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Babangida defends mismanagement of \$12.4bn gulf oil windfall

By Olamilekan Botti

Former military President General Ibrahim Babangida has expressed that Nigeria missed critical opportunities during its oil boom years due to a culture of “profligacy” and “conspicuous consumption” that ultimately hindered the country’s long-term economic development. In a candid assessment of the nation’s financial management during a period of significant oil revenue, Babangida offered insights into the challenges that plagued Nigeria’s economy.

Addressing concerns about the spending of the \$12.4 billion oil windfall during his administration, Babangida defended his government’s financial decisions, arguing that such expenditures were not atypical for the time. “What I have done is not unusual in this country. Somebody did it before me, but I won’t mention names,” he stated, suggesting that the patterns of spending were consistent with previous administrations.

Babangida pointed to various infrastructure projects initiated during his tenure, indicating that the funds were allocated towards the construction of essential facilities, including ports and bridges. He emphasized the importance of these projects in fostering national development, arguing that the investments made were crucial for improving the country’s infrastructure.

The former president acknowledged that the \$12.4 billion windfall could have been directed into the Federation Account, which would have benefited the entire nation. However, he clarified that the approach taken was to monetize the foreign exchange earnings, which



subsequently provided revenue to state and local governments. “We monetised it, and those we monetised were what the state governments and local governments were getting,” Babangida explained.

His remarks come in the wake of ongoing discussions about the management of oil revenues in Nigeria, particularly in light of the country’s struggles with economic instability and corruption. Critics have often pointed to the lack of accountability and transparency in the handling of oil wealth as a significant factor in Nigeria’s economic challenges. Babangida’s defense of his administration’s spending decisions raises questions about the lessons learned from that era and the implications for current and future governance.

Babangida’s tenure from 1985 to 1993 was marked by significant oil revenues, yet many argue that the benefits did not translate into sustainable development for the nation. The former president’s admission of “profligacy” reflects a

recognition of the broader issues that have plagued Nigeria, including mismanagement of resources and a failure to invest in long-term economic strategies.

Despite the challenges, Babangida expressed pride in the accomplishments of his administration, particularly in infrastructure development. He noted, “If all we could spend between 1988 and 1994 was \$12.4 billion, that is very good,” suggesting that the investments made during that time positively impacted the nation.

As Nigeria continues to navigate complex economic landscapes, the reflections of past leaders like Babangida provide valuable context for understanding the ongoing debates about oil revenue management, accountability, and the need for sustainable development practices. The lessons from the past remain relevant as the nation seeks to leverage its natural resources for the benefit of all Nigerians, ensuring that future generations can thrive in a more stable and prosperous economic environment.

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CONTACT US

Correspondent Address:
Real Group Plaza, No.1 Junaid Dosumu
Street, CBD, Alausa, Ikeja, Lagos
Call the Editor on: 07025014298, 09014323792

E-mail Address:
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Tinubu moves to resolve Lagos Assembly crisis, tasks Osoba, Akande, others

By **Dave Oludare Oso**

To prevent the leadership crisis rocking the Lagos State House of Assembly from spiralling out of control and restore sanity, the president, Asiwaju Bola Tinubu has waded in, enlisting some respected elders of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) to intervene and put the festering crisis to bed.

To this effect, Chief Bisi Akande, Chief Olusegun Osoba and Akinwunmi Ambode, who were former governors of Osun, Ogun and Lagos states, respectively met with Governor Babajide Sanwoolu at the Governor's Lodge in Marina, Lagos, for a marathon meeting on Sunday.

Also, all members of the Lagos Governance Advisory Council (GAC), the present Lagos chairman of the APC, Cornelius Ojelabi, and the former state chairman of the party, Tunde Balogun, were in attendance at the meeting.

The meeting, according to PUNCH lasted till late Sunday evening.

After the meeting, the party chieftains are expected to call all the Lagos lawmakers for another round of meeting.

A source privy to the development told journalists that the meeting was aimed at resolving the speakership tussle between ousted Speaker Mudashiru Obasa and current Speaker Mojisola Meranda.

The source disclosed that while some lawmakers want Obasa to return as Speaker of the House, a faction does not want his return.

“The meeting is currently holding as we speak. The party chieftains will call the lawmakers for another round of meeting. It is all in a bid to resolve the crisis.

“Obasa wants to return as Speaker of the House to spend a little time before he finally resigns by himself. However, some lawmakers believe that once he



returns to the seat, it will be hard to get him to leave the position.

“So President Tinubu was fed up with the prolonged crisis and he drafted the party bigwigs to Lagos to find a way out,” the source said.

The development comes following the inability of the GAC members to resolve the crisis which began on January 13 2025 when about 36 lawmakers removed Obasa as Speaker and replaced him with Meranda, who was then a Deputy Speaker.

Obasa, who has since faulted his removal, dragged the Assembly and the new Speaker, Meranda, before a Lagos State High Court in Ikeja, claiming that the lawmakers were wrong to have removed him when the Assembly was in recess.

It was gathered that the intervention of the party's heavyweights intervention may see Meranda stepping down to allow Setonji David from Badagry to assume the position.

A reliable Presidency told NEW DAILY PRIME in confidence that, “Well, it is true. There have been consultations, and it appears that she will step down.”

Another source who also asked not to be named, said President Tinubu advised party leaders to reach an amicable solution that balances representation.

The recommendation was to ensure fair representation, as Lagos West currently lacks a principal position in the state's leadership.

“The President believes Lagos West should not be sidelined, and he is in support of a solution that accommodates all interests,” the source said.

Another source in the Assembly who spoke with our correspondent on Sunday said there was pressure on Meranda to resign.

The source said the lawmakers had been holding meetings over the matter.

The source said, “There has been pressure on Meranda to resign. She was meant to read out her resignation last week at the House but the lawmakers did not agree with her. So there have been meetings over this.

“The letter that was circulating last week suggesting she had resigned was the one she was meant to read out. She is being pressured from Abuja to resign.”

FG postpones NEC meeting in Osun amid political unrest

By **Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye**

The Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation has announced the postponement of the National Council for Art, Culture, Tourism, and Creative Economy meeting, initially scheduled to take place in Osun State from February 25 to 27, 2025.

The decision follows rising political tensions in the state, triggered by the ongoing local government elections.

The Minister of Information and National Orientation, Mohammed Idris, conveyed the postponement through an internal memo titled ‘Urgent Action Against Hosting of National Council for Art, Culture, Tourism and Creative Economy from 24-27 February 2025, in Osun State’.

The memo, directed to State Commissioners, Directors of MDAs, and key stakeholders, cited the current political unrest in Osun State as the primary reason for the delay.

“With reference to the above, I wish to bring to your notice the current tense situation in Osun State stemmed from political unrest and uproar in view of the ongoing local government elections,” the memo read.

The memo further informed the



recipients that the meeting would be rescheduled to a later date, which would be communicated in due course. It concluded by expressing regret for any inconvenience caused by the change in plans: “Any inconvenience(s) caused is highly regretted, please.”

In light of this, the Ministry urged all stakeholders to circulate the updated information to relevant parties to ensure widespread awareness of the change.

The postponement coincides with significant political developments in Osun State, where the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) secured a sweeping victory in the local government elections on Saturday.

The PDP won all 30 chairmanship and 332 councillorship seats across the state’s local councils, as

confirmed by the Chairman of the Osun State Independent Electoral Commission, Hashim Abioye, at a press briefing in Osogbo.

Governor Ademola Adeleke subsequently inaugurated the newly elected local government officials on Sunday, urging them to focus on delivering good governance while warning against attempts to forcibly occupy council secretariats.

The political situation and local government elections have led to heightened tensions, contributing to the decision to postpone the meeting, ensuring that safety and order are prioritised.

A new date for the National Council meeting will be announced once the situation stabilises.

Tinubu changed his mind on my ministerial appointment, says El-Rufai

By New Daily Prime

Former Kaduna State Governor Nasir El-Rufai has revealed that President Bola Ahmed Tinubu personally rejected his ministerial nomination, refuting claims that his disqualification was due to security concerns raised by the National Assembly.

Speaking on Arise Television's Prime Time on Monday, El-Rufai, a former Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and once a close ally of President Tinubu, said that despite Tinubu's initial public plea for him to join the administration, the president ultimately changed his mind about his appointment.

El-Rufai, who was widely expected to lead power sector reforms under Tinubu, emphasized that his exclusion was a deliberate decision by the president, not a National Assembly rejection.

