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Why suicide is becoming silent killer in Nigeria **Pg 19**



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Francis Nwifuru
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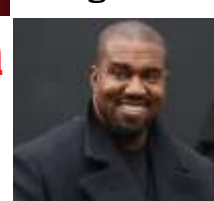
Israel lifts all tariffs on US products



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'American rappers can learn from Nigerian artists' - Kanye West



Natasha: Hold Akpabio, Ododo, Bello responsible if anything happens to me

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Suspended Kogi Central Senator, Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan, on Tuesday, cried out to Nigerians to hold the trio of Senate President Godswill Akpabio, Governor Ahmed Ododo of Kogi State and his predecessor, Yahaya Bello, responsible if anything untoward happens to her and her supporters.

The embattled lawmaker raised the alarm in a post via her official Facebook, writing thus: “My dear people of Kogi Central, I look forward to our peaceful Sallah celebrations today.

“However, should we be met with or infiltrated by violence, Nigerians should hold Gov Òdodo, Yahaya Bello & SP Godswill Akpabio wholly responsible.”

The Kogi Central’s Senator’s warning comes a few hours after she vowed in a statement to go ahead with her scheduled visit to her constituency for the Eid-el-Fitr break and the rally planned for her homecoming.

The senator also urged her supporters to disregard speculations making the round that she has cancelled her scheduled visit.

While stating that she has a statutory



function in her capacity as the lawmaker representing her constituents, the embattled senator encouraged her supporters to troop out en masse to celebrate the Eid-el-Fitr with her.

On Monday, the Kogi State Government banned rallies and public gatherings in the state over ‘security reports’.

The government also stopped fishing and other activities, arguing that they recently resulted in the loss of two lives in Kasemiya, Katubo and Umozu Ette, all in Kogi Local Government Area in Kogi West.

The Commissioner for Information, Kingsley Fanwo said the move was to prevent any form of security breach that might destabilise the state.

Similarly, the Kogi Police Command warned Akpoti-Uduaghan to cancel her planned Sallah rally.

Kogi State Commissioner of Police, Miller Dantawaye stated that the planned gathering goes against the state government’s recent ban on political gatherings, which was announced on Monday.

Meanwhile, videos of the purported rally for the homecoming of the senator have started making the rounds on social media.

As of the time of filing this story, one of the Kogi senators named, Bashir Haroon, shared a live feed showing hundreds of Akpoti-Uduaghan’s supporters, comprising mainly women singing and drumming in anticipation of her return.

THE NEW DAILY PRIME RATE CARD

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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
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9X3	150,000.00
8X6	216,000.00
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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
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8X3	N/A
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6X3	41,124.50
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Shettima calls for national unity, support for economic reforms

By Friday Omosola

Vice President Kashim Shettima has urged Nigerians to uphold unity, peaceful coexistence, and tolerance as key values for national progress, drawing inspiration from the lessons of Ramadan.

Speaking in Maiduguri, Borno State, during a luncheon with state elders and his former schoolmates in celebration of Eid-El-Fitr, Shettima emphasised the importance of collective harmony.

Represented by Abdulkadir Rahis, the member representing Maiduguri Metropolitan Constituency in the House of Representatives, the Vice President stressed the need for citizens to embrace unity as a national gift.

“We thank the Almighty Allah for sparing our lives to witness this Eid-El-Fitr. I wish to also say that we should all perfect, maintain, and build on the sense of unity that exists among us for our collective gain and progress as a gift for one another,” he said.

Shettima reassured Nigerians of President Bola Tinubu’s commitment to implementing policies that will foster sustainable development, acknowledging that while economic reforms may pose short-term challenges, they will ultimately yield long-term benefits.

“Just as Ramadan teaches endurance, we ask for your continued patience as these



necessary reforms take root and bear fruit,” he stated.

He further urged Nigerians to embody the values of humility, community living, and mutual respect, which he described as essential for national growth.

In his remarks, Senator Kaka Shehu Lawan, who represents Borno Central Senatorial District, prayed for lasting peace in Nigeria and called on Nigerians to support President Tinubu as he works towards economic transformation.

“The President needs the prayers and support of Nigerians as he implements the good policies designed to improve the economy and the overall development of the country,” Lawan said.

He also praised Shettima’s leadership qualities, describing him as a symbol of resilience, integrity,

and perseverance.

Minister of Agriculture and Food Security, Abubakar Kyari, also commended the Vice President’s dedication to his people, noting that despite his busy schedule in Abuja, Shettima always makes time to connect with his community.

“Seeing the joyful faces of his classmates, elders, and other guests at this event is a testament to his character,” Kyari said.

Chairman of the Borno State Elders Forum, Alhaji Gambo Gubio, expressed gratitude for the Vice President’s hospitality and pledged continued prayers for his success.

Dignitaries at the event included the Secretary to the Borno State Government, Bukar Tijjani, as well as Shettima’s former classmates and neighbours from Maiduguri.

Murdered Northern hunters: Uromi residents flee over reprisal, arrest fears

By Dave Oludare Oso

Following the lynching of 16 travelling Northern hunters by a mob in Uromi, Edo State last Thursday, residents in communities around Old Ilushi Road, Opere, and Good Will Junction in the town have fled for fear of reprisals by aggrieved relations of the slain men and arrests by security agents.

According to a Vanguard report, the residents of Uromi and environs have also stopped going to their farms, with many seeking refuge in neighbouring towns.

This development came as the state governor, Monday Okpebholo went to Kano State, where a larger majority of the victims hailed from yesterday.

The governor, who was received by his Kano counterpart, Kabir Yusuf, assured that justice will prevail for those killed in the mob attack.

Governor Okpebholo also visited the Deputy Senate President, Senator Barau Jibrin (APC, Kano North), where he said the 14 suspects so far arrested in connection with the killings, would soon be moved to Abuja for further interrogation.

Meanwhile, the leading socio-cultural platform in the North, the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) has called for an independent judicial panel to investigate the killings.

Talking about the circumstances that led to the mob action, some residents explained that they have been subjected to several bandits/herdsmen attacks in the past few months, leading to the anger with which they dealt with the travelling northerners.

Vanguard quoted a resident, who simply gave his name as Monday, as saying, "The community has been plagued by incessant kidnappings, carried out by hunters and herders



from the northern part of the country.

"Regarding the present incident, the vigilante group received information from areas on the stretch of Old Ilushi road, from where the travellers were coming, that they had weapons in their vehicle.

"When they arrived in Uromi, the vigilantes asked them to step down, but the travellers refused, leading to an altercation. One of them pulled out a knife, prompting the vigilantes to raise an alarm, accusing them of being kidnappers.

Residents' tales of herdsmen/bandits attacks

"Nobody is justifying the action. However, those who took part in the mob action have fled, while innocent individuals are being arrested.

"On Saturday, the police arrested a young man riding a GLK motorcycle near Opere Secondary School, where a wedding ceremony was taking place. The man claimed he was unaware of the previous day's events.

"The area remains deserted, with few motorbikes passing through. However, at around 12 noon on Monday (yesterday), police returned to arrest more people.

"In one of the latest incidents, a young lady was kidnapped in front of her gate on Sunday, March 30, 2025. Her captors had yet to call for ransom as of 2 pm today (yesterday)."

NEW DAILY PRIME also learned that some residents, especially youths, have been quietly leaving the town for fear of reprisal and arrests by security agents.

Most of the residents who spoke to journalists anonymously, said though they are not justifying the killings, insisted that the victims were suspected kidnappers and not hunters as presented to the public.

**Continue reading
on the next page**

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They explained that the victims were sighted near Ubiaja, headquarters of Esan South-East, which is close to Uromi.

According to them, Ubiaja is also suffering the same menace of kidnapping and it is where the victims were said to have entered a truck with their arms and cash.

Another resident, who identified himself simply as Mr Akhere, said: "In as much as we are not justifying the killings, because two wrongs don't make a right, these people are not hunters as claimed because the hunters we have seen also go with dogs.

"Our local vigilantes have been on the trail of these suspected kidnappers. It has been tough for everybody, so on the fateful day, these people were sighted near Ubiaja where they flagged down a truck coming from the east and they entered with their guns and luggage believed to include huge sums of money.

"I think where the vigilantes in Uromi that stopped them missed it was not handing them over to the police, instead of resorting to self-help and you know many of the people who were around have been victims of kidnappings directly and indirectly in the area.

"Yes, we condemn the illegal actions but government has also been slow in taking action against these kidnappers. They have been killing, maiming our people and raping our women in the farms."

Also speaking, another resident, who introduced himself as Peter, said his cousin "has been actively involved in securing the town" but noted that on this particular day, he was not around.

"He came into town after the incident but when he saw the way people were being arrested, he had to flee because he would have been arrested, too.

"Some other people have also left town because of fear that there could be reprisals, like we heard that earlier today (yesterday) there was panic in Ekpoma."

It was also learned that there was commotion in the neighbouring Ekpoma Market earlier yesterday, as information filtered in that the Fulani were planning to invade the town, which is not too far from Uromi.

Motorists were said to have made U-turns when the rumour came that the market was about to be attacked.

It was, however, gathered that security personnel were immediately mobilised to the area to restore normalcy.

On what had been her experience in the hands of kidnappers in the area, Jenny Osajie, 30, said her elder brother was kidnapped on his way to the farm and killed when they could not raise a ransom of N5 million.

She said: "They were so bold that they called us to come and pick the dead body of our brother and we actually saw the dead body in the place they described for us. I am a Christian and I have committed everything to God but there is anger everywhere because of what these people have been doing.

"Why has the government not acted this way since we have been crying over the activities of herdsmen and kidnappers that have been terrorising us? Is the government biased?"

Gov Okpebholo vows justice

The state governor, Monday Okpebholo yesterday vowed that the perpetrators of the dastardly killings would be fished out and prosecuted, assuring that justice will prevail for the slain northerners.

Okpebholo spoke when he led a delegation to Kano to commiserate with the Kano State government and the residents over the incident.

The governor, who noted that so far, 14 suspects had been arrested in connection with the incident, said: "It is like I was the one that was touched by the incident that happened in Uromi. I got the information in the night, that at 4am, I was already set to travel to Uromi.

"I'm here to commiserate with the government and good people of Kano State. We have made tremendous progress, I can assure you that Mr. President wasn't happy at all. He didn't waste time, he made no mistake to direct the service chiefs to go after the killers. I can assure you that justice will prevail.

