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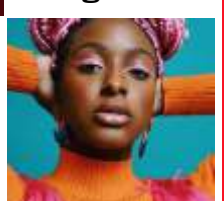
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Eid-el-Fitr: FG declares Monday, Tuesday public holiday

By Friday Omosola

The Federal Government (FG) has declared Monday, March 31, and Tuesday, April 1, 2025, as public holidays in honour of the Eid-el-Fitr festivities.

This declaration was issued by the Minister of Interior, Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo, on behalf of the government.

In a statement released on Wednesday, the ministry's Permanent Secretary, Magdalene Ajani, conveyed the minister's felicitations to the Muslim community for completing the Ramadan fast.

He underscored the importance of the holy month in promoting self-discipline, empathy, and spiritual growth.

Tunji-Ojo encouraged Muslims to uphold the values of kindness, generosity, and harmony while stressing the importance of national unity and interfaith cooperation.

Additionally, he called on all Nigerians to take advantage of the holiday to pray for



the nation's peace, stability, and development.

"As we celebrate Eid-el-Fitr, let us reflect on the lessons of Ramadan, embrace one another with love and forgiveness, and work together to build a more united and prosperous Nigeria," the minister stated.

He urged citizens to mark the occasion

with caution and consideration, emphasizing the importance of sharing with those in need, in keeping with the spirit of Ramadan and Eid.

Tunji-Ojo extended warm Eid Mubarak wishes to all Muslim faithful, expressing hope that the season's blessings bring joy and fulfillment to all.

Atiku calls for a "New Movement" to re-engineer Nigeria's democracy

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

Former Vice President Atiku Abubakar has reiterated the need for a fundamental re-engineering of Nigeria's political system to ensure that citizens fully benefit from the country's democratic process.

At a coalition meeting in Yola on Tuesday, March 25, which brought together members from various political parties, Atiku stressed that Nigeria was no longer heading in the right direction and that urgent reforms were required to save the country from further decline.

Atiku, who was the presidential candidate for the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the 2023 election, made his remarks shortly after arriving at Yola International Airport in his private jet at 12:48 pm.

He was warmly received by Senator



Ishaku Abbo before proceeding in a long convoy to the American University of Nigeria hotel, where the coalition meeting was held.

In his address, Atiku stated, "We need a new movement that we can use to correct things. If we do not act now, our children will become slaves in their fatherland."

His comments reflected growing concerns over the state of the nation, as well as the need for a unified political force capable of steering the country back onto a path of progress.

Although Atiku refrained from delving into the specifics of his political plans at this stage, he hinted that he would soon break his silence on the issue, declaring, "It is not yet time for me to speak on the politics of the country, but very soon I will break my silence on my political position and other things that are wrongly going on in the country."

He urged Nigerians to remain vigilant and work collectively for the nation's well-being, stressing that the new political movement he envisions would be the saviour of the country.

THE NEW DAILY PRIME RATE CARD

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SIZE	TOTAL RATE
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10X4	206,890.50
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9X5	225,738.00
9X4	193,500.00
9X3	166,223.50
8X6	225,368.50
8X3	106,934.50
7X4	180,173.50
6X4	100,434.50
6X3	82,750.00
6X2	52,499.50
5X6	123,749.50
5X5	110,000.00
5X4	76,833.00
5X3	66,875.00
5X2	42,916.50
4X4	60,166.50
4X3	36,499.50
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9X5	206,000.00
9X4	177,500.00
9X3	150,000.00
8X6	216,000.00
8X3	98,500.00
7X4	164,002.00
6X4	94,010.50
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6X2	47,500.00
5X5	100,000.00
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10X4	142,787.50
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9X4	137,875.00
9X3	112,875.00
8X6	179,368.00
8X5	143,500.00
8X4	93,500.00
8X3	82,434.50
7X4	111,173.50
6X4	82,434.50
6X3	59,250.00
6X2	40,000.00
5X6	98,749.50
5X4	65,833.00
5X3	49,375.00
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Tinubu signs South-West, South-South development commissions, anti-doping law

By Friday Omosola



President Bola Tinubu has signed into law the South-West Development Commission Bill, the South-South Development Commission Bill, and the Nigeria Anti-Doping Bill, 2025.

In a statement announcing the presidential assent, Special Adviser on Senate Matters, Basheer Lado, emphasised that the newly enacted laws demonstrate Tinubu's dedication to fostering regional growth, economic development, and Nigeria's international standing.

“With the establishment of the

South-West and South-South Development Commissions, President Tinubu has reinforced his vision of equitable development across all regions, prioritizing economic expansion, infrastructure advancement, and social progress,” Lado stated.

He noted that the commissions are designed to drive industrialization, boost job creation, and accelerate infrastructural development, ensuring that all parts of the country benefit from the administration's strategic initiatives.

On the Nigeria Anti-Doping Bill, 2025, Lado highlighted its significance in strengthening integrity in sports.

He explained that by aligning with the UNESCO International Convention Against Doping in Sports, Nigeria is taking proactive steps to uphold fairness in athletics while protecting its athletes from unethical practices.

“These efforts solidify Nigeria's reputation as a nation that values fairness, excellence, and sportsmanship on the global stage,” he added.

Shettima urges judiciary to remain steadfast in dispensing justice

By Friday Omosola

Vice President Kashim Shettima has called on the Nigerian judiciary to resist blackmail and uphold justice with unwavering integrity.

He emphasised that the third arm of government must not yield to pressures that threaten its independence.

He spoke in Abuja on Wednesday at the inaugural ‘Body of Benchers Annual Lecture’ and the public presentation of the ‘Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Committee Report’.

Shettima underscored the judiciary’s vital role in maintaining accountability, fairness, and order in Nigeria.

“A nation is only as accountable, fair, and orderly as the people who make, enforce, and interpret its laws,” he said, cautioning judges and legal practitioners against succumbing to political or external influences.

He condemned the notion that justice should favour the loudest voices, warning that every instance of judicial compromise erodes the nation’s foundation.

He praised the judiciary’s resilience in upholding President Bola Tinubu’s



mandate despite political blackmail.

“The judiciary did not yield to the weight of vested interests but stood firm in recognising that the fate of a nation is too sacred to be intimidated or bartered for compromise,” Shettima said.

The Vice President also reaffirmed President Tinubu’s commitment to maintaining a cordial relationship between the three arms of government, stating that collaboration rather than hostility is key to strengthening Nigeria’s democracy.

Chief Justice of Nigeria, Justice Kudirat Kekere-Ekun, commended the Body of Benchers for its dedication to ethical legal practice, stressing that the profession’s sanctity rests on the body’s shoulders.

In his keynote address, former Lagos State Governor Babatunde Fashola urged the legal profession to embrace internal reforms that ensure justice is dispensed speedily and credibly.

He highlighted the importance of character formation and self-discipline in preserving the profession’s dignity.

Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa of Ondo State and Solicitor General of the Federation, Beatrice Jeddy-Agba, also emphasised the need for legal practitioners to evolve with modern challenges while maintaining the highest ethical standards.

The event ended with the public presentation of the ‘Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Committee Report’ by Shettima.

Akpabio officially notified as INEC moves to recall Senator Natasha

By Dr. Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi

Nigeria's Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has formally notified Senate President Godswill Akpabio and Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan of a petition filed by constituents in Kogi Central seeking her recall from office, citing alleged gross misconduct and a vote of no confidence.

In a statement issued Wednesday, INEC said it had received updated documentation from the petitioners, including contact information required under Nigerian election law, allowing the agency to proceed with the next phase of the recall process.

"The contact address of representatives of the petitioners, their telephone numbers, and email addresses have now been provided in a letter dated March 26, 2025," said Sam Olumekun, INEC's National Commissioner for Information and Voter Education.

Read Also: Amnesty International demands probe into Natasha's allegations against Akpabio

A formal notice has been delivered to Senator Akpoti-Uduaghan, and the same has been copied to the presiding officer of the Senate, as well as published on INEC's official website, Olumekun confirmed.

Under Nigerian law, the recall of a sitting senator requires the endorsement of more than 50 percent of registered voters in the affected constituency.



INEC will now review the signatures submitted by petitioners to determine whether this threshold has been met.

If the commission verifies the petition, the process advances to a referendum. For the recall to be successful, more than half of all registered voters in the Kogi Central district must vote in favor of removal.

Recalling an elected federal lawmaker in Nigeria is permitted under Section 69 of the 1999 Constitution, but the process is intentionally stringent and politically fraught. In practice, no Nigerian senator has ever been successfully recalled.

The most prominent attempt came in 2017, when constituents of then-Senator Dino Melaye of Kogi West submitted a recall petition. While INEC verified the signatures and initiated referendum proceedings, the process was ultimately stalled and derailed by legal challenges mounted by Melaye's legal team.

Political analysts note that logistical hurdles, judicial delays, and high voter thresholds have made such recalls

difficult to carry out.

As of Wednesday evening, Senator Akpoti-Uduaghan had not publicly responded to the recall effort. A first-term senator elected in 2023 under the banner of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), she represents Kogi Central, a district in Nigeria's North Central geopolitical zone.

