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50% Tariff Hike: Senate urges telcos to reduce data cost

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

The Senate has called on the Federal Ministry of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy to engage telecommunications operators to consider reviewing the costs of data and other internet-related services for their subscribers.

The Senate also asked the ministry to develop a policy framework for affordable internet services in Nigeria, adding that the government should establish and support tech hubs across the country that would “provide free or subsidised internet access to young entrepreneurs, students, and innovators.”

The upper legislative chamber stated this on Wednesday, March 26, following a motion on the “Urgent Need to Address the Increased Cost of Data Services in Nigeria” sponsored by Senator Asuquo Ekpenyong.

Ekpenyong stated that the over 200 per cent hike in costs had “placed significant financial strain on millions of Nigerians, especially young people who rely on the internet for their livelihood.”

“The Senate notes that young Nigerians have embraced the digital economy, leveraging the internet for various income-generating activities, including e-commerce and online trading software development, web design, and mobile app creation, content creation on YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram, online



education and professional skill development and cryptocurrency trading.

“Concerned that fibre-optic internet services remain unaffordable for the average young Nigerian, leaving them heavily dependent on mobile telecommunications companies for internet access and the sudden substantial increase in data costs threatens their economic survival and limits access to critical digital services.

“Aware that the high cost of doing business in Nigeria is driven by multiple challenges, bottlenecks that slow down business operations and high cost of diesel, (the Senate) believes that urgent government intervention is required to ensure affordable internet access remains available to Nigerians, particularly the youth, who are the backbone of Nigeria’s digital economy,” the motion read.

Data cost reduction would improve access to digital services. The motion was unanimously

endorsed by Senators at the plenary, which also had the President of the Senate, Senator Godswill Akpabio, in attendance.

Akpabio stressed that implementing the motion would ensure improve access to digital services and help budding entrepreneurs thrive, which in turn would boost revenue and profits.

Telcos hiked data and call prices. Recall that telecommunications companies in Nigeria hiked costs of data and airtime plans following the approval of a 50 per cent tariff increase by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC).

The increase, especially by MTN Nigeria, sparked outrage from Nigerians, resulting in the trend of ‘from 2k to 6k’ across social media platforms.

The telcos cited rising operational costs and the need to expand infrastructure for improved service delivery.

THE NEW DAILY PRIME RATE CARD

PUBLIC NOTICE COLOUR

PRODUCT COLOUR

**EFFECTIVE FROM
DECEMBER 1, 2024**

SIZE	TOTAL RATE
FULL PAGE	372,500.00
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14X2	118,000.00
10X6	261,585.50
10X5	255,238.00
10X4	206,890.50
10X3	179,608.00
9X6	254,977.00
9X5	225,738.00
9X4	193,500.00
9X3	166,223.50
8X6	225,368.50
8X3	106,934.50
7X4	180,173.50
6X4	100,434.50
6X3	82,750.00
6X2	52,499.50
5X6	123,749.50
5X5	110,000.00
5X4	76,833.00
5X3	66,875.00
5X2	42,916.50
4X4	60,166.50
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3X3	28,000.00
3X2	17,400.00
2X2	13,000.00
2X1	8,600.00
1X1	4,400.00

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10X6	242,500.00
10X5	237,500.00
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9X6	232,500.00
9X5	206,000.00
9X4	177,500.00
9X3	150,000.00
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8X3	98,500.00
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QUARTER PAGE	95,222.50

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SPECIAL POSITIONS

2X6 FRONT PAGE	700,000.00
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3X6 FRONT PAGE	1,200,000.00
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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
5X2	32,916.50
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PRODUCT BLACK & WHITE

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8X3	N/A
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2X1	5,439.50
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ALLURE RATE

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10X5		295,625.00
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EVENT		250,000.00

PICTURE & CAPTION

SIZE	RATE	7.5% VAT	TOTAL
PHOTO NEWS PAGE 2	50,000.00	3,750.00	53,750.00
PHOTO NEWS (3X3)	30,000.00	2,250.00	32,250.00
PHOTO NEWS (4X4)	53,333.30	4,250.00	57,583.30
PRESS RELEASE (4X4)	30,000.00	2,250.00	32,250.00
EVENT COVERAGE	100,000.00	7,500.00	107,500.00
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Tinubu appoints new members to NCDMB governing council

By Friday Omosola

President Bola Tinubu has appointed four new members to the Governing Council of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), filling existing vacancies and reinforcing the board's operational strength.

The newly appointed members include Olusegun Omoshin of the National Insurance Commission (NAICOM) and Wole Ogunsanya, representing the Petroleum Technology Association of Nigeria (PETAN).

Also joining the council are Mazi Sam Azoka Onyechi of the Nigerian Content Consultative Forum (NCCF) and Barrister Owei Oyanbo from the Ministry of Petroleum.

These appointments follow the exit of previous institutional representatives from the council.

The NCDMB Governing Council,



established under Section 69 of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act, 2010, includes representatives from critical institutions such as the Ministry of Petroleum Resources, the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC), the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited

(NNPCL), PETAN, the Council for the Regulation of Engineering in Nigeria (COREN), NCCF, and NAICOM.

President Tinubu tasked the new appointees with utilizing their expertise to advance local content development in Nigeria's oil and gas sector.

Senate rejects proposal to rename INEC HQ after Nwosu

By Friday Omosola

The Senate has dismissed a motion seeking to rename the headquarters of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in honour of the late Prof. Humphrey Nwosu.

Nwosu was the former chairman of the defunct National Electoral Commission (NEC) who oversaw the annulled June 12, 1993, presidential election.

The motion, reintroduced on Thursday by Senator Enyinnaya Abaribe after being previously rejected, also called for a posthumous national honour for Nwosu in recognition of his contributions to Nigeria's democratic development.

However, the proposal reignited sharp disagreements among lawmakers, with opinions divided over Nwosu's legacy.



Senator Osita Ngwu defended Nwosu, emphasising that he operated under military rule and was unable to announce the election results due to threats to his life.

"There was no way he could have declared the results with a gun to his head. That

doesn't erase his contributions," he argued.

In contrast, Senator Jimoh Ibrahim and others strongly opposed the idea, insisting that Nwosu should not be honoured since he failed to announce the election outcome.

Senator Cyril Fasuyi reinforced this stance, stating, "History rewards results, not attempts. If he didn't announce the results, he doesn't deserve this honour."

Senator Sunday Karimi criticised Nwosu for his silence over the years, while Senator Afolabi Salisu warned that naming INEC's headquarters after him would diminish the legacy of MKO Abiola, the presumed winner of the election.

PETROAN commends FG, NNPC for 180 days of continuous Port Harcourt refinery operation

By **Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye**

The Petroleum Products Retail Outlets Owners Association of Nigeria (PETROAN) has praised the Federal Government and the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL) for the successful operation of the revamped Port Harcourt Refinery, which has now run continuously for 180 days since its relaunch in November 2024.

The refinery, which had been dormant for over two decades, was rehabilitated with a loan from Afreximbank, and the project was executed by Tecnimont Nigeria Limited, a subsidiary of the Mair Tecnimont Group.

PETROAN expressed its satisfaction with the rehabilitation, highlighting the remarkable achievement of the refinery running non-stop for six months, as a testament to the success of the project.

In a statement issued by its Publicity Secretary, Joseph Obele, PETROAN also commended Tecnimont Nigeria Limited for its professionalism and expertise in delivering the world-class rehabilitation project, which has revitalised a key national asset.



The association further extended appreciation to the host communities for their cooperation and support during the rehabilitation process.

“The refinery, which was commissioned in October 2024, has been running continuously for 180 days, up to March, a remarkable feat that underscores the effectiveness of the rehabilitation project,” PETROAN stated.

The association also noted that its members are currently loading diesel and kerosene from the refinery, while NNPC retail marketers are loading Premium Motor Spirit (PMS), ensuring a steady supply of petroleum products across the country.

The revitalised refinery has not only contributed to eliminating the circulation of fake kerosene and diesel in the market, but has also boosted local production, reducing the dependency on imported petroleum products.

PETROAN also praised the managing director of the Port Harcourt Refining Company, Ibrahim Onoja, for his leadership and dedication to the successful rehabilitation and operation of the refinery.

The Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA) was also recognised for its oversight role, ensuring the refinery’s safe and efficient operation.

Bill to bar over-60s from presidency, governorship passes second reading

By Dr. Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi

Nigeria's House of Representatives has advanced a controversial constitutional amendment that would bar individuals aged 60 and above from contesting for the offices of President and Governor. The bill, which passed its second reading during Thursday's plenary session, could reshape the country's political landscape ahead of the 2027 general elections.

If enacted into law, the measure would render some of Nigeria's most prominent political figures—including President Bola Ahmed Tinubu (72), former Vice President Atiku Abubakar (78), and Labour Party's 2023 presidential candidate Peter Obi (63)—ineligible to seek office in the next election cycle.

The bill, sponsored by Imo State lawmaker Ikenga Ugochinyere, proposes a sweeping amendment to Nigeria's 1999 Constitution and calls for both age and education-based reforms to the nation's eligibility criteria for top executive positions.

Key Provisions: Education and Age Cap
Formally titled "A Bill for an Act to Alter the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, to Review the Requirements that Qualify a Person to Be Elected as President, Vice President, Governor, and Deputy Governor", the legislation introduces two core changes:

Educational Requirement: Candidates must hold at least a bachelor's degree from a recognized university in their chosen field.

Age Limit: Candidates must not be older than 60 years at the time of vying for office.

