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Nigerian lawmakers order NCC to block porn websites

By New Daily Prime



The Nigerian House of Representatives has ordered the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) to block all pornographic websites in the country. Lawmakers want the NCC to make sure that internet service providers stop access to these websites immediately.

The motion was brought forward by Dalhatu Tafoki, a lawmaker from Katsina State and a member of the All Progressives Congress (APC). He said that online pornography is a serious problem and that Nigeria has not done enough to stop it.

“Nigeria is a religious country where most people do not support nudity and indecent content,” Tafoki said

while presenting his motion. He also pointed out that many countries in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East have already banned pornography.

Tafoki also mentioned that psychologists and sociologists have warned about the dangers of pornography. He said that watching porn could lead to addiction, encourage bad behavior, and increase social problems like cheating and prostitution.

“Experts around the world have warned about the negative effects of watching porn, including mental and social problems,” he added.

After Tafoki presented his motion, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Tajudeen Abbas,

asked lawmakers to vote. A majority of them supported the decision.

The House has now directed the NCC to make sure all internet providers block access to pornographic websites. The lawmakers also said the NCC should fine any internet company that does not follow this rule.

This decision may lead to debates among different groups, including digital rights activists, internet service providers, and religious leaders. Many will be watching to see how Nigeria handles this new rule on internet content.

The NCC has not yet said how it will put this order into action.

THE NEW DAILY PRIME RATE CARD

PUBLIC NOTICE COLOUR

PRODUCT COLOUR

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SIZE	TOTAL RATE
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10X5	255,238.00
10X4	206,890.50
10X3	179,608.00
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9X5	225,738.00
9X4	193,500.00
9X3	166,223.50
8X6	225,368.50
8X3	106,934.50
7X4	180,173.50
6X4	100,434.50
6X3	82,750.00
6X2	52,499.50
5X6	123,749.50
5X5	110,000.00
5X4	76,833.00
5X3	66,875.00
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PHOTO NEWS (4X4)	53,333.30	4,250.00	57,583.30
PRESS RELEASE (4X4)	30,000.00	2,250.00	32,250.00
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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 appoints new leaders for NABTEB, UBEC

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

President Bola Tinubu has made key appointments, appointing Dr. Mohammed Aminu as the Registrar and Chief Executive Officer of the National Business and Technical Examinations Board (NABTEB).

Dr. Aminu, who holds a Ph.D. in Automobile Technology and a Master's degree in Procurement and Supply Chain Management, brings a wealth of experience to the role.

The President's spokesperson, Bayo Onanuga, confirmed the appointment in a statement released on Tuesday, March 11.

With 28 years of professional experience spanning teaching, administration, research, and policy development, Dr. Aminu is well-equipped to lead NABTEB.

Prior to this appointment, he served as the Director of Procurement at the National Agency for Science and Engineering Infrastructure (NASeni).

In his new role, President Tinubu has encouraged Dr. Aminu to utilise his extensive experience to bring about transformational leadership within NABTEB.

The President stressed the importance of the agency in



assessing and certifying skilled human resources, which are crucial for Nigeria's industrial growth.

In addition to Dr. Aminu's appointment, President Tinubu also announced the appointment of Mr. Idris Olorunnimbe as Chairman of the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) Board.

Mr. Olorunnimbe, a renowned leader in youth empowerment and education, has spent years driving innovative initiatives in the fields of education, entertainment, and sports.

As the founder and Group CEO of The Temple Company, established in 2016, he has led transformative programmes aimed at improving the lives of young people across the country.

Furthermore, Mr. Rasaq Olajuwon has been named UBEC's Deputy Executive

Secretary (Technical), while Mr. Tunde Ajibulu will serve as Deputy Executive Secretary (Services).

Mr. Olajuwon previously served as the Director of Administration and Human Resources at the Lagos State Infrastructure Maintenance and Regulatory Agency.

President Tinubu has called on the newly appointed UBEC leaders to focus on strengthening human capital and improving service delivery within the education sector.

Their efforts, he said, should contribute to educational reforms and ensure better access to quality basic education across Nigeria.

These appointments reflect President Tinubu's commitment to driving transformative leadership in key sectors, aiming to improve Nigeria's industrial and educational development.

Reps ask CBN to halt ATM charges hike

By Friday Omosola



The House of Representatives has urged the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to suspend its recent policy increasing charges on Automated Teller Machine (ATM) transactions and discontinuing free withdrawals for customers using ATMs of other banks.

This resolution followed a motion of urgent public importance sponsored by lawmaker Marcus Onobun, who raised concerns over a CBN directive implementing the changes.

Lawmakers expressed fears that the new policy would place additional financial strain on Nigerians and called for its

suspension pending consultations with the relevant House committees on banking, finance, and financial institutions.