"Since I left office, the President publicly begged me to serve in his government. I initially had no interest and told him so. But after two months of negotiations, we agreed on my nomination as a minister under certain conditions."

"Along the line, either the President changed his mind or something else happened. Please don't believe the story that the National Assembly rejected me. The National Assembly had nothing to do with this. The President didn't want me in his cabinet. He changed his mind. Whatever it is, I don't care—I've



moved on."

"Since I moved on, I have not commented on the government or granted any interviews. But as a founding member of the APC, I have the right to ask why the party isn't functioning."

El-Rufai's Growing Criticism of Tinubu's Administration

Once regarded as one of Tinubu's closest allies, El-Rufai has recently been vocal in his criticism of the administration, questioning its policy direction and governance strategy. His fallout with the president has fueled speculation about deepening cracks within the APC.

El-Rufai remains a key power broker in Northern Nigeria, and his dissatisfaction with Tinubu's leadership has sparked discussions about internal party struggles ahead of the 2027 elections.

He was expected to oversee Nigeria's power sector reforms, but his nomination was reportedly blocked in

the Senate, allegedly due to security clearance issues. However, his latest remarks suggest that Tinubu himself pulled the plug on his appointment.

El-Rufai's public critique of the APC's dysfunction raises questions about the party's stability and whether internal divisions could weaken Tinubu's presidency.

With El-Rufai breaking his silence, many are questioning whether he is positioning himself for a future political move or if his criticisms signal a broader rift within the APC. His influence in Northern Nigeria and his history of political maneuvering suggest that his political ambitions may not be over.

Will El-Rufai remain in the APC, or is a major political realignment on the horizon? The coming months will reveal whether his strained relationship with Tinubu leads to a new political strategy ahead of 2027.

Dangote Refinery assures Nigeria of adequate petrol supply

By Friday Omosola

Aliko Dangote, President of Dangote Industries Limited, has affirmed that the Dangote Petroleum Refinery possesses ample petrol reserves to cater to Nigeria's fuel demand.

Addressing stakeholders over the weekend, Dangote highlighted that the refinery currently holds over half a billion litres of petroleum products, valued at more than 600 billion Naira.

He emphasised that the facility is fully equipped to supply the country's petrol, diesel, and kerosene needs without reliance on imports.

During a visit by Zambia's Minister of Energy, Makozo Chikote, and his delegation, Dangote reiterated that the refinery's mission extends beyond Nigeria, aiming to enhance regional trade under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

He expressed a commitment to fostering energy partnerships across Africa.

Following a comprehensive tour of the refinery complex in Ibeju Lekki, which includes Africa's largest fertiliser plant and the world's largest single-train refinery with a 650,000 barrels per day capacity, Minister Chikote commended Dangote's vision.

He acknowledged the refinery's potential to address Zambia's energy challenges and expressed eagerness to collaborate with Dangote Industries for sustainable energy solutions.

The Zambian minister noted that his country has embraced private sector participation in the petroleum industry and is keen to explore strategic partnerships for energy security and economic growth.



"We aim to boost productivity in mining, agriculture, and other sectors. Your presentation offers an immediate solution to our energy needs. We are also fostering competition among private-sector players.

"We anticipate Dangote joining the effort, which will enhance efficiency, reliability, quality, and competitiveness. And we need this to happen as soon as possible."

Regarding the Dangote Petroleum Refinery, he noted: "We have witnessed the benefits of introducing multiple players into the industry, which has significantly improved citizens' lives."

He further emphasized, "Based on our observations, we must strengthen intra-African trade to support one another. Uniting these countries will make Africa an efficient and reliable trade hub.

"We have seen firsthand that Africa can learn from Dangote's achievements. This progress enables Africans to become self-sufficient rather than relying on external support. I believe this visit has offered valuable lessons, and the key takeaway for me is that Dangote prioritizes Africa's broader development."

Another member of the Zambian delegation, Samuel Maimbo, Vice President of Budget, Performance Review, and Strategic Planning at the World Bank Group—currently running for the AfDB presidency—highlighted the lack of sufficient development aid for Africa.

"Government funding alone is also inadequate to drive Africa's development. The only way to achieve the scale and speed required for progress is through the private sector. That is why we are here today—to learn and witness an ambitious growth model firsthand," he stated.

He added that only private-sector involvement can accelerate Africa's development.

Edwin Devakumar, Vice President of Dangote Industries Limited, explained that the refinery operates with a core strategy of producing top-quality products.

"The project's original concept was to refine Nigerian crude and add value. However, we also designed it with the flexibility to process a variety of African and Middle Eastern crude oils," he said.

Tinubu congratulates Aiyedatiwa on fresh term as Ondo gov

By Friday Omosola

President Bola Tinubu has congratulated Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa of Ondo State on the commencement of a fresh term in office following his swearing-in on Monday in Akure, the state capital.

Governor Aiyedatiwa, who initially took over from the late Governor Rotimi Akeredolu, secured his mandate in the last governorship election.

In his congratulatory message, President Tinubu urged him to use this opportunity to serve the people diligently and build on the legacy of his predecessor.

“You have a rare privilege to succeed your illustrious predecessor, who worked for the growth and development of the state and advanced the progress of Nigeria as a whole,” Tinubu stated.



“Having been sworn in today for a fresh term in office, I urge you to work in the best interest of the people of the state and our country as a whole. I will be your partner in progress to usher in a new era of prosperity for the people of Ondo State.”

The president further emphasized the need for Governor Aiyedatiwa to expand economic opportunities, reduce poverty, improve security, and provide critical infrastructure to enhance the well-being of Ondo residents.

Senate commences two-day public hearing on tax reforms

By Friday Omosola

The Senate has commenced a two-day public hearing to evaluate proposed tax reform bills, gathering prominent figures from the economic and financial sectors.

Key attendees include the Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Wale Edun; the Chairman of the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Zacch Adedeji; the Group CEO of the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL), Mele Kyari; members of the Federal Executive Council; heads of relevant agencies; and the Comptroller General



of Customs, Adewale Adeniyi, among others.

Senator Sani Musa, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance, assured that the process would be open and conducted in the nation’s best interest.

He stressed that the primary objective is to review and modernize tax laws to reflect current economic realities.

He highlighted that the proposed reforms are designed to enhance fairness, equity, and inclusivity while addressing inefficiencies in the existing tax framework.

Senator Musa encouraged stakeholders and the public to engage actively in the discussions, emphasising that collective input is crucial in shaping a tax system that supports economic development and national progress.

Sanwo-Olu attributes Lagos' progress to faith, unity

By Friday Omosola

Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu, has credited faith and unity as the key drivers of the state's continuous growth and prosperity.

He made this assertion during the 2025 Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) Annual Inter-Denominational Divine Service (IDDS), held at The Apostolic Church, LAWNA Territorial Headquarters, Ketu.

Represented by the Secretary to the State Government, Bimbola Salu-Hundeyin, the governor expressed deep appreciation for the unwavering prayers of the Christian community.

He emphasised the vital role faith plays in the development of Lagos.

He acknowledged the church's contributions to fostering moral values, unity, and social progress.

"Lagos State thrives not only through governance but also through the spiritual support and moral fortitude provided by faith communities," Sanwo-Olu stated.

"Our government remains committed to religious harmony, ethical leadership, and continuous collaboration with faith-based organizations to drive our collective vision for growth and prosperity."



Reflecting on the event's theme, Total Restoration, the governor noted that it resonated with the aspirations of Lagosians for peace, security, and greater opportunities.

He assured the audience that, by divine grace, the best days of Lagos and Nigeria lay ahead.

In his address, the Chairman of CAN Lagos State Chapter and convener of the service, His Lordship, The Right Reverend Steven Adegbite, commended Governor Sanwo-Olu's administration for its transformative initiatives and unwavering support for the Christian community.

The bishop also made a passionate appeal for the construction of a

pedestrian bridge to enhance safety for worshipers at The Apostolic Church's convention grounds along the Ibadan Expressway in Ketu.

Touching on recent developments in the state legislature, Bishop Adegbite urged for a peaceful resolution, stating, "God is in control of the Lagos House of Assembly, and He will resolve the matter for us. We are not going to fight in Lagos."

Guest preacher, Prelate of the Methodist Church Nigeria, Oliver Aba, represented by Bishop Oluyinka Akande, stressed the need for increased funding for the education and health sectors to curb brain drain.

Gov Aiyedatiwa appoints SSG

By Friday Omosola

Ondo State Governor, Lucky Aiyedatiwa, has announced a series of key appointments shortly after assuming office as the 7th democratically elected governor of the state on Monday.