The proposal amends Section 131 of the Constitution for presidential and vice-presidential qualifications, and Section 177 for gubernatorial and deputy gubernatorial candidates.



"This bill seeks to modernize Nigeria's leadership criteria and ensure a generational shift in governance," Ugochinyere said during the debate. "It is time to prioritize merit, education, and youth participation in public office."

The bill has already ignited debate within and beyond the National Assembly. Nigeria's political elite is predominantly older, with the average age of Senators standing at approximately 63 years, and members of the House of Representatives averaging 56 years.

For comparison, in the United States—the world's second-largest democracy—the average age of members of the House of Representatives is 58, while U.S. Senators average 64.

While critics argue that age does not necessarily correlate with competence, supporters of the bill view it as a necessary corrective to a political culture dominated by aging leaders with long tenures and entrenched interests.

In a busy legislative session, the House

also passed two other constitutional amendment bills for second reading:

Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education Bill: Sponsored again by Ugochinyere, this bill seeks to elevate the Alvan Ikoku College of Education in Imo State to full university status, providing federal recognition and funding support.

Inclusion Bill: Another proposed amendment mandates the inclusion of youths and persons with disabilities (PWDs) in political appointments, signaling a broader push for equity and diversity in governance.

The age-limit bill must still pass a third reading in the House, clear the Senate, and receive presidential assent before becoming law. Constitutional amendments in Nigeria also require approval by two-thirds of the 36 state assemblies, making the path to ratification both politically and procedurally demanding.

Should it succeed, the bill would constitute one of the most consequential changes to Nigeria's electoral framework since the nation's transition to democracy in 1999.

Naira-for-crude: Fuel prices set to rise as landing cost of imported petrol increases

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

The price of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS), commonly known as petrol, may soon rise further as the landing cost of imported fuel has surged.

This increase follows a significant uptick in the importation of petrol, compounded by the ongoing suspension of the sale of petroleum products in naira by the Dangote Refinery, due to a dispute with the Federal Government over the naira-for-crude deal.

According to reports, the price of imported petrol is set to reflect this rise in costs in the coming days, with the landing cost per litre jumping by N88 in just one week.

This increase raises concerns about an imminent hike in pump prices, which could affect consumers across the country.

Data from the Major Energies Marketers Association of Nigeria (MEMAN) indicated that the landing cost of a litre of petrol has risen from N797 last week to N885 this week.

This sharp increase could potentially see the price of petrol at filling stations soar to as high as N1,000 per litre once additional charges and margins are factored in.

For context, the cost of importing petrol had previously dropped to an average of N860 per litre in recent weeks, following aggressive price cuts by the Dangote refinery, which had been selling petrol



below the market price.

The rising cost of imported petrol is linked to a number of factors, including the suspension of the naira-for-crude deal by the Dangote Refinery. The refinery had been selling petrol to local marketers in naira, but this arrangement has now been suspended after the Nigerian government allegedly refused to continue the deal.

The Dangote refinery's decision to halt naira-based transactions has led to a spike in petrol prices at private depots in Lagos, with the cost of loading petrol jumping to approximately N900 per litre.

Implications of the suspension of Naira-for-Crude deal

The naira-for-crude policy had been instrumental in keeping fuel prices relatively stable, as it allowed the Dangote refinery to purchase crude oil in naira and sell refined products in the same currency.

However, with the suspension of this

agreement, the Dangote refinery has now aligned its pricing with the global market, where transactions are typically conducted in US dollars.

This shift has left local marketers scrambling to adjust to the new pricing structure, which has already led to an uptick in fuel prices.

The Federal Government's failure to resolve the deadlock over the naira-for-crude deal has left many in the industry concerned about the future of fuel prices.

The refinery's decision to halt naira transactions has had immediate effects on fuel imports, with reports indicating that several vessels carrying imported petrol are expected to arrive at Nigerian ports in the coming weeks.

Between March 17 and 23, seven vessels carrying 115,000 metric tonnes of PMS were expected to dock at various seaports, a move aimed at improving fuel supply nationwide.

Emir of Kano cancels Eid-el-Fitr Durbar celebration over security concerns

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

The Emir of Kano, Aminu Ado Bayero, has announced the cancellation of the traditional Eid-el-Fitr Durbar celebration due to rising security concerns in the state.

The announcement was made on Wednesday during a press briefing held at the Nasarawa mini palace in Kano. Emir Bayero explained that the decision followed consultations with respected Islamic clerics, elders, stakeholders, and members of his council, who advised him to prioritize peace and stability in the state.

“I urge the people of Kano to celebrate the Sallah in peace and harmony,” Bayero said.

A durbar is a grand cultural festival held during Eid-el-Fitr and Eid-el-Kabir celebrations. It features prayers and a ceremonial parade of the emir and his entourage on horseback, symbolizing Kano’s rich cultural heritage.

This year’s durbar was also meant to mark Emir Bayero’s fifth anniversary on the throne. However, with tensions rising over the ongoing emirship tussle between Bayero and Muhammadu Sanusi II, the former emir of Kano, the event was called off to avoid potential unrest.

The cancellation comes amid a



prolonged leadership dispute over the Emir of Kano throne. In May 2024, the Kano House of Assembly passed an amended bill that allowed for the reinstatement of Muhammadu Sanusi II, who had been dethroned in 2020. The bill, signed into law by Governor Abba Yusuf, effectively removed Aminu Bayero from the throne.

However, Bayero rejected his dethronement and initiated legal proceedings to challenge the state government’s decision. The legal battle reached the Court of Appeal, which, on March 14, temporarily suspended its earlier ruling that had overturned a federal high court decision invalidating the state’s repeal of the 2019 Emirate Council Law. This suspension halted Bayero’s removal while the case awaits resolution at the Supreme Court.

As a result, both Sanusi and Bayero are now laying claim to the throne, fueling political and social tensions

in Kano.

Governor Abba Yusuf recently directed all four Kano emirates to begin preparations for the Sallah durbar and ensure that citizens and visitors enjoy a peaceful festive season. Emir Bayero initially complied and notified security agencies of his intention to hold the durbar and commemorate his five-year reign. However, concerns grew over the possibility of clashes between supporters of Bayero and Sanusi.

To avoid any escalation, Bayero ultimately chose to cancel the durbar.

He urged the people of Kano to use the Sallah period to visit friends and family and to celebrate peacefully. The emir also prayed for Allah’s blessings, forgiveness, and mercy during the holy month of Ramadan.

Atiku calls allegations of receiving Lagos funds 'blatant lie from pit of hell'

By Friday Omosola



Former Vice President Atiku Abubakar has dismissed as a 'blatant lie from the pit of hell' the allegations linking him to purported financial dealings involving Lagos State funds.

In a statement issued on Thursday by his media adviser, Paul Ibe, Atiku refuted reports suggesting that Lagos State Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu, through Ms Aisha Achimugu, provided funds to him during the 2023 presidential election.

Describing the claim as 'contrived political hogwash' and a 'futile campaign of calumny', he noted that the accusation was an attempt to serve the political interests of President Bola Tinubu.

Atiku stressed that he has no relationship with Sanwo-Olu and has never met him.

He questioned the logic behind such an alleged transaction—especially given that he and Tinubu were direct political opponents in the 2023 presidential election.

He further suggested that the allegation

was part of a two-pronged political strategy: to justify Sanwo-Olu's diminishing influence within Tinubu's camp and to undermine the emerging coalition of opposition leaders, in which he plays a key role.

The statement read: "We at Atiku Media Office have taken note of reports in a section of the media that the Governor of Lagos State, Babajide Sanwo-Olu, through Ms Aisha Achimugu, made available to His Excellency Atiku Abubakar, Vice President of Nigeria, 1999-2007 money purportedly belonging to Lagos State. The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) is also credited with investigating the matter.

"This piece of kindergarten propaganda is beneath the camp of Tinubu. How is it possible for an Atiku that does not know and had no connection with Sanwo-Olu to be having a transaction with him involving the exchange of money – let alone during the Presidential election of 2023 in which his boss was a contestant? To what end would that be?

"We wish to, therefore, state emphatically and for the record that it is

a political hatchet job aimed at providing a much-needed justification to jettison Governor Sanwo-Olu, who appears to have fallen out of favour with the "Bourdillon Cult."

"To even underscore how poor the propaganda is, an unnamed Sanwo-Olu's aide is quoted in the news story trashing his principal and adding fuel to the fire. Pray, who does that?

"Since the EFCC has been dragged into the arena of politics and propaganda, we challenge the anti-corruption agency to make public the outcome of its alleged investigation.

"It is not just the President that is entitled to that information but the generality of the Nigerian public, including former Vice President Atiku Abubakar and Labour Party's Presidential flag bearer in the 2023 election, Peter Obi.

"This voyage of misadventure and campaign of calumny against the person and reputation of Atiku Abubakar must be halted immediately and with alacrity, too."

Senate approves bill to hold elections on same day

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

A bill aimed at empowering the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to conduct general elections on the same day has successfully passed its second reading in the Nigerian Senate.

The proposed legislation seeks to amend the Electoral Act 2022 in a bid to reduce the spiralling costs of elections, shorten campaign periods, and allow elected officeholders to participate as ad hoc delegates in party congresses.

Leading the debate on the Electoral Act (Amendment) Bill, 2025, Senator Saliu Mustapha emphasised the unsustainable financial burden of elections, noting that the cost has surged from ₦1.5 billion in 1999 to a staggering ₦350 billion in 2023.

“The current staggered election process is a major financial burden. Holding all elections on the same day will save costs, improve voter turnout, and reduce political tension,” Mustapha argued, highlighting the inefficiency and expense associated with staggered elections.