INEC has emphasized its commitment to upholding due process and constitutional transparency as the process unfolds.

"The next step is scrutiny," Olumekun said. "The Commission will determine whether the petition meets constitutional requirements before proceeding further."

While the outcome remains uncertain, the move marks a significant political moment in Nigeria's Fourth Republic — and a rare invocation of the electorate's constitutional right to seek the removal of a sitting lawmaker.

Gowon commends NYSC for overcoming early resistance, hails its role in National Unity

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

Former Head of State and founding father of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), General Yakubu Gowon (retd.), has praised the enduring success of the scheme, despite the initial resistance it faced from Nigerian students at its inception over five decades ago.

Gowon made the commendation during a courtesy visit by the newly appointed NYSC Director-General, Brigadier General Olakunle Nafiu, at his residence in Asokoro, Abuja.

According to a press statement released by Caroline Embu, the acting Director of Information and Public Relations for the NYSC, Gowon reflected on the history of the scheme, acknowledging the skepticism and opposition it faced when it was first established in 1973.

Despite the early pushback from students across the country, the former military leader noted that the NYSC has since evolved into one of Nigeria's most recognised and impactful national institutions.

"The NYSC, which was greeted with strong opposition from Nigerian students at its inception, has not only overcome those early misgivings but has grown to become a nationally accepted tool for fostering unity, integration, development, job creation, and youth empowerment in Nigeria," Gowon stated.

The NYSC has become integral to the country's socio-political fabric, with its annual programme bringing together



thousands of young Nigerians, encouraging them to serve in regions far from their place of origin, thus promoting national integration.

Gowon further lauded the multi-dimensional contributions of corps members to Nigeria's development over the past 50 years, noting that their service in education, healthcare, infrastructure, and community development had played a key role in strengthening the country's social and economic structures.

He specifically praised the NYSC's deployment policy, which exposes corps members to diverse cultures and communities, fostering mutual understanding among the country's varied ethnic groups.

"The NYSC has had a significant impact, not only in contributing to national development but also in helping young Nigerians appreciate the diverse cultural tapestry of our nation," Gowon said.

In his address, Gowon urged the newly appointed NYSC DG, Brig. Gen. Nafiu, to build on the successes of his predecessors and continue to steer the scheme towards greater achievements.

He encouraged the NYSC leadership to stay true to the core principles of the programme while adapting to the evolving needs of Nigerian society.

In response, Nafiu described the NYSC as "a divine project" that had been a tremendous blessing to Nigeria.

He expressed his deep appreciation for Gowon's continued support of the scheme, adding that he was eager to draw on the former Head of State's wisdom and experience as he led the NYSC into its next phase.

"I seek your mentorship as we continue to build on the solid foundation laid by those who came before me," Nafiu stated.

FG to enforce crackdown on irregular expatriates from August 2025

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

The Federal Government has announced that it will begin a strict enforcement campaign against irregular expatriates in Nigeria from August 1, 2025.

This new initiative comes as part of the implementation of the Expatriate Administration System, aimed at ensuring full compliance with immigration laws across the country.

The announcement was made by the Minister of Interior, Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo, during a meeting with the Nigerian Employers' Consultative Association (NECA) in Abuja on Tuesday, March 25.

Tunji-Ojo revealed that a three-month grace period would be provided from May 1 to July 31, 2025, to allow expatriates and businesses to regularise their immigration status before enforcement begins.

As part of the government's efforts to assist expatriates in complying with the new regulations, an immigration amnesty programme will run throughout the grace period.

This programme will enable migrants to adjust their status without facing penalties, as long as



they meet the required conditions by the end of July.

"The three-month amnesty period will allow those who have overstayed their welcome or are operating outside the legal framework to regularise their status before the enforcement begins," Tunji-Ojo explained.

Additionally, the minister warned businesses against obstructing the operations of the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS).

He stressed that the government would not tolerate any interference in the execution of immigration duties and stated that any company found hindering the NIS would face severe penalties.

"The days when some companies irresponsibly evade immigration laws are over. The immigration service has a mandate, and they must be allowed to execute it. Any

company that attempts to hinder their operations will face strict sanctions," he said.

Tunji-Ojo also addressed the issue of immigration service fees, stating that current charges were unsustainable.

Following discussions with stakeholders, the fees for citizenship and business-related applications have been revised. The finalised fee structure will be officially released in the coming weeks and will be signed by both the Ministry of Interior and NECA.

The revised expatriate administration system, including the new fee structure, will take effect from May 1, 2025, alongside the amnesty programme.

However, the full enforcement against irregular migrants will commence on August 1, 2025.

Kano Emirship: Appeal Court halts legal battles, defers case to Supreme Court

By Friday Omosola

The Court of Appeal in Abuja has directed all parties involved in the Kano Emirship dispute to maintain restraint while awaiting the Supreme Court's decision on their appeals.

In its ruling, the appellate court also put on hold any actions challenging the reinstatement of Muhammadu Sanusi II as the 16th Emir of Kano.

The decision was reached by a three-member panel of justices, led by Justice Biobele Georgewill, which upheld the withdrawal of an application earlier filed by the Kano State Government after the appeal records were transmitted to the Supreme Court.

The Kano State Government had reinstated Sanusi II following the enactment of the Kano State Emirate Council (Repeal) Law 2024, which effectively removed Aminu Ado Bayero and dissolved the additional emirates created by the previous administration of Abdullahi Umar Ganduje.



On March 14, 2025, Justice Okon Abang issued a ruling suspending the Court of Appeal's earlier judgment that validated Sanusi II's reinstatement.

He further ordered that all parties maintain the status quo ante bellum, ensuring that the situation remained as it was before the lower court's decision on June 13, 2024.

However, the respondents challenged Justice Abang's ruling, arguing that it misinterpreted constitutional provisions since an appeal was already pending before the Supreme Court.

During the resumed hearing on the enforcement of previous orders, the Kano State Government's legal counsel, Ibrahim Wangida,



informed the court that a notice of appeal had been filed against the stay of execution ruling issued on March 14.

He further stated that all legal processes had been finalized, including the transmission of the appeal records to the Supreme Court.

By legal precedent, the transmission of the case to the Supreme Court effectively suspends any further action on the Court of Appeal's March 14 ruling.

In light of this, the appellate court advised all parties to refrain from taking further steps until the Supreme Court adjudicates the matter.

State of emergency: Rivers Administrator suspends all political appointees

By New Daily Prime

Retired Vice Admiral Ibok-Ete Ibas, the newly appointed Sole Administrator of Rivers State, has announced the immediate suspension of all political office holders and appointees in the state government.

In a statement issued Wednesday by the Chief of Staff to the Administrator, the decision was described as part of the authority granted to Ibas following the federal declaration of a state of emergency in the oil-rich southern state.

The suspension affects a wide range of senior officials, including the Secretary to the State Government, the Chief of Staff, all commissioners, chairpersons and members of state boards, agencies, commissions, and parastatals, as well as all Special Advisers, Special Assistants, and Senior Special Assistants.

“This suspension takes effect from Wednesday, March 26, 2025,” the statement read. “The affected officers are to hand over to the permanent secretaries in their respective ministries, departments, and agencies. Where no permanent secretary exists, the most senior director or head of administration shall assume responsibility.”

Federal Takeover Amid Political Crisis

The sweeping administrative changes follow the March 19 swearing-in of Ibas by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, who declared a six-month state of emergency in Rivers State in response to what the



presidency described as a breakdown of constitutional order and escalating political instability.

The President also suspended Governor Siminalayi Fubara, Deputy Governor Ngozi Odu, and all elected members of the Rivers State House of Assembly, pending further federal oversight.

Ibas, who previously served as Nigeria’s Chief of Naval Staff, has pledged to restore stability and public confidence in governance during the interim period.

“If the main issue is that of maintaining law and order in the state, I think for any meaningful activities to take place in Rivers State, that is the utmost task that I have,” Ibas told reporters at the State House following his swearing-in.

He further emphasized his intent to collaborate with stakeholders and

institutions to ensure a peaceful and orderly transition.

The federal intervention in Rivers State—one of Nigeria’s most politically sensitive and economically vital regions—has drawn mixed reactions, with some welcoming the move as a step toward restoring order, while others have raised concerns about the precedent it sets for democracy and federalism in the country.

Legal experts and political analysts are closely watching how the situation unfolds, particularly as questions remain about the legal framework for the suspension of elected officials under emergency rule.

President Tinubu has not yet indicated whether further appointments or state elections will follow the temporary federal takeover.

Otti reaffirms commitment to restoring dignity in Abia through education, healthcare

By **Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye**

Governor Alex Otti has reiterated his administration's determination to restore the dignity of Abia residents by focusing on quality education and healthcare.

During a meeting with a delegation from the World Bank on Sunday, March 23, Otti outlined the significant strides his government is making in these vital sectors, despite the challenges faced upon his assumption of office in 2023.

The World Bank delegation, led by Lead Governance Specialist Ms. Deborah Isser, visited Abia State as part of the World Bank's Human Capital Opportunities for Prosperity and Equity (HOPE) programme.