"We have so far arrested about 14 people in connection with the killings. The Inspector-General of Police has directed the DIG, AIG at the force headquarters to take over the investigation. After the holiday, these people will be transferred to Abuja for further interrogation and more arrests to be made."

Kano gov seeks compensation for victims' families

His host, Governor Abba Yusuf opposed reprisals, saying it is not the solution to the unfortunate incident but said the perpetrators must be prosecuted.

Governor Yusuf said, "Reprisal is not the solution because it affects innocent people. So, as leaders, we have to come together to fight this unfortunate behaviour. People shouldn't be taking laws into their hands. It is unconstitutional and should be avoided.

"We (leaders) must be seen as protectors of our people. We assure you of maximum cooperation to collaborate with the security agencies to fish out the perpetrators.

"We will want to see them (perpetrators) physically paraded. That will go a long way to make the families happy.

"We appeal to the security agencies to help parade them to make the world see that these are the people that perpetrated the crime. They should be taken to court, so they can reap from what they sowed. The families must be compensated and I believe you will fulfill the promise.

"We appeal to the people to exercise patience, as everything's being done to ensure justice for the victims."

Meanwhile, Governor Okpebholo has visited families of the victims in Torankarawa, Bunkure Local Government area of Kano State.

He was accompanied by Governor Yusuf on the visit.

At Torankawa village, home of the bereaved families, Governor Okpebholo promised that compensation would be paid for the killings, pledging also that justice would be served for the victims.

On his part, Governor Yusuf pledged that cash (unspecified amounts) and food stuff (unspecified numbers) would be donated to the families.

The governor promised that the state government will not relent in ensuring justice for the victims.

Police stop Natasha's homecoming rally

By Alade Adisa



The much-anticipated homecoming rally by Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan fixed for Wednesday has been stopped by the Nigeria Police.

The action of the police on Tuesday followed Monday's announcement by the State Government that rallies and convoy processions have been banned henceforth.

The State Commissioner of Police, Miller Dantawaye made this known on Tuesday in a statement signed by the Police Public Relations Officer, ASP William Aya.

According to the statement, the Kogi Police boss said the rally is against the

proclamation on ban on political gathering by the state government issued on Monday.

“Following the intelligence report on security threats in Kogi State and the subsequent ban on all forms of Rally and procession by the Kogi State Government, the Nigeria Police Force, Kogi State Police Command has called on the organisers of planned rally at Okene to cancel such event in the interest of the peace in Kogi State.

“The call for cancellation becomes necessary, noting that intelligence reveals that some hoodlums plan to hijack the process and cause disturbance of peace in the State. The Command cannot afford to jeopardize

the existing peace the State is currently enjoying.

“In view of the security threat received on the planned rally, the Kogi State Police Command is therefore advising the organisers to cancel the event so as to avoid any breakdown of law and order in the State. As the Command will not hesitate to apply the full wrath of law on any one who causes disturbance of peace and order in the State.”

Despite the Monday proclamation by the state government banning political gathering or rallies, Senator Natasha has vowed to continue with her “Home Coming”, said she's only coming to the state to celebrate Eid Fitr with her constituents.

Nwifuru arrests 6 commissioners, LG boss over breach of contract

By Dave Oludare Oso



Governor Francis Nwifuru of Ebonyi State has arrested six commissioners over alleged involvement in breach of a contract for the construction of 140 housing units for Izzo and Amaze communities.

The Chairman of Afikpo Local Government Area, Mr Timothy Nwachi, was also suspended.

The arrested commissioners are Professor Omari Omaka (Tertiary Education), Victor Chukwu (Environment), Ifeanyi Ogbuewu (Culture and Tourism), Uchenna Igwe (Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Matters), Moses Ekuma (Health) and Felix Igboke (Project Monitoring).

NEW DAILY PRIME gathered that the affected commissioners were declared wanted by the state government before their arrest.

Speaking to newsmen in Abakaliki through the Chairman of the State Executive Council Committee on

Izzo and Amaze Housing Project, Ilang Donatus, the governor said the government felt that the affected commissioners and contractors have breached the terms and conditions of the contract given to them by the government.

It was also gathered that the affected commissioners and the contractors were accused of sabotaging the plan of Governor Nwifuru, to commission the housing units to mark his two years anniversary in the state.

“The governor is not happy over the pace of the work which ought to have been completed. The government has decided to clamp down on the contractors and commissioners who were mandated to supervise those projects.

“As you can see, our governor is a man with a passionate heart, he likes giving succour, hence the building of those houses for the victims of the communal crisis.

“He is not happy that the project is delayed and has ordered the arrest of

all the commissioners who were supposed to ensure the speedy completion of the housing units,” Donatus said.

The Special Assistant to the Governor on Women Mobilisation, Ebonyi Central, Mrs Maria Okohu who is a member of the Executive Council Committee, said that non-completion of the projects by the contractors and the failure of some of the commissioners to strictly supervise them as directed by the government is an act of sabotage.

The governor, through the committee, insisted that the arrests will continue until all the commissioners and contractors involved are brought to book and as well do the needful.

It was gathered that the Nigeria Police has equally issued invitation letters to some of the fleeing commissioners and contractors who were not at home at the time the committee visited.

Ibas: Trans-Kalabari road to strengthen Rivers' economy

By Friday Omosola



Rivers State Administrator, Vice Admiral Ibok-Ete Ibas (rtd), has emphasised the economic significance of the ongoing Trans-Kalabari Road Project, describing it as a crucial initiative to improve connectivity and address the economic challenges faced by riverine communities.

During an inspection tour yesterday, Ibas visited the project site in Rumuolumeni and also assessed the Permanent Secretaries' Quarters in Rumuokwurushi, both in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.

He stressed the need for the timely completion of these infrastructure projects, citing their potential to enhance economic activities in Rivers State and beyond.

Acknowledging the difficult terrain that has long hindered movement between communities, Ibas expressed confidence that the new road would serve as a game-changer for trade and development.

"This project is a major step towards bridging the gap between communities, easing transportation challenges, and boosting economic activities. Once completed, it will significantly impact the state's overall development," he said.

He urged contractors to adhere to the agreed timelines, noting that the government had fulfilled its financial obligations to ensure smooth progress.

At the Permanent Secretaries' Quarters, Ibas also highlighted the

importance of providing quality housing for civil servants, emphasising that proper accommodation would improve their efficiency at work.

"We recognize the housing difficulties faced by many civil servants. The government is committed to ensuring that these accommodations are delivered on schedule, allowing public servants to focus on their responsibilities without distractions," he added.

Reaffirming his commitment to a peaceful and progressive Rivers State, Ibas assured residents that his administration's initiatives were designed to bring long-term benefits to the people.

Over 5,000 APC, LP, NNPP members decamp to PDP in Benue

By Dave Oludare Oso

Over 5,000 members of various political parties, including the All Progressives Congress (APC), Labour Party (LP), New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP), and Social Democratic Party (SDP), have defected to the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Okpokwu Local Government Area of Benue State.

Citing poor performance by the ruling party for their defection, they also blamed the APC for failing to address the security situation in the state, and on the federal level.

Leaders of the group of defectors, which included Onah Idoko Alexander, John Adole, Engr. Adegbo Moses, Mike Ejeba, Ocheme Candidus, and Abah Ejeh, speaking at the defection event on Monday, said the ruling APC has failed woefully.



They hailed Senator Abba Moro for his developmental strides across Benue South. They described him as a rare leader who has positively impacted almost every community in the district.

The defectors said, “We are defecting to your party from several political parties because of the quality leadership and representation you are providing in the Senate. You have touched almost every community in Benue South, and we have realized that there is no leader like you.”

An elated Senator Moro welcomed the new PDP



members, assuring them of equal rights and opportunities within the party.

He reiterated his commitment to providing effective leadership and representation for the overall good of Benue South.

The defection event, which had a carnival-like atmosphere, was attended by key political figures, including the Minority Leader of the Benue State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Mike Audu, and the Okpokwu Local Government PDP Chairman, Hon. Christopher Okpabi, among other dignitaries.

'She has no respect for law' – Kogi govt criticises Natasha after rally

By Friday Omosola

The Kogi State Government has condemned the homecoming rally held for Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan, who represents the state's central district, following her warm reception by supporters and residents of the Ihima community.

This comes despite the state government's ban on rallies and processions.

In a statement issued on Tuesday, the Commissioner for Information, Kingsley Fanwo, called on security agencies to hold Akpoti-Uduaghan accountable should any violence erupt in the North Central state.

The commissioner accused the senator of deliberately flouting the ban imposed by Governor Usman Ododo's administration.

Fanwo further stated that Akpoti-Uduaghan's defiance of the order once again demonstrated her disregard for rules and the law.

The statement read: "The attention of the Kogi State Government has been drawn to the reckless, malicious, and utterly false allegations made by the suspended Senator Natasha Akpoti Uduaghan in her verified Facebook Page, in which she claims that Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo, former Governor Yahaya Bello, and the Senate President, Senator Godswill Akpabio should be held responsible if anything happens to her.

"This is yet another desperate and calculated attempt by an incurable liar and serial manipulator to mislead the public, inciting unrest, and present herself as a victim after deliberately violating the ban on political gatherings imposed by the State Government to maintain law and order. Her statement exposed her plans to use her visit to stir trouble and violence in Kogi Central Senatorial District. We will not allow any part of the state to go up in flames nor permit the killing of innocent souls by the actions of the suspended Senator.

"Although she has since deleted the post after realizing what the lie would cost her, we have a screenshot of it which was saved before she deleted the post. Her actions since the early hours of today have confirmed the authenticity of the security report that certain elements were planning to foment trouble in Kogi Central.

"Let it be categorically stated that Governor Ododo has no interest in the political theatrics of the suspended Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan. Her baseless allegations are



nothing but a feeble attempt to stir unnecessary controversy and cover up her blatant disregard for the law. She has once again proven that she has no respect for rules and the laws.

"Suspended Senator Natasha Akpoti Uduaghan has consistently demonstrated a pattern of lawlessness, using lies and deceit as her tools of political engagement. The recent disturbances in Kogi State, orchestrated by her defiance of the state's security directives, have further confirmed her status as a security threat to the people of the State.

"She deliberately violated the State Government's ban on political gatherings, which was put in place to prevent security breaches and maintain peace. Instead of respecting the law, she chose to incite chaos, disregarding the safety and stability of the state. When confronted with the consequences of her actions, she resorted to her usual tactics of playing the victim and fabricating baseless accusations against respected leaders of the state and the nation.