He further pointed out that staggered polls also contribute to voter fatigue, disillusionment, and increased logistical challenges.



The proposal has received widespread support from several senators, who agreed on the need for electoral reforms to reduce financial pressures. However, some lawmakers raised concerns about INEC’s ability to manage nationwide elections on a single day.

Senator Adams Oshiomhole voiced caution, suggesting that while the bill was well-intentioned, the readiness of INEC should be carefully evaluated before moving forward.

He questioned whether the electoral body had the necessary resources and

infrastructure to conduct all elections in a single day, particularly in light of the logistical challenges posed by multiple ballot papers.

“We must ask: Is INEC equipped to conduct all elections in one day? We must also consider the confusion that multiple ballot papers could create, especially for illiterate voters,” Oshiomhole warned.

The Senate is expected to conduct further scrutiny of the bill in the coming weeks, as lawmakers continue to deliberate on the proposed amendments to the Electoral Act.

Oyebanji approves increase in subvention to tertiary institutions, others

By Friday Omosola

Ekiti State Governor, Biodun Oyebanji, has approved an increase in the monthly subvention allocated to the Judiciary, the legislative arm of government, and other subvented institutions in the state.

Olayinka Oyebode, the governor’s Special Adviser on Media, announced this in a statement on Thursday.

The increment, totalling ₦438.9 million monthly, is aimed at enabling these institutions to accommodate the new minimum wage and the consequential salary adjustments for workers.

The beneficiaries of this increase include the Ekiti State Customary Court of Appeal, Ekiti State High Court of Justice, Ekiti State Judicial Service Commission, and Ekiti State House of Assembly Service Commission.

Other institutions covered are Ekiti State University (EKSU), Ado-Ekiti; Ekiti State University Teaching Hospital (EKSUTH); Bamidele Olumilua University of Education, Science and Technology (BOUESTI), Ikere Ekiti; Ekiti State Polytechnic, Isan Ekiti; College of Health Technology, Ijero-Ekiti; and the Non-Academic Staff Union of Educational and Associated Institutions.

Additionally, Governor Oyebanji has approved the payment of the outstanding 2020 leave bonus for local government workers, fulfilling his commitment to settling all outstanding entitlements inherited from previous administrations.

Reaffirming his administration’s dedication to the welfare of workers and retirees, the governor emphasised ongoing efforts to clear



all outstanding entitlements, including gratuities, in line with the government’s continuity and shared prosperity agenda.

He urged workers to remain committed to excellent service delivery and to view themselves as key stakeholders in the Ekiti Project.

“Democracies don’t whisper”: Gana blasts voice vote on Rivers emergency rule

By Dr. Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi

Hon. Joshua Gana warns that Nigeria’s emergency rule in Rivers State and the unrecorded voice vote undermine democracy, lack transparency, and echo authoritarian practices.

In a sharp critique of Nigeria’s federal government, Honourable Joshua Audu Gana, a prominent member of Nigeria’s House of Representatives, has voiced deep concern over the recent declaration of a state of emergency in Rivers State. In an exclusive interview, Gana described the move as an “unconstitutional overreach” that could imperil the democratic fabric of Africa’s most populous nation.

The federal government’s appointment of a sole administrator to replace the elected governor of Rivers State, Siminalayi Fubara, has drawn widespread condemnation from legal scholars, civil society groups, and opposition politicians. But Gana’s criticism is particularly notable—not only for its legal precision, but for its political courage.

“There is no provision in the 1999 Constitution that allows the President to remove a sitting governor and install an unelected administrator,” Gana said. “Although Section 305 permits the President to declare a state of emergency, it does not authorize the dissolution of state executive structures or the removal of elected representatives. Section 11(4) only empowers the National Assembly to take over state legislative functions—not executive powers—if a state assembly is unable to perform its duties.”

Gana described the circumstances surrounding the declaration of a state of emergency in Rivers State as “unprecedented, extra-constitutional, and dangerous.”

Gana, who represents Niger State in the House, warned that the federal government’s actions set a disturbing precedent. Drawing on historical comparisons, he pointed out that during past emergency declarations—including in Plateau State under President Olusegun Obasanjo in 2004 and in Borno and Yobe States under President Goodluck Jonathan in 2011—elected governors remained in office.



“Even in those crisis periods, constitutional order was preserved. What we’re seeing today is different. It’s the erosion of federalism through executive overreach,” he said.

Even more alarming, according to Gana, was the House of Representatives’ decision to ratify the emergency declaration via a voice vote—a method that does not record how individual lawmakers voted. Lawmakers voiced their votes by shouting “aye” or “nay,” without any record of individual accountability. This, he noted, is a violation of Nigeria’s democratic best practices.

“Decisions such as the declaration of emergency rule in democracies worldwide typically require recorded votes to allow for public scrutiny. Nigerians deserve to know how their representatives voted on a matter of such national importance,” Gana said. “Democracies do not operate in whispers—they function in transparency.”

He cited Section 58(4) of Nigeria’s Constitution, which outlines proper legislative procedures, and compared Nigeria’s current process unfavorably with international standards, particularly in the United States.

“After 9/11, Congress debated and voted openly on emergency powers. That’s what accountability looks like. A voice vote on a state of emergency? That’s unacceptable,” he said.

Gana’s critique is not limited to legal procedure—it touches on the broader implications for Nigeria’s federal system and democratic integrity.

“If we normalize this—the idea that elected state governments can be dissolved at will—then what remains of our federalism?” he asked.

He further warned that such actions echo the authoritarian tendencies of Nigeria’s military past.

“We fought hard for this democracy. We cannot afford to casually dismantle it under the pretext of emergency rule,” he said.

Gana believes the federal government must provide clear, verifiable evidence to justify the imposition of emergency rule—and that any future emergencies must follow strict constitutional procedures.

“The stakes are too high,” he said. “This is not about politics. It’s about the rule of law.”

He concluded with a plea for legislative integrity and public vigilance.

“Democracy is not sustained by silence. It’s sustained by scrutiny,” Gana said. “And the people must hold us accountable.”

Senior advocate backs Tinubu's declaration of state of emergency in Rivers

By Damilola Olufemi

The President of Nigeria, Bola Tinubu, on March 18, 2025, declared a state of emergency in Nigeria.

The declaration led to the suspension of Governor Siminalayi Fubara, his deputy and all members of the House of Assembly.

The president thereby appointed Retired Admiral Ette Ibas as Sole Administrator of the state.

Since then, the declaration of a state of emergency has generated several thoughts, conversations, and opinions, including the constitutional backing of the declaration.

In an in-depth discussion on Arise TV's Good Morning Show, a senior advocate of Nigeria, Abiodun Jelili Owonikoko, provided a legal analysis of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's decision to declare a state of emergency in Rivers State. Addressing concerns surrounding the constitutionality of the proclamation and the appointment of an interim administrator, Owonikoko defended the government's actions, asserting that due process was followed in accordance with 1999 Constitution.

Emergency Declaration and Constitutional Backing

Owonikoko emphasised that the Nigerian constitution, under Section 305, grants the president the authority to declare a state of emergency in any part of the country when circumstances warrant such action. He explained that this provision was crafted to avoid the legislative gridlock that occurred under the 1962 Constitution, where emergency declarations required parliamentary approval before taking effect, leading to significant political turmoil.

"The drafters of the 1999 Constitution learned from history," Owonikoko stated. "Rather than having the parliament debate extensively before a state of emergency is declared, the constitution now gives the president the initial power to act swiftly, subject to legislative review within 48 hours."



He further highlighted that the proclamation is only effective if it gains the approval of two-thirds of the National Assembly. "If the president did not do his homework and assumed that parliament would see things his way, he would have been disgraced within 48 hours," he added.

Legislative Approval and the Vote Controversy

Responding to criticisms regarding the approval process, Owonikoko acknowledged that how the National Assembly approved the proclamation—particularly the use of a voice vote—has raised concerns about transparency. However, he maintained that the National Assembly has the prerogative to determine its voting procedures unless challenged in court.

"If evidence is produced showing that the required quorum of two-thirds of the House of Representatives and the Senate was not met, the proclamation can be struck down," he noted. "But as of now, the decision stands, and it must be assumed that the approval was unanimous until proven otherwise."

Presidential Powers to Suspend a Governor

One of the most contentious aspects of the emergency declaration is the suspension of the state governor, Siminalayi Fubara.

Addressing this issue, Owonikoko asserted that the president does not have the power to remove a sitting governor but can temporarily freeze executive powers if the governor is deemed a threat to law and order.

"The executive power of a governor must be exercised in a way that does not impede federal authority," he explained, citing Section 5(3) of the Constitution. "Where a governor's actions contribute to a breakdown of law and order, the president has the constitutional right to intervene."

He also referenced the Supreme Court's ruling that there was effectively no functioning government in Rivers State due to the political crisis. "The president does not need more justification than that," he remarked.

Appointment of a Sole Administrator

Owonikoko clarified the legal standing of the interim administrator appointed to oversee Rivers State. He argued that the appointment was not a replacement of the governor but a temporary measure to maintain law and order.

"The sole administrator is not running an independent administration," he cautioned. "Governor Fubara remains the governor, but his powers are currently frozen to prevent further instability."

BEDC sparks controversy with pidgin curse on vandals and meter bypassers

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

The Benin Electricity Distribution Company (BEDC) has triggered widespread reactions after posting a controversial message on its official X (formerly Twitter) handle. On Thursday morning, BEDC publicly cursed those vandalizing transformers and tampering with electricity meters.