Otti welcomed the team, expressing gratitude for their interest in the state's efforts to improve healthcare and education.

He emphasised that the visit was not only an opportunity for the World Bank to learn from Abia's initiatives but also for his administration to gain insights from the organisation's expertise.

"It is my pleasure to have you (World Bank delegation). I think you came not just to learn from us but to see what we are doing and allow us to learn from you as experts," Otti said.

The Governor explained that restoring dignity to Abians is deeply intertwined with improving healthcare and education, noting that these are essential to achieving true dignity for the people.

"If the people are not healthy, there is nothing like dignity. If they are healthy



and not well educated, they can't even communicate," Otti stated.

On assuming office in 2023, Otti acknowledged the deteriorated state of both the healthcare and education systems in the state, which had been left in disrepair.

However, he assured the delegation that his government had made significant progress in refurbishing and improving health and academic institutions across the state.

"Our administration has made huge success in the health and education sectors, with substantial retrofitting of health and academic institutions across the state," he said.

The Governor also expressed concern over the ongoing brain drain in the healthcare sector and revealed that his administration would begin procuring equipment for newly retrofitted primary healthcare centres.

Additionally, plans for capacity building for existing healthcare workers are set to commence soon.

While visiting Abia State University, Uturu, after Sunday church service, Otti voiced his embarrassment at the dilapidated state of the institution's infrastructure. He called for urgent reforms and improvements to the facilities, stating that such conditions were unacceptable.

Otti continued by outlining how his administration was addressing the root causes of the educational sector's decline, primarily the inadequate infrastructure that had left many schools in disrepair.

He promised that more detailed updates on progress in education and healthcare would be shared with the World Bank delegation as they continued their study tour of the state's relevant Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs).

Wike not to blame for Rivers crisis, says FCT Minister's spokesperson

By Dr. Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi

FCT Minister's aide, Lere Olayinka, defends Nyesom Wike, denying his role in the Rivers crisis and insisting he is not to blame for the political turmoil rocking the state.

Port Harcourt, Nigeria — Political tensions in Rivers State have reached a critical point following the federal government's declaration of a state of emergency and the suspension of Governor Siminalayi Fubara and the entire House of Assembly. The controversial move, approved by both chambers of the National Assembly, has drawn sharp criticism from opposition parties, civil society groups, and legal scholars.

The crisis, which has been ongoing for nearly two years, reportedly began with a rift between the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike, and Governor Fubara — his former political ally and successor.

Critics say the emergency declaration — announced by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu — sets a troubling precedent for Nigerian democracy. The People's Democratic Party (PDP), under which Governor Fubara was elected, called the action "unconstitutional and undemocratic." In a statement signed by National Publicity Secretary Debo Ologunagba, the PDP accused the presidency of attempting to override the will of the Rivers electorate.

Former President Goodluck Jonathan also condemned the move, warning that such decisions by the executive and legislature undermine the country's democratic values.

In defense of the declaration, Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Lateef Olasunkanmi Fagbemi, described the president's action as a strategic effort to de-escalate mounting political tensions and restore order in the state.

Constitutional law expert Professor



Sesan Fabamise of Afe Babalola University echoed that sentiment, suggesting that while the decision may raise legal questions, it was likely a necessary intervention.

"A politically astute leader doesn't wait for a crisis to spiral out of control," Fabamise said. "This move may have prevented a more serious breakdown of governance in Rivers State."

Exclusive: Lere Olayinka Says Wike Not to Blame

In an exclusive interview with The New Daily Prime, Lere Olayinka, Senior Special Assistant on Public Communication and social media to the FCT Minister, pushed back against claims that Wike was behind the crisis.

"Wike is not to blame for the Rivers State crisis," Olayinka said. "He is not the governor. He didn't demolish the House of Assembly complex. He wasn't the one using only three out of 32 lawmakers to pass budgets or appoint commissioners."

Olayinka criticized what he described as Governor Fubara's flawed understanding of legislative procedures.

"One-third of the entire House — not just those available — is required to form a quorum," he said. "And for any decision-

making, two-thirds must be present. Was it the Minister who manipulated these figures?"

Olayinka defended Wike following court rulings on the legitimacy of the Rivers Assembly.

"A lower court gave a judgment affirming the valid House of Assembly. Did Wike violate that? No. The President saw the danger, brought all parties together, and they signed an agreement — including the governor and national security advisers."

He continued:

"In the United States, when courts issue rulings, they're obeyed immediately. Why did the governor not comply? Was it Wike who stopped him?"

Responding to criticism of the emergency measures, Olayinka insisted the President acted within constitutional limits.

"Once the President declares a state of emergency and the National Assembly approves it, it becomes law. If anyone is dissatisfied, they should go to court. Public opinion doesn't overrule the constitution."

UNN appoints first Yoruba DVC in historic move toward inclusivity and academic excellence

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

In a groundbreaking appointment, the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN) has named Professor Kamoru Olayiwola Usman, a Yoruba Muslim from Oyo State, as its new Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academics). This marks the first time in the university's history that a person of Yoruba descent has held the position.

The appointment, made by Acting Vice-Chancellor (Ag. VC) Professor Oguejiofo T. Ujam, is part of ongoing reforms aimed at fostering inclusive governance and restoring UNN's legacy as a hub for academic excellence.

In a statement issued Tuesday in Abuja, the university underscored its commitment to promoting merit-based leadership and national unity. Professor Ujam emphasized that the choice of Professor Usman was driven by competence and the need to move beyond sectional considerations.

"The appointment of Professor Usman reflects our resolve to prioritise competence over sectional considerations. It is imperative that we sustain this culture of inclusivity and meritocracy to move the university forward," Professor Ujam said.

Professor Usman, who succeeds Professor Urama, holds a PhD in Mathematics Education and previously served as Provost of the Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo State, from 2015 to 2023. A distinguished scholar, he is a fellow of the Mathematical Association of Nigeria and a member of the National Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies, among other professional bodies. His tenure as DVC (Academics) will initially run for two years, with the possibility of renewal.



In addition to Professor Usman's appointment, the Acting VC also named Dr Mansur Adebawale Saddiq as Acting Director of the Medical Centre, signaling further efforts to promote excellence over sectional interests.

The appointments have been widely praised by scholars and students, who view them as positive steps toward strengthening national unity within the institution.

During a recent University Senate meeting, Professor Ujam called on faculty and staff to collectively reposition UNN as a centre for ethical and innovative learning.

"A collective effort is required to place the institution on a steady path towards ethical and innovative learning. UNN must regain its pride of place as Nigeria's premier university. We must rid the system of narrow-minded sectionalism and divisive tendencies that have eroded the enabling environment for research, comparative studies, and the adaptive application of

new knowledge," he said.

The meeting was attended by key university officials, including Professor Usman and members of the governing council, led by Engineer Olubunmi Kayode Ojo.

Looking ahead, the Acting VC urged the university to lead in emerging global trends, particularly in technology and artificial intelligence, and commended Enugu State Governor, Dr Peter Ndubuisi Mbah, for championing experiential learning.

"It is commendable that His Excellency, Dr Peter Ndubuisi Mbah, the Governor of Enugu State—our host state—has been advocating for the transition to experiential learning. We must align with this vision to ensure our students are not left behind in the evolving global education landscape," Professor Ujam added.

He further pledged to be "firm, fair, and transparent" in his leadership, stressing that UNN must not fall behind in the technological revolution currently reshaping education worldwide.

Upholding Justice: CJN calls for ethical rebirth among lawyers

By Friday Omosola

The Chief Justice of Nigeria (CJN), Justice Kudirat Kekere-Ekun, has raised concerns over the erosion of ethical standards in the legal profession, warning that the decline poses a significant challenge to the integrity of law practice in the country.

Speaking at the public presentation of the Legal Practitioners' Disciplinary Committee (LPDC) report at the Body of Benchers' Complex in Abuja, she stressed that professional ethics and discipline among lawyers must be reinforced to maintain public trust in the judiciary.

Justice Kekere-Ekun emphasised the urgent need for legal practitioners to recommit to the core values of honesty, discipline, and professional responsibility.

The 66-year-old urged the LPDC to strengthen its oversight functions to ensure compliance with ethical standards.

"The Body of Benchers, as the highest institution of legal oversight in Nigeria, must take decisive steps to uphold the



integrity of the profession," she stated.

"The enforcement of discipline must be guided by fairness, transparency, and firm resolve."

The CJN commended the Chairman of the Body of Benchers, Adegboyega Awomolo, and members of the body for organizing the inaugural edition of the Body of Benchers annual lecture.

She described the lecture as a valuable platform for discussing legal ethics, professional discipline, and the evolving role of the legal profession in Nigeria.

According to her, the lecture series

aims to provide deeper insights into the work of the Body of Benchers, both locally and internationally, while also fostering critical discussions on ethical challenges and reforms within the legal profession.

She called for the initiative to be sustained and expanded, noting that it should serve as a benchmark for setting professional ethics, advancing legal education, and driving reforms within the justice sector.

