all congressionally appropriated foreign aid, which set off a shockwave and upended reliance interests for thousands of agreements with businesses, nonprofits, and organizations around the country, was a rational precursor to reviewing programs."

Trump has also ordered agencies to prepare for wide-ranging job cuts, and several have already begun to lay off recent hires who lack full job security.

The Republican has fired and sidelined hundreds of civil servants and top officials at agencies in his first steps toward downsizing the bureaucracy and installing more loyalists.

Britain announces new sanctions against Putin allies

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Britain has imposed sanctions targeting figures working in the Russian government, including Pavel Fradkov, a deputy minister for defence, and Vladimir Selin, who leads an arm of the country's Ministry of Defence.

The foreign office said in a statement it also sanctioned Artem Chaika, whose extractives company supports Russian state-owned business, and two entities linked to Russia's nuclear energy giant Rosatom.



Those targeted by the sanctions have links to the "inner circle" of Russian President Vladimir Putin, the foreign office said.

"I am announcing further sanctions to keep up the pressure on Putin," said foreign minister David Lammy.

"Ukrainians are fighting for their country's future and the principle of sovereignty across Europe at the frontline," he said.

Russia's embassy in London did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Pope Francis cancels events after being admitted to hospital

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Pope Francis has cancelled his scheduled events over the next few days after being hospitalised, the Vatican said.

The pontiff, who has been suffering from bronchitis, was admitted to Gemelli hospital in Rome on Friday after reportedly having breathing difficulties during one of his meetings.

In a statement on Friday evening, the Vatican said the pope had been admitted to hospital due to worsening bronchitis and that the first diagnostic tests had shown a “respiratory tract infection”. The pontiff has started “hospital drug therapy”, the statement added, and his “clinical condition is fair; he has a slight fever.”

The pontiff’s planned attendance at an audience on Saturday has been cancelled, while mass in Saint Peter’s Basilica on Sunday will instead be delivered by Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça. A visit to the Cinecittà film studios on Monday has also been cancelled.

Francis, 88, held several meetings on Friday before being taken to hospital, including with Mark Thompson, the CEO of the CNN news channel,



which later reported that the pontiff was “mentally alert but struggling to speak for extended periods due to breathing difficulties”.

The pope, who has been blighted by ill-health in recent years, was also hospitalised in March 2023 with acute bronchitis. After being discharged, he said: “I am still alive.” He was readmitted to the Gemelli for health checks in June that year and again in February 2024 after suffering from what he said was “a bit of a cold”.

Francis had part of his lung removed in his early 20s while training to be a priest in his native Argentina. In June 2021, he underwent a colon operation.

He has often been seen in a

wheelchair or with a walking stick due to a sciatic nerve pain and a knee problem. In January, he injured his right forearm after falling at his Casa Santa Marta residence and on 1 February he stumbled after his walking stick snapped while entering the Vatican’s auditorium. In early December, Francis hit his chin on his nightstand, reportedly after a fall.

Francis, whose schedule has intensified because of this year’s catholic jubilee, has often alluded to resigning if bad health prevents him from doing his job. In 2023, he revealed he had chosen his burial place – the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore in the Esquilino neighbourhood of Rome – breaking with the longstanding tradition of popes being buried in the grottos beneath St Peter’s Basilica.

Mexico threatens to escalate US gunmakers lawsuit with terror charges

By Dave Oludare Oso

Claudia Scheinbaum warns of reciprocal action if Washington designates country's cartels as terrorist groups

Mexico's president, Claudia Scheinbaum has warned US gunmakers they could face fresh legal action as accomplices of organized crime if Washington designates the country's cartels as terrorist groups.

The Latin American country, which is under mounting pressure from Donald Trump to curb illegal drug smuggling, wants its neighbor to crack down on firearms trafficking in the other direction.

"If they declare these criminal groups as terrorists, then we'll have to expand our US lawsuit," Mexico's president, Claudia Sheinbaum, said at a daily press conference.

A new charge could include alleged complicity of gunmakers with terror groups, she said.