The post, written in Nigerian Pidgin, stated, “E no go beta for who dey vandalize transformer and who dey bypass.”

While the message aimed to address electricity theft and vandalism, its tone has sparked criticism from netizens, who described it as unprofessional.

One user, @iamkissking, called out BEDC for the statement, saying, “As you talk am e good. E NOR GO BETTER FOR UNACAUSE NAWE DEY USE OUR MONEY FIX TRANSFORMER FOR THIS SIDE.” Another user, @DatNaijaGuy1, supported the criticism, highlighting issues with prepaid meters: “Transformers una no dey buy, even cable kpa-kpa una no dey buy. Prepaid metre wey una suppose give customers, una go dey sell am at exorbitant prices. Light we no dey see but una must still collect money. How life wan take better for una?”

The backlash continued with @deluxe_k, who tweeted, “Amen ... same applies to who does not give light but keeps increasing tariff.”

Some commenters accused BEDC of failing to provide basic services while still charging high fees. A frustrated user, @WajufisGm, wrote, “May misfortune be the portion of distribution company wey dey service most part of Ondo state but refuse to provide light for 24hrs in a week for



majority of the people. May the company perish!”

Others questioned the company’s right to curse customers when, according to them, BEDC’s performance has been subpar. @edin_sparkle tweeted, “If person won even swear, shey na you suppose Dey swear? Your poor performance in Oye-Ikole axis is a result of swears you guys don use head pack.”

Many of the complaints centered on the alleged lack of investment by BEDC in critical infrastructure like transformers, cables, and prepaid meters.

The controversy is not new. BEDC, responsible for electricity distribution in Delta, Edo, Ekiti, and Ondo states, has faced public criticism and protests in recent years.

In April 2024, over 20,000 Edo residents petitioned the House of Representatives after enduring a nine-month power outage. Similarly, in July 2024, Ondo residents staged protests over BEDC’s prolonged failure to restore power in their communities.

Meanwhile, the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) recently issued new penalties for meter tampering and electricity theft. According to an order released on January 22, 2025, first-time offenders using single-phase meters will be fined ₦100,000, with repeat offenders paying ₦150,000. Three-phase meter violators will pay ₦200,000 initially, rising to ₦300,000 for subsequent offences.

NERC also introduced harsh fines for maximum demand users, who will pay 450% of their last bill for a first offence and 600% for repeat cases.

The measures, NERC says, are designed to curb illegal connections and ensure fair metering. However, many Nigerians believe that unless electricity distribution improves, vandalism and bypassing will remain widespread.

As BEDC’s controversial curse continues to trend, one thing is clear—Nigeria’s electricity crisis remains a source of deep frustration for citizens.

Students, youths protest in Akure over insecurity, unmet government promises

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

A fresh wave of protests broke out in Akure, the capital of Ondo State, on Thursday, as students and youths took to the streets to demand urgent action from the state government on rising insecurity and unfulfilled developmental promises.

The protest, led by the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) Joint Campus Committee, Ondo Axis, comes amidst increasing cases of kidnappings, farmer-herder clashes, and general insecurity in communities across the state. The demonstrators, mostly students, accused the government of persistent neglect and “empty promises,” particularly regarding student welfare and educational infrastructure.

Carrying placards with inscriptions such as “Enough is Enough” and “We Demand Action Now,” the protesters marched through major roads in Akure, chanting and calling for immediate reforms.

In a statement issued on Wednesday, NANS leaders Oluwarotimi Joshua, Chairman of the Joint Campus Committee, and Naheem Ademola, Deputy Coordinator of NANS South West Zone D, expressed frustration over the government’s inaction despite previous peaceful engagements and official appeals.

“Our demands are clear and just. We have engaged in peaceful dialogue, written official letters, and made numerous appeals, yet our cries have been ignored. Enough is enough! The government must act now,” the statement read.



The association outlined several key demands, including the renovation and equipping of institutional facilities, the construction and rehabilitation of student hostels, and improved security, particularly for students participating in the Students’ Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES).

Other demands include the procurement of promised student buses, support for student entrepreneurship and skill acquisition programs, and justice for an unaddressed attack on NANS members in Ogbese.

“The attack on our members at Ogbese remains unaddressed. We will not stand idly while students are left vulnerable and neglected. We are calling on the government to do the needful before this issue escalates further,” the statement added.

NANS also called on all students in Ondo State to participate in the protest, emphasizing that it would remain peaceful but resolute.

“The power of the students must never be undermined. We are determined to hold the government accountable and demand the quality education and welfare we deserve,” the statement concluded.

As of press time, government officials had yet to issue a response to the protest. However, tensions remain high in Akure as students vow to sustain their demonstration until concrete action is taken by the state government.

The protest is the latest in a series of youth-led actions in Nigeria, as frustrations continue to mount over issues ranging from insecurity to educational neglect.

Ogun govt partners with Morocco on energy, infrastructure, education

By Friday Omosola

Ogun State Government has formalized a strategic partnership with Morocco to drive advancements in energy, infrastructure, and education.

The agreement, sealed through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Confederation of General Employers of Morocco (CGEM), aims to enhance power supply, housing, port development, and industrial expansion.

Governor Dapo Abiodun highlighted Morocco's success in energy, manufacturing, and agriculture, noting that the state seeks to tap into its expertise.

Key areas of discussion included the 'Light Up Ogun Project' to improve electricity supply, investment in fertilizer production, and the promotion of technical education to support industrial



growth.

As part of the partnership, plans are underway to extend the Lagos Blue Line railway into Ogun, fast-track the Olokola Deep Seaport, and develop smart cities to boost economic activities.

CGEM's Vice President, Ali Zerouali,

affirmed Morocco's commitment to strengthening economic ties with the state.

Governor Abiodun expressed optimism that this collaboration would accelerate industrialization, create jobs, and further position the state as Nigeria's premier investment hub.

Late Gov Ajimobi daughter dies at 42

By Helen Okechukwu

The former governor of Oyo State, late Abiola Ajimobi's first daughter, Bisola Kola-Daisi, has passed away at the age of 42 in the United Kingdom (UK).

The news of her death was shared on Thursday via social media.

According to reports, she passed away after a brief illness.

The late Mrs. Bisola was married to Kolapo Kola-Daisi and is survived by three children.

She served as a Special Adviser to the Minister of Budget and Planning, Atiku Bagudu.

The late special adviser was the Managing Director of Grandex Nigeria Ltd., a leading FMCG retail and wholesale chain established in 1984.



Red Also: Lagos set to integrate korope, danfo buses into state's transport reform plan

The post read, "I am deeply saddened to receive the news of the passing of Mrs. Bisola Kola-Daisi (Nee Ajimobi), the

beloved daughter of my cousin, the late Senator Isiaq Abiola Ajimobi, and former First Lady of Oyo State, Her Excellency (Dr.) Florence Ajimobi. Bisola's untimely death has left an unfillable void in our hearts, and I can only imagine the pain of a parent burying their child.

"As someone who had the privilege of knowing Bisola as a dear family member – she was like a daughter to me – her passing has left me with a profound sense of personal loss.

"I extend my heartfelt condolences to the Ajimobi family, particularly former First Lady, H.E Florence Ajimobi . May God grant us the strength and fortitude to bear this irreparable loss.

May Bisola's soul rest in perfect peace."

Rivers administrator swears in new SSG

By Friday Omosola

The Sole Administrator of Rivers State, Retired Vice Admiral Ibok-Ete Ibas, has sworn in Ibibia Lucky-Worika as the new Secretary to the State Government (SSG).

The New Daily Prime reported that Ibas appointed Worika, a distinguished legal expert and administrator, as SSG on 25 March and emphasised that Worika's selection followed a meticulous vetting process.

During the swearing-in ceremony, he urged him to apply his expertise in advancing governance and stability in the state.

The swearing-in ceremony, held yesterday at the Government House in Port Harcourt, underscored the administrator's commitment to strengthening public administration and fostering trust in governance.

Ibas described Worika's appointment as a strategic decision aimed at ensuring effective governance and policy implementation.

"The challenges ahead are significant, but I have no doubt



in your ability to deliver. Your knowledge, resilience, and commitment to service will be instrumental in driving the progress that Rivers State urgently needs," he stated.

Highlighting Worika's extensive background in law, policy development, and international governance, the administrator expressed confidence in his ability to help shape policies that align with the administration's objectives of stability and accountability.

He reaffirmed his administration's dedication to transparency and effective governance, urging the new SSG to work closely with civil servants to maintain governmental efficiency.

"There is no time for delays—you must get straight to work. Our civil service remains the backbone of government operations, and collaboration is key to ensuring continuity and efficiency," he said.

Addressing government officials, he called for collective effort and cooperation to achieve the administration's goals.

"I ask for the full support of our Permanent Secretaries and civil servants as we navigate this critical period. Our success depends on teamwork and a shared commitment to the state's progress," he added.

25 PWDs graduates with digital skills in Lagos

By Damilola Olufemi

No less than 25 Persons With Disabilities (PWDs) have completed the IT Bridge Academy programme, a pioneering initiative by Sightsavers designed to provide accessible and high-quality IT training.

The academy, hosted by Digital Bridge Institute (DBI) Lagos Campus, aims to bridge the digital divide by equipping persons with disabilities with industry-recognised certifications and pathways to employment. The programme's disability-inclusive model offers tailored support, extended timelines for course completion, and accommodations such as screen readers and sign language interpreters.

The graduates, comprising 16 female and 9 male students, earned Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) certifications, with some already securing internships at top firms like MTN Nigeria and the Chartered Institute of Personnel Management (CIPM).