The maiden edition of the annual lecture was themed: 'Half-A-Century of the Body of Benchers: The Past, The Present, and The Future of Maintaining the Ethics of the Legal Profession in Nigeria.'

He doesn't stop sex even when I cry – Kaduna woman wants divorce

By Dr. Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi

My husband makes love from midnight till dawn, woman in Kaduna State has petitioned a local court to dissolve her six-year marriage, citing her husband's alleged excessive sexual demands and instances of physical abuse.

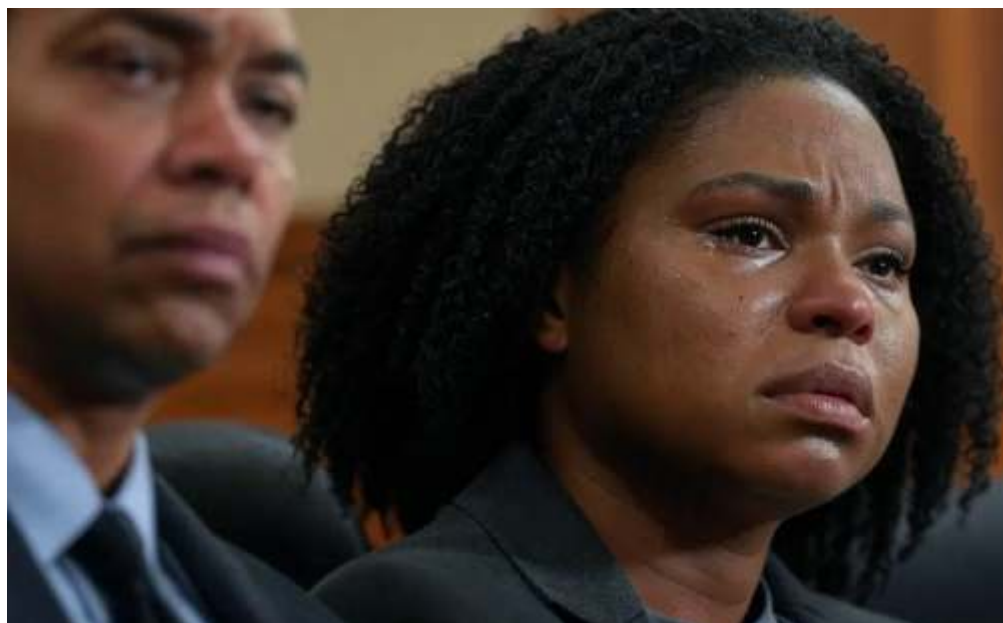
According to a report by Vanguard, Mrs. Stephen, a resident of Ungwan Sunday in Kaduna, appeared before a customary court, pleading for a divorce from her husband, whom she accused of forcing her into prolonged sexual activity and physically assaulting her when she resisted.

"I urge the court to dissolve this marriage because I can't stand his excessive sexual urge," she told the court. "He likes sex too much, and I can't bear it. Most times, he would have sex with me from midnight till early morning. Even when I cry, he won't stop."

According to her testimony, the emotional and physical toll of the marriage had become unbearable. She revealed that she moved out of her husband's house three months ago and had since been resisting pleas from his relatives to return.

"His family doesn't know what I've been going through. He doesn't control himself, and when I refuse him, he beats me — even in front of our two children," she said.

Husband Responds: "I'm Ready to Control My Urge"



In his defense, Mr. Stephen told the court that he remained committed to his wife and had been making efforts to reconcile. He acknowledged his behavior and expressed a willingness to change.

"I love my wife. I've been pleading with her not to leave," he said. "I took my uncles and friends to her parents' house to beg her, but she walked out on us. I'm now ready to control my sexual urge."

Mr. Stephen pleaded with the court for more time to resolve the conflict and restore the marriage.

Judge Calls for Calm, Sets Date for Reconciliation Outcome

Presiding Judge John Dauda adjourned the case until May 6, requesting feedback on any progress made during the reconciliation process. He advised both parties to remain peaceful and respectful as efforts continue.

"This court encourages peaceful resolution, especially where children are involved," the judge said. "However, we will act in the best interests of all parties if reconciliation fails."

Domestic Abuse and Marital Consent Under Scrutiny

The case has sparked local discussions on issues of marital consent, domestic abuse, and emotional well-being within marriages — topics that are often stigmatized or underreported in traditional communities.

Legal experts note that under Nigerian law, spousal abuse — physical or emotional — remains grounds for divorce, regardless of cultural norms that may discourage speaking out.

The Kaduna court is expected to deliver a conclusive direction at the next hearing.

Four ritual suspects arrested in Rivers for allegedly killing two minors

By Helen Okechukwu

Rivers State Command has announced the apprehension of four suspects for allegedly killing two minors for ritual purposes.

The incident reportedly occurred at Rukpokwu in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area (LGA) of the state.

The spokesperson for the state command, Grace Iringe-Koko, confirmed that the two deceased minors, aged seven, Chizaram Onuche and Chidinma Onuche, were said to have been lured to the location of Aniekan Uko, 27.

Further disclosure noted that Uko, after drugging both minors with a drink known as Black Bullet as a sedative, slaughtered them and drained their blood into a bottle.

However, the bodies of the deceased minors have been deposited at the mortuary for preservation and autopsy, says the spokesperson.

Recalling how the four suspects were arrested, on 23 March, after the case was transferred from Special Area Division, the Anti-Kidnapping Unit team swung into action upon hearing about the crime.

Read Also: Rivers police intensifies security operations, arrest suspected kidnappers

At approximately 9 a.m., the security officers arrested Kingsley Oporum, a 43-year-old native doctor, and other individuals in connection to the crime.

After interrogation, Uko confessed, narrating his ritual ordeal with the suspected native doctor, alleging to have seen Oporum performing similar rituals for others in exchange for wealth.



Iringe-Koko stated, “The native doctor instructed him to provide fresh human remains and blood for ritualistic purposes.”

“Law enforcement officials visited the scene of the crime, documented evidence with photographs, and recovered additional exhibits.”

“Arrested suspects are: Aniekan Sunday Uko (Male, 27 years): A native of Akwa Ibom, residing at 2nd Pipeline, Rukpokwu. He lured victims to his location, drugged them using a drink known as Black Bullet as a sedative, and subsequently slaughtered them, collecting their blood in a bottle.

” Luis John Uwelemele (Female, 19 years): A native of Cross River State, residing at Omuike, Aluu. She is the girlfriend of the first suspect, Aniekan, and is linked to the crime.

” Kingsley Oporum (Male, 43 years): A native of Etche, Rivers State, residing at

3rd Pipeline, Eneka. He has been implicated as the native doctor complicit in the murder of the deceased.

” Friday Silas (Male, 47 years): A native of Plateau State, residing at 2nd Pipeline, Rukpokwu. The first suspect claimed that he allowed him to stay at the uncompleted building where the killings took place.”

Items recovered at the crime scene include: “A kitchen knife identified as the murder weapon, a bottle filled with the victims’ blood, scooped by the suspect, an empty can of Black Bullet, used to drug the victims before the act, and a spoon, used to collect the victims’ blood.”

Assuring the public that justice will be served, Commissioner of Police (CP) Olugbenga Adepoku, stressed that all perpetrators of this heinous crime will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law as investigations are ongoing to uncover more details.

Oyo govt tightens surveillance to tackle diphtheria outbreak

By Helen Okechukwu

Oyo State Government has ramped up disease surveillance and vaccination efforts to combat the outbreak of diphtheria, a highly contagious bacterial infection, as part of an urgent public health response.

During a visit to the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) in Ibadan, the state capital, the Commissioner for Health, Dr. Oluwaserimi Ajetunmobi, emphasized the dangers of diphtheria and its rapid transmission.

She explained that the disease spreads through respiratory droplets from coughing or sneezing, as well as direct contact with infected wounds.

“Diphtheria primarily affects the throat and upper airways, forming a thick greyish membrane that can obstruct breathing,” Ajetunmobi stated.

Diphtheria shows symptom like sore throat, fever, cough, swollen lymph nodes, difficulty swallowing, and, in severe cases, respiratory distress.

As part of the government’s response, she highlighted that surveillance systems have been



reinforced to quickly detect and contain new cases.

Medical personnel are actively monitoring affected areas, while vaccination campaigns are being expanded to protect vulnerable populations.

Ajetunmobi also called on residents to remain vigilant and cooperate with health authorities.

She urged the public to adopt preventive measures, including proper hygiene practices and timely immunization, to reduce the risk of infection and prevent further spread.

The Commissioner specifically advised parents to ensure their children receive the three doses of the Pentavalent vaccine at 6, 10,

and 14 weeks of age to build immunity against diphtheria.

“Pregnant women should also receive the Tetanus-Diphtheria (Td) vaccine during antenatal care,” Ajetunmobi added. “Maintain good personal hygiene, including regular handwashing, covering the mouth when coughing or sneezing, and avoiding sharing personal items.”