"The people of Kogi State and Nigerians at large should see through her deceptive ploys and reject her attempt to manipulate public perception with outright lies. Senator Natasha Akpoti Uduaghan is not a victim; she is an instigator of disorder who thrives on spreading falsehoods to gain public sympathy.

"The Kogi State Government will not be blackmailed or intimidated by the antics of a

desperate politician who has built her political career on falsehoods. We remain committed to upholding law and order and will take all necessary steps to ensure that no individual, no matter how highly placed, is allowed to breach public peace with impunity. The building tension and cloud of violence hanging on Kogi Central wouldn't have been necessary if Natasha Akpoti Uduaghan had complied with the position of the State Government and cooperated with security agencies. She would be held responsible if her actions result in any violence in Kogi Central or any part of the State.

"Let it be clear that the security of every citizen in Kogi State, including that of Natasha Akpoti Uduaghan, remains a priority. However, the government will not tolerate anyone deliberately provoking crises and then crying wolf when confronted with the consequences of his or her actions.

"We call on the security agencies to take note of her reckless utterances and inflammatory actions that pose a serious threat to peace and stability in the state. She should be held accountable for her blatant attempts to incite violence and cause unnecessary tension.

"Kogi State remains a peaceful state under the leadership of the Chief Servant of Kogi State, His Excellency, Alh. Ahmed Usman Ododo and we will not allow anyone, regardless of his or her status, to derail our commitment to peace, security, and progress."

NSCDC squad intercepts 70,000 litres of stolen crude in port harcourt

By Helen Okechukwu



In a decisive move against oil theft, the Commandant General's Special Intelligence Squad (CG'S SIS) of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) has intercepted and impounded a long container truck with an in-built storage tank carrying approximately 70,000 litres of stolen crude oil.

The truck, a red-head navy blue container vehicle with registration number AGL 574 XY, was intercepted around the Eleme flyover in Elelewon, Port Harcourt following an intelligence tip-off.

According to Commandant AS Dandaura, the operatives were swiftly deployed to the scene, but the truck's operators abandoned the vehicle and fled upon sighting security personnel.

Preliminary investigations indicate that the crude oil was illegally siphoned from vandalized well-heads and damaged pipelines, further worsening Nigeria's economic losses due to crude oil theft.

Commandant Dandaura stated that a thorough investigation has been launched to track down the perpetrators and their network of collaborators.

"For the records, the exhibits recovered at the point of arrest include a red-head and navy-blue colour container truck with 10 tyres (Reg. No. AGL574XY) and an estimated content of about 70,000 litres of stolen crude," he disclosed.

He further revealed that upon the

completion of investigations, the NSCDC will seek a court order for the forfeiture of both the truck and its contents, with proceeds to be remitted into the Proceeds of Crime Account (POCA).

The CG'S SIS Commander reaffirmed the squad's unwavering commitment to tackling oil theft, stressing that all individuals involved in the illicit trade will be brought to justice.

The NSCDC has continued to intensify its anti-vandalism operations in the Niger Delta, aligning with the federal government's mandate to curb crude oil theft, which has significantly impacted Nigeria's revenue and oil production capacity.

Edo poll: Leaked copies of tribunal judgment surface online

By Alade Adisa

Few hours after the Edo State Governorship Election Petition Tribunal summoned parties to appear before it on Wednesday for its judgment on the poll, leaked copies of the judgment have surfaced on the internet.

The tribunal had early on Tuesday told parties to come before it on Wednesday for its decision on the poll.

The Justice Wilfred Kpochi-led three-member tribunal had on March 3, reserved its judgement on the case the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, and its candidate, Mr. Asuerinme Ighodalo, filed to challenge the outcome of the governorship poll that held in the state on September 21, 2024

However, in what appeared as a leakage, copies of the judgement made its way into the internet, indicating a two-to-one split in the decision of the tribunal.

According to the documents that were sighted by Vanguard on Tuesday, while Chairman of the tribunal, Justice Kpochi, and member 1 of the tribunal, Justice A. B. Yusuf, dismissed the petition and affirmed the election of Governor Monday Okpebholo, the third member of the panel, Justice A. A. Adewole, ordered the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, to issue fresh Certificate of Return to Ighodalo of the PDP as the authentic winner of the poll.

In the said minority judgement, Justice Adewole held that governor Okpebholo's election was invalid by reason of non-substantial compliance with provisions of the Electoral Act.

He held that the 2nd Respondent, governor Okpebholo, was not duly elected by majority of lawful votes cast and proceeded to nullify his return as the winner of the gubernatorial contest.

"The petitioners case was not rebutted and showed unit by unit, how the actual total should be 243,113 votes, while the 2nd Respondent's tally should stand at 210,



326 votes- clear reversal of the declared result," Justice Adewole was credited to have held in the leaked documents.

However, in the lead and majority decision of the tribunal, its Chairman, Justice Kpochi, held that "while there was credible evidence to non-compliance particularly with respect to section 73(2) (failure to record serial numbers in EC 25B) and section 51(2) (over-voting) the petitioners failed to demonstrate that these breaches substantially affected the outcome of the election as required under section 135(1) of the Electoral Act.

"On the issue of majority of lawful votes, the petitioners established instances of incorrect collation and exclusion of results. However, their mathematical and documentary evidence did not conclusively establish that the margin of lead was overtaken or that they scored highest number of lawful votes."

Relying on the Supreme Court decided cases in *Oyetola Vs Adeleke*, 2023, 10NWLR (Pt 1892), as well as *Atiku Vs INEC* (2023), 19NWLR, pt. 1927, the panel held that the petitioners failed to prove not only that non-compliance occurred, but also that it was substantial enough to have affected the result of the election.

Adding that the petitioners ought to have tied every complaint to figures, demonstrate the net effect of each

infraction and show that for the violation the outcome would have changed.

"We find that the petitioners have not discharged the dual burden to the satisfaction of the law.

"Accordingly, the petition lacks merit and is hereby dismissed," the document further read.

It will be recalled that the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, had declared that Okpebholo of the APC secured a total of 291, 667 votes to defeat his closet rivalry, Ighodalo of the PDP, who got a total of 247, 655 votes.

Dissatisfied with the outcome of the poll, the PDP and its candidate approached the tribunal, alleging that it was not conducted with substantial compliance with provisions of the Electoral Act, 2022.

In the petition marked: EPT/ED/GOV/02/2024, it was alleged that governor Okpebholo did not secure the highest number of lawful votes that were cast at the election.

It was equally the contention of the petitioners that INEC failed to serialise and pre-record some of the sensitive materials that were deployed for the poll, a situation they said aided the rigging of the election in favour of the APC and its candidate.

Wike consoles ex-gov Ortom over brother's death

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



In a mark of compassion, Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Minister, Nyesom Wike, has condoled with a former Benue State governor, Samuel Ortom over the death of his younger brother, Bernard Tyozenda Ortom.

The minister, in a statement by his Senior Special Assistant on Public Communications and Social Media, Lere Olayinka on Tuesday, described the death of the younger Ortom as painful, and prayed for the repose of his soul.

He urged former Governor Ortom and the entire Ortom Adorogo family of Guma Local Government Area, Benue State to remain strong and take solace in God, the giver and taker of life.

The Minister said; “The news of the death of Mr Bernard Tyozenda Ortom Nicholas came to me as a rude shock and I understand the feeling of loss that must be going on in the mind of my brother and friend, His Excellency, Dr. Samuel

Ortom now.

“However, as painful and shocking as the death may be, I urged that solace should be taken in God, who has made death inevitable.

“On behalf of my family, friends and associates, I commiserate with you over this sad incident. It is my prayer that God in His infinite mercies will give you and the entire Ortom Adorogo family the fortitude to bear this irreparable and painful loss.”

LAWMA reaffirms commitment to zero waste in Lagos

By Friday Omosola

The Lagos Waste Management Authority (LAWMA) has restated its commitment to achieving a zero-waste Lagos, aligning with global efforts to minimise waste generation and maximise resource recovery.

Speaking on the occasion of International Zero Waste Day, themed 'Towards Zero Waste in Fashion and Textiles', the Managing Director/CEO of LAWMA, Muyiwa Gbadegesin, emphasised the need for sustainable waste management practices.

He highlighted LAWMA's ongoing initiatives to reduce landfill dependence, increase recycling rates, and promote responsible waste disposal among residents.

Gbadegesin stressed that achieving a zero-waste Lagos requires active participation from all residents.

"The International Zero Waste Day reminds us of our collective responsibility to protect the environment by adopting sustainable waste management practices.

"At LAWMA, we are fully committed to policies and programmes that support zero-waste principles, including waste sorting, recycling, and waste-to-energy initiatives.

"However, for these efforts to succeed, every Lagosian must take responsibility for proper waste disposal and environmental sustainability."

He outlined key LAWMA initiatives, including the expansion of the Lagos



Recycle programme, the promotion of circular economy practices, and stricter enforcement of environmental laws.

In line with this year's theme, Dr Gbadegesin revealed that LAWMA would take decisive steps to manage textile waste, which constitutes approximately 8% of the 13,000 tonnes of waste generated daily in Lagos.

"LAWMA plans to ban textile waste from all landfills in the state. We are collaborating with Tejuosho Market in Yaba to collect textile waste for recycling.

"Additionally, students at the LAWMA Academy are being trained to upcycle textile waste into practical products, promoting sustainability while creating economic opportunities for residents."

Gbadegesin also highlighted LAWMA's Waste-to-Wealth initiatives, where organic waste is converted into compost and other useful by-products.

He noted that LAWMA's partnerships with private firms had facilitated the recycling of plastic, aluminium cans, and glass, further strengthening the circular economy in Lagos.

"We have seen remarkable progress in our waste conversion efforts. Organic waste, which forms a significant percentage of our total waste, is being processed into compost for agricultural use.

"Our collaborations with the private sector have enabled more waste materials to be repurposed, creating economic opportunities for residents."

Gbadegesin further stated that LAWMA's marine waste team had intensified efforts to clear waste from Lagos' waterways, focusing on cleaning operations along the coastline, drainage channels, and flood-prone areas, including Five Cowries Creek.

Reaffirming LAWMA's zero-tolerance policy on environmental infractions, he urged Lagosians to support the state's zero-waste vision by complying with waste management laws, embracing recycling, and ensuring proper waste disposal through assigned PSP operators.

"Community participation remains a key factor in sustaining a cleaner and healthier Lagos. We urge all residents to play their part in making Lagos a model city for waste management and environmental responsibility.