In a swift move to kick-start his administration, Governor Aiyedatiwa approved the appointment of Taiwo Fasoranti as the Secretary to the State Government (SSG).

Fasoranti appointment followed the death of former SSG, Tayo Oluwatuyi, popularly known as Tukana.

Fasoranti who hails from Akure South Local Government Area, previously served as the Chairman of the Ondo State Hospitals Management Board.

Additionally, the governor reappointed Kayode Ajulo, as Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, along with Omowunmi Isaac as Commissioner for Finance.



Their appointments are subject to confirmation by the Ondo State House of Assembly.

Governor Aiyedatiwa also reappointed the following individuals as Special Advisers, Johnson Alabi as Special Adviser on Power and Seun Osamaye as Special Adviser on Women Affairs.

Others are Bola Taiwo as Special Adviser on Union Matters & Special Duties and Simidele Odimayo as Special Adviser on Health.

In another elevation within the administration, EAbiola Olawoye, formerly the Senior Special Assistant to the Governor on Infrastructure, Lands, and Housing, has been promoted to the role of Special Adviser in the same portfolio.

Governor Aiyedatiwa emphasised that these appointments take immediate effect and charged the newly appointed officials to swiftly engage in providing efficient and effective services to the people of the state.

El-Rufai thanks well-wishers, takes jab at critics over 65th birthday

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

Former Kaduna State Governor, Nasir El-Rufai, has expressed his heartfelt gratitude to friends, associates, and well-wishers who celebrated his 65th birthday.

However, he couldn't resist taking a subtle dig at those he claimed initially refrained from acknowledging his milestone until President Bola Tinubu's birthday message prompted them to do so.

In a statement shared via his X (formerly Twitter) handle on Monday, El-Rufai thanked those who sent him birthday prayers and well-wishes, while poking fun at his critics.

He remarked, "I want to thank everyone that sent me their prayers and best wishes, including those that didn't want to until President Tinubu's message shamed them into action."

He continued, "May the Almighty God accept our prayers and continue to shower his blessings on us and our people."

Reflecting on the outpouring of support, El-Rufai noted that the messages were "humbling and gratifying" but that it would have been impossible to individually acknowledge each one.

"It has been about a week since many friends, associates and admirers sent



me various messages and prayers in commemoration of my 65th birthday. The prayers and good wishes were quite humbling and gratifying, but far too many and overwhelming for individual acknowledgement or response by me, hence this message," he explained.

Acknowledging the sheer volume of birthday messages, the former governor confessed that he may have unintentionally missed a few.

"I have tried to repost, retweet and share all the birthday messages I received, but as an imperfect mortal, I am sure I couldn't have done all. If I didn't with yours, please forgive me. It is an omission of the head, not of the

heart," he said.

El-Rufai concluded his statement with prayers for his continued health, happiness, and for the prosperity of the nation.

"May Almighty Allah grant us even longer life, in good health, happiness and prosperity, in a Nigeria that flourishes as a beacon of progressive governance, democracy and equal opportunity for all. Thank you all, and God Bless," he said.

The statement, while expressing gratitude, also offered a glimpse into the former governor's characteristic wit, as he continues to engage with both his supporters and critics.

9 die, three injured as bus collides with truck on Lagos-Ibadan Expressway

By Friday Omosola

Nine persons were killed, while at least three were seriously injured in an accident along the Lagos-Ibadan expressway near Ayetoro early Monday morning.

The crash, which occurred around 5:30 am, involved a Toyota bus with registration number UYY165ZY and a stationary truck bearing the number plate DKA244XC.

According to reports, the tragedy ensued when the driver of the Toyota bus lost control and collided with the parked truck, resulting in the devastating loss of lives and injuries.

Emergency responders swiftly arrived at the scene to manage the situation and provide aid to the injured victims.



The Spokesperson for the Ogun State Sector Command of the Federal Road Safety Corps, Florence Okpe, disclosed this in a statement sent to journalists on Monday.

She said, “A total of 13 people were

involved which comprised of 10 male adults and 03 female adults and 09 were recorded killed (06 male and 03 female) while 03 were injured.

“The suspected causes of the fatal crash were excessive speed and fatigue which led to loss of control and the driver rammed into a stationary truck.

“The injured victims were taken to Famobis Hospital, Mowe, while the deceased were deposited at Idera morgue Sagamu.”

Meanwhile, the Sector Commander is said to have been pained over the recklessness of some drivers for not observing the stipulated speed limit and refusing to obey the 15-minute rest after 4 hrs journey.

APC-elected LG chairmen resume duties in Osun amid tight security

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

Chairmen elected under the All Progressives Congress (APC) in the October 2022 Osun Local Government elections returned to their respective council secretariats on Monday, amid heightened security.

Council officials resumed work at various secretariats, including in Ikirun (Ifelodun Local Government), Igbona (Olorunda Local Government), and Oke-Baale (Osogbo Local Government), despite ongoing tensions.

A heavy security presence was visible across the state, with armed



police officers and Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) personnel stationed at roadblocks leading to the secretariats.

Checkpoints were also set up along major routes, including the Osogbo/Kwara boundary and

Osogbo/Ilesa roads.

Jamiu Olawumi, a former Special Adviser on Education to ex-Governor Adegboyega Oyetola, confirmed that chairmen and councillors resumed work across all 30 local government areas, with directives for staff to return by Wednesday.

Olawumi stated, “All chairmen and councillors have resumed in all local governments and area councils in Osun State. Local governments are active, and security is tight with officers from the police, DSS, and Civil Defence present.”

Kidnapped Afenifere youth leader pleads for N100m ransom in viral video

By Friday Omosola

The National President of the Afenifere National Youth Council, Prince Eniola Ojajuni, has made a desperate appeal to Nigerians for help in raising the N100 million ransom demanded by his kidnapers.

In a widely circulated video on Monday, the visibly distressed youth leader said the kidnapers had threatened to kill him by 3 p.m. on Monday.

He was seen pleading for his life while a kidnapper held an AK-47 to his chest, urging the public to assist in securing his release.

He said, “Nigerians, please help me! Your donation—N100,000, N50,000, or N1,000,000—can go a long way in saving my life,” he pleaded in the video. “My name is Prince Eniola Ojajuni. God bless you. Aderohunmu, please help me spread this video.”

The National Secretary of the council, Abiodun Aderohunmu, confirmed the abduction and disclosed that the kidnapers are demanding a ransom of N100 million for his release.

“The Afenifere National Youths Council is deeply saddened to announce the kidnapping of its National President, Prince Eniola Joseph Ojajuni, in Abuja. During the attack, he sustained a gunshot wound, and we are extremely concerned about his safety,” the statement read.

Aderohunmu urged the Federal Government and security agencies to act swiftly to ensure Ojajuni’s release.



Reports indicate that Ojajuni’s kidnapers have issued a 48-hour deadline, threatening to kill him if a N100 million ransom is not paid.

A widely circulated voice recording captures a tense conversation between the kidnapers and Ojajuni’s family during negotiations.

Speaking in distress, Ojajuni disclosed that his captors had demanded N100 million and had already shot him in the buttock.

During the call, a family member engaged with the kidnapers, appealing for a reduction in the ransom amount.

“Please, what options do we have? How can we make the payment?” the family member asked.

Struggling to reach an agreement, the family member pleaded, “We don’t have that kind of money. We’re considering

selling a small piece of land in our village. Once we do, we’ll see how much we can gather. How do we deliver the money? Where should we make the payment?”

The kidnapper remained firm. “The payment must be in cash,” he demanded. Desperate, the family offered, “Please, can you take N10 million? That’s the most we can manage.”

Rejecting the offer, the kidnapper retorted, “God forbid! If you keep talking nonsense, I swear you won’t hear from me again. My boss’s final demand is N100 million, but if you can come up with a better offer, let me know.”

Despite their continued pleas, the kidnapers threatened to escalate their actions against Prince Ojajuni.

Meanwhile, the Nigeria Police Force has yet to provide any update on the efforts being made to secure his release.

Police probe officers for assaulting Delta polytechnic SUG president

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

The Delta State Police Command has said it will investigate viral videos in which some policemen allegedly slapped and shot at the Student Union Government's President of the Delta State Polytechnic, Ogwashi-Uku, Eruru Christian, over N500 'settlement.'

An X-user, ChuksEricE, had shared the video claiming the SUG president was allegedly approached by police officers who demanded that he "settled" them with N500.