The IT Bridge Academy has received overwhelming interest, with over 400 applications received for the Lagos programme alone in 2023. This demonstrates the growing demand for inclusive tech education and employment



opportunities in Nigeria.

“We’re very happy that Nigeria has the National Commission for Persons with Disability that is also championing this cause, and that the private sector also is coming together to make sure that their workplaces are inclusive for persons with disability. So yes, not the first step, but we still have a long way to go as a nation,” she said.

Speaking at the graduation on Thursday, Dr. Joy Shuaibu, Country Director for Sight Savers in Nigeria, noted that it has continually, in all countries where we work, advocated to ensure that persons with disability are not just in employment, but are skilled with what it takes for them to be employed and as a nation, Nigeria have a long way to go.

Viola Askia Usoro, Head, Special Programme DBI, representing DBI President David Daber, disclosed that DBI is resolute about pushing the concept of inclusivity to deliver its mandate to carry out capacity building, this time for persons with disabilities.

“It is important for us to equip them with the skills so that they can benefit from the opportunities in Nigeria’s digital economy,” she said.

She added that President Bola Tinubu’s Renewed Hope Agenda has a very important pillar: youth empowerment, which is “inclusive of all youth, and therefore this program signposts the empowerment for persons with disabilities aspect of that.”

INEC receives 91 applications for new political parties ahead of 2027 elections

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

As momentum builds ahead of the 2027 elections, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has confirmed it has received 91 applications for the registration of new political parties.

The announcement has sparked mixed reactions across the political spectrum. The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) stated that the number of applications reflected a lack of unity among opposition leaders, while the New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP) saw it as a sign of incompetence within the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC).

The Labour Party (LP), on the other hand, welcomed the development but called on INEC to thoroughly review all applications before proceeding with the registration process.

The APC, however, accused former Vice President Atiku Abubakar of being behind the push for more political parties, claiming that it would come to nothing as the ruling party was confident of winning the 2027 elections.

Accusations of INEC's obstruction

The announcement of 91 applications came amid accusations from opposition groups, alleging that INEC was intentionally obstructing the registration of new political parties in preparation for the 2027 general elections.

Salihu Lukman, a key figure in the opposition coalition and former National Vice Chairman of the APC for the North-West, claimed that registered political parties that failed to meet the electoral threshold by winning seats in the previous general elections were at risk of being deregistered.

Lukman further suggested that INEC was frustrating efforts to register new political parties.



He stated, "The only conclusion that can be reached in the circumstance is that INEC has decided that it will not register new parties."

Opposition's concern

The PDP Deputy National Youth Leader, Timothy Osadolor, criticized the creation of new political parties as unnecessary and wasteful.

He argued that opposition leaders did not need multiple parties to challenge the ruling APC but rather a single, united platform.

"What they should do right now is focus more on how to harmonize and have a much more formidable platform," he said.

Osadolor emphasised the need for the opposition to unify and avoid the fragmentation that multiple political parties could cause. He also pointed out that some of the applications for new political parties were being submitted by people who lacked the structure and technical know-how to build a successful political organization.

Support from other opposition parties

The National Publicity Secretary of the NNPP, Ladipo Johnson, welcomed the increased political participation, arguing that it demonstrated the growing awareness among Nigerians about the ruling

party's perceived ineptitude.

Johnson, however, reassured that the formation of new parties would not divide the opposition, but might encourage more cooperation and consolidation among existing parties to present a united front against the APC.

Labour Party's National Publicity Secretary, Obiora Ifoh, agreed that the registration of new political parties was a democratic right and should not be seen as a threat to existing parties.

He added that if any group met the necessary criteria, they should be allowed to register. "The more, the merrier," he remarked, suggesting that a broader political landscape could only benefit the democratic process.

APC's dismissal of the applications
APC Publicity Director, Bala Ibrahim, dismissed the efforts to register new political parties as being driven by unsuccessful politicians trying to maintain their relevance.

Rivers police warn against actions threatening state's peace

By Helen Okechukwu

The Rivers State Police Command has issued a stern warning to the public, urging citizens to avoid any actions that could disrupt the prevailing peace and security in the state.

This came after the confirmation of the invitation of Mr. Nubari Saatah, President of the Niger Delta Congress (NDC), at the State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID).

This was made known through a release made available to journalists on Thursday.

Saatah was invited for questioning after he called for a public protest in the state.

“This invitation became necessary due to the NDC’s persistent and emphatic calls for public protests within Rivers State. As part of its responsibility to ensure public safety, the Police sought clarification on the nature and objectives of these planned demonstrations,” the spokesperson, Grace Iringe-Koko, said.

“While the Command recognizes and upholds the fundamental right

to peaceful assembly, it remains vigilant to the potential security risks that could arise from such gatherings.”

Highlighting the implications of the protest by mischief-makers or enemies of the state who could take advantage of the situation, the command said it could lead to unrest and the destruction of lives and properties.

Iringe-Koko said that when it jeopardizes security, the organizers bear the consequences.

After the conclusion of the questioning, the invited President of the NDC was allowed to return home.



Additionally, Iringe-Koko said, “The Rivers State Police Command urges all residents and stakeholders in the state to continue to uphold peace and stability, recognizing that security is in the best interest of all.

“The Command remains unwavering in its commitment to protecting lives and property while ensuring strict enforcement of law and order.”

While reiterating the consequences of disrupting public peace, the commander asserted that any group or individual found instigating unrest would be punished according to the law.

Nigeria's money supply drops to N110.32 trillion in February 2025

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

Nigeria's money supply (M3) declined for the first time in 2025, dropping from N110.94 trillion in January to N110.32 trillion in February 2025.

The figure represents a 0.56 per cent decline month-on-month and a 15.45 per cent increase year-on-year compared to the N95.56 trillion recorded in February 2024.

The year-on-year change indicates that Nigeria's monetary base has expanded over the past 12 months despite the recent slowdown.

M3, which measures the total amount of money in an economy, including net foreign assets (NFA) and net domestic assets (NDA), provides a holistic picture of Nigeria's monetary dynamics.

The slight decline in February reflects changes in both foreign reserves and domestic credit flows.

Analysis of foreign and domestic assets movement in February

An analysis of the M3 components showed that net foreign assets declined by 8.62 per cent in February to N32.34 trillion, down from N35.39 trillion in January.

The decline in foreign assets is a likely indication of reduced external reserves or increased foreign exchange interventions by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) aimed at stabilising the naira.

However, on a year-on-year basis, net foreign assets saw a 337 per cent increase from N7.41 trillion in February 2024.

Net domestic assets, on the other hand, increased by 3.21 per cent month-on-month from N75.55 trillion in January to N77.97 trillion in February.

The increase signals sustained credit expansion within the domestic economy, particularly from government and private sector lending.



However, net domestic assets dropped from the N88.15 trillion recorded in February 2024.

Broad money slightly declined to N110.31 trillion

Broad money supply (M2), which excludes certain large time deposits and institutional instruments, declined by 0.56 per cent in February.

M2 dropped from N110.93 trillion in January to N110.31 trillion in February 2025.

The figure for M2 in February represents a 17.3 per cent increase compared to February 2024, when it stood at N93.97 trillion.

Narrow Money (M1) increases to N37.57 trillion

Contrary to the downward trend of other categories of money, narrow money (M1), which includes currency in circulation and demand deposits, recorded a 2.18 per cent increase in February.

Narrow money increased from N36.77 trillion in January to N37.57 trillion in February.

The increase suggests increased liquidity in the hands of households and

businesses, which may be due to higher transactional demand and ongoing fiscal disbursements.

On a year-on-year basis, M1 increased by 24.07 per cent in February 2025 from the N30.28 trillion recorded in February 2024.

Decline in M3 may influence monetary policy decision

Going by the recent moderation in the inflation rate, which dropped for the second consecutive month to 23.18 per cent in February from 24.28 per cent in January, and the relative stability in the foreign exchange market, the moderation in M3 could sway the position of monetary authorities.

The decline in M3 may influence the upcoming Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting as many economic analysts have called for the tapering of the Monetary Policy Rate (MPR) and other monetary decisions following the moderation of inflation.

Annie Idibia returns to social media, wipes Instagram posts

By **Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi**

Annie Macaulay Idibia has returned to social media following her highly publicized divorce from Nigerian music star 2Face Idibia.

The actress and entrepreneur made a bold statement by wiping her Instagram account clean, deleting all previous posts.

2Face announced divorce in January

The development comes months after 2Face, whose real name is Innocent Idibia, publicly announced their separation in January 2025. The singer shocked fans when he took to Instagram to reveal that he and Annie were ending their marriage. Just days later, he made headlines again by proposing to his new partner, Natasha Osawaru.

Mixed reactions from fans and celebrities

Their split sent shockwaves across social media, sparking intense discussions among fans and celebrities. Many expressed mixed reactions, with some showing support for Annie and others defending 2Face's decision to move on. The controversy deepened as rumors circulated about her whereabouts. Reports claimed she had checked into a rehabilitation center, though no official statement confirmed the speculation.

Months of silence



Despite the rumours, she remained silent for months. She neither addressed the allegations nor responded to the public debate surrounding her marriage. Her absence from social media only fueled further speculation, leaving many wondering about her well-being.

A fresh start or a message?

However, in a recent twist, she made her comeback online. Instead of directly addressing the controversy, she took a different approach—erasing all her Instagram posts. The move left fans guessing about her next steps. Some interpreted it as a fresh start, while others saw it as a sign that she was still dealing with the emotional toll of the divorce.

What's next for Annie Idibia?