Lagos records 10 diphtheria cases in three months

By Friday Omosola

Lagos State has recorded 10 confirmed cases of diphtheria between January 1 and March 27, 2025, prompting intensified efforts by health authorities to curb the outbreak.

According to the Lagos State Commissioner for Health, Akin Abayomi, suspected cases have fluctuated throughout the period, with daily reports varying between one and 15 cases.

Providing an update on the situation over the weekend, Abayomi revealed that laboratory tests conducted on 76 samples confirmed 10 positive cases, while 63 returned negative.

He also stated that three additional samples collected on March 26 are still pending results.

He said the outbreak has been reported in multiple Local Government Areas (LGAs), with Eti-Osa being the most affected, recording 44 suspected cases.

According to him, other impacted LGAs include Alimosho, Badagry, Ikorodu, Kosofe, Ojo, Mushin, and Lagos Island.

Abayomi added that to prevent further transmission, all confirmed cases are mandated to remain on admission for treatment.

The Commissioner emphasised the importance of public cooperation with health authorities in adhering to this measure.

“As part of the state’s response, 21 individuals have received Diphtheria Antitoxin (DAT) treatment. The highest number of recipients—14—are from King’s College, Eti-Osa, while others were treated at Lagos State Model School, Meiran, and various locations in Alimosho, Kosofe, and Badagry.

“Data analysis from the outbreak report indicates that cases peaked in the third, fourth, and tenth weeks of 2025, with four cases confirmed each week. However, a decline in recent weeks suggests that containment measures may be proving effective”, he said.

He further stated that contact tracing efforts have identified 118 individuals as potential contacts of infected persons. Of these, follow-ups have been completed for 100 individuals, while 18 remain under



monitoring.

Additionally, he said 36 individuals across affected LGAs have received prophylaxis to prevent further spread.

“Confirmed cases have been linked to various locations, including King’s College (Eti-Osa LGA), Lagos State Model School (Meran in Alimosho LGA), Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH in Mushin), De-Emmaculate School (Mile 12 in Kosofe LGA), and Gbara Junior Secondary School (Eti-Osa LGA).

“These areas are now focal points for intensified interventions, including targeted vaccination campaigns and public awareness efforts. So far, 36,310 individuals have been vaccinated as part of the ongoing immunization drive. This includes 7,473 individuals aged 9 to 17 years and 28,837 individuals aged 18 and above, among whom 13,633 are healthcare workers”, said Abayomi.

He said risk communication and public health sensitization efforts have also been strengthened through community-based mobilization and media campaigns.

As Lagos residents prepare for Eid-el-Fitr, Easter celebrations, and the second-term school vacation, the Commissioner urged strict adherence to precautionary measures.

He advised the public to maintain high levels of hygiene, wash hands regularly, use sanitizers, and avoid crowded places.

He also emphasised the need for prompt

reporting of symptoms such as cough, runny nose, fever, sore throat, red eyes, neck swelling, and thick grey or white patches on the throat.

“Reporting these symptoms immediately can save lives and prevent further transmission of diphtheria,” he stressed, adding that treatment for suspected cases is available free of charge at designated government health facilities.

Abayomi commended Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu for his swift intervention in managing the outbreak.

He also acknowledged the support of the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), the World Health Organization (WHO), and UNICEF for providing technical assistance and resources.

He assured Lagosians that the state government, in collaboration with health partners, remains committed to intensifying surveillance, treatment, and prevention efforts.

“We will continue to monitor the situation closely and provide regular updates. Residents are advised to stay informed and adhere to all public health advisories,” he said.

The commissioner reiterated the government’s commitment to safeguarding public health and urged residents to cooperate with health authorities to contain the outbreak and prevent future occurrences.

Popular sleep aids linked to increased dementia risk, expert warns

By Helen Okechukwu

A top United States (US) health expert has issued warning that common tablets taken by millions of people in United Kingdom may increase dementia risk, particularly sleeping drugs.

Dr. Amy Shah, an immunity and diet specialist trained at Harvard, Cornell, and Columbia universities, has raised concerns over the use of medications containing diphenhydramine.

She made this call while urging her followers to stay away from such drugs recently.

These include widely available UK brands such as Nytol One-a-Night, Boots Sleeppeaze, and Panadol Night, as well as US brands like Tylenol PM, Unisom, and Benadryl.

Dr. Shah's warning comes amid mounting research linking long-term use of anticholinergic medications—such as diphenhydramine—to cognitive decline.

Anticholinergics work by blocking acetylcholine, a neurotransmitter critical for learning and memory.

One alarming study, published in 2015, tracked 3,500 older adults and found that those who took anticholinergic medications for three years or more had a 54% higher risk of developing dementia.

Dr. Shah's viral social media post, viewed more than three million times, strongly advised against the regular use of diphenhydramine-containing



products. She stated: “‘I know it's over-the-counter, I know you've had it since you were kid, but we know lot more now. You should not be using these medications regularly.”

In the US, diphenhydramine is commonly found in Benadryl products, but it is not as frequently used in UK allergy medications.

Dr. Shah recommended alternatives such as Zirtec, Allegra (sold as Allevia in the UK), Claritin, and Zyzal, which do not penetrate the blood-brain barrier as much as older antihistamines.

With dementia cases projected to rise from 900,000 to 1.7 million in the UK over the next two decades, researchers stress the need for alternative treatments, particularly for older patients prescribed medications for bladder control.

Despite these concerns, not all anticholinergic medications showed a

dementia risk.

The study, published in the British Medical Journal, found that drugs such as darifenacin, fesoterodine fumarate, flavoxate hydrochloride, propiverine hydrochloride, and trospium chloride were not linked to increased dementia risk.

A non-anticholinergic alternative for overactive bladder, mirabegron, showed some potential risk, but researchers noted that more data is needed.

The manufacturers of Nytol, Panadol Night, Benylin, and Boots were approached for comment regarding these findings according to Daily Mail.

As awareness grows, experts urge both medical professionals and consumers to reconsider the frequent use of anticholinergic sleep aids and explore safer alternatives for sleep and allergy management.

General overseer detained in Rivers for alleged involvement in homosexuality

By Helen Okechukwu



Rivers State Police Command spokesperson Grace Iringe-Koko has confirmed that the General Overseer (GO) of a New Generation Church in Eagleland has been arrested by Octopus Strike Force unit (C4i) over allegations of homosexuality as an investigation is ongoing.

The leader of the church known as Elijah, whose church is located at Diobu in the capital city of the

state, was said to have been arrested after his videos were shared with the security team.

According to the Revelation Agent report, it was revealed that the clergyman was exposed by a man who pretended to reciprocate his advances in a bid to gather evidence against him.

During a private encounter, the informant allegedly recorded a nude video of the pastor while he was engaging in intimate acts and soliciting sex.

Acting on credible intelligence, operatives of the C4i traced the GO to a relaxation spot in Port Harcourt, where he was apprehended and taken into custody for further investigation.

However, reliable sources claim that during interrogation, the suspect reportedly confessed to engaging in multiple homosexual acts with both adults and minors within and outside Port Harcourt.

Why suicide is becoming silent killer in Nigeria

By New Daily Prime

Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation, is grappling with a silent but deadly epidemic: suicide. According to the Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Prof. Muhammed Pate, Nigeria's suicide rate currently stands at 12.9 per 100,000 people, exceeding both the global average of 10.5 and Africa's average of 12.0. He further revealed that suicide is now the fourth leading cause of death among people aged 15 to 29 in Africa, with 40% of incidents in Nigeria occurring within this age group. This disturbing trend has left families, communities, and policymakers searching for answers.

The Scope of the Problem

Section 327 of Nigeria's Criminal Code Act criminalizes attempted suicide, stating: 'Any person who attempts to kill himself is guilty of a misdemeanour and is liable to imprisonment for one year.' However, Prof. Pate has confirmed that the federal government is working to decriminalize suicide and is advocating for compassion and support instead.

Rising Incidents Spark Concern

Between 2024 and 2025, many cases of suicide and attempted suicide were reported by media platforms nationwide, indicating a significant mental health issue. In the absence of comprehensive national data, media reports have become one of the few windows into the scope of the issue.

In September 2024, officers from the Lagos State Rapid Response Squad (RRS) prevented a 59-years old man from jumping off the Third Mainland Bridge. The man, a resident of Ilasa, reportedly said he was overwhelmed by life's challenges.

That same year, Nick Imudia, the former CEO of Konga, reportedly died by suicide after jumping from his balcony in Lekki, Lagos. In another case, a 19-year-old pregnant girl in Ikorodu was rescued after attempting to take her life due to abandonment and financial hardship.

In Delta State, a woman in her early 30s reportedly jumped to her death from the Ekpan flyover, crying out about being "tired of hardship" before the fatal leap. In Oyo State, a 17-year-old mother allegedly ingested insecticide after a domestic dispute with her husband over what he deemed an insignificant issue—how much rice to cook for their child.

In February 2025, the body of 19-year-old secondary school student Sunday Moses



was discovered hanging from a tree in a remote part of Afio Village, Ogun State. Meanwhile, in Benue State, a man identified as Mr. Tator Ayihe reportedly took his own life following a land dispute.

Understanding the Root Causes

Nneoma Okoro, a psychologist, told New Daily Prime that mental health challenges remain one of the leading drivers of suicide in Nigeria. She noted that cultural stigma discourages people from seeking help.

"The stigma surrounding mental health issues in Nigeria is a significant barrier. Many individuals struggle with isolation and hopelessness due to fear of being labelled as 'mad' or weak," she said.

She added that economic hardship, social pressures, and a lack of access to mental health care worsen the situation, creating what she called "a perfect storm" for suicidal thoughts and behaviours.

Okoro emphasized that suicide has far-reaching consequences beyond the individual, affecting families and communities. She called for greater public awareness, reduced stigma, and increased access to mental health resources as urgent priorities.

Therapist Olufunmilayo Oyeibanji echoed the need for a multi-layered response. She explained that while awareness campaigns are essential, they must be matched with investment in mental health infrastructure, including trained professionals and accessible facilities.

"People are afraid to seek help because they fear judgement. We must change that," she said. "Support groups, counselling centres, and strong community ties can act as safety nets for those in distress."

Oyeibanji stressed that suicide prevention cannot be left to health professionals alone—it requires coordinated action from government, civil society, and individuals. Only a united response can move Nigeria closer to a future where mental health is valued, communities are resilient, and every life is treated with dignity.