"The lawyers are looking at it, but they could be accomplices," Sheinbaum warned.

She said the US justice department itself has recognized that "74% of the weapons" used by criminal groups in Mexico come from north of the border.

On Thursday, the New York Times reported that the US state department plans to classify criminal groups from Mexico, Colombia, El Salvador and Venezuela as "terrorist organizations."

They include Mexico's two main drug-trafficking organizations, the Jalisco New Generation and Sinaloa cartels, the report said.

Trump signed an executive order on 20 January creating a process for such a designation, saying that the cartels



"constitute a national security threat beyond that posed by traditional organized crime."

Mexico says that between 200,000 and 750,000 weapons manufactured by US gunmakers are smuggled across the border from the United States every year, many of which are found at crime scenes.

Last August, a US judge dismissed a \$10bn lawsuit brought by the Mexican government against six gun manufacturers based in the United States that sought to hold them responsible for deaths from guns trafficked into Mexico.

The suit was thrown out based on a lack of jurisdiction, though Mexico said at the time that its lawsuit against two manufacturers, Smith and Wesson and Interstate Arms, would continue.

Another suit brought in the border state of Arizona seeks sanctions against dealers that sold guns used in serious crimes over the border.

Mexico tightly controls firearm sales, making them practically impossible to obtain legally.

Even so, drug-related violence led to the deaths of about 480,000 people in Mexico since the government deployed the army to combat trafficking in 2006, according to official figures.

Earlier this month, Sheinbaum angrily rejected an accusation by the United States that her government was allied with drug cartels.

"We categorically reject the slander made by the White House against the Mexican government about alliances with criminal organizations," the president wrote on social platform X at the time.

"If there is such an alliance anywhere, it is in the US gun shops that sell high-powered weapons to these criminal groups," she added.

Tensions between the closely connected neighbors soared after the White House said Trump would slap tariffs of 25% on Mexican and Canadian goods because of illegal immigration and drug smuggling.

The threatened tariffs have since been halted for 30 days.

ECC endorses purchase of \$582m capital shares in BRICS's New Development Bank

By Dave Oludare Oso

The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) has given its nod to the purchase of capital shares worth \$582 million in the New Development Bank (NDB), according to a Finance Division statement.

Established in 2015 by BRICS countries, the NDB is a multilateral development bank aimed at mobilising resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS and other emerging markets and developing countries (EMDCs).

“The ECC approved Pakistan’s membership in the New Development Bank, established by BRICS member countries. The committee endorsed the purchase of 5,882 capital shares in the NDB, amounting to USD 582 million, with USD 116 million as paid-in capital,” the statement read on Friday.

The countries that comprise BRICS—which stands for Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, and now five new members—are an informal grouping of emerging economies hoping to increase their sway in the global order. The group was established in 2009.

Pakistan is also looking forward to become a part of BRICS. The country applied for the membership of BRICS back in 2023.

“We have taken this decision after having noted the BRICS-related developments in Johannesburg,” Pakistan Foreign Office’s spokesperson said then.

Meanwhile, US President Donald Trump, after winning 2024 elections, threatened to impose a 100% tariff on the BRICS group nations if they undercut the US dollar.

When asked about Trump’s reservations over BRICS, Islamabad said there was no change in Pakistan’s policy to join the BRICS and the country was working with the member countries to become a part of



the intergovernmental organisation.

In the Friday’s meeting, the ECC also approved a proposal from the Ministry of Commerce regarding the inclusion of PCT/HS codes for newly notified mandatory items of the Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority (PSQCA) in the Import Policy Order (IPO), 2022.

“The decision incorporates specific PVC and polymer-based products into the mandatory regulatory framework, ensuring compliance with Pakistan Standards,” the Finance Division said.

The ECC also deliberated on the transfer of shares of DISCOs in the name of the President of Pakistan as proposed by the Ministry of Energy (Power Division).

“The committee approved the transfer with the observation that the approval is subject to confirmation that the transfer will have no financial implications.”

The ECC also approved the incorporation of an International Joint Trading Company in Singapore by Pakistan State Oil (PSO) and the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR).