Additionally she said, “Avoid close contact with infected individuals and seek medical attention immediately if symptoms arise,”

For further information or to report suspected cases, residents can contact 08033742052 or 07032067763.

NYSC member dies of Lessa fever in Ogun

By Helen Okechukwu



Ogun State Commissioner for Health, Dr. Tomi Coker, on Wednesday confirmed that a 25-year-old female National Youth Service Corps member (name withheld) lost her life to Lassa fever.

This comes after the Commissioner for Health declared an outbreak of the hemorrhagic viral fever in the state on Tuesday.

It was gathered that on March 18, the 25-year-old woman, who had fallen ill in Ondo State, was later hospitalized at one of the state's secondary health facilities in Ijebu North Local Government Area (LGA), where she succumbed to Lassa fever.

Coker said, "The index case is a 25-year-old female National Youth Service Corps member who fell ill while in Ondo State and was brought to one of our secondary health facilities in Ijebu North LGA on March 18, 2025.

She later died the same da

"Lassa fever is a viral Haemorrhagic disease that presents with High-grade fever, Headache, General body weakness, Sore throat, Muscle pain, Cough, Nausea, Vomiting, Diarrhoea, Chest pain and Unexplained bleeding from the ears, eyes, nose, mouth and other body openings.

In addressing the outbreak, she stated, "We implore members of the community to promptly report to the hospital if they notice any of these symptoms. Any case of febrile illness that has not responded to 48 hours of use of anti-malaria or antibiotics should raise an index of suspicion for Lassa fever!

"We implore all Health facilities in Ogun state, public and private, to step up Infection Prevention and Control measures and encourage compliance by all health facility staff.

"Healthcare worker who suspects Lassa fever in a patient are advised to call their local government disease surveillance and notification officer (LGA DSNO), whose numbers are placed in our health facilities or call State Disease Surveillance and Notification Officer (0703-421-4893) or State Epidemiologist (0808-425-0881).

"The Ogun State Government remains dedicated to protecting the health of its citizens through continuous surveillance and prompt response to infectious diseases.

"The Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the Rapid Response Team at Ijebu North East, are keeping the situation under control with enhanced surveillance and community engagement and mobilization for effective response."

Mr Macaroni rejects call to unfollow silent celebrities

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Actor Mr Macaroni responds to a protest urging Nigerians to unfollow silent celebrities amid economic hardship, rejecting calls to force activism.

The call for mass unfollowing came from a social media user with the handle @TeniBegiloju on X (formerly Twitter). The protester accused Nigerian celebrities of ignoring the suffering of the masses and claimed that only Mr Macaroni deserved public support.

The protester shared a placard that read, “Nigerians, let’s unfollow all useless celebrities keeping quiet now.” Alongside the image, they wrote, “They don’t deserve our follow. The only person worthy of our respect is Mr Macaroni.”

However, Mr Macaroni strongly opposed this movement. He made it clear that he does not support forcing celebrities to speak out, arguing that they are citizens like everyone else and should not bear an unfair burden.

Celebrities are citizens too

Responding on X, Mr Macaroni urged people not to demand sacrifices from celebrities if they are not willing to make those sacrifices themselves.

“I would never endorse a post like this! Please do not ask celebrities to make sacrifices that the people themselves are not ready to make,” he wrote.

He pointed out that if most citizens remain silent, it is unfair to single out celebrities for blame. He also noted that not every public figure wants to speak about social issues, and forcing them into advocacy is wrong.



“Celebrities are citizens like you. If the majority of the people are quiet, why should we blame celebrities?” he asked.

The dangers of forced advocacy

Mr Macaroni explained that even when celebrities speak up, they often face backlash. He warned against manipulating public figures into taking stands on controversial topics.

“Not all celebrities wish to speak on social issues. So it’s unfair to manipulate us into speaking about certain topics because even when we speak, we get attacked!”

He emphasized that fame does not come with a responsibility to advocate for social causes.

“We can’t force people into advocacy simply because their line of work has made them famous.”

A call for collective action

Using an example, Mr Macaroni highlighted a common issue in Nigeria—police brutality. He noted that when ordinary Nigerians witness

police officers abusing someone, many choose to walk past, record videos, or remain silent instead of stepping in.

“Nigerians will see their fellow Nigerian being brutalized by the police. Instead of coming together to stop it at that very moment, some will pass by, some will watch, and some will record. Then the same Nigerians will come online to attack celebrities for not speaking against police brutality,” he said.

For real change to happen, Mr Macaroni believes that citizens must take the lead rather than waiting for celebrities to act on their behalf.

“When Nigerians truly want change, the people will not wait for any celebrity. The people will become their own celebrities, and they will lead and take charge!”

His statement reinforces the idea that societal change is a collective effort. While celebrities may lend their voices to causes, the responsibility for change rests on everyone, not just a select few.

'Nigeria may see female president, VP' – DJ Cuppy

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Renowned Nigerian disc jockey, Florence Otedola, popularly known as DJ Cuppy, has expressed optimism that Nigeria will one day elect a female President.

She believes that the recent political milestone in Namibia, where both the President and Vice President are women, serves as an inspiration for Nigerian women in leadership.

DJ Cuppy reacts to Namibia's historic achievement

In a post on her X (formerly Twitter) account, DJ Cuppy celebrated Namibia's groundbreaking moment. She wrote:

“Namibia just made history. Africa's FIRST country with BOTH a female President AND female Vice President. Maybe there's hope for Nigeria one day after all...”

Her statement comes after Namibia's Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah was sworn in as the country's first female President. She previously served as Vice President and won last year's election to take on the top role. Joining her in office is Lucia Witbooi, who now serves as Vice President. This historic shift makes Namibia the first African country where women hold both top leadership positions.

The milestone has sparked conversations across the continent, with many viewing it as progress toward gender equality in governance.

Women in Nigerian politics: Struggles and setbacks

Unlike Namibia, Nigeria has never



had a female President or Vice President. Women's participation in politics remains limited despite their contributions to society. Currently, women hold less than 10% of elected positions in the country.

Cultural norms, financial barriers, and gender biases have long prevented women from rising to top political offices. Many female politicians face discrimination, lack of support, and challenges securing party nominations. Despite these setbacks, women continue to push for greater representation in government.

Namibia's success sparks debate in Nigeria

Namibia's recent achievement has reignited discussions about Nigeria's political future. Some political analysts believe that a female President is possible in Nigeria, but major changes are necessary. Political parties must create fair opportunities for women, and society must shift its mindset about female leadership.

Activists argue that more women in government could lead to policies that address critical issues like education, healthcare, and economic empowerment. They emphasize that representation matters and that Namibia's progress should serve as a motivation for Nigeria.

A hopeful future for women in leadership

DJ Cuppy's statement reflects the aspirations of many Nigerians who dream of seeing a woman lead the country. While the journey may be long, Namibia's achievement proves that change is possible.

If Nigeria embraces gender inclusivity in politics, a female President could become a reality in the future. As more African nations make strides toward equal representation, Nigeria may one day follow suit.

For now, Namibia's groundbreaking leadership remains a beacon of hope—not just for Nigeria but for the entire continent.

'Music industry friends betrayed me' – Skales

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigerian Afrobeats artist Skales has spoken candidly about the betrayal he has faced from artists he once supported in their rise to fame.

The singer, known for his hit song Shake Body, revealed that many of those he helped in the past have now turned their backs on him.

Despite their actions, Skales remains steadfast in his faith, emphasizing that God has never abandoned him. He shared his experience on social media, encouraging fans to trust in God, no matter the circumstances.

Betrayal from former associates

Skales, who has been active in the music industry for over a decade, expressed disappointment over how some artists he mentored have treated him. While he did not name specific individuals, his message suggested deep hurt over broken relationships.

He described feeling isolated at times, despite once playing a role in helping others succeed. His words reflect a common struggle among many in the entertainment industry—loyalty is often short-lived, and personal success can lead to unexpected betrayals.

Faith remains his anchor

Even in the face of disloyalty,



Skales remains optimistic. He credits his faith in God for keeping him strong. His late mother, he said, instilled in him the importance of prayer and unwavering trust in divine guidance.

On his X (formerly Twitter) account, he shared:

“One day, I’ll sit down and tell you a story of how many people turned their backs on me, including those I helped build in this industry. But guess what? God never failed me, even when I was left alone... Never stop praying and trusting God with everything you have. That’s the best advice my mom gave me!”

A message of perseverance

Skales’ post resonated with many fans, who praised him for his resilience. Some shared similar experiences of betrayal, while others encouraged him to stay focused on his career.

The singer’s journey has been filled with ups and downs. After leaving his former record label, he faced financial struggles before making a strong comeback with his music. His story serves as a reminder that setbacks are temporary and that faith and hard work can lead to success.

Moving forward

Despite the challenges, Skales remains dedicated to his craft. He continues to release music and engage with his fans, proving that setbacks do not define a person’s future.

His message is clear: success comes with challenges, but staying true to oneself and maintaining faith can help overcome any obstacle. As he navigates the industry, he hopes his story will inspire others to persevere through difficult times.