The Media's Responsibility

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) have published clear guidelines on how the media can help reduce suicide rates.

Rather than sensationalising tragedy, journalists are urged to report responsibly, offer accurate information on where to seek help, and avoid graphic content or explicit descriptions of suicide methods. Special care is recommended when covering celebrity suicides or interviewing grieving families.

The use of dramatic headlines, photographs, or videos that may trigger vulnerable individuals is strongly discouraged. Instead, the media is encouraged to spotlight stories of recovery and resilience, shifting the narrative from despair to hope.

Finally, suicide is a complex, deeply human crisis—one that cannot be solved through silence or punishment. As Nigeria confronts this urgent mental health challenge, the time has come for a coordinated, compassionate, and sustained response. By investing in mental health, breaking down stigma, strengthening community support, and promoting responsible media practices, the nation can begin to turn the tide—and save lives.

‘I’m contemplating relocating from Nigeria’ – Mayorkun

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigerian Afrobeats singer Emmanuel Adewale, better known as Mayorkun, has hinted at the possibility of leaving the country.

He cited the growing hardship as a reason for considering relocation.

On Monday, Mayorkun shared his thoughts on social media. Posting on X (formerly Twitter), he wrote, “I dey reason to japa [relocate].” His statement quickly sparked reactions from fans and fellow celebrities.

Growing trend of celebrity relocation

Mayorkun is not the only Nigerian celebrity contemplating a move abroad. Over the years, many well-known figures in the entertainment industry have left the country in search of better opportunities or improved living conditions.

Several Nigerian stars, including reality TV personality Tacha and music veterans Eldee and Dr. Sid, have already relocated. The film industry has also seen some of its biggest names move abroad. Nollywood actresses such as Genevieve Nnaji, Omotola Jalade Ekeinde, Rita Dominic, and Uche Jombo have all spent significant time outside Nigeria in recent years. Actor Emeka Ike has also chosen to live overseas.

Last year, musician and politician Banky W confirmed that he had moved to the United States with his family. He explained that the decision was primarily for educational reasons.

Economic challenges driving migration



Many Nigerians, including celebrities, have been struggling with the country’s economic situation. Inflation, rising living costs, and unstable electricity have made daily life difficult for many citizens. The ongoing economic challenges have forced people from different walks of life to consider relocating to countries with better living conditions.

For entertainers, financial instability in the industry adds to the pressure. The high cost of production, lack of government support, and piracy continue to affect music and film revenue. As a result, many celebrities explore opportunities in other countries where they can earn more and enjoy a better quality of life.

Fans react to Mayorkun’s post

Mayorkun’s post about relocation triggered mixed reactions. Some fans sympathized with him, agreeing that the economic situation in Nigeria is tough. Others encouraged him to stay and keep making music for his

Nigerian audience. A few critics accused celebrities of abandoning the country instead of using their influence to push for change.

However, this trend is not unique to entertainers. In recent years, thousands of skilled professionals, including doctors, engineers, and tech experts, have left Nigeria in search of better opportunities abroad. This wave of migration, popularly called the “japa” movement, continues to grow.

What’s next for Mayorkun?

Mayorkun has not confirmed whether he will go through with his plan to relocate. For now, he remains active in the music industry, performing at shows and working on new projects.

If he decides to leave, he will be joining a growing list of Nigerian entertainers who have sought a fresh start abroad. Whether he stays or moves, his fans will be watching closely to see what comes next.

'You should've gone for someone prettier' – "Bobrisky criticises 2Face's new relationship"

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Bobrisky criticizes 2Face Idibia's new relationship with Edo lawmaker Natasha Osawaru, expressing disappointment over the singer's choice after his split.

Bobrisky questioned why the music star chose Natasha after ending his marriage with Annie Idibia.

2Face moves on after separation

In February, 2Face proposed to Natasha in a moment that quickly went viral. His proposal came just weeks after he publicly announced his separation from Annie. Speculation grew when Natasha updated her Instagram name to include 2Face's surname, Idibia. Around the same time, Annie reverted to her maiden name, Macaulay. These changes fueled rumors that 2Face and Natasha had secretly tied the knot.

Bobrisky shares his thoughts

During an Instagram live session, Bobrisky criticized 2Face's decision. He argued that the singer should have chosen a more attractive partner.

"I understand that 2Face left Annie," Bobrisky said. "But if you're going to leave your woman, at least go for someone prettier, sexier, and cuter. I don't understand what's going on with that 'Mary Amaka' they are parading around."

He continued by commenting on Natasha's looks. "I saw a video of them two days ago, and I don't get it. The girl has four different faces. In



one picture, she looks one way; in another, she looks completely different. She weak me," he added.

Mixed reactions from the public

Bobrisky's remarks quickly went viral, sparking debates on social media. Some users agreed with him, claiming that 2Face's new partner was not as glamorous as Annie. Others criticized Bobrisky, calling his comments unnecessary and disrespectful.

Meanwhile, neither 2Face nor Natasha has responded to the controversy. The singer has remained silent despite the heated discussions about his personal life.

A history of controversy

2Face and Annie Idibia's marriage was one of the most talked-about relationships in the Nigerian entertainment industry. They had been together for years and shared

children. However, their relationship faced multiple controversies, including allegations of infidelity and family disputes.

Now, with his rumored marriage to Natasha, 2Face is once again in the spotlight. Many fans are still trying to understand why he made this sudden decision.

What's next for 2Face?

For Bobrisky, the issue is simple—he believes 2Face should have chosen someone more attractive. However, not everyone agrees. Critics argue that beauty is subjective and that 2Face's happiness should be the priority.

As the debate continues, one thing is clear—2Face's love life remains a trending topic. Whether he speaks out or stays silent, fans and critics will be watching closely.

'American rappers can learn from Nigerian artists' - Kanye West

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Kanye West urges musicians to learn from Nigerian Afrobeats artists, Jewish investors, and tech leaders from China and India for business success.

Speaking in a recent interview with DJ Akademiks, West criticized American rappers for their lack of business knowledge and dependence on outsiders to manage their financial and legal affairs.

West did not hold back in his comments, calling out artists for failing to understand the complexities of contracts and industry deals.

"None of these rappers are as smart as me," he claimed. "They don't know how to handle their own business. They depend on lawyers and investors to do everything for them."

Claims of Industry Dependence on Lawyers and Investors

He pointed out that many artists struggle with even the basics of financial management.

"It's like they can't even count. Jewish people and lawyers run their entire business. They handle the contracts, the setups—everything," West said.

The rapper challenged his peers to operate independently.

"Try running a record label without a Jewish investor," he said. "Go and build a TV network without them. Let's see how that works."

Praise for Nigerian Afrobeats and Tech Leaders

West went on to praise Nigerian Afrobeats artists for their success in the global music scene. He noted that these musicians have built strong business models without relying heavily on outsiders.



"Look at the Nigerians, the Chinese, the Jewish, or the Indian tech guys. They know how to take control of their own industries," he said.

The Long-Standing Debate on Financial Literacy

His remarks reflect a long-running debate about financial literacy in the music industry. Many artists, especially in hip-hop, have historically struggled with exploitative contracts and poor money management. Labels and investors often take advantage of musicians who lack business knowledge, leaving them with little control over their careers.

West himself has had legal and financial disputes in the past. Over the years, he has spoken openly about contract issues with major record labels. In 2020, he went as far as posting pages of his own music contracts on social media to expose what he called unfair industry practices.

A Push for Financial Independence

His latest comments come at a time when more artists are advocating for ownership and financial independence. Streaming services and social media have given musicians more control over

their careers, but many still rely on traditional industry structures to succeed.

Some critics argue that West's statements oversimplify a complex issue. They point out that not every artist has the resources or connections to break free from industry norms. Others believe his remarks could be seen as divisive, especially given his history of controversial statements.

A Call to Take Charge

Despite the controversy, West's core message remains clear: artists need to take charge of their business affairs. He believes musicians should study successful models from other industries and cultures.

"Until rappers start thinking like Nigerians, the Chinese, the Jewish, or the Indian tech guys, they'll always be at a disadvantage," he said.

His words may spark further discussion among artists and industry professionals. As the music business continues to evolve, financial literacy and ownership will likely remain key topics for debate.

Diddy's sexual assault lawsuit dismissed after accuser chose not to reveal identity

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

A New York judge dismissed one of the many sexual assault lawsuits against Sean “Diddy” Combs on Tuesday after a Jane Doe chose not to reveal her identity by pursuing the case.

In the suit, originally filed by attorney Tony Buzbee in Oct. 2024, Doe claimed that Combs attempted to sexually assault her at a New York City party in 1995 and violently struck her when she refused his advances. In January, Buzbee filed a motion for Doe to proceed anonymously, which the court denied, stating that the “very gravity of the charges” combined with “no evidence of specific and concrete harm... undermin[ed] her claim to proceed anonymously.”

After the court ordered Doe to file a complaint under her name by March 20, the judge dismissed the case earlier today as Doe chose not to pursue the case further.

Buzbee explained in a statement to Variety that Doe did not feel comfortable revealing her identity and ultimately decided to drop the allegations. “In this particular case, Jane Doe opted not to proceed,” he said. “There is a lot of fear amongst these plaintiffs. I thus can’t blame her. These are tough cases and they are many times re-traumatizing for those who pursue them. Each case stands on its own merit. This



woman chose not to proceed and subject herself to the media circus and the perceived danger she felt. We have to respect that.”

Combs’ legal team shared with Variety that this dismissal is a sign of what’s to come with other pending cases. “Today a federal judge dismissed a lawsuit filed against Mr. Combs by Texas attorney Anthony Buzbee and his local counsel Antigone Curis on behalf of an anonymized plaintiff,” reads the statement

. “This is now the second case brought by these attorneys against Mr. Combs that has been dismissed in its entirety. It will not be the last. For months, we have seen case after case filed by individuals hiding behind anonymity, pushed forward by attorneys more focused on media headlines than legal merit. The

other claims, like the one dismissed today, also will not hold up in a court of law.”

The dismissal comes in the wake of last week’s ruling that a Jane and John Doe must also reveal their identities in separate suits by April 10 to proceed. In her opinion, Judge Jennifer Rochon stated that each case was “substantively identical to declarations filed on the same day in other Doe v. Combs cases in this District involving different plaintiffs and facts.”

Combs is currently incarcerated in Brooklyn on federal charges of racketeering and sex trafficking. Last week, a judge dismissed five charges against Combs in a separate \$30 million sexual assault lawsuit, but allowed several other charges to proceed.