On February 10, 2025, the CBN announced that customers using ATMs of banks other than their own would now incur charges, eliminating the existing three free withdrawals per month for interbank transactions, as previously stipulated under Section 10.6.2 of the CBN's guidelines.

According to the new directive, which takes effect on March 1, 2025, customers withdrawing money from ATMs of other banks will now pay ₦100 per ₦20,000.

Additionally, for withdrawals

from off-site ATMs—those located in public spaces like malls and restaurants—a surcharge of up to ₦500 per ₦20,000 will be applied, alongside the standard ₦100 fee.

The CBN justified the policy change, citing rising operational costs and the need to enhance ATM service efficiency nationwide.

It stated that the adjustments would encourage wider ATM deployment and ensure fair pricing for financial services.

Despite mounting criticism, the apex bank maintains that the revised charges serve the interests of both customers and financial institutions.

Entrepreneurs decry telecom tariff hike, declining network service

By Friday Omosola and Helen Okechukwu

Entrepreneurs operating in Nigeria whose businesses depend on data for sustainability and profitability have raised the alarm over declining productivity caused by the recent hike in data costs, as well as unreliable network service.

In January this year, in a statement, the Nigerian Communications Commission's (NCC) Director of Public Affairs, Reuben Muoka, announced a 50% tariff increase for telecom call and data services.

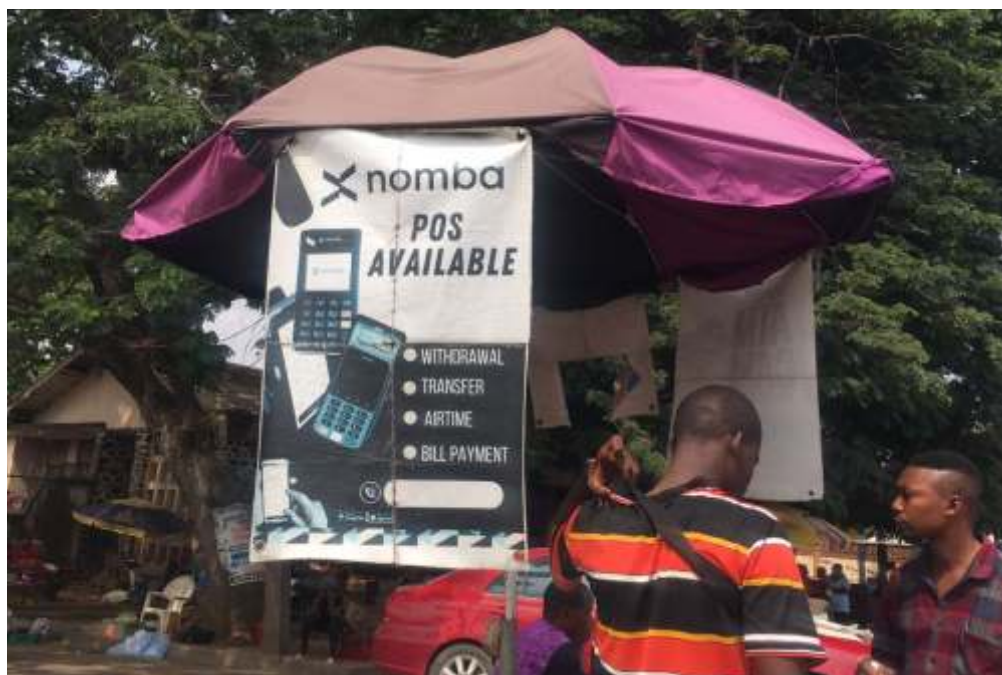
According to NCC, the tariff increase was the first since 2013 and aligned with Section 108 of the Nigerian Communications Act, 2003 (NCA).

Since the approval of higher data and airtime charges for telecom operators, Nigerians—including entrepreneurs who rely on social media for their businesses—have borne the brunt of the price hike.

There is also ample evidence that data and call tariffs have risen by 200%. Under the revised pricing, MTN's 1.8GB monthly plan now costs ₦1,500, replacing the previous 1.5GB plan, which was priced at ₦1,000. Similarly, the 20GB plan has risen from ₦5,500 to ₦7,500.

In response to the backlash, MTN tendered an apology to its subscribers for the 200 per cent increase in the price of its 15GB data plan. However, despite the NCC approving a 50 per cent tariff review for telecom operators, the price hike was not reversed.

Beyond MTN, other network providers, including GLO, Airtel, and others also



increased their data and call tariffs.

Meanwhile, entrepreneurs who spoke with The New Daily Prime disclosed how rising costs and deteriorating network quality have affected their service delivery to clients and potential customers.

Anthony Orji, a car dealer in Rivers State, recounted the challenges he has continued to face since the tariff hike.