Kunle Remi, wife welcome first child

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nollywood actor Kunle Remi and wife Tiwi welcome their first child, Eemi Oluwa, after 80 days in Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

The couple shared their joyful news on social media, expressing gratitude for their journey to parenthood. However, the path was not an easy one. They faced significant medical challenges, endured months of uncertainty, and leaned on their faith to see them through.

A pregnancy filled with challenges

Kunle revealed that the pregnancy came with unexpected difficulties. Early on, doctors discovered a medical issue that required Tiwi to be placed on strict bed rest. This sudden change forced them to adjust their lives, balancing work, travel, and personal struggles. Despite their best efforts, complications led to an early delivery, bringing new concerns for their baby's health.

The couple spent long weeks in and out of the hospital, with their newborn requiring extended care in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). For 80 days, they visited the NICU, clinging to hope and trusting that their daughter would grow stronger.

Holding onto faith

In an emotional Instagram post, Kunle shared his thoughts on the experience. He described the journey as a test of patience, love, and faith.

“From an unexpected medical discovery to months of complete bed rest. From managing demanding work schedules to taking flights



across different countries. From being apart to finally reuniting. From an early birth to trusting in God's perfect timing,” he wrote.

He also reflected on the 11 weeks and three days they spent in the NICU, describing it as “80 days of faith.” Through every challenge, they leaned on their belief that everything would work out in the end.

A message of hope and gratitude

Now, with their baby girl safely in their arms, Kunle and Tiwi are filled with gratitude. The actor described their daughter's arrival as a true miracle, emphasizing that their story is a testament to God's faithfulness.

“We've been blessed with a wonder. We've been blessed with Eemi Oluwa—The Breath of God,” he wrote.

Kunle also took a moment to encourage others who might be

facing similar struggles. He wanted their story to serve as a reminder that, even in the hardest times, there is hope.

“This isn't a podcast. It's just two people sharing their journey—honestly, openly, and with grace—to encourage someone out there,” he added.

A celebration of love and strength

Kunle and Tiwi's journey to parenthood has been filled with obstacles, but their resilience and faith carried them through. Their story is one of love, patience, and unwavering belief. Now, they celebrate the arrival of their daughter, knowing that every challenge they faced brought them to this moment.

With baby Eemi finally home, the couple looks forward to embracing their new chapter as parents.

I endorsed Tinubu, but hardship becoming unbearable – Cynthia Morgan

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigerian singer Cynthia Morgan, now known as Madrina, has called on President Bola Tinubu to take urgent action to reduce the economic hardship in the country.

She urged the government to reconsider its stance on fuel subsidy removal, arguing that the current situation has become unbearable for many Nigerians.

Initial support for subsidy removal

Morgan admitted that she initially supported Tinubu's decision to remove the petrol subsidy. She believed the move was necessary for the country's economic growth. However, she now feels the government was unprepared for the full removal and that its impact has pushed many Nigerians into severe hardship.

In a video posted on her TikTok page, Morgan expressed her concerns. "Are you feeling what I'm feeling? I'm not going to lie, I feel it. It's unfortunate that we can't do much except plead with the government," she said.

She questioned the logic of spending over \$8 billion on fuel subsidies in the past when the country's total revenue was only around \$20 billion. "It doesn't make sense to spend \$7 billion on subsidized petroleum products when we don't have the structures to sustain it," she added.

Economic challenges and inflation

Morgan explained that the high cost of petrol affects almost every aspect of daily life. "Petrol prices control 90% of the cost of goods and services in the market," she noted. She also pointed out that the rising exchange rate of the naira against the dollar is worsening the situation. Since Nigeria imports more than it exports, the



weakened naira has further increased the cost of living.

She highlighted that Nigeria's GDP per capita is currently about \$860, making it difficult for citizens to cope with rising prices. "People are struggling. The cost of food is high. Transportation costs have skyrocketed. We don't have the right structures in place to survive without a fuel subsidy," she said.

Appealing for government intervention
Rather than protest or criticize the government, Madrina suggested a different approach. She urged Nigerians to collectively appeal to the government for relief. "Let's do a 'begging challenge.' Let's ask the government to reconsider. Maybe we have been irresponsible, but we need help," she said.

She proposed that the government should restore at least 50% of the fuel subsidy to ease the pressure on citizens. "100% subsidy removal will not work right now. People are hungry. Crime rates are increasing. We need a balance," she added.

Historical perspective on subsidy

She also traced the fuel subsidy issue

back to former President Olusegun Obasanjo's administration. She criticized past governments for failing to manage the issue properly. "The introduction of the subsidy was a mistake. A leader should face problems head-on, not postpone them," she argued.

However, she acknowledged that Tinubu is attempting to address the issue directly. "I don't think removing the subsidy is a bad idea. The money spent on subsidies could be used for other development projects. But we are not ready for this. The economy cannot handle it," she stated.

Final plea to the government

Morgan ended her message with a heartfelt plea to the government. She urged officials to consider the suffering of ordinary Nigerians and take immediate steps to reduce the burden. "Let's not rant. Let's not fight. Let's ask the government to help us. If they can bring back even 50% of the subsidy, it will make a big difference," she said.

As economic challenges persist, many Nigerians share Madrina's concerns. Whether the government will respond to her appeal remains to be seen.

Actress Mercy Aigbe caught flaunting fake bag

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Popular luxury watchdog, T20Luxury, has publicly accused Nollywood actress Mercy Aigbe of flaunting a counterfeit designer handbag.

The Instagram-based fashion detective page, known for exposing fake luxury goods, made the allegation in a recent post.

Questioning the authenticity of her accessories

T20Luxury shared a picture of Aigbe and claimed her Louis Vuitton Capucines bag was not genuine. The page also raised doubts about the originality of her eyewear.

“Dear Mercy Aigbe, this is NOT a genuine LV Capucines. Even the authenticity of the eyewear is questionable,” the post stated.

A message to the actress

The company addressed Aigbe directly, urging her to be more cautious with her luxury purchases. It acknowledged that celebrities often rely on stylists or personal shoppers but stressed the importance of verifying authenticity.

“We understand that, as a celebrity, you may rely on a stylist or personal shopper. But we hope you recognize the harm counterfeit goods cause to creativity. Given your influence in the industry, we encourage you to conduct due diligence when hiring a stylist,” T20Luxury stated.

Similar case involving AY Makun



This controversy follows another recent case involving comedian AY Makun. Just days ago, T20Luxury accused him of flaunting a fake Hermès bag. In response, AY criticized the page and questioned its credibility.

The impact of counterfeit luxury goods

The issue of fake luxury products remains a major concern in the fashion industry. Many top brands take legal action against counterfeiters, arguing that fake products damage their reputation and reduce sales. Experts also warn of ethical concerns, as counterfeit goods are often linked to exploitative labor practices.

For celebrities, wearing designer items is essential to maintaining a glamorous public image. However, incidents like these highlight the risks of unknowingly purchasing

counterfeit goods. Some stars collaborate directly with brands to ensure authenticity, while others may fall victim to unreliable sources.

Awaiting Mercy Aigbe’s response

As of now, the actress has not responded to the accusations. Fans and followers are eager to see if she will address the claims or ignore the controversy. Meanwhile, social media users continue to debate whether she knowingly flaunted a counterfeit handbag.

A lesson for celebrities and influencers

This incident serves as a reminder that celebrities and influencers must verify the authenticity of luxury items before showcasing them. The battle against counterfeit fashion is ongoing, and public figures must take extra precautions to maintain credibility in the industry.

Putin demands sanctions relief for Black Sea ceasefire deal

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

Russia's refusal to implement a ceasefire agreement with Ukraine in the Black Sea hinges on the lifting of international sanctions, a condition laid out by President Vladimir Putin following talks with the United States.

In a dramatic twist to the ongoing conflict, Moscow has insisted that sanctions on Russian agriculture, fertiliser exports, and financial institutions be lifted before it will commit to the maritime truce.

These demands were made clear shortly after the White House announced the tentative ceasefire deal, brokered after lengthy negotiations in Saudi Arabia.

The ceasefire proposal, which emerged from 12 hours of discussions between Russian and US officials on Monday, is aimed at securing safe passage for commercial vessels and preventing the use of military force in the Black Sea.

However, Moscow's conditions have complicated the agreement, with the Kremlin stipulating that sanctions relief for Russian agricultural exports and financial institutions involved in the food trade be a precondition for implementation.

Sanctions a Sticking Point

Moscow has long argued that sanctions imposed after the invasion of Ukraine have crippled its economy, particularly in the agricultural sector, and continues to demand relief.

The White House has pledged to assist in seeking the lifting of these sanctions, especially those targeting Russian agriculture and fertiliser exports.

However, the lifting of sanctions is unlikely to be straightforward, and Washington and its allies remain divided on the issue.

The proposed agreement was expected to



bring relief to global food markets, which have been severely disrupted by the ongoing conflict.

Russia's demand to reintegrate into international banking systems, specifically the SWIFT payment network, is central to the deal, with Moscow pushing for the removal of restrictions on the Russian Agricultural Bank and other financial institutions involved in food exports.