Russia warns US against bombing Iran after Trump's threat

By Dave Oludare Oso

Russia has given its two cents over the ongoing rumpus between the US and Iran, especially after President Donald Trump threatened to bomb the Asian nation.

Speaking on Tuesday, Russia warned the United States that any military attack on Iran's nuclear sites would have "catastrophic" effects.

Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov issued the warning while calling for peaceful negotiations.

Few days ago, United States President Donald Trump threatened to bomb Iran unless the Asian country comes to an agreement with the US on its nuclear activities.

"If they [Iran] don't make a deal, there will be bombing," Trump said.

Speaking on the development, Ryabkov raised concern over the



matter.

"Threats are indeed being heard, ultimatums are also being heard," Ryabkov said in an interview with the International Affairs journal on Tuesday.

"We consider such methods inappropriate, we condemn them. We

consider them a way for [the United States] to impose its own will on the Iranian side.

"The consequences of this, especially if the strikes are on nuclear infrastructure, could be catastrophic for the entire region."

UK signs \$213 million helicopter maintenance deal with Leonardo

By Fatimah Idera

Britain handed Italian defence company Leonard a 165 million pound (\$213 million) contract extension on Tuesday to maintain the Royal Navy's fleet of 54 Merlin helicopters, a deal which it said would help support 1,000 jobs across the country.

Britain, which plans to boost defence spending to 2.5% of economic output by 2027, said the deal with Leonardo would help bolster national security.

"This investment demonstrates our unwavering commitment to maintaining cutting-edge defence capabilities that keep us safe, while utilising defence as an engine for



economic growth," Maria Eagle, the minister for defence procurement and industry, said in a statement.

Leonardo is the prime contractor for the maintenance, with Lockheed Martin and Serco appointed sub-contractors, the government said.

Trump signs off Starmer's plan to cede Chagos Islands

By Fatimah Idera

Donald Trump has signed and approved Sir Keir Starmer's controversial deal to cede the Chagos Islands to Mauritius.

The details of the agreement with the Mauritian government are now being finalised which includes a leaseback arrangement for the Diego Garcia airbase.

Speaking about the progress of the deal on Tuesday, the Prime Minister's official spokesman said; "I think the finalisation of the deal is ongoing, but we'll obviously provide an update as and when we've got one."

Asked whether the UK was still waiting for Mr Trump to approve the agreement, he said: "I mean, you will have seen from the president that he recognised the strength of the deal."

"I think we are now working with the Mauritian government to finalise the deal and sign the treaty. My understanding is it's now between us and the Mauritian government to finalise the deal following the discussions with the US."

It is understood the agreement will not be put back to the US for approval after it is signed off by Mauritius.

Downing Street did not provide a timeline for the final stages of negotiations. The spokesman said: "I haven't got an update on that, but it will come to Parliament following the finalisation and signing of the treaty."

The development confirms that Mr Trump, who was initially thought to be sceptical of the deal, will not attempt to block the handover. He first indicated his support for the plan during Sir Keir Starmer's trip to Washington in February.

He said leasing the US military base on Diego Garcia, one of the islands, for 140 years was "powerful" and "doesn't sound bad".

Asked whether he would sign off the deal,



Mr Trump replied: "Well, we're going to have some discussions about that very soon, and I have a feeling it's going to work out very well."

"And I think we'll be inclined to go along with your country. We have to be given the details, but it doesn't sound bad."

David Lammy, the Foreign Secretary, had previously admitted the deal would not happen without Mr Trump's support.

Sir Keir announced the pact to hand over sovereignty of the Chagos Islands, a strategically placed archipelago in the Indian Ocean, in October. It was highly controversial because of the US military base on Diego Garcia.

However, the deal has faced criticism due to its potential cost up to 18 billion. The International Court of Justice earlier ruled that the archipelago belongs to Mauritius.

The Chagos Islands represent an important part of UK-US security plans because of the airbase, which is strategically important for both countries' militaries.

Recall the agreement was signed off by Joe Biden's administration last year, but Mr Trump's team asked to look at it again after the US election amid concerns that it

could harm US national security because Mauritius is an ally of China.

Mauritius also ordered a review of the terms after a change in government last year, throwing the future of the pact into doubt.

The Conservatives and Nigel Farage, the Reform UK leader, had called for the agreement to be scrapped, and Marco Rubio, Mr Trump's secretary of state, also criticised it.

Under the original agreement, the UK would relinquish the islands' sovereignty to Mauritius but maintain a 99-year lease on Diego Garcia. As part of the deal, it said it would provide a package of financial support, including annual payments and infrastructure investment.

Neither side has said how much is involved. However, reports suggested Mauritius had requested as much as £800 million per year and billions of pounds in reparations to secure the base.

Mauritius has long argued that it was illegally forced to give the Chagos Islands away in return for its own independence from the UK in 1968. Until very recently, the UK insisted that Mauritius had no legitimate claim to the islands.

British house prices stagnant in March, Nationwide says

By Fatimah Idera

UK house prices were flat in March and the market is likely to stay soft after a tax increase on property transactions, mortgage lender Nationwide.

The average price of a home was unchanged at £271,316 in March, compared with February's 0.4% monthly rise, according to Nationwide building society.

The annual growth rate stayed at 3.9%, masking big regional variations. In Northern Ireland, annual price growth accelerated to 13.5%, the highest in the region since 2021. Scotland posted a 3.9% annual rise, while Wales was close behind at 3.6%.

As of Tuesday, Britain's government has lowered the price threshold at which buyers become eligible to pay property transaction taxes – known as stamp duty

Robert Gardner, the Nationwide chief economist, said the price trends were unsurprising, given the end of the stamp duty holiday at the end of March.

“Indeed, the market is likely to remain a little soft in the coming months since activity will have been brought forward to avoid



the additional tax obligations – a pattern typically observed in the wake of the end of stamp duty holidays,” he said.

Bank of England data on Monday showed mortgage approvals cooled in February, while the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors said its members reported a slowing of house price growth.

Compared with a year ago, house prices were 3.9% higher, compared with the consensus for a 4.1% annual increase.

Nationwide said it expected the market to pick up again in future months, despite rising uncertainty about the global economic outlook.

It cited a low unemployment rate, rising real household earnings, and the possibility that

the Bank of England will cut interest rates again. On Monday financial markets priced in a roughly two-thirds chance that the BoE will cut interest rates in May.

Buyers have been rushing to complete their purchases in recent months, while removals firms have been swamped. The stamp duty thresholds, which were temporarily increased in September 2022, have fallen back after the 31 March deadline, which means some buyers could end up paying thousands of pounds more in tax.

It usually takes longer than a month to complete, so demand waned before the end of the stamp duty deadline. Mortgage approvals were the lowest in six months in February, according to Bank of England figures.

Britain formally declares Russia national security threat for first time

By Dave Oludare Oso

For the first time, Russia has been formally declared a national security threat to Britain, Telegraph reported.

UK Security Minister Dan Jarvis announced on Tuesday that the Russian agents working on behalf of Russian President Vladimir Putin's regime will be forced to register their activities or face five years in prison.

Russia presented an "acute threat" to UK national security through hostile acts in recent years, including the Salisbury nerve agent poisonings, espionage, cyber-attacks and the invasion of Ukraine, he said in a statement to the Commons.

Further, Russia will be added to the highest "enhanced tier" of the forthcoming Foreign Influence Registration Scheme (Firs).

Firs is a status reserved for nations that pose a risk to the safety of the UK's interests.

Also, Home Secretary Yvette Cooper said that the new measures will take stronger action against Russia as she accused the Kremlin of "unacceptable threats to our national security."

"The new measures will make it harder for Russia to conduct hostile acts against us in the future and demonstrate once again this government's unshakeable commitment to keep our country and our people safe."



The scheme will go live in July and for the first time, it will compel anyone in the UK acting for a foreign power or entity to declare their activities or face arrest and prosecution.

The UK minister further said that it would include Putin and Russia's government agencies and authorities, including its armed forces, intelligence services, police forces and judges.

Moreover, some Russian political parties, including United Russia will also come under scrutiny.

"As Security Minister, I see first-hand the disruptive activity conducted by Russia, beyond their barbaric and illegal war against Ukraine, including their attempts to infiltrate our democracy and sow discord in our society," Jarvis said.

"We will not stand for it."

Earlier this month, Iran was the first

regime to be listed under Firs. Moreover, the ministers have also faced pressure to designate China.

However, Jarvis denied commenting on whether China would be added to the enhanced tier, although ministers have previously indicated that it would not because the Government regards a closer relationship with the communist state as "in our national interests."

Notably, less than a month ago, a team of Russian agents were found guilty in the biggest spying investigation in Britain.

The UK has expelled more than 20 Russian spies since the Salisbury poisonings in 2018, and revoked the accreditation of Russian diplomats in response to the harassment and expulsion of British diplomats.

Moreover, they also removed diplomatic status from Russian properties believed to be used in intelligence activities.

Nigerian declared missing in Canada

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



The Toronto Police Service has reported that Omotayo, a 32-year-old Nigerian man residing in Canada, has been missing since March 25, 2025.

He was last seen in the Trafalgar Road and Dundas Street East area of Oakville.

In a statement released on March 28, authorities urged the public to come forward with any information that could assist in

locating Omotayo, as his whereabouts have remained unknown since his disappearance.

“Omotayo is described as 6’0”, 160-170 lbs, with a thin build and short black hair.

“Omotayo was last seen wearing a tan ‘Essentials’ hoodie, black Nike trackpants, tan Yeezy slides, and black-framed glasses. Police are concerned for their safety.”

The police urged anyone with relevant information to come forward through official communication channels.

They further encouraged the public to reach out by calling 416-808-4200, contacting Crime Stoppers anonymously at 416-222-TIPS (8477), or visiting www.222tips.com.

As of Monday, authorities had yet to determine his location.

4th US soldier missing in Lithuania found dead

By Dave Oludare Oso

The fourth U.S. Army soldier who went missing during a scheduled training exercise near Pabradė, Lithuania, last week was found dead on Tuesday, according to the Army.

“The soldier was found after a search by hundreds of rescue workers from the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, Lithuanian Armed Forces, Polish Armed Forces, Estonian Armed Forces, and many other elements of the Lithuanian government and civilian agencies,” the Army said in a statement.

The bodies of the other three soldiers were recovered on Monday.

The four soldiers are all based in Fort Stewart, Georgia. Their identities have not been released.