In one of the videos, the SUG president was heard saying:

"You slapped me because I refused to settle you. You will see what you have never seen in your life before. Ogwashi-Uku divisional police slapped me, SUG president because I refused to settle them in my vehicle... because I refused to give



him N500.

"They are running inside the bush, look at them, criminals. They are threatening to shoot me, SUG president. Look at you, criminals. The whole world is going to see you," he said in another video as a policeman stepped out of the vehicle and

fired a shot in the air.

Reacting to the viral video, the spokesperson of the command, SP Edefa Bright, disclosed that an investigation into the incident had been launched, adding that the officer accused of assaulting the SUG president had been detained.

The PPRO said, "While we are looking into this incident, his allegation of them asking for N500 remains an allegation and we are looking into it. He said they hit him, that's also wrong and the officer is presently detained. However, we should not encourage the behaviour of the SUG president to be so hostile to policemen deployed because of the kidnapping complaints in that area. He called the police criminals and thieves even after they had left him. This, too, should be discouraged."

NNPP suspends Senator, three others for associating with APC leaders

By Dave Oludare Oso

The Kano State chapter of the New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP) has suspended Senator Kawu Sumaila, who represents Kano South Senatorial District, along with three other prominent members, Ali Madakin Gini, Sani Abdullahi Rogo, and Kabiru Alhassan Rurum over alleged anti-party activities.

Announcing the decision at a press briefing in Kano on Monday, the state chairman of NNPP, Hashimu Suleiman Dungurawa, stated that the affected members had acted against the party's interests.

This suspension comes just a day after the National Chairman of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Abdullahi



Umar Ganduje, hinted at an impending mass defection of top NNPP members to the APC.

Dungurawa accused the suspended

members of failing to remain loyal to the party, despite being given free tickets during the elections.

One of the key incidents that led to their suspension was the wedding ceremony of Senator Kawu Sumaila's daughter and the commissioning of projects at his university in Sumaila.

According to Dungurawa, Sumaila invited several APC leaders, including Deputy Senate President Jibrin Barau and Ganduje, while NNPP members were conspicuously absent.

To address the issue, the party has set up a committee to investigate the matter and ensure a resolution.

Police arrest man for killing wife with machete in Edo

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

The Police Command of Edo State has arrested one Kelvin Izekor for killing his 38-year-old wife, Success Izekor.

According to reports, the incident happened at Upper Mission Extension in Benin City on Saturday, February 22, 2025.

A resident, who pleaded anonymity, said the couple recently got married. "I can't believe what I saw. Imagine being killed by your own husband. They were newlyweds, and nobody would have expected the woman to suffer such a fate," she said.

A graphic video sighted on social media shows police officers and residents taking the deceased, who had deep machete cuts on her head, from her apartment into a



police Hilux van.

The spokesperson of the Edo State Police Command, Moses Yamu, who confirmed the incident in a statement on Sunday, said that the husband was about to be lynched by an irate mob before the police arrived, pacified the crowd, and arrested

him.

The statement read, "On 22/02/2025, at about 22:00hrs, information was received that one Kelvin Izekor of No. 50 Upper Mission Extension, Benin City, had killed his wife, Success Izekor, aged 38, and was about to be lynched by an irate mob.

"Operatives of the Aduwawa Division swiftly responded to the report and found the lifeless body of the woman lying in a pool of her own blood, with deep cuts on her head.

"It took serious efforts by the police to pacify the mob, rescue the suspect, and take him into custody for investigation. The victim was taken to the hospital, where she was confirmed dead."

Again, DStv, GOtv hike subscription

By Damilola Olufemi

Multichoice, the parent body of DStv and GOtv, is set to increase its subscription packages starting March 1, 2025.

The company, in a statement titled, "Price adjustments for DStv and GOtv packages," made this known on Monday.

According to the statement, the hike is to enable expand its services to customers.

The new hike is coming after its last price review almost a year ago.

"Dear Customer, please note that effective 1 March 2025, there will be a price adjustment on all DStv packages.



"This is to enable us to continue to offer our customers world-class homegrown and international content, delivered through the best technology," part of the statement reads.

The DStv Compact bouquet will increase N15,700 to N19,000, the

Compact Plus to N30,000, while the Premium subscription rises to N44,500.

Also, GOtv subscribers will pay 3,900 from N3,600, while the GOtv Plus plan will increase from N4,850 to N5,800.

The GoTV max package will now cost N8,500 while the Supa will cost N11,400 and the Supa Plus, N16,800.

The company blamed the new price increase on the rising cost of operating a business in Nigeria.

It cites currency depreciation, naira's value dropping significantly, including high inflation as part its operation expenses.

Indonesia launches free medical check-ups for all citizens By Helen Okechukwu

Indonesia has introduced a free medical check-up programme for all its 280 million citizens.

A statement from the chief of the Presidential Communication Office, Hasan Nasbi, said the healthcare initiative was the first of its kind.

The 'Cek Kesehatan Gratis (CKG) programme' initiative aims to promote preventive healthcare, eliminating barriers to accessing healthcare services.

Mr Nasbi said citizens can access the



programme through the Satu Sehat mobile app or by visiting the nearest government health clinic.

He said the CKG programme

significantly shifts Indonesia's healthcare approach, prioritising preventive care over expensive treatments.

"By detecting health issues early, the programme aims to promote positive and healthier behaviour, reducing household costs for treating sick family members.

"The initiative has earned global recognition, with WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus applauding Indonesia's commitment to preventive healthcare," he said.

1,600 employees on leave as USAID begins workforce reduction By Helen Okechukwu

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has placed at least 1,600 employees on administrative leave as part of a broader workforce reduction plan.

The announcement was made on Sunday, at 11:59 pm EST through an official statement titled "Notification of Administrative Leave," published on the agency's website.

According to the statement, most USAID direct-hire employees, except those assigned to mission-critical tasks, leadership positions, or specially designated programs, have been placed on leave globally.

At the same time, USAID has begun implementing a Reduction-in-Force



(RIF) that will impact around 1,600 personnel stationed within the United States.

Affected employees were directly notified about their employment status, available benefits, and future options.

"Individuals that are impacted will receive specific notifications on February 23, 2025, with further instructions and information about their benefits and rights," the

agency confirmed in the statement.

Despite the large-scale leave, a select number of essential personnel have been instructed to continue working. These individuals were identified by agency leadership and were notified of their status by 5 pm EST on 23 February.

The agency acknowledged the significant impact of these changes, especially on its overseas personnel, and assured them of their safety.

To assist those stationed abroad, USAID introduced a voluntary, agency-funded return travel program.

This initiative aims to facilitate a smooth transition for affected staff members who wish to return home.

Woman conceives after deliberately tripping me – Bishop Oyedepo

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Bishop David Oyedepo shared a testimony of a woman who conceived after deliberately tripping him, believing contact with him would grant her a child.

According to the cleric, the incident was a powerful demonstration of faith in action.

Speaking to his congregation, Oyedepo recounted how the woman, desperate for a child, took an unconventional step to secure her miracle.

She noticed security personnel surrounding him and decided to seize the opportunity. Without hesitation, she intentionally placed her foot in his path, causing him to stumble.

Her motivation? A deep belief that making physical contact with him would result in pregnancy.

“The woman saw security all around and said to herself, ‘Today is the day,’” Oyedepo recalled. “She put her leg out, and I tripped. Then she turned to her husband and declared, ‘I’m pregnant.’ He was shocked and asked, ‘Just now?’ Nine months later, she gave birth. Faith was alive.”

The bishop shared the story as an example of unwavering trust in divine intervention. He emphasised that the woman’s bold action reflected a level of faith that moved mountains.

A testament to faith

Faith has always played a central role in the teachings of Oyedepo, who leads one of the largest Christian congregations in Africa.

He often speaks about the power of belief, encouraging his followers to trust God without hesitation. This testimony, he suggested, is proof that faith, when acted upon, yields



miraculous results.

The woman’s conviction echoes the biblical story of the woman with the issue of blood, who believed that touching Jesus’ garment would heal her. Like that story, this testimony highlights the idea that faith is not just about words but also about action.

Mixed reactions from the public

As news of the testimony spread, reactions poured in from different quarters. Many believers saw it as an inspiring example of faith in action, while sceptics questioned the logic behind the incident.

Some social media users praised the woman’s determination, calling it an act of bold belief. Others, however, dismissed it as superstition.