Trump's Role in the Negotiations

The ceasefire deal, while aimed at reducing hostilities in the Black Sea, is also entangled with broader geopolitical considerations. Shortly after the announcement, Moscow clarified that the deal would only be enacted once sanctions relief was confirmed.

The Trump administration, despite its support for the ceasefire, has faced increasing pressure to address these demands, as Russia seeks to link the Black Sea truce to a broader easing of international restrictions.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky, who had initially welcomed the deal, responded cautiously.

While agreeing that the truce would be beneficial, he stressed that it would only hold if Russian warships remained

confined to the eastern part of the Black Sea. Any violation, he warned, would prompt Ukraine to call for further sanctions and military support from the West.

"We will treat any movement of Russian warships outside the eastern part of the Black Sea as a violation of the agreement," Zelensky stated. "If that happens, I will demand more weapons and sanctions on Russia."

Competing Interests and Regional Tensions

The negotiations have exposed deep divides between the US and Russia, with both sides accusing each other of dragging out talks for strategic gain. Moscow has been accused of using the negotiations to buy time and secure further territorial gains in Ukraine. A Kremlin source told the Moscow Times that Russia was "trying to make the most of the situation," as it seeks to maximise territorial control.

The US, on the other hand, is pushing for an agreement that will restore safe shipping lanes and prevent further escalation in the Black Sea. However, Washington's efforts to secure a joint statement with Moscow have faltered, underscoring the ongoing tensions between the two powers.

IMF, Argentina in Advance talks over new loan program

By **Fatimah Idera**

The International Monetary Fund said on Tuesday discussions with Argentina on a new program are “advanced,” and that fund staff and its board have also met as part of the program’s proceedings.

The IMF board was expected to meet on Tuesday, with Argentina’s qualification for a new program under the fund’s Exceptional Access Policy on the agenda, given that the country has borrowed beyond the fund’s regular lending limits.

The EAP requires informal meetings with the board ahead of any agreement announcement, in part to guarantee that the loan criteria are met.

The fund gave no further details and the Argentine government declined to comment.

Earlier this month, spokesperson Julie Kozack said the fund was “continuing to make good progress toward a program, and we are working constructively with the Argentine authorities in this regard.”

The IMF’s statement follows a vote in Argentina’s Congress last week which gave Javier Milei the green light to negotiate a new IMF loan agreement, on top of the \$44 billion Buenos Aires already owes the lender.

Milei asked lawmakers on March 11 to approve a new 10-year loan to boost the central bank’s foreign currency



reserves and cover looming debt payments.

Under a 2021 law, Argentina’s president must seek authorization from both houses of Congress to request money from the IMF, but needs support from only one to go ahead with the loan.

What is the IMF lending limit and Countries with largest loan limits

Lending limits protect the safety and soundness of national banks, promote diversification of loans, and help ensure equitable access to banking services. These limits prevent excessive loans to one person, or loans to related persons who are financially dependent.

Argentina remains the biggest debtor to the IMF, with a total outstanding debt of \$40.9bn. This is about \$2bn

debt less than a year ago, a sign of a shift in the long, beleaguered relationship between the country and the IMF.

Ukraine has overtaken Egypt to become the IMF’s second largest debtor with its outstanding balance of \$14.6bn. This was up from about \$12bn a year earlier as international support has risen for the war-torn country.

Egypt is the third-largest debtor by amount, with an outstanding balance of \$10.7bn, down from \$14.9bn recorded in April 2024. Its economy deteriorated following the Egyptian revolution in 2011 and falling revenues from the Suez Canal. The government thus sought an IMF deal to unlock \$12bn of cash in 2016. The Fund then approved further loans of \$2.72bn and \$5.2bn to address the impact of Covid-19 in 2020.

Prince Harry resigns from own charity amid infighting, governance crisis

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

The Duke of Sussex has stepped down from his charity, Sentebale, following a devastating breakdown in governance and trust within the organisation.

In a deeply emotional statement released on Tuesday evening, Prince Harry revealed that he had resigned from his role at the helm of Sentebale, a charity he founded in 2006 in memory of his late mother, Diana, Princess of Wales. His resignation comes in solidarity with the charity's board of trustees, all of whom have also vacated their positions in the wake of an ongoing crisis.

The charity, which focuses on supporting children affected by HIV in Lesotho and Botswana, has been plagued by a bitter conflict involving its newly-appointed chairwoman, Dr Sophia Chandaoka, and the board.

The Duke of Sussex and his co-founder, Prince Seeiso of Lesotho, expressed their heartbreak over the situation, citing the "unthinkable" breakdown in relations.

Governance Issues Spark Resignations

Sentebale has confirmed that it is under investigation by the Charity Commission, following concerns raised about the governance of the charity. At the centre of the turmoil is Dr Chandaoka's appointment last summer as chair, which has led to increasing tensions with the trustees.

Reports suggest that when the trustees asked Dr Chandaoka to step down, she responded by filing a lawsuit against the charity, allegedly to secure her position.

In their joint statement, Prince Harry and Prince Seeiso said they were "truly heartbroken" by the developments.

"With heavy hearts, we have resigned



from our roles as patrons of the organisation until further notice, in support of and solidarity with the board of trustees who have had to do the same," the two princes said.

"We are in shock that we have to do this, but we have a continued responsibility to Sentebale's beneficiaries, so we will be sharing all of our concerns with the Charity Commission as to how this came about."

Five former trustees, including Mark Dyer, an Army captain and long-time mentor to Prince Harry, also issued a statement confirming their decision to step down.

They expressed their dismay at the breakdown in trust with Dr Chandaoka, which led to the lawsuit and ultimately forced them to vacate their positions for the sake of the charity.

"This was not a choice willingly made, but rather something we felt forced into in order to look after the charity," the former

trustees said.

Accusations and Counter-Claims

In an extraordinary turn of events, Dr Chandaoka accused the resigning trustees of "abuse of power, bullying, misogyny, and harassment" in a fiery response to their decision. She also took aim at the Duke of Sussex, calling Sentebale a "vanity project" for those who had resigned and accusing them of using the media to damage the charity's reputation.

"Beneath all the victim narrative and fiction that has been syndicated to the press is the story of a woman who dared to blow the whistle about issues of poor governance, weak executive management, abuse of power, bullying, harassment, misogyny, misogynoir – and the cover-up that ensued," she said.

Dr Chandaoka, however, remains defiant, stating that she will not step down from her position and will continue to focus on fundraising for Sentebale's work. "For me, this is not a vanity project from which I can resign when I am called to account," she stated.

Ukraine demands 'fighting ready' troops from Europe

By New Daily Prime

European troops must be ready to fight if they are sent to guard any future peace deal between Ukraine and Russia, a senior aide to Volodymyr Zelensky has said.

"We don't need a mere presence to showcase that Europe is present," Igor Zhovkva, a top Ukrainian negotiator, said ahead of an international summit in Paris.

"It's not the amount which matters... it's also their readiness to fight, their readiness to defend, their readiness to be equipped, and their readiness to understand that Ukraine is an inevitable part of European security," he said.

The comments came ahead of a visit by Mr Zelensky to Paris on Wednesday, where he is scheduled to meet Emmanuel Macron later in the day.

Keir Starmer has spearheaded plans to organise a 'coalition of the willing', mainly comprising European countries, that would be prepared to contribute soldiers to monitor a peace deal.

Russia has said it will not consider any peace deal which involved



European troops being sent to Ukraine.

Kyiv on Wednesday accused Moscow of playing games as it demanded a significant number of sanctions be lifted before a ceasefire in the Black Sea comes into effect.

"We demonstrated we are very serious, the Americans understood...Russia is just playing games," said Andriy Yermak, Mr Zelensky's chief of staff.

Brussels said it had refused to lift EU sanctions on Russia until Moscow completely withdrew its forces from Ukraine, dealing a blow to Donald Trump's hopes to strike a quick ceasefire deal between Kyiv and the Kremlin.

Both sides continued trading allegations of breaking a ceasefire agreement covering strikes against energy infrastructure, which was confirmed by the US on Tuesday following talks in Saudi Arabia.

Overnight, Russia said it had taken down nine drones, including two over the Black Sea. It also said Ukraine tried to attack a gas storage facility in Russian-occupied Crimea and energy infrastructure in Russia's Kursk and Bryansk regions. Ukraine denied this.

Meanwhile, Ukraine's military reported 117 Russian drone attacks overnight. Local officials said the city of Kryvyi Rih had been hit by the biggest drone attack it has faced yet.

Dubai man flies to UK for sex with 13-yr-old girl

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

A man who flew to Britain from Dubai to have sex with a 13-year-old girl he groomed online was relaxing in a hotel spa and wellness centre when he was arrested by police.

Hamdan Alshamsi, 21, a university student from Abu Dhabi, met the vulnerable schoolgirl on the social media site Snapchat and bombarded her with messages for months.

When she agreed to meet him, he flew to the UK and checked into a four-star seafront hotel in Brighton.

The paedophile then booked an Uber taxi to bring the girl to the hotel where he spent two days sexually assaulting her in his room.