“This past week has been devastating,” Maj. Gen. Christopher Norrie, 3rd Infantry Division commanding general, said in a statement. “Though we have received some closure, the world is darker without them.”

The soldiers went missing on March 25 while operating an M88 Hercules armored recovery vehicle, the Army said, and the next day, their 63-ton vehicle was found submerged in about 15 feet of water and mud in a training area.



“Most likely, the M88 drove into the swamp,” and the vehicle “may have just gone diagonally to the bottom,” Lithuanian Defense Minister Dovile Sakaliene told ABC News via phone last week.

The U.S. Army is searching for four soldiers who went missing during a scheduled training exercise near Pabradė, Lithuania. U.S. Army

The soldiers’ vehicle was removed from a swamp early Monday morning after six days of work to retrieve it, the Army said.

The search effort — which included law enforcement and military personnel from several countries — was complicated by the muddy conditions and unstable ground, officials said.

“It has been truly amazing and very humbling to watch the

incredible recovery team from different commands, countries and continents come together and give everything to recover our Soldiers,” Lt. Gen. Charles Costanza, commanding general, V Corps, said in a statement Tuesday.

“Thank you, Lithuania, Poland, Estonia, the U.S. Navy and the Army Corps of Engineers. We are forever grateful.”

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said at Tuesday’s briefing, “The president, the secretary of defense and the entire White House are praying for the victims, friends and family during this unimaginable time. This is another stark reminder of the selfless sacrifice of our brave military men and women who risk their lives around the world every day to keep us safe. God bless them.”

US peace plan for Ukraine unacceptable 'in its current form' - Russia

By Dave Oludare Oso

Moscow has described the latest US peace proposals as unacceptable to the Kremlin, highlighting the limited progress Donald Trump has made on his promise to end the war in Ukraine since taking office in January.

Sergei Ryabkov, a foreign policy adviser to Vladimir Putin, said some of Russia's key demands were not being addressed by the US proposals to end the war, in comments that marked a rare acknowledgment from the Russian side that talks with the US over Ukraine had stalled in recent weeks.

"We take the models and solutions proposed by the Americans very seriously, but we can't accept it all in its current form," Ryabkov was quoted by state media as telling the Russian magazine International Affairs. It came after Trump on Sunday revealed his frustration with Putin, saying he was "pissed off" and threatening to impose tariffs on Russian oil exports.

"All we have today is an attempt to find some kind of framework that would first allow for a ceasefire – at least as envisioned by the Americans," Ryabkov said.

"As far as we can see, there is no place in them today for our main demand, namely to solve the problems related to the root causes of this conflict."

Putin has repeatedly referred to what he claimed were the "root causes" of the conflict to justify his hardline position on any prospective deal to end the war in Ukraine.

As preconditions for a ceasefire, the Russian leader has insisted on terms that would, in effect, dismantle Ukraine as an independent, functioning state – pulling it firmly into Russia's sphere of influence.

He has demanded that Kyiv recognise Russia's annexation of Crimea and four partly occupied regions in the south-east, withdraw its forces from those areas, pledge never to join Nato, and agree to demilitarisation.

The ruins of a building in the abandoned Ukrainian city of Maryinka, which was destroyed during the invasion by Russian



forces. Photograph: Alexander Ermochenko/Reuters

In recent weeks the Russian president has also been openly pushing for regime change in Ukraine, claiming that Volodymyr Zelenskyy lacks the legitimacy to sign a peace deal and suggesting that Ukraine needs external governance.

Trump appears to be growing increasingly impatient with his lack of progress in a war that he promised to end in 24 hours, expressing frustration with Russian and Ukrainian leaders as he struggles to forge a truce.

Trump's comment that he was "pissed off" with Putin over the Russian leader's approach to a potential ceasefire in Ukraine was a noticeable shift in tone from a leader who had previously expressed admiration for Putin. However, Trump later dialled back his rhetoric and by Monday was accusing Ukraine of trying to renegotiate an economic deal with the US.

The White House on Tuesday said Trump was frustrated with leaders on both sides of the war.

Despite a flurry of US-brokered meetings and parallel talks with Russia and Ukraine in Saudi Arabia that produced – on paper – a 30-day energy ceasefire, both sides have continued to strike each other's energy infrastructure.

The Trump administration also attempted to broker a ceasefire in the Black Sea, but Moscow sought to attach several conditions to

the deal, including the easing of European sanctions, a demand swiftly rejected by Brussels.

Grigory Karasin, who represented Russia at the talks with the US in Saudi Arabia, last week admitted that the sides had failed to make significant progress and that negotiations may drag into next year.

But Trump's team has said it remains committed to halting the war, with the US leader telling NBC he and Putin planned to speak again this week.

The Finnish president, Alexander Stubb, who spent time with Trump over the weekend, said he proposed setting a deadline of 20 April for Putin to comply with a full ceasefire.

However, those close to the Kremlin believe Moscow is unlikely to accept a full ceasefire without securing some of its demands, which include the cessation of all arms and intelligence supplies to Ukraine from the US and other allies.

"We're prepared to keep fighting for some time," said Fyodor Lukyanov, a prominent Russian foreign policy analyst who heads a council that advises the Kremlin.

"The continuation of the war, which we are slowly but surely winning, is in our interest. Especially considering that the main sponsor [the US] seems to be backing out ... Why should we rush in a situation like this?"

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Leaked memo: No US troops if Russia invades Europe

By New Daily Prime

A leaked Pentagon document has sparked international alarm by revealing that the United States is unlikely to deploy troops to defend Europe in the event of a Russian military incursion. The confidential memo, titled “Interim National Defence Strategic Guidance”, outlines a dramatic shift in U.S. defence priorities, placing China above Europe in Washington’s global military agenda.

According to the memo, first reported by the Washington Post, U.S. Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth stated unequivocally that American military forces would not be automatically mobilized to protect European allies if Russia were to attack. Instead, the U.S. would reserve its troop deployments for defending its own territory and deterring Chinese aggression—particularly in relation to Taiwan.

“China is the Department’s sole pacing threat,” Hegseth reportedly wrote. “Denial of a Chinese fait accompli seizure of Taiwan—while simultaneously defending the U.S. homeland—is the Department’s sole pacing scenario.”

Although the United States pledged to continue supporting Europe through its nuclear deterrent capabilities, the document calls for greater European investment in collective defence. It emphasizes that NATO allies must become more self-reliant in the face of possible Russian aggression, especially if the U.S. is engaged in another conflict or withholds its forces.

“This leaked report tells us in black and white what we’ve known for six weeks: the U.S. is not interested in the



defence of the European continent,” said Mike Martin, a UK Member of Parliament and member of the Defence Select Committee. “The UK now needs to work rapidly with our European allies to deliver collective security in Europe without the U.S.”

The revelations have reignited concerns about NATO’s unity and Europe’s long-standing reliance on American military power. Critics argue the leak reflects a broader repositioning of U.S. foreign policy, particularly under the Trump administration, which has prioritized a more insular, America-first strategy.

Former Defence Select Committee Chair Tobias Ellwood called the memo “a wake-up call to Europe,” warning that it could embolden the Kremlin to expand further westward.

“Europe can no longer view the United States as a guaranteed security partner,” Ellwood said. “This memo confirms a shift in American strategic thinking and places Europe in a more vulnerable position.”

He further warned that this shift “enhances and encourages Russian

aggression,” suggesting the West must rapidly adapt to a new era of global realpolitik.

Implications for Europe

The leaked memo is expected to fuel debates within NATO and the European Union over military spending, joint defense initiatives, and the development of an independent European security strategy. As the U.S. focuses on the Pacific, European leaders may be forced to reimagine the continent’s defense framework without guaranteed American military support.

Analysts suggest this could accelerate discussions around EU strategic autonomy, a concept long debated but rarely acted upon with urgency—until now.

With rising tensions in Eastern Europe and persistent fears over Russian expansionism, the memo serves as both a diplomatic tremor and a strategic challenge. Europe, it seems, must now look inward—and to its immediate neighbours—for defence leadership in a rapidly shifting global order.

Two NYPD cops arrested for groping, robbing Queens prostitute

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Two New York City police officers have been suspended after being charged with burglary and forcibly touching a sex worker while responding to a complaint about an illegal brothel, prosecutors said Monday.

Officers Justin McMillan and Justin Colon intentionally turned off their body cameras as they broke into a residential building, stole money and forcibly touched a woman while on duty last July, according to Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz.

The patrol officers, who were still on probationary status after entering the police academy in 2023, had been responding to a report of prostitution inside the building.

Prosecutors say the two shut off their bodycams before approaching a woman leaving the building and taking a key to the residence from her.

They returned eight hours later, unlocked the door and found a woman having sex with a man, who immediately fled, according to Katz's office.

McMillan then stole money



from the woman's purse and groped her.

The woman ran away and eventually called 911 with the help of others, prosecutors said. The officers, meanwhile, returned to their stationhouse without reporting the incidents.

McMillan, 27, of Long Island, and Colon, 24, of Queens, pleaded not guilty during their arraignment hearings Monday in Queens.

They were released and are due back in court April 28, according to Katz's office.

They each face one count of forcible touching and petit larceny, two counts of burglary, and four counts of official misconduct.

Lawyers for the two didn't immediately respond to messages seeking comment.

The officers have been suspended without pay. They were placed on modified duty last August as the NYPD's internal affairs bureau and Katz's office investigated, according to police.

"We hold our officers to the highest standard of professionalism and integrity, and failing to meet that standard is disqualifying," Police Commissioner Jessica Tisch said in a statement.

"Let me be perfectly clear: Any officer who violates their oath will be investigated, exposed, and held fully accountable. That standard will never change."

Putin drafts 160,000 men into Russian army despite peace talks

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Vladimir Putin has ordered 160,000 men to be drafted into the Russian army by mid-summer despite claiming to be working towards peace with Ukraine.

The record-high conscription drive suggests Russia is planning to boost its ranks after months of sustained losses in trying to expel the last of Kyiv's troops from Kursk and in its slow grind forward into Ukraine's east.

Russian men aged 18-30 are eligible to be drafted for mandatory military service through bi-annual call-ups in spring and autumn.

Each time Russia has grown its army, its defence ministry has denied any link to the Ukraine conflict and claimed that the conscripts would not be sent into active combat.

In a decree published on Monday, Putin demanded the draft size for this year's spring conscription hit 160,000 by July 15, up from 150,000 in 2024, 147,000 in 2023 and 134,500 in 2022.