Religious scholars weighed in, noting that faith-based testimonies often challenge conventional thinking. “Faith defies logic,” one theologian remarked. “Miracles are, by nature, beyond human understanding.”

Oyedepo’s teachings on faith

Bishop Oyedepo has long preached that faith is the key to unlocking divine blessings. In his sermons, he often references biblical figures who experienced breakthroughs because they believed without doubt. His message remains clear—faith must be unwavering, active, and bold.

Over the years, many of his followers have shared testimonies of healing, financial breakthroughs, and miraculous interventions. The woman’s story, though unusual, aligns with the bishop’s core teachings: faith works when acted upon.

Conclusion

While some may question the logic behind the woman’s actions, her story serves as a striking example of faith in motion.

Whether one believes in miracles or not, the testimony has sparked discussions on the power of belief. For those who subscribe to Oyedepo’s teachings, this incident is yet another reminder that faith, when strong and unshaken, can bring about extraordinary results.

I will get married this year – Ruger

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi



Nigerian Afrobeats singer Michael Adebayo Olayinka, better known as Ruger, has revealed his plans to settle down this year.

The ‘Toma Toma’ hitmaker shared his thoughts on marriage, admitting that watching others get married has made him reflect on his own lifestyle.

Ruger, known for his energetic performances and signature eye patch, expressed his desire to leave behind his playboy ways. In a candid Snapchat post, he wrote, “Everybody is just getting married. Got me questioning myself—how long will I continue this playboy shiii? I’m settling down this year, period. I’ll soon be 30, tf.”

A change of heart in love

The singer’s statement took many fans by surprise. Ruger has previously been open about his love life, even claiming he could love multiple women equally. He once admitted that he falls in love easily, especially when showered with gifts and compliments.

His new stance on marriage suggests

a shift in perspective. While he has not revealed details about his future bride, his announcement has sparked discussions among fans and social media users. Some wonder if a special someone has influenced his decision. Others question if he will truly leave his past lifestyle behind.

Ruger’s career and personal life

Since his breakthrough in the music industry, Ruger has continued to rise in popularity. With chart-topping hits and a growing fanbase, he has cemented his place as one of Afrobeats’ brightest stars. However, his personal life has often been a subject of curiosity. His bold lyrics and confident persona have fueled speculation about his relationships.

Now, his declaration of commitment marks a new chapter. The singer’s followers are eager to see how this decision will shape his music and public image. Many celebrities have walked a similar path, transitioning from bachelorhood to family life while maintaining successful careers.

What’s next for Ruger?

For now, Ruger remains focused on his journey. Whether fans celebrate his decision or remain skeptical, one thing is certain—his upcoming marriage will be a hot topic in the entertainment world. As the wedding date approaches, the music industry will be watching closely to see how this new phase of his life unfolds.

Actress Ini Edo loses father, says “I’ve lost my greatest cheerleader”

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Veteran Nollywood actress, Iniobong Edo Ekim, popularly known as Ini Edo has announced the passing of her father.

The 42-year-old actress shared the heartbreaking news in an Instagram post on Monday February 24th, posting a photo of her late father alongside an emotional tribute.

In the post, the grieving movie star described her late father as her greatest cheerleader and first love.

She noted that her late father would forever remain in her heart, expressing the deep void his loss has left in her heart.

She wrote, “This post has been the



hardest to make... I have lost my greatest cheerleader... My Beloved Father, My first Love..The Heavens have gained an Angel. You will forever remain in my heart. Rest on King.”

Iniobong Edo Ekim is a veteran Nigerian actress from Akwa Ibom



State.

She began her acting career in 2000, and has featured in more than 200 movies since her debut.

In 2013, Ini Edo was a judge for the Miss Black Africa UK Pageant and De9jaSpirit Talent Hunt.

My fiancée’s mum separated us after she met a rich man – Ruggedman

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Nigerian rapper, Michael Stephens, better known as Ruggedman, has revealed that the mother of one of his lovers encouraged her to end their relationship after she met a rich man.

He also explained why he is yet to have a child after over 5 decades on earth, saying “I vowed not to have a child out of wedlock.”

The ‘Is Police Your Friend’ crooner made these known recently while featuring on the TVC programme ‘Your View’.



According to the 51-year-old, he made a decision not to have a child without walking down the aisle with his lover when he was much younger.

Speaking during the interview, Ruggedman said, “I am not married and do not have a child yet. When I was much

younger, I vowed never to have a child out of wedlock. Sometimes, I wonder whether I made the right or wrong decision. But still, it takes a lot from both parties. You have to do it with someone you really love.”

Sharing a bitter experience he had while planning to marry one of his lovers, he added, “I have met some ladies I thought I would end up with, but it didn’t work out. There was a particular lady I was supposed to marry, but a wealthy man came into the picture, and her mother separated us.”

Grammy-winning singer, Roberta Flack is dead

By Dave Oludare Oso

Roberta Flack, the Grammy-winning singer behind timeless hits like “Killing Me Softly With His Song” and “The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face,” passed away on Monday at the age of 88.

Her publicist confirmed the news but did not reveal the cause of death.

In recent years, Flack had been battling ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig’s disease, which was diagnosed in 2022.

“She died peacefully surrounded by her family,” the statement from the publicist said.

The classically trained musician with a tender voice produced a number of early classics of rhythm and blues that she frequently described as “scientific soul,” timeless works that blended meticulous practice with impeccable taste.

Her work was key to the “quiet storm” radio form of smooth, sensuous, slow jams that popularized R&B and influenced its later aesthetics in the 1980s and 1990s.

Born Roberta Cleopatra Flack in Black Mountain, North Carolina on February 10, 1937, the artist was raised in Arlington, Virginia, just outside Washington DC.

Her large, musical family had a penchant for gospel, and she took up the piano in her youth, which ultimately earned her a music scholarship to Washington’s Howard University at the tender age of 15.

She told Forbes in 2021 that her father



“found an old, smelly piano in a junkyard and restored it for me and painted it green.”

“This was my first piano and was the instrument in which I found my expression and inspiration as a young person.”

She was a regular playing clubs in Washington, where she was eventually discovered by jazz musician Les McCann.

Flack signed at Atlantic Records, launching a recording career at the relatively late age of 32. But her magnetic star grew overnight after Clint Eastwood used her romantic ballad “The First Time I Ever Saw Your Face” on the soundtrack of his 1971 movie “Play Misty for Me.”

The song earned her the Grammy for Record of the Year in 1972, a prize which she took home at the following ceremony as well for “Killing Me Softly With His Song,” thus becoming the first artist ever to win the honor two years in a row.

A remixed rendition of “Killing Me Softly” was released in 1996 by the

Fugees, with Lauryn Hill on lead vocals, bringing Flack a resurgence as it soared to top charts worldwide and scored another Grammy.

Flack also won a lifetime achievement honor from the Recording Academy in 2020.

Flack was a figure in the mid-20th century’s social movements, and was friends with both Reverend Jesse Jackson and activist Angela Davis. She sang at the funeral of baseball icon Jackie Robinson, MLB’s first Black player.

She has described growing up “at a time ‘Black’ was the most derogatory word you could use. I went through the civil rights movement. I learned, long after leaving Black Mountain, that being Black was a positive thing, as all of us did, the most positive thing we could be.”

“I did a lot of songs that were considered protest songs, a lot of folk music,” she said, “but I protested as a singer with a lot of love.”

Mohbad: 'I was accused of being Naira Marley's father' - Actor Jude Chukwuka

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Veteran Nigerian actor Jude Chukwuka has revealed that he was attacked in Lagos following the tragic death of singer Mohbad.

The assault happened after a group of men mistakenly assumed he was the father of Nigerian musician Naira Marley, who has been accused by some of having a connection to Mohbad's death.

In a recent interview with Seun Oloketuyi on YouTube, Chukwuka recounted the shocking incident. He explained that the attack occurred while he was on a movie set in Ikorodu, a district in Lagos State.

A case of mistaken identity

Chukwuka described the moment he was confronted. According to him, a group of men stormed the set, accusing his "son" of causing Mohbad's death. At first, he was confused by their aggression but soon realized they had mistaken him for the father of Naira Marley.

"I understood from the beginning that blaming Naira Marley for Mohbad's death was more of an attack on his personality," Chukwuka said. "But some people saw it as an opportunity to gain attention. They came at me, claiming that my son was responsible for Mohbad's death."

Despite his attempts to clarify the situation, the men remained aggressive. Chukwuka had to firmly state that he was not related to Naira Marley in any way.