Police who traced the victim to the hotel using her mobile phone, discovered Alshamsi enjoying spa treatments in the wellness centre.

Police mugshot of Hamdan Alshamsi
Police mugshot of Hamdan Alshamsi
Credit: CHP/Brighton Pictures
He was sentenced to six years in prison on Tuesday after admitting three charges of engaging in sexual activity with a child.

The girl's distraught parents said Alshamsi had destroyed their daughter's innocence and had left her with severe psychological damage for which she requires ongoing counselling.

Her mother said: "He has taken away our little girl. He took away the virginity of a girl who should be learning about sex education at school and not having sex with a grown adult.

"She was honest with him and told him her age. He knew what he was doing, what he was coming over here for."

Lewes Crown Court heard how Alshamsi first made contact with the Year 9 pupil on Snapchat last year, telling her he was just 16.



Bombarding her with sexually explicit messages, he offered to travel to the UK so they could meet up.

On Christmas Eve last year Alshamsi flew from his home in Abu Dhabi to Britain and on Dec 27 checked into a £250 a night room at the Hilton Brighton Metropole.

He then booked an Uber to collect the girl from her home and drop her off at the hotel, where he spent two days sexually abusing her.

Police launched an urgent hunt for the teenager and using a signal from her mobile phone were able to pinpoint her location to Brighton.

Detectives spent hours scouring the coastline around the city before narrowing the search down to the hotel.

She was eventually located in a hotel corridor where she told police she just wanted to be with her mother.

A subsequent search of Alshamsi's room found condoms, a whipped cream canister, lubricant and vodka he had purchased.

He was tracked down to the hotel spa,

where he was relaxing and enjoying luxury treatments.

Victim on suicide watch

The victim's family said the girl was so traumatised by what had happened she was now on constant "suicide watch" and was not allowed to go anywhere by herself.

Her mother told Lewes Crown Court: "I am worried she is going to be a volcano and explode in some way. She wants life to be normal but he has taken away our little girl. She has been to a doctor and is on suicide watch.

"He knew what he was doing coming over here. He got her to leave home alone."

Will Saunders, prosecuting, said Alshamsi had shown clear "grooming behaviour" and planned his trip in detail.

He said the "grooming" and "planning" was all done with sex in mind.

In mitigation Daniel Darnbrough, defending, said Alshamsi had brought shame on his respectable family and his four sisters were "disgusted" by his behaviour.

'People have been pushed to the brink': welfare cuts spark fear in Blackpool

By Hannah Al-Othman

Already one of the most impoverished towns in the UK, withdrawal of support has left many unsure how to cope.

"It's not very helpful really," says Owen Sandford, 27, of the government's spring statement. "I understand they've got a tough job, but we've got a tougher job trying to survive."

Sandford is in receipt of universal credit and has been applying for work – but he is struggling.

"A lot of us have got kids," he says outside the jobcentre just behind Blackpool's famous tower. "There's so many families that live in poverty, that can't pay the bills and are getting into debt."

And the government's financial plans, he adds, don't help people like him. "Energy keeps going up, council tax keeps going up, food shop is rising every week. The only thing not going up is my money."

Rachel Reeves's statement included sweeping welfare cuts, with the health element of universal credit to be frozen or reduced alongside a review of personal independence payment (Pip).

Lindsay Barlow, the chief executive of the Blackpool charity Disability First, says many disabled people in the city are "terrified" by the changes.

Mortality rates in Blackpool are already substantially above the UK average. Photograph: Christopher Thomond/The Guardian.



"We've received lots of emails and terrified phone calls," she says. "We had a couple who had learning disabilities pop in last week, and they just didn't have a clue how this change was going to affect them."

"We get people who are in mental health crisis on the phone. We have had to have suicide awareness training to help people who have been pushed to the brink, because it's people with mental health conditions that are really feeling the impact of these changes, because they're frightened."

Blackpool has one of the highest proportions of people claiming disability benefit – 17% of the population, according to House of Commons Library data.

Health outcomes are also poor. People in Blackpool are more likely to have a diagnosis of depression and the town has the highest proportion in the country of people with mental health conditions such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.

In Blackpool mortality rates are

higher, while life expectancy is lower. Men and women have the lowest life expectancy from birth of any local authority in England, with the gap between the town and the rest of the country continuing to grow.

At Layton Methodist church, volunteers see about 600 people each week coming through their doors looking for everything from a free breakfast to budget cookery lessons.

On a Thursday, for £8 people can do a food shop that would cost about £40 in a normal supermarket – but some struggle to manage even that.

"People buy it the first couple of weeks after they get the benefit," says Jakki Garner. "But by week three or week four, they can't, their benefits have gone."

Diane Halstead, the church minister's wife, adds: "It brings them down. Because at the end of the day, they feel they're failing as parents ... they'll feed the children, then they'll end up not eating themselves."

South Korea sports ministry to inspect pitches after Son criticism

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi



The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and the K League will inspect 27 K League pitches starting in April in an effort to straighten out problems that have endangered players, the ministry announced Thursday.

The ministry and the league have already installed a K League department in charge of pitch management that will analyze problems and make suggestions to improve conditions.

The department will also make stricter guidelines on how a team should manage its pitch in the long term while considering factors such as the field's characteristics and climate.

The move comes in the wake of player

complaints about the quality of K League surfaces multiple times, including national team regular picks.

Korean national team captain Son Heung-min pointed out the poor conditions at Suwon World Cup Stadium in Suwon, Gyeonggi, after drawing 1-1 with Jordan on Tuesday, saying, "When conditions on our home soil get in the way, then I wonder where we should get our home field advantage."

A pitch problem has also persisted at Seoul World Cup Stadium, home of FC Seoul, as captain Jesse Lingard nearly sustained an injury during a K League 1 match against Gimcheon Sangmu earlier this month after tripping over a part of the turf that had been peeled off.

The ministry will also run a project with local governments this year through which they can actively support pitch improvement and expand the number of stadiums subject to inspections in the future.

"The pitch condition not only has a direct impact on player performance, but it also directly affects whether players can avoid injury, how much fans enjoy games and the overall quality of the games," a ministry official in charge of the inspection project was quoted as saying in a press release on Thursday. "We will come up with a plan to realistically improve stadiums' pitch conditions through this inspection and form a continuous management system by reinforcing communication with the K League, clubs and those in charge of stadium operations."

South Africa keeps World Cup hopes alive with 2-0 win over Benin, amid eligibility concerns

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

South Africa maintained their position at the top of Group C in the 2026 FIFA World Cup Africa qualifiers with a solid 2-0 victory over Benin Republic in Abidjan on Tuesday, March 25.

The win saw Hugo Broos' side extend their lead in the race for an automatic World Cup ticket, though it came on the back of significant uncertainty regarding the eligibility of one of their players.

Before kick-off, the South African team had been under the cloud of potential disciplinary action, with the threat of losing three points hanging over them after fielding an ineligible player in their previous match against Lesotho.

The player at the centre of the controversy was midfielder Teboho Mokoena, who had accumulated two yellow cards in previous matches, thus making him ineligible to feature in the 2-0 win over Lesotho last Friday.

According to FIFA's World Cup qualifying rules, a player is automatically suspended from the team's next match after receiving two yellow cards in separate games.

Mokoena, who plays for Mamelodi Sundowns, was first cautioned during South Africa's 2-1 victory over Benin Republic in November 2023, in the 54th minute.

He was again booked in the 52nd minute of the 3-1 win over Zimbabwe in June 2024. Despite this, he was named in the starting lineup against Lesotho, where he played 82 minutes before being replaced by Thabane Mbatha.



Had FIFA ruled the South Africans' fielding of Mokoena to be in violation of eligibility rules, it could have meant the team would lose the points from their victory over Lesotho, giving Lesotho—or Nigeria—an opportunity to close the gap.

However, South Africa's win against Benin on Tuesday has allowed them to keep their momentum going.

Despite the concerns, South Africa showed little sign of pressure on the field, with second-half goals from Burley forward Lyle Foster and Jayden Adams sealing the win.

The victory now leaves Broos' team with 13 points from six matches, five points clear of second-placed Rwanda and third-placed Benin Republic, who are both on 8 points.

The potential protests from Nigeria or Lesotho regarding the fielding of Mokoena could have complicated the situation.

Under FIFA's guidelines, any protest over player eligibility must be submitted in

writing to the FIFA Match Commissioner within two hours of the match in question, with a detailed report following within 24 hours.

Failure to adhere to these procedures could result in the protest being dismissed.

If a protest had been successful, Lesotho, currently in fifth place with five points, could have been awarded three points, propelling them to 8 points and tightening the race for World Cup qualification.

Nigeria, sitting just four points behind South Africa, could also have benefitted from such a ruling, depending on the outcomes of other matches.

With South Africa now holding a comfortable lead in the group, the focus shifts to their remaining qualifiers.

The result also leaves the South Africans in a strong position to secure automatic qualification, while Benin and Rwanda will be scrambling to keep pace in the coming weeks.