Annie's return has reignited

discussions about her marriage, personal struggles, and future plans. Supporters flooded social media with messages of encouragement, urging her to stay strong. Others speculated about her next career move, wondering whether she would speak out or focus on new projects.

Meanwhile, 2Face and Natasha have continued to make public appearances together, fueling further reactions online. While neither has addressed the backlash directly, their relationship remains a hot topic among fans and critics alike.

As the drama unfolds, many are eager to see what Annie's next move will be. Will she break her silence and share her side of the story? Or will she choose to move forward without looking back? For now, her social media reset speaks volumes, signaling a possible new chapter in her life.

'I've collaborated with Nicki Minaj but never met her' – Davido

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi



Despite working with her on two songs, Nigerian Afrobeats star Davido has revealed that he has never met American rapper Nicki Minaj.

Speaking on the Bootleg Kev podcast, Davido shared how their collaborations came to life. He expressed his surprise at the fact that, despite their musical connection, they have never crossed paths in person.

How it all began

According to the singer, their first interaction happened online. "The crazy thing? I have never met her. It's crazy," he said. "We speak on the phone all the time, but we first connected through DM."

Davido noticed that Minaj had followed him on social media. Excited by the opportunity, he decided to reach out. "I texted her, then went to bed," he recalled. "The next morning, I woke up and saw her reply. I was shocked."

Wasting no time, Davido pitched an idea for a collaboration. "I told her I had a song for us, and she said she was interested," he explained. "That was around 2019 or 2020."

He then sent her the track. Within two days, she recorded her verse and sent it back.

A video that never happened

After finishing the song, the next step was to shoot a music video. The plan was to film in Los Angeles. However, it did not work out.

"We went to L.A. to shoot the video, but it couldn't happen because she was having her baby at that time," Davido explained.

Despite the missed opportunity, their connection remained strong.

Their second collaboration

Years later, Minaj reached out again. She wanted him on her anniversary album, *Pink Friday 2*.

"She hit me again with a record last year," he said. "She's always supportive. She's amazing."

Their latest collaboration proved their continued artistic bond, even without an in-person meeting.

Two hits, zero Meetings

Davido and Minaj first worked together on *Holy Ground*, a song from his 2020 album *A Better Time*. The track became a fan favorite. Their second project appeared on Minaj's anniversary album in 2023.

While the two global stars have yet to meet, their musical partnership continues to thrive.

'Some of my colleagues are diabolical' – Hanks Anuku opens up

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nollywood star Hanks Anuku reveals hidden industry struggles, claiming some colleagues use diabolical means out of jealousy and rivalry.

Anuku made these shocking revelations during an interview on the Nollywood Hardcore podcast with fellow actor Emma Labista. He opened up about his experiences, the challenges he faced, and the betrayals he encountered throughout his career.

A troubling reality

During the conversation, Labista asked Anuku about his relationship with other Nollywood actors. In response, the veteran actor did not hold back.

"In life, we must always make room for setbacks and comebacks," Anuku said. "The industry had its dark side. Some people used diabolical means, while others were simply envious. They couldn't stand my success. I was blackmailed."

His words hint at the deep-rooted struggles many actors face behind the scenes. While Nollywood is known for its glamour and entertainment, Anuku suggests that success often comes with hidden dangers.

Envy and blackmail in Nollywood

According to Anuku, jealousy played a significant role in the challenges he encountered. He believes some of his colleagues saw his rise to fame as a threat and resorted to extreme measures to bring him down.



Though he did not name any specific individuals, his statements paint a picture of an industry where rivalry goes beyond healthy competition. His claim that some actors used "diabolical" means suggests that supernatural or spiritual influences may have been involved.

Blackmail, he added, was another tool used against him. In the entertainment industry, rumors and scandals can quickly ruin a career. Anuku's account suggests that false accusations and character attacks were used to damage his reputation.

A common problem in the industry?

Anuku's story is not the first time Nollywood has been linked to such controversies. Over the years, several actors have shared similar experiences, claiming that dark practices and betrayal are common in the industry.

Some insiders believe that the pressure to succeed drives certain individuals to unethical actions. Superstition and spirituality play a strong role in Nigerian

culture, and some actors believe that success in Nollywood requires more than just talent and hard work.

Moving forward

Despite these challenges, Anuku remains resilient. His words suggest that he has learned to navigate the industry's dark side and focus on his craft. He continues to be a respected figure in Nollywood, with a career spanning decades.

His revelations serve as a cautionary tale for aspiring actors. While Nollywood offers fame and fortune, it also comes with hidden dangers. Success, as Anuku suggests, is not just about talent—it also involves overcoming envy, betrayal, and unseen forces.

As more actors speak out about their experiences, conversations about ethics and fair competition in Nollywood may gain momentum. Whether or not diabolical practices are widespread, Anuku's words shed light on the challenges that come with fame in the entertainment world.

Pasuma, Taye Currency reconcile in Mecca

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi



Fuji legends Pasuma and Taye Currency have ended their long feud, reconciling in Mecca during the ongoing Umrah 2025 pilgrimage, delighting fans.

A viral video circulating online shows the two musicians sitting closely and engaged in conversation. This marks the end of a bitter dispute that lasted for months.

The feud that shook the fuji scene

In 2024, what began as a mentor-protégé relationship took a different turn. The tension started when Taye Currency publicly disagreed with fans who called Pasuma his “industry father.”

In an interview in October 2024, Taye Currency stated that Pasuma was more like an elder brother, not a father figure. His comment sparked controversy among Fuji music lovers. Pasuma’s fans were quick to criticize him, saying his words were disrespectful.

As reactions poured in, the Ibadan-based singer tried to clear the air. In a viral video, he apologized to Pasuma, saying he never meant any harm. However, the tension between them lingered, with both artists making subtle and direct remarks about each other on social media.

A historic reconciliation in Mecca

Now, the long-standing rift has come to an end. Their recent meeting in Mecca signals a fresh start for their relationship. Both artists appeared calm and engaged in a friendly discussion in the video, giving fans hope for peace.

Many Fuji music lovers have reacted positively to the news, expressing joy that the two legends have settled their differences. Industry insiders believe this reconciliation could open the door for future collaborations between them.

Fans celebrate the reunion

On social media, fans have been

celebrating the reunion. Many have shared their excitement, calling it a significant moment for Fuji music. Some believe this reconciliation will restore unity within the Fuji music community.

The power of forgiveness and brotherhood was evident in their meeting. Mecca, a sacred place for Muslims, served as the perfect backdrop for this emotional moment.

A lesson in unity

This reconciliation serves as a lesson in unity and peace. It reminds artists and fans alike that conflicts should not last forever. Both Pasuma and Taye Currency have played vital roles in shaping Fuji music. Their influence on the industry remains strong.

For now, Fuji fans can look forward to seeing both stars focus on their music rather than personal disputes. Their Mecca meeting has set a new tone—one of peace, respect, and mutual understanding.

Odumodublvck urges Davido to drop album under Kcee, E-Money's label

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Rapper Odumodublvck sparks controversy with a social media post about Davido's upcoming album, leading to mixed reactions from fans.

His remark, meant as sarcasm, was misunderstood by some fans, leading to mixed reactions online.

Odumodublvck's post causes a stir

On his X (formerly Twitter) handle, Odumodublvck made a statement directed at Davido, the leader of the 30 Billion Gang (30BG). He suggested that Davido should not release his upcoming album, *5ive*, under his own record label, Davido Music Worldwide (DMW). Instead, he jokingly proposed that it should be released under 5ive Star Music, the label owned by Kcee and E-Money.

He wrote:

"Davido, I trust your vision and all. But this album is not meant to be released under 30BG. This album is meant to drop under Kcee and E-Money. I rest my case."

His comment was meant as a playful way of praising the album, implying it was a "five-star" project. However, some fans did not catch the sarcasm and reacted negatively.

Fans react: Sarcasm or insult?

Odumodublvck's post quickly went viral, sparking debates among fans. Some saw it as an insult to Davido, suggesting that the rapper was downplaying his achievements. Others, however, understood the humor and defended him.

One fan tweeted, "Odumodublvck was obviously joking. People love to overreact." Another responded,



"Whether he was joking or not, it sounded disrespectful."

Despite the backlash, Odumodublvck has not responded to the criticism. He has neither clarified his statement nor engaged with fans on the matter.

Davido's *5ive* album set for April release

While the debate continues, anticipation for Davido's fifth studio album, *5ive*, is growing. The project is set for release in April under DMW and Sony Music.

So far, three singles from the album have been released:

Awuke – featuring YG Marley, grandson of reggae icon Bob Marley.

Funds – featuring Odumodublvck and Chike.

Be There Still – a song that showcases Davido's signature emotional style.

Each track has been well received, further increasing excitement for the full album.

Davido remains silent on controversy
Despite the online drama, Davido has

not addressed Odumodublvck's post. He continues to focus on promoting *5ive* and engaging with fans ahead of the album's release.

This is not the first time a social media post has caused a misunderstanding among music lovers. Sarcasm can often be misinterpreted in text, especially in an industry where words carry significant weight.

The hype around *5ive* continues

With or without controversy, Davido's upcoming album is already one of the most talked-about projects of the year. The social media buzz surrounding *5ive*—whether positive or negative—has only added to the hype.

As fans wait for the album's release, one thing is clear: Davido remains a dominant force in the Nigerian music industry. Whether through music or social media debates, he continues to capture the spotlight.

King Charles hospitalized after cancer treatment side effects

By Dr. Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi

The 76-year-old King Charles was briefly hospitalized on Thursday after experiencing side effects related to his ongoing cancer treatment, Buckingham Palace confirmed. Although discharged later that day following a short period of observation at the London Clinic, the King has postponed official engagements scheduled in Birmingham. He has been hospitalized at least twice since the beginning of 2024.