"I told them plainly that I am not his father," he said. "I even explained that



my family is from Delta State, while Naira Marley comes from Abeokuta in Ogun State. We have no connection whatsoever."

Tensions rise over Mohbad's death

Mohbad's passing has triggered widespread outrage, with many seeking justice for the late singer. Accusations, speculation, and conspiracy theories have spread rapidly, leading to hostility against those perceived to be involved.

Naira Marley, a popular artist and record label owner, has faced significant backlash. Many believe he played a role in Mohbad's struggles before his death, though no concrete evidence has been presented.

Chukwuka believes that emotions surrounding the case are running high, causing some people to act irrationally. He condemned the attack against him and urged the public to wait for proper investigations rather than jumping to conclusions.

A plea for calm and custice

The veteran actor called for patience and understanding in the wake of Mohbad's tragic passing. He urged people to avoid taking the law into their own hands and to allow authorities to handle the case.

"This is a sensitive issue, and I understand that emotions are involved," he said. "But we must be careful not to attack innocent people based on false assumptions. Let the truth come out through proper investigations."

Mohbad's death remains a heated topic in Nigeria, with fans, celebrities, and authorities seeking answers. As investigations continue, Chukwuka's experience serves as a reminder of how misinformation and misplaced anger can lead to unintended consequences.

Authorities have yet to comment on the attack against Chukwuka, but concerns are growing about rising tensions and vigilante actions linked to the case.

Pastor Jerry Eze recounts how he survived plane crash

By **Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi**

Pastor Jerry Eze, founder of Streams of Joy and NSPPD convener, shares his testimony of a miraculous escape from a plane crash after a prayer conference.

He shared the harrowing experience during a Sunday church service, revealing how he and his team narrowly survived a near-fatal accident while returning from the NSPPD Prayer Conference in Lagos.

A troubling feeling before takeoff

The incident unfolded on Saturday morning after the event concluded. Pastor Jerry and his team boarded a flight back to Abuja, but something felt off. A deep sense of unease stirred within him, prompting him to request a meeting with the pilot.

“As soon as we got on the flight, before we even took off, I told the air hostess that I needed to see the pilot,” Pastor Jerry recalled. “She looked at me and asked, ‘Papa, are you uncomfortable?’ I told her, ‘My spirit is not at peace with the pilot.’”

Despite this strong feeling, exhaustion from the conference weighed on him. He decided to pray silently and continue with the journey.

Chaos in the sky

Everything seemed normal until the aircraft approached Abuja. Suddenly, chaos erupted. The plane made a hard landing, violently shaking the passengers. The impact was so severe



that many on board feared the worst.

“We suddenly heard a loud ‘Gboahhh!’” Pastor Jerry recounted. “The crew called it a hard landing. Then they said it was a crash landing. At that moment, we didn’t know what to think.”

A shocking discovery

When the passengers finally disembarked, they saw the damage firsthand. Every single tire of the plane had burst upon impact. It was a miracle that no one was injured.

The pastor expressed deep gratitude to God for sparing their lives. He urged his congregation to always listen to divine promptings and never ignore their inner convictions.

Faith and divine protection

“God saved us,” he declared. “It could have been worse. But mercy spoke for us.”

The testimony has since gone viral, with many of his followers praising God for the miraculous escape. Videos from the service, where he narrated the ordeal, have flooded social media.

A message of hope and caution

The incident has also sparked conversations about air travel safety and the importance of faith in difficult moments. Many believers see Pastor Jerry’s experience as a reminder that prayer and divine guidance can make all the difference in life-or-death situations.

Despite the terrifying event, Pastor Jerry Eze remains undeterred in his ministry. He continues to lead the NSPPD movement, which has gained international recognition for its daily online prayer sessions. His message remains clear: faith and prayer can move mountains—even in the face of danger.

Meeting with Macron 'important step' in ending Russia-Ukraine war – Trump

By Dave Oludare Oso

President Trump said Monday that his meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron marked an “important step” in ending the war between Russia and Ukraine, as Trump’s return to the White House has indicated a likely tipping point in American support — and a possible rift with France and other European allies.

Trump and Macron, who have a long-standing relationship after both came to office in 2017, held a bilateral meeting and news conference Monday afternoon, after participating in a Group of Seven leadership call earlier in the day to mark three years since Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. Macron is the first European leader to visit the White House since Mr. Trump returned to office last month.

“France is America’s oldest ally, our cherished partnership has been a force for freedom, prosperity and peace from the very beginning,” Trump said. “We’re now working on some very interesting developments, one in particular, as you know, the war between Russia and Ukraine.”

Citing France’s support during the American Revolution and during World War II, Trump said the purpose of the meeting was to “end another battle,” the war between Russia and Ukraine.

“The horrors of this gruesome and bloody war can scarcely be underestimated,”

Trump said, citing the Russians and Ukrainians who have “needlessly died.” “It’s time to end this bloodletting and restore peace, and I think we’re going to do



it.”

Trump called his meeting with Macron an “important step” toward achieving a permanent peace between Russia and Ukraine. He said it’s in the best interest of the U.S., Ukraine, Russia and Europe more broadly to “stop the killing now and bring the world to peace.” He added that he hopes his legacy will be of “a peacemaker and a unifier.”

President Trump meets with French President Emmanuel Macron in the Oval Office at the White House on Feb. 24, 2025, in Washington, D.C. LUDOVIC MARIN/AFP via Getty Images

Macron reiterated that France and the U.S., along with European leaders, are committed to reaching lasting peace between Ukraine and Russia, while outlining how Europe would take on a larger role.

Trump touted his relationship with Russian President Vladimir Putin, saying one of the first calls he made when he returned to the White House was to the Russian president,

and he said the White House has been working on “deals right now” to end the war through a ceasefire or a broader agreement.

“They want to end this war,” Trump said.

Macron said with the new U.S. administration, there’s “good reason for President Trump to reengage with President Putin,” while warning that Putin could violate a negotiated peace. Macron said “being strong and having deterrence capacities is the only way to be sure it will be respected,” saying the U.S. “has the capacity to do so.”

“A lot of my European colleagues are ready to be engaged, but we do need this American backup because this is part of the credibility of the security guarantees. And this is our collective deterrence capacity,” Macron said. “And I have the feeling that the president has this capacity.”

Trump said it’s “to the very much benefit of Russia to make a deal,” adding that he’s confident that Putin wants to make a deal.

Zelensky loses vote affirming his legitimacy as President

Leader Without a Mandate? Ukrainian Parliament Snubs Zelensky's Legitimacy

By New Daily Prime

A symbolic resolution affirming the legitimacy of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky failed to pass in the Ukrainian parliament (Verkhovna Rada) today, as political divisions deepen over ongoing war between Ukraine and Russia.

The resolution, which sought to reaffirm Zelensky's democratic mandate, garnered 218 votes—falling short of the 226 required for passage. Notably, 54 lawmakers abstained, including 38 members from Zelensky's own Servant of the People party, raising concerns about the president's ability to maintain a parliamentary majority.

The resolution stated:

“The Verkhovna Rada once again recalls that President Volodymyr Zelensky was elected in free, transparent, democratic elections. His mandate is not called into question by the Ukrainian people or the parliament.”

It also cited Article 108 of the Ukrainian Constitution, which allows a sitting president to remain in office until a new one is elected. However, with martial law still in effect due to the war, elections cannot be scheduled, fuelling criticism of Zelensky's extended rule.

Internationally, Zelensky's legitimacy has come under renewed attack from both Russia and, more recently, the United States. Last week, President Donald Trump labeled Zelensky a “dictator” for not holding elections, echoing Kremlin rhetoric that questions Ukraine's democratic process.



Read Also: No weak deal with Putin at Ukraine's expense, says Macron

Read Also: Europe, US disagree on Ukraine strategy at G7 and UN

Domestically, the failure to pass the resolution signals growing instability within Zelensky's parliamentary coalition. While he has previously relied on shifting majorities to push legislation, the lack of solid parliamentary backing could jeopardize key international agreements, such as a potential peace treaty with Russia and proposed raw materials deal with the U.S.

Without parliamentary ratification, these agreements cannot be finalized, potentially weakening Ukraine's position in international negotiations.

In a stunning diplomatic shift, the United States voted against a UN General Assembly resolution condemning Russia's war against Ukraine, aligning with Russia on the third anniversary of Moscow's full-scale invasion.