"The forthcoming draft campaign is in no way connected with the special military operation in Ukraine," the Russian defence ministry said in a statement.

Kyiv has repeatedly accused Moscow of taking Russian conscripts captive while sending ill-equipped and badly trained troops into "meatgrinder" assaults on the front line.

The UK Ministry of Defence's latest intelligence update said that Russia "has likely" sustained more than 900,000 casualties during three years of war with Ukraine.

On Sunday, Donald Trump vented frustration at his Russian counterpart for making slow progress towards a ceasefire.



He was "very angry, p—ed off" with Putin for attacking Volodymyr Zelensky's "credibility" and seemingly stalling peace negotiations by demanding the Ukrainian leader be replaced.

The US president threatened to introduce "secondary tariffs" on Russian energy exports, targeting countries that buy Russian oil and gas with sanctions, if talks did not progress.

In response, the Kremlin said it viewed efforts to end the war in Ukraine as "a drawn-out process".

"There is nothing concrete yet that we could and should announce," Dmitry Peskov, the Kremlin spokesman said.

He added that Putin is still "open" to contact with Trump, and although no phone call was currently scheduled, one could be "organised promptly".

Mr Trump on Sunday also accused Mr Zelensky of trying to "back out" of signing a long-contested deal with the US over his country's rare minerals.

He told reporters on Air Force One: "He's trying to back out of the rare earth deal, and if he does that he's got some problems, big, big problems."

The US president speaks to reporters on

board Air Force One on his return to Washington – Kevin Lamarque

The latest version of the minerals deal would give the US access to Ukraine's oil, gas and minerals through a joint investment fund, which would split revenue between the two countries.

On Friday, Mr Zelensky said that he would not sign the deal if it threatened Ukraine's potential accession to the EU, as reports emerged that it could go against the bloc's economic sovereignty rules.

Despite forceful US efforts to broker a ceasefire, the Ukrainian leader said late on Sunday that there had been no let-up in Russian attacks, including on Ukraine's energy infrastructure despite a fragile deal to halt such tactics.

Accusing Russia of being unwilling to forge any kind of truce, Mr Zelensky said: "The geography and brutality of Russian strikes.. show that Putin couldn't care less about diplomacy."

In the early hours of Monday, Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, once again came under heavy Russian drone attack, resulting in three injuries and fires throughout the city. Further aerial attacks targeted the Kherson, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia and Dnipro regions.

Gold hits all-time high amid Trump's uncertain actions

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Gold has surged to a record high, with spot prices trading at approximately \$3,132 per ounce as of 1:00 PM WAT.

Data from commodity tracking platform GoldPrice.com indicates that the precious metal closed at \$3,118 per ounce on March 31.

Since the start of the year, gold has gained 19.8%, having opened 2025 at \$2,625 per ounce.

The rally is largely driven by heightened uncertainty in the global financial markets, prompting investors to seek safe-haven assets as a hedge against economic volatility.

Meanwhile, the equities market has struggled, with the S&P 500 posting its worst first-quarter performance since 2022, declining 4.37% year-to-date. The Dow Jones Industrial Average also ended Q1 with a 0.92% drop, despite a brief mid-March rally.

These movements in the US and global financial markets are down to erratic nature of Donald Trump's policy positions.

Since assuming the US presidency on January 20, he launched a tirade against some of America's closest trade partners, threatening tariffs on goods imported from Mexico, Canada, and China.

The 25% tariffs on goods from Canada and Mexico took effect on March 4, prompting Canada to impose retaliatory measures in response. Simultaneously, President Trump escalated trade tensions by



implementing additional tariffs on Chinese imports, targeting all the United States' largest trading partners.

Amid these escalating trade disputes, the U.S. has struggled to de-escalate the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, further unsettling the global trade landscape. The mounting geopolitical uncertainty continues to challenge international markets and economic stability.

In February, the US consumer price index declined to 2.8 percent, its lowest since November 2024. However, it did little to ease concerns about a looming recession in the U.S. economy.

Gold may hit \$3,300 by year-end – Goldman Sachs

As uncertainty looms, Goldman Sachs projected that gold price may hit \$3,300 by the end of 2025. Daan Struyven, the co-head of global commodities research at Goldman Sachs, highlighted that dropping rates is a contributory factor to the rally in gold prices.

Struyven also attributed the rally to the five-fold increase in the gold purchases by the Russian central bank.

Speaking to CNBC International, Struyven said, "The rally began in mid-2022, driven by the freezing of Russia's central bank reserves and a fivefold increase in central bank gold purchases. This structural shift has been a key factor in sustaining the rally."

He continued, "Over the past two months, there has been a significant rise in ETF inflows, fueled by declining interest rates and uncertainty surrounding U.S. policy.

"More recently, in the last few weeks, a surge in speculative positioning pushed gold prices past the \$3,000 mark. These three factors, operating over different time horizons, have collectively driven gold to an all-time high."

"Looking ahead, further gains are expected, with gold prices projected to reach \$3,300 per troy ounce by year-end."

Israel lifts all tariffs on US products

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



President of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu announced the lifting of all tariffs imposed on United States products on Tuesday.

The Prime Minister said the move was aimed at ensuring a competitive market, make the economy more diverse and reduce the cost of living for Israelis.

This was announced in a joint statement by Netanyahu and Minister of Economy and Industry, Nir Barkat.

Parts of the statement said, “In addition to the economic benefits for the economy and citizens of Israel, this move will allow us to further strengthen the alliance and ties between Israel and the United States.

“We will continue to work to remove barriers and tariffs and to reinforce our special relationship with the United States.”

This comes as President Donald Trump is set to levy reciprocal tariffs on US trade partners.

The United States president started imposing tariffs on some particular countries ever since he made a dramatic comeback to the White House on January 20, but incredibly announced last week that all nations of the world will be levied heavy tariffs.

The take-off of the tariffs is just some few hours away.

The US is Israel’s largest trading partner and closest ally, with bilateral trade worth \$34 billion in 2024.

Tsunoda aims to challenge Verstappen in Red Bull debut

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

Red Bull team principal Christian Horner has set Yuki Tsunoda a clear challenge ahead of his highly anticipated debut alongside Max Verstappen: get as “close as possible” to the reigning four-time world champion.

The 24-year-old Japanese driver was announced last week as the replacement for Liam Lawson, who was dropped just two races into the 2025 Formula 1 season. Now, Tsunoda prepares to race in front of his home crowd at the iconic Suzuka Circuit, hoping to make an immediate impact.

With Red Bull currently third in the constructors’ standings and Verstappen trailing McLaren’s Lando Norris by eight points in the drivers’ championship, Tsunoda’s performance could be crucial in the team’s bid for success.

“In the end, Red Bull Racing are focused on Max scoring a drivers’ championship,” Tsunoda told BBC Radio 5 Live. “Performance-wise, Horner wants me to be as close to Max as possible. In some races, I can help with strategy, but he also promised that if I’m able to be in front of Max, he wouldn’t necessarily ask me to swap positions.”

Verstappen’s Support for Lawson’s Demotion Unclear

Lawson’s sudden exit from Red Bull’s main team raised eyebrows,



with the New Zealander struggling in the first two races of the season. He finished 18th in Australia before crashing out, then endured a difficult weekend in China, qualifying last for both the sprint and main grand prix, finishing 14th and 12th.

Verstappen appeared to subtly criticize the decision to demote Lawson by ‘liking’ an Instagram post from former F1 driver Giedo van der Garde, who called the move a “panic decision.” However, Tsunoda remains focused on the challenge ahead rather than any potential team tensions.

“I haven’t spoken to Max since replacing Lawson,” Tsunoda said. “He’s a bit different in how he behaves in and outside the car. But I’m not really worried about our relationship—I know what I want to do.”

Aiming for Points in Front of a Home Crowd

Tsunoda, who made his F1 debut in 2021 with Red Bull’s second team, Racing Bulls, is realistic about his chances in Japan. Jumping into a new car mid-season presents a significant challenge, but he remains optimistic about delivering a strong performance.

“Obviously, I’d love to say I’m aiming for a podium,” he admitted. “But realistically, with limited sessions in the car, it’ll be tough. If I can score points—finish in the top 10—I’ll be happy.”

Formula 1 fans will be watching closely as Tsunoda takes to the track in front of his home supporters. Whether he can challenge Verstappen and cement his place at Red Bull remains to be seen, but one thing is certain: all eyes will be on Suzuka this weekend.

Haaland out for up to seven weeks with ankle injury

By Timi-Zacchaeus Oluwaferanmi

Manchester City striker Erling Haaland will be out for up to seven weeks with the ankle injury he suffered in Sunday's FA Cup quarter-final win at Bournemouth, says manager Pep Guardiola.

The Norwegian was substituted in the 61st minute after scoring the equaliser as City went on to beat the Cherries 2-1 and reach the semi-finals.

A video was posted on social media showing the 24-year-old leaving the Vitality Stadium on crutches and with his left ankle in a protective boot.

"They told me the doctors say between five to seven weeks," said Guardiola. "So hopefully the end of the season and by the Club World Cup he will be ready."

"Sometimes there are years when these kinds of things happen. It happened all season."

City said on Monday that Haaland would see a specialist about the injury and anticipate he "will be fit to play a further part in the remainder of this season including this summer's Fifa Club World Cup".



Haaland missed a penalty and two big chances on Sunday, but he turned in Nico O'Reilly's cross to level the game before Omar Marmouh scored the winner.

The FA Cup is City's only remaining chance of silverware this season following a difficult Premier League campaign and early exits from the Champions League and Carabao Cup.

Manager Guardiola has had to deal with injuries to key players throughout the campaign. His side are fifth in the Premier League, one point behind Chelsea in the race for a Champions League spot.

Manchester City striker Erling Haaland sitting on the floor, holding his injured leg
Image caption, Haaland has scored 30 goals and provided four assists in all competitions this campaign

What games will Erling Haaland miss?

A five-week absence would see Haaland miss six matches including the FA Cup semi-final against Nottingham Forest on 26 April. That timeframe means he would be looking to return in the Premier League game against Southampton on 10 May.

If he were to miss seven weeks, Haaland would be a doubt for the FA Cup final on 17 May – should City beat Forest.

Haaland would then aim to be fit for the final league game of the season on 25 May at Fulham, before the Club World Cup is played in June and July.

City's Premier League match against Aston Villa has been postponed because of their involvement in the FA Cup semi-final and has yet to be rescheduled.