A statement from Buckingham Palace emphasized that His Majesty's recovery remains on a positive path, and the recent health episode is not considered serious. "Following scheduled and ongoing medical treatment for cancer this morning, The King experienced temporary side effects that required a short period of observation in hospital. His Majesty's afternoon engagements were therefore postponed," the Palace stated.

The King returned to Clarence House on Thursday evening and, acting on medical advice, has rescheduled Friday's public appearances as a precaution. Palace officials clarified that the King deeply regrets missing his engagements and has extended apologies to those impacted.

The temporary side effects were described as common and non-life-threatening. The visit to the hospital, while unplanned, was brief, and the monarch is reportedly in good spirits, continuing state duties from home. According to sources, His Majesty was reviewing state papers and making calls from his study Thursday evening.

Despite the disruption, next week's schedule remains largely unchanged. A state visit to Italy, including stops in Rome and Ravenna, is still expected to proceed. The Queen, who had attended separate events in Wembley earlier in the day, did not accompany the King to the hospital.

In a statement Thursday night, a Palace spokesperson said: "His Majesty was due



to receive credentials from the ambassadors of three nations this afternoon. Tomorrow, he was to undertake four public engagements in Birmingham. He is greatly disappointed to miss them and hopes they can be rescheduled soon."

King Charles's cancer diagnosis was publicly disclosed in February 2024 after treatment for an enlarged prostate. Since then, he has undergone regular treatment while maintaining a full calendar of public events. He has completed high-profile visits, including state trips to Australia and Samoa, and hosted receptions for charitable and cultural institutions.

The King and Queen were also scheduled to visit the Vatican, but that trip has been postponed following medical advice that Pope Francis requires rest after a recent illness.

The King, often described as a workaholic, has found strength in staying active. Palace aides note that maintaining a steady routine contributes positively to his recovery. The Queen has previously joked about his intense schedule, once commenting he would be recovering faster "if he behaved himself."

Both King Charles and the Princess of Wales were discharged from The London Clinic on January 29, 2024, after undergoing treatment—his for prostate issues and hers for abdominal surgery. Both later revealed they had been diagnosed with cancer. While the King has remained active, the Princess took a quieter path, undergoing preventative chemotherapy and later announcing her remission.

Public support for the royal family has been strong. On a recent visit to Northern Ireland, the King encouraged fellow cancer patients with a dose of Churchillian humor: "What's that Winston Churchill saying? Keep buggering on."

The Palace has indicated no further updates on the King's health are expected unless changes to his schedule arise. Prime Minister Keir Starmer issued a statement expressing his best wishes to the King following the hospital stay.

Buckingham Palace maintains that the King's treatment remains effective and the outlook remains positive, with aides referring to his health status as a "very encouraging status quo."

Zimbabwe president removes army chief amid coup rumours

By New Daily Prime

President Emmerson Mnangagwa of Zimbabwe has removed the country's top military official, Lieutenant General Anselem Sanyatwe, from his post and reassigned him to serve as Minister of Sports—a move that is fuelling speculation of internal tensions and pre-emptive maneuvering ahead of the 2028 general elections.

In an official statement released Tuesday, the Zimbabwean presidency confirmed that Sanyatwe had been “retired and reassigned” following the recent vacancy in the sports ministry. The role became open earlier this month after former minister Kirsty Coventry was elected president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), marking a historic milestone for the continent.

However, Sanyatwe's sudden shift from army leadership to a civilian cabinet position has triggered widespread speculation of a political shakeup, with some analysts suggesting that President Mnangagwa is attempting to neutralize potential military threats to his authority.

Rumors of Internal Rivalries

The timing of the reassignment has not gone unnoticed. Political observers believe the president's decision may be rooted in efforts to consolidate control within the ruling Zanu-PF party, amid persistent rumors of a brewing power struggle between Mnangagwa and his deputy, Vice President Constantino Chiwenga.

Chiwenga, the former army general who played a pivotal role in ousting



longtime leader Robert Mugabe in 2017, remains a powerful and influential figure within the government and the party. His close ties to the military and growing popularity among Zanu-PF loyalists have fueled speculation that he may be eyeing a presidential bid ahead of 2028.

“This move signals Mnangagwa's awareness of the fault lines within the party and the military,” said Dr. Tendai Mandaza, a Harare-based political analyst. “Removing a top army figure like Sanyatwe under the guise of a cabinet reshuffle may be a strategy to disrupt any emerging alliances with Chiwenga.”

Coup Fears and Political Stability

Zimbabwe has a history of political power shifts driven by military influence, most notably the 2017 coup that led to Mugabe's resignation after nearly four decades in power. Since then, the military's involvement in politics has remained a sensitive and closely watched issue.

Although no evidence of a coup plot has been presented, the reassignment

has raised eyebrows among diplomats and regional observers who see it as a precautionary measure by a leader looking to avoid the fate of his predecessor.

As of press time, Lieutenant General Sanyatwe has not made any public comment regarding his reassignment. His military tenure has been marked by both loyalty to Mnangagwa and controversy, including allegations of human rights abuses during post-election unrest in 2018.

His new role as Sports Minister is seen by many as a symbolic demotion, far removed from the high-stakes realm of national security.

Looking Ahead to 2028

With Zimbabwe's next general elections more than three years away, Mnangagwa's latest cabinet reshuffle may indicate early positioning for political survival. Whether this move will calm internal rivalries or further stoke tensions within the military and Zanu-PF remains to be seen.

Three American women found dead in Belize died of carbon monoxide poisoning

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Belizean authorities confirmed on Wednesday that the three American women found dead last month at the Royal Kahal Beach Resort died as a result of carbon monoxide poisoning.

The victims, Kaoutar Naqqad, 23, Imane Mallah, 24, and Wafae El-Arar, 26, all from Revere, Massachusetts, were discovered unconscious in their hotel room in February. An initial investigation revealed that the women had fluid build-up in their lungs, but the final test results now point conclusively to carbon monoxide poisoning as the cause of death.

Gian Cho, executive director of Belize's National Forensics Science Service, explained that all three women had carboxyhemoglobin levels exceeding 60%. For comparison, nonsmokers typically have levels lower than 2%, and smokers usually measure below 5%.

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas produced when fossil fuels are burned. Exposure to this toxic gas can cause accidental poisoning, particularly when faulty appliances such as furnaces, stoves, or generators release dangerous fumes in enclosed spaces.

Following the toxicology results, Belize's Police Commissioner Chester Williams announced that authorities conducted a second round of testing in the hotel room to detect potential carbon monoxide sources. The initial test had not identified any issues, and investigators are now awaiting results from this second assessment.

In addition to examining the room for toxins, investigators tested alcohol and edible gummies found inside. THC, the



psychoactive component in marijuana, was detected in one item, but no illicit drugs were found in the victims' bodies.

The grieving families of Naqqad, Mallah, and El-Arar issued a joint statement expressing gratitude for the thorough investigation and the eventual clarity on what led to the tragic deaths.

"While we remain shattered by the loss of these three bright lights in our world, we are incredibly heartened by the results of this investigation and grateful to those who completed it in a thorough and independent manner," the families wrote.

They criticized early media reports suggesting other causes and stressed the importance of measured and transparent communication from law enforcement. "We have said since the beginning of this investigation that their deaths were suspicious and raised concerns about initial reports in the news media. While today's official finding puts to rest those initial reports, we hope this will give authorities in law enforcement pause before they make similar suggestions during future investigations," the families

said.

An independent review of the incident is still ongoing in Massachusetts, but the families remain focused on honoring the women's memory.

"We will forever love and miss you, Kaoutar, Imane, and Wafae. May their beautiful souls rest in eternal peace," the statement concluded.

The families also expressed deep appreciation for the outpouring of support they have received and asked for continued prayers, patience, and privacy as they navigate their grief.

Authorities in Belize are continuing their efforts to determine how the carbon monoxide leak occurred and whether lapses in hotel safety protocols played a role. Hotel guests are advised to be vigilant and ensure that accommodations are equipped with functional carbon monoxide detectors, especially in regions where fossil fuel-powered appliances are in use.

Marjorie Taylor Greene tells British reporter to 'go back to your country' during confrontation

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

In a heated exchange caught on camera, far-right American politician Marjorie Taylor Greene told a British journalist to “go back to your own country” after being questioned about the accidental leaking of Houthi attack plans during an interview.

The Republican representative for Georgia, a staunch ally of former President Donald Trump, became visibly agitated when Sky News reporter Martha Kelner, who is British, asked her about the incident dubbed “Signalgate.”

“We don’t give a cr-p about your opinion and your reporting,” Greene said, before adding, “Why don’t you go back to your country?”

The confrontation escalated as Greene, who has made a name for herself as one of Trump’s most vocal supporters, continued: “You should care about your own borders. Let me tell you something, do you care about people from your country? What about all the women that are raped by migrants... do you care?”

This is not the first time Greene has directed similar remarks at a foreign journalist. In June 2022, she told Channel 4’s Siobhan Kennedy to “go back to your country” after being challenged on American gun laws during a press conference following the tragic school shooting in Uvalde, Texas, which claimed the lives of 19 children and two adults.

Greene, 50, who has a controversial political career, was initially seen as a fringe figure within the Republican



Party after her election in 2020. Often associated with the “QAnon” movement, her social media posts, which included inflammatory comments such as comparing mask mandates to the Holocaust, led to her removal from key positions on the House education and budget committees.