The European-backed resolution, which

called for an end to hostilities and reaffirmed Ukraine's territorial integrity, passed with 93 votes in favour. However, Washington introduced a competing resolution, omitting references to Russia as the aggressor and instead calling for a “swift end to the conflict” and a “lasting peace between Ukraine and Russia.”

“A path to peace is possible,” said Dorothy Shea, U.S. Ambassador to the UN, defending Washington's decision to oppose Ukraine's resolution.

“That is why the United States cannot support Ukraine's resolution and instead urges a strong commitment to ending the war.”

The U.S. is now expected to introduce its resolution at the UN Security Council, further escalating tensions between Washington and its European allies.

With the Ukrainian parliament struggling to unite behind Zelensky, and U.S. support for Kyiv shifting under the Trump administration, Ukraine faces uncertain political and diplomatic terrain. And Russia may exploit these divisions to push for a favorable settlement.

Donald Trump choose Right-Wing Podcaster as New FBI Deputy

By Olamilekan Botti

President Donald Trump has appointed Dan Bongino, a prominent right-wing commentator and podcaster, as the deputy director of the FBI.

Bongino, known for his vocal support of Trump and his promotion of various conspiracy theories surrounding the 2020 election and the January 6 Capitol attack, will serve under Kash Patel, who was recently sworn in as the agency's ninth director.

Bongino's rise to this influential position is notable, especially given his background as a former Secret Service agent and his history of engaging audiences through his widely-followed podcast, "The Dan Bongino Show."

His podcast has become a platform for discussing controversial topics, including allegations regarding the FBI's role in the Capitol riots. Media analysts have pointed out that Bongino, alongside other influential figures like Joe Rogan, played a critical role in bolstering Trump's political ascent during the previous election cycle.

Throughout his career, Bongino has been a fierce advocate for Trump, often appearing on Fox News to promote the president's agenda while framing his political opponents — especially Democrats — as inept.

He has been particularly vocal in criticizing President Joe Biden, whom he has labeled "the worst president in US history." Additionally, Bongino has not shied



away from challenging the legitimacy of the 2020 election results, which has further solidified his standing within far-right circles.

The announcement of Bongino's appointment was made by Trump on Sunday night, who praised him as a man of "incredible love and passion for our Country."

Trump noted that Bongino was prepared to give up his podcast to take on this new role, underscoring the significance of the appointment. Bongino expressed his gratitude on social media, thanking Trump, Attorney General Pam Bondi, and Director Patel for their support.

Notably, Bongino's appointment does not require Senate confirmation, which has raised concerns about the politicization of the FBI. Traditionally, the role of deputy director has been filled by seasoned

career agents rather than political allies, a practice that has aimed to maintain the agency's integrity and independence.

Critics worry that Trump's influence over the FBI could lead to increased targeting of political adversaries.

Bongino's previous experience includes a tenure with the New York Police Department and protective details for both President George W. Bush and President Barack Obama, alongside three unsuccessful attempts to secure a seat in Congress.

His appointment is likely to amplify fears among Democrats about the potential for political retribution within the federal law enforcement agency, marking a significant shift in how such positions are filled and the implications they carry for the future of American governance.

Europe, US disagree on Ukraine strategy at G7 and UN

By **Olamilekan Botti**

The United States and Europe are locked in tense negotiations at the United Nations and G7 over the question of accountability for Russia's ongoing war against Ukraine. This conflict has been exacerbated by a notable shift in stance from former President Donald Trump, which threatens to fracture the longstanding unity among Western nations.

This week, the Trump administration and the European Union have submitted competing resolutions at both the UN Security Council and the General Assembly. As G7 diplomats engaged in discussions over the weekend, a key point of contention emerged: whether a forthcoming joint statement from the wealthy nations would explicitly refer to Russia's "aggression" against Ukraine.

European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen and Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy at a summit in Kyiv on Monday, the third anniversary of the full-scale Russian invasion.

Officials have indicated that, without a last-minute compromise, the U.S. could align itself with Russia and China, thus undermining a Western-supported initiative aimed at showing solidarity with Ukraine. EU chief diplomat Kaja Kallas expressed her concerns, stating, "If we look at the messages coming from the United States, it is clear that the Russian narrative is very strongly represented."

Trump's recent push for a swift resolution to the conflict, along with his initiation of bilateral peace talks with Russia and his increasingly contentious exchanges with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, have disrupted three years of unified Western denunciations of Moscow's invasion, which began in February 2022.



In a symbolic move to mark the third anniversary of the war, Ukraine, alongside the EU, has drafted a UN resolution condemning Russia's invasion. This resolution is slated for a vote among the General Assembly's 193 member states on Monday afternoon.

However, sources reveal that the U.S. has called for the withdrawal of this resolution. Instead, Washington is advocating for its own text that equates the actions of Ukraine and Russia, expressing sorrow over "the tragic loss of life across the Russian Federation-Ukraine conflict." This proposed wording has been met with strong opposition from European officials, who characterize it as part of a troubling shift in U.S. policy.

France, with backing from its European allies, has suggested an amendment to the U.S. resolution, asserting the need to acknowledge "Russia's invasion of Ukraine" and reaffirming Ukraine's "sovereignty, independence, unity, and territorial integrity." Should this amendment be disregarded, a significant number of European nations may opt not to support the resolution, although some may diverge from the EU's collective

stance to back the U.S.

As the Security Council convenes later today, European representatives are expected to reintroduce their amendment, but they face the possibility of a veto from Russia and China. The situation is further complicated for France and the UK, both permanent members of the council, as they must decide between vetoing the U.S. resolution or abstaining, potentially allowing it to pass.

Meanwhile, the G7 leaders held a virtual meeting on Ukraine, where a source reported an "agreement in principle" on a compromise text. However, Trump's insistence on tying this agreement to the UN resolutions has created additional friction. Last week, the U.S. declined to support a G7 statement that categorized the conflict as "Russian aggression." U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth reiterated this stance over the weekend, stating that the situation remains "very complicated."

As the diplomatic battle unfolds, the implications for Western unity and the future of Ukraine remain uncertain, underscoring the complexities of international relations in a time of crisis.

Trump open to deals with Russia, says Ukraine war could end within weeks

By New Daily Prime

President Donald Trump has indicated that the United States is open to forging economic agreements with Russia, confirming that recent talks with Moscow over ending the Ukraine war have been “very good.”

Speaking alongside French President Emmanuel Macron in the Oval Office, Trump downplayed tensions with Russia and suggested that Washington could engage in economic development deals in exchange for resolving the ongoing conflict in Ukraine.

“A lot of progress has been made. We’ve had some very good talks with Russia,” Trump told reporters. “Just as we’re doing with Ukraine, we could do some economic development in terms of Russia and getting things that we want.”

The comments come amid a dramatic shift in U.S. policy, following Washington’s vote against a UN General Assembly resolution condemning Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

Macron Supports European Peacekeeping Force, Trump Claims Putin Won’t Object

Trump further suggested that Russian President Vladimir Putin would not oppose a European peacekeeping force in Ukraine once hostilities conclude.

“He has no problem with it,” Trump



said, referring to Putin’s stance on a potential European-led mission.

Macron, however, took a firmer stance, stating:

“Europeans are ready to support Ukraine in various ways, supporting its military, and are ready to be present to make sure the peace lasts.”

Despite European efforts to maintain pressure on Moscow, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution condemning Russia’s invasion, backed by Kyiv and EU nations—without U.S. support.

The U.S. not only voted against the resolution but actively urged other nations to oppose it, signaling a major break from previous Western unity.

Trump’s Shift on Ukraine Stuns European Allies

Trump’s rapid policy shift on Ukraine

has shaken decades of transatlantic cooperation, blindsiding European allies who fear that a U.S.-Russia bilateral deal could sideline both Kyiv and Europe from the negotiating table.

G7 leaders failed to agree on a joint statement condemning Russia’s war on Ukraine on the third anniversary of Putin’s invasion.

The Trump administration introduced its own UN resolution but later abstained from voting on it after key amendments referenced Russia’s invasion.

These diplomatic reversals have led to concerns that Trump’s approach may weaken NATO solidarity and fracture the Western alliance that has underpinned European security for the past 80 years.

With Trump pushing for a rapid peace deal with Moscow, all eyes are on how this shift will reshape global geopolitics.

Labour MP sentenced to Jail for street assault

By Olamilekan Botti

Mike Amesbury, the former Labour Member of Parliament for Runcorn and Helsby, received a ten-week jail sentence for assaulting a man during a drunken altercation in the street. Deputy Chief Magistrate Tan Ikram delivered the ruling at Chester Magistrates' Court. He described the incident as a "drunken brawl" that stopped only when bystanders intervened.