The committee instructed the Ministry of Petroleum to ensure due diligence regarding specific investment approvals, particularly equity injections, as well as timeline for operationalisation of the company, according to the Finance Division.

ECC approves multiple Technical Supplementary Grants

To ensure financial support for key initiatives, the ECC also approved multiple Technical Supplementary Grants (TSGs).

It approved Rs19.15 billion under the Finance Division for 133 public sector development programme (PSDP) schemes of the defunct Pakistan Public Works Department (Pak-PWD).

“The funds will now be transferred to respective ministries, divisions, and provincial governments.”

The ECC also greenlighted Rs5.36 billion for the Ministry of Housing and Works to execute development schemes under the SDGs Achievement Programme (SAP), with Rs4.25 billion allocated for Sindh and Rs1.11 billion for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Latest Israeli hostages to be exchanged for 369 Palestinian prisoners named

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Palestinian militant groups have named the three hostages they plan to free on Saturday in return for the release of 369 Palestinian prisoners held by Israel, raising hopes that the January ceasefire agreement will survive its latest crisis.

However, the longer-term prospects of the truce remain in doubt and the uncertainty has been deepened by the US president, Donald Trump, who made surprise territorial claims over Gaza.

Saudi Arabia is reportedly planning to host a summit next week to try to agree an alternative plan for Gaza's future, a week before an emergency Arab League meeting in Cairo to discuss the situation.

The hostages due to be released on Saturday have been named as Argentinian-born Iair Horn; a dual US-Israeli citizen, Sagui Dekel-Chen; and a Russian-Israeli, Sasha Troufanov. They were all abducted from the Nir Oz kibbutz, near Gaza, in the Hamas attack of 7 October 2023. Two were held by Hamas and one by Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

The identities of the Palestinians due to be freed have not been published, but they are expected to include 333 people taken prisoner in Gaza since the start of the war and 36 inmates serving life prison sentences.

Israel and global human rights groups expressed outrage at the frail, emaciated state of the three hostages freed a week ago, their accounts of brutality in captivity, and the handover event staged by Hamas in which the three men had to thank their captors in front of a line of masked, armed gunmen.

An Israeli-American hostage released two weeks ago, Keith Siegel, has given a chilling account of his experiences. "I was held for 484 days in unimaginable



conditions, every single day felt like it could be my last," he said in a video message. "I was starved and I was tortured, both physically and emotionally."

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which has facilitated the exchanges, said in a statement: "The latest release operations reinforce the urgent need for ICRC access to those held hostage. We remain very concerned about the conditions of the hostages." It called on Hamas to ensure future handovers were conducted in privacy and with dignity.

If Saturday's hostage release goes ahead, it will bring to 19 the number of Israelis exchanged for about 1,100 Palestinians. Five Thai citizens have also been released. By the end of the first six-week phase, another 14 hostages (six live and the remains of eight who have died in captivity) are due to be freed in exchange for another 800 Palestinian prisoners and detainees.

A second phase is due to begin on 1 March, in which both sides plan to release all remaining hostages and prisoners, and Israel would complete its military withdrawal from Gaza. But so far, Benjamin Netanyahu has not empowered

his negotiators to start talks on how this second phase would proceed, and Israeli analysts question the prime minister's readiness to stick to the agreement.

"It's no secret that Netanyahu doesn't want the deal to continue and wants to stop it before the second phase," Haaretz's military analyst, Amos Harel, wrote, adding that if the truce ended, there could be "a year or even longer" of fighting to come.

The truce agreement appeared in danger of collapse this week after Hamas announced there would be an indefinite delay to the release of the next three hostages owing to Israel's alleged violations of the deal. Soon after, Trump suggested that Israel should demand that the remaining hostages be freed by noon on Saturday or "all hell is going to break out".

Israel massed troops around the edge of the Gaza Strip, deepening fears the ceasefire would come to an abrupt end. On Thursday, however, the immediate crisis appeared to recede with Hamas confirming three Israelis would be freed and Netanyahu's office clarifying that it was not demanding the liberation of all the remaining hostages.