Republican leaders, including then-House Republican leader Kevin McCarthy, condemned her comments as “appalling,” and Senate leader Mitch McConnell described her views as a “cancer” within the party. However, Greene has since risen through the ranks, securing the chairmanship of the new subcommittee on government efficiency.

Greene has remained a prominent figure in the Republican Party, known for her aggressive stance on a range of issues, including immigration and gun rights. Her political career is marked by frequent controversies, including her heckling of President Joe Biden and her fiery remarks towards British politicians, such as her insult directed at former Prime Minister David Cameron

over comments regarding Ukraine aid in 2024.

In a more personal episode, Greene’s boyfriend, Brian Glenn, a reporter with strong ties to the MAGA movement, recently caused a diplomatic stir when he mocked Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky for not wearing a suit during his visit to the White House.

Despite the controversy, Greene continues to maintain a strong presence in the Republican Party, raising millions for her re-election campaign and expanding her social media following. Her campaign ads have included provocative imagery, such as her firing an assault rifle at feral hogs from a helicopter, a scene which she has compared to the Democrats.

Greene’s outspoken style, combined with her hard-right politics and controversial comments, ensures that she remains a polarising figure on both the American political scene and the international stage.

EU rejects lifting sanctions on Russia, demands full withdrawal from Ukraine

By Dave Oludare Oso

The European Union has made it clear that Russia must fully withdraw from Ukraine before any sanctions on Moscow can be lifted, in a sharp rebuke to US President Donald Trump's hopes of striking a quick ceasefire deal.

In a statement issued on Wednesday, the European Commission reiterated its stance that the cessation of Russia's "unprovoked and unjustified aggression" in Ukraine, along with the unconditional withdrawal of all Russian military forces from Ukrainian territory, would be essential preconditions for any changes to the sanctions regime.

The remarks came after President Trump appeared to make significant headway in negotiations with Russian officials during marathon talks in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday, where he agreed to Russian demands for the lifting of international sanctions in exchange for a partial truce in the Black Sea.

The White House also signalled that Ukraine might be asked to cede territory to Russia as part of a final peace settlement, a proposal swiftly rejected by European leaders.

A European Commission spokesman underscored the EU's firm position: "The end of Russia's aggression in Ukraine and the full withdrawal of Russian forces are fundamental conditions before any sanctions can be amended or lifted," the official said.

This development casts a shadow over President Trump's diplomatic efforts, which have largely excluded European and Ukrainian leaders from the negotiating table.

With sanctions imposed by the EU and the UK since Russia's invasion in 2022, any attempt to remove them will require unanimous approval from all 27 EU member states – a formidable challenge given the bloc's unwavering support for Kyiv.

Rising Tensions: Kyiv and Europe's Diverging Views on Peace Talks

Kyiv remains resolute in its demand for the return of Russian-occupied territories, but it is facing increasing pressure from Washington to soften its position and compromise on its territorial integrity and NATO ambitions.

European officials, however, have firmly



rejected the notion of sidelining Ukraine and Europe from the peace talks. There is growing concern that Trump's push for a quick ceasefire, without consulting European allies, could undermine long-standing EU and NATO unity.

Some diplomats have expressed frustration with Washington's approach. One EU diplomat remarked, "For an administration that seems to consider Europe useless and pathetic, they sure need a lot of our help to make a half-baked 'peace deal' with the Russians work."

In the UK, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has indicated that Britain remains committed to maintaining sanctions. A Downing Street spokesperson confirmed that the UK government was "hopeful of progress" in the negotiations, but would not comment on any potential easing of sanctions.

Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the EU has adopted an unprecedented series of sanctions targeting key sectors of the Russian economy, including energy, agriculture, and transport. The 16th sanctions package was implemented earlier this month, and EU leaders have reiterated their resolve to keep these measures in place until Russia fully withdraws from Ukrainian territory.

Russia's Demands: Sanctions and Swift Access

During the talks in Saudi Arabia, Russia outlined a series of conditions for a ceasefire, including the lifting of sanctions on food, fertiliser, and shipping, as well as the return of its access to the SWIFT international payment system. These demands were seen as an attempt to leverage the negotiations in its favour.

Russia's exports to Europe, particularly in energy, were once a significant component of its economy, and the Kremlin has been keen to regain access to European markets. However, European diplomats have been cautious, with many expressing scepticism about Moscow's true intentions.

Zelensky: Sanctions Must Remain

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has strongly opposed any moves to lift sanctions in exchange for a ceasefire, arguing that doing so would reward Russia's continued aggression. Speaking in Paris on Wednesday, he said, "Sanctions will remain and may be increased. Russia is not ready to end its war."

Zelensky called on Ukraine's allies to remain steadfast in their support and not to succumb to Russian pressure. "We have shown our resilience to everyone, and now it's very important that our partners be resilient and strong, at least at the minimum, as we are," he said, adding that Russia's actions on the ground were inconsistent with its professed desire for peace.

Eric Chelle stays optimistic despite Eagles draw with Zimbabwe

By Dave Oludare Oso

Super Eagles head coach, Eric Chelle, has remained resolute and positive following his team's 1-1 draw with Zimbabwe in their World Cup qualifier on Tuesday, March 25.

Despite the setback, Chelle insisted that Nigeria was the superior side in the match, which took place at the Godswill Akpabio International Stadium in Uyo.

The game, which saw Victor Osimhen's 74th-minute strike cancelled out by Zimbabwe's Tawanda Chiwera, ended in a disappointing draw for the hosts.

Osimhen's superb finish, assisted by Ola Aina, had given Nigeria a glimmer of hope for a second consecutive win, but Chiwera, just ten minutes after coming on as a substitute, equalised with a well-timed pass from fellow substitute Tawanda Maswanhise.

The draw left Nigeria on seven points, stuck in fourth place in Group C, six points behind leaders South Africa. Benin Republic and Rwanda are tied in second place with eight points each, further complicating Nigeria's path to qualification.



Despite the disappointing result, Chelle expressed confidence in his team's ability to still secure one of the group's two qualification spots. The coach suggested that, if necessary, the Super Eagles could target a place in the play-offs should they finish as runners-up.

"We played better than Zimbabwe, Normally, we can score maybe 10 goals in the first half, but you can make some mistakes. We tried our technical skills, but Zimbabwe came to defend and stop our game. In the second half, we took control, and when we scored the goal, we thought maybe it was finished. But even 10 seconds can change a game," Chelle said, reflecting on the game.

Chelle also acknowledged his team's failure to capitalise on several goal-scoring opportunities.

Despite their dominance in possession and attacking play, they were unable to convert chances into goals, which he believes ultimately cost them the win.

"Still, my team was the best on the pitch, with ball possession and fast attack, We just missed some goals. I'm so disappointed for my players and the country, because I know we can do it. But for the next game, I know we can look beyond second place and aim for first," Chelle continued.

Hudson-Odoi eyes England return after resurgence at Forest

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

Callum Hudson-Odoi is rediscovering the form that once made him one of England's brightest prospects. The Nottingham Forest winger, now 24, has been instrumental in his club's push for Champions League qualification and an FA Cup quarter-final clash against Brighton.

After bursting onto the scene with Chelsea and earning three England caps by 2019, Hudson-Odoi's progress was halted by a serious Achilles injury. Reflecting on that period, he told BBC Sport: "I had been playing week in, week out, then boom—everything collapsed."



Despite struggles with fitness and form, he has rebuilt his career at Forest, scoring five goals and providing two assists this season. His performances sparked

speculation about a recall to the England squad under new manager Thomas Tuchel, who previously coached him at Chelsea.

Although he missed out on Tuchel's first squad, Hudson-Odoi remains determined. "If the chance comes, I'll prove myself again," he said. "It's about enjoying my football, smiling, and being positive."

With renewed confidence and maturity, Hudson-Odoi is focused on proving—above all to himself—that he can once again reach the highest level.

Super Eagles hope for CAF assistance following Lesotho's protest against South Africa

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

A potential boost has emerged for the Super Eagles in their bid to overtake South Africa in Group C of the 2026 FIFA World Cup qualifiers, following a formal protest lodged by Lesotho against their southern neighbours.

Lesotho has accused South Africa of fielding an ineligible player, Teboho Mokoena, in their 2-0 victory over Lesotho last week.

The protest comes after Lesotho's football officials discovered that Mokoena had been booked in South Africa's opening match against Benin Republic in November 2023, and again in their subsequent fixture against Zimbabwe.

According to the rules, these bookings should have ruled him out of the game against Lesotho, a match which Bafana Bafana won 2-0 at home.

Lesotho's protest could have significant repercussions for South Africa, whose 13-point tally from six matches may now be reduced to 10, pending CAF's investigation.

This could open a window of opportunity



for Nigeria, who are currently in fourth place with seven points after their 1-1 draw with Zimbabwe on Tuesday, March 25.

With only three points separating them from South Africa, the Super Eagles would need to capitalise on this situation to close the gap.

Mkhosi Mohapi, the Secretary-General of the Lesotho Football Association (LFA), confirmed the protest, stating: "The question is: was a rule broken? If yes, we are fully entitled to protest and get the points. We were made aware of Mokoena's bookings, and we have since

sent a formal inquiry to CAF and FIFA."

This development may strengthen recent arguments by some football experts, including former Secretary-General of the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF), Ambassador Fanny Amun. Amun had suggested that there would be no political favouritism from South Africa's COSAFA partners, Lesotho and Zimbabwe, when it comes to the Super Eagles' matchups against Bafana Bafana.

However, the final decision rests with the Confederation of African Football (CAF), who will investigate the matter.