Mike Amesbury was jailed for 10 weeks at Chester magistrates' court. Amesbury, 55, pleaded guilty to assaulting 45-year-old Paul Fellows on Main Street in Frodsham, Cheshire, in the early hours of October 26. Judge Ikram noted that Mr. Fellows showed no aggression and did not retaliate against Amesbury. The judge emphasized that the assault was unprovoked.

Judge Ikram explained that the immediate custodial sentence served both as punishment and deterrence. He stated that Amesbury's drunken state could not excuse his actions. As an elected representative, he should expect robust challenges from constituents. The judge condemned the former MP's behavior, saying, "You continued the attack while the victim was on the ground. This incident may not have ended if bystanders hadn't intervened."

After the verdict, two dock officers escorted Amesbury out of the courtroom. He appeared not to have brought any personal belongings, as



he was set to go directly to HMP Altcourse in Liverpool. Following his removal, Amesbury's attorney, Richard Derby, requested the judge to reconsider bail. However, Judge Ikram returned to the court and stated, "Application refused."

The court heard details of the events leading to the assault. Amesbury had been drinking before arriving at a taxi rank. There, he encountered Mr. Fellows, who approached him to discuss a local bridge closure. Eyewitness footage captured Amesbury punching Mr. Fellows in the head, knocking him to the ground. Despite being vulnerable, Amesbury followed and struck him at least five more times. He taunted Mr. Fellows, saying, "You won't threaten your MP again, will you?"

This incident has sparked

considerable backlash. Many view it as unacceptable behavior for an elected official. Constituents have expressed disappointment, noting that MPs should set a positive example. The fallout from this case may resonate within political circles, raising questions about accountability and the expected conduct of public figures.

As news of Amesbury's sentencing spreads, it reminds us of the consequences of unchecked aggression. It highlights the importance of maintaining decorum, especially among those in public service. The case has also reignited discussions about the impact of alcohol on behavior and the responsibilities of elected officials to uphold the law.

No weak deal with Putin at Ukraine's expense, says Macron

By New Daily Prime

French President Emmanuel Macron arrived at the White House today to present a European-backed peace plan for Ukraine, as concerns mount over Donald Trump's shifting stance on the war and his recent engagements with Moscow.

During a 90-minute session with Trump, Macron pushed for a clear Western strategy to counter Russian aggression, emphasizing that Ukraine's sovereignty must be upheld. His proposal, described as a "call to action" against Russian influence, could include European military support in Kyiv to reinforce Ukrainian defences.

Macron's visit comes ahead of a similar trip by UK Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, as both European leaders seek to secure military commitments for Ukraine and prevent Trump from rushing into a ceasefire deal with Vladimir Putin.



Over the weekend, Trump hinted that an agreement on Ukraine was imminent, fuelling speculation about what terms he is considering. His administration is reportedly negotiating a revenue-sharing deal with Ukraine to recoup part of the U.S. military aid sent under the Biden administration.

However, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy rejected U.S. demands for \$500 billion in mineral wealth as repayment for war aid, arguing that the actual support received from Washington falls far short of that amount and lacks concrete security guarantees.

Macron, leveraging his previous relationship with Trump, has warned against striking a bad deal with Russia, arguing that any rushed agreement could lead to Ukraine's capitulation and embolden U.S. adversaries such as China and Iran.

The French leader also participated in a G7 video conference from the Oval Office, underscoring Europe's push to remain central in shaping Ukraine's future.

COLD BLOODED: 18-yr-old American mother throws newborn from Paris hotel window

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

A newborn baby died in Paris, the French capital on Monday after his 18-year-old American mother threw him out a hotel window, with umbilical cord still attached,

According to French prosecutors and a police source, she threw the infant from the second-floor window of a hotel in the 20th arrondissement in eastern Paris, the prosecutor's office said.

"The newborn was given emergency care but did not survive," prosecutors said.

The baby died at 7:45 am (0645 GMT) at the Robert Debre hospital, a police source told AFP.

Police had been alerted after an infant



wrapped in a cloth, with its umbilical cord still attached, had been discovered in front of the hotel, the police source said.

The mother, an 18-year-old American student, had given birth in a room on the second floor of the hotel and then thrown her child out of the window, according to the source.

French officials said they had launched a murder investigation, adding that the young woman — who was "part of a group of young adults travelling in Europe" — had been taken into custody.

The officials added that the incident was being looked into as a possible "case of pregnancy denial."

Pregnancy denial can be described as a case of a mother either not being aware of or not being able to accept her pregnancy.

The mother was taken to hospital where she was to undergo treatment following her delivery, the prosecutor's office

Merz champions debt brake reform to overcome blocking minority

By Olamilekan Botti

Friedrich Merz has indicated he is considering leveraging the current parliament to ease the nation's stringent limits on public borrowing, following Sunday's election results that produced a minority coalition capable of obstructing any proposed measures.

Merz remarks come in the wake of a tightly contested election that has left the German Bundestag with a fragmented representation. The implications of this scenario are profound, particularly as the newly formed minority coalition, which includes various parties with differing agendas, poses challenges to any sweeping reforms, especially those related to fiscal policy and public finance.

Speaking to reporters on Monday, Merz emphasized that the political landscape, while complex, does not preclude action on pressing issues. He pointed out that parties could still take meaningful steps regarding the so-called debt brake within the existing legislature, which is in session until March 24.

This debt brake, a constitutional rule aimed at enforcing strict limits on public borrowing, has been a focal point of economic policy debates in Germany. Critics argue that it constrains the government's ability to invest in crucial areas such as infrastructure, education, and climate change initiatives.

Election winner Friedrich Merz "The German Bundestag has the capacity to make decisions at any time without interruption, even after elections," Merz stated, asserting his belief in the parliament's ongoing functionality despite the electoral outcome. His confidence reflects a commitment to governance that prioritizes economic stability and responsiveness to current challenges.



Merz's strategy involves reaching out to other political factions to foster dialogue around possible adjustments to the debt brake. "I will engage in discussions with the parties that retain their mandates in the German Bundestag,"

he added, referencing the Social Democrats (SPD), the Greens, and the Free Democratic Party (FDP). This approach indicates a willingness to collaborate across party lines, a crucial factor in navigating the complexities of a minority government.

The prospect of reforming the debt brake raises questions about fiscal responsibility and the balance between maintaining budgetary discipline and addressing urgent socio-economic needs. Advocates for reform argue that loosening these limits could provide the necessary flexibility to invest in critical areas that support long-term growth and societal well-being. On the other hand, opponents caution against any measures that could lead to excessive borrowing and jeopardize financial stability.

As Merz engages in discussions with other parties, the response from the SPD, Greens, and FDP will be pivotal. Each party has its own priorities and concerns, which could either facilitate or hinder potential reforms. The SPD, traditionally focused on social welfare programs, may be inclined to support measures that promote economic equity, while the Greens are likely to emphasize sustainability and environmental considerations. The FDP, known for its pro-business stance, may advocate for policies that encourage investment and innovation.

The upcoming weeks will be crucial as Merz seeks to navigate this political landscape. His ability to forge alliances and build consensus will determine the feasibility of any proposed changes to the debt brake. Moreover, public sentiment regarding fiscal policy will play a significant role in shaping the discourse. Citizens are increasingly aware of the implications of government borrowing on their lives, particularly in the context of rising living costs and economic uncertainty.

Nigerian footballer, Abubakar Lawal falls to death in Uganda

By Dave Oludare Oso



Ugandan police said Monday they were investigating the death of Nigerian footballer, Abubakar Lawal who fell from a shopping mall balcony in Kampala.

The 29-year-old striker played for local premiership club, Vipers.

He fell from the third floor of Voicemall Shopping Arcade early on Monday, police said in a statement.

He had been visiting a Tanzanian friend staying in one of the residential apartments that form part of the mall.

The friend told police she had left him alone shortly before the fall.

“Authorities are retrieving CCTV footage and conducting thorough interrogations to establish the exact circumstances surrounding the incident,” police said.

The Vipers Sports Club said in

a statement: “We are deeply saddened to announce the sudden and untimely passing of our beloved player, Abubakar Lawal, who left us this morning.

“Our thoughts and prayers are with Lawal’s family, club fans, friends and loved ones during this difficult time,” it added.

Lawal had been the team’s leading striker since joining the club in July 2022 after two years with AS Kigali in Rwanda.