“Uploading content now is a struggle. Before, I used to upload more than 30 pictures of cars on my WhatsApp status for potential customers. Now, I can only upload three, because of the high cost of data,” he said, frustration palpable evident in his voice. “I don’t want to upload content and then run out of data unexpectedly, leading to additional expenses.”

He further explained that due to the high costs of data, he switched from MTN to Glo. “MTN’s tariffs have doubled compared to what we used to pay before,” he added.

Similarly, Favour Brown, a clothing vendor, noted that the data price hike has affected her customer reach.

“I don’t get as many views on my status as I used to, because many of my clients are complaining about the high cost of data. It has limited their ability to buy data regularly,” she lamented. “Despite this, I have managed to keep my service prices stable for now, even with the economic difficulties we’re facing in Nigeria.”

Alternatives options

In Niger State, Samson Chukwu, a realtor, has been struggling with poor network service alongside the increasing cost of data. What was once a smooth process of connecting with clients through social media and messaging platforms has become a daily frustration.

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“Sometimes you buy data, and it doesn’t work,” he said. “I used to get 10GB of data for a month at N800 under a special plan in MTN data tariff. Now, that same thing is not available anymore.”

The unreliable service has had a direct impact on his business. Vital client messages are often delayed, even when he is online.

“Clients now have to call me before I even realize that messages have been sent,” he explained. Due to the inefficiency of mainstream telecom providers, he and many others in his area have turned to Starlink, despite its high cost.

To manage expenses, a growing trend has emerged—those without personal Starlink setups contribute money to those who own the system to share the connection.

“This is what is trending now in my area. Any young person here is using Starlink in one way or another,” he noted.

However, the high cost of Starlink remains a concern. “Last year, I was interested in getting a fairly used Starlink setup for N450,000. But instead, I decided to contribute to someone else’s subscription. If network providers don’t improve their services, many people will completely abandon them for Starlink,” he warned.

Adjustment to new realities

This migration to Starlink and other

internet providers is not limited to individuals. Chibuchi Onyemauche, who runs a tech company specializing in business registration, design, and social media management, highlighted how the tariff hike has negatively impacted operational costs.

With Starlink’s rapid adoption, the telecom landscape in Nigeria is changing.

“Just a year ago, only 1% of my community used Starlink,” Samson stated. “Now, it’s over 70-80%. Even those who don’t own a Starlink device are connected to someone else’s network. In five to ten years, traditional telecom companies might lose most of their data customers to Starlink.”

While Starlink offers a promising alternative, its high cost remains a barrier for many Nigerians. If local telecom providers fail to improve service quality and adjust pricing structures, the migration to Starlink may become a nationwide trend, redefining digital connectivity in Nigeria.

“The increase hasn’t affected our ability to render quality services,” Chibuchi stated. “But it has significantly impacted our subscription budget. We now spend 15-33% more than we used to on data.”

Despite the cost hike, Chibuchi’s company has maintained its pricing model without overburdening customers. However, they have had

to make adjustments.

“Previously, our free Wi-Fi was open to unlimited users. Now, we’ve had to restrict access to a certain number of people per day. Once the limit is reached, there’s no additional access,” he explained.

Unlike Samson, Chibuchi is less concerned about government intervention. “Our organization has always found ways to navigate challenges,” he said. However, he acknowledged that if tariffs continue to rise, businesses will eventually have to increase service charges, affecting customers.

Call for govt’s intervention

For many Nigerians, frustration goes beyond mere inconvenience. Samson believes that the government should regulate telecom providers to ensure fair pricing and better service delivery.

“If you go to other African countries, they have better networks. Here in Nigeria, these companies are taking us for granted. If the government impose policies to regulate these frequent price hikes, it would help a lot,” he suggested.

For Orji and other young entrepreneurs, their collective appeal is for the government to intervene—making internet services both affordable and reliable, particularly for small business owners who depend on it for their livelihood.

Natasha takes case against Akpabio to UN, IPU

By Friday Omosola

The controversy surrounding Kogi Central Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan's suspension from the Senate and her allegations against Senate President Godswill Akpabio has now reached the international stage.

On Tuesday, the embattled Kogi lawmaker took her grievance to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Women in Parliament Session at the United Nations headquarters in New York, seeking global intervention.

Addressing the session, she decried what she described as an unjust and illegal suspension from the Nigerian Senate.

"I was suspended illegally because I submitted a petition for sexual harassment against the President of the Nigerian Senate, Senator Godswill Akpabio. I thought that by submitting the petition, he would recuse himself and both of us would submit ourselves to the Committee on Ethics, Privileges, and Public Petition for a fair, transparent investigation. But unfortunately, I was silenced and I was suspended," she told the gathering.

"That means I'm here illegally, but I have no other place to go but to come here and speak to you because this is a bigger picture. This is a bigger picture. It depicts the crisis of women's political representation. My suspension is not just about me. It's about the systemic exclusion of women from political leadership in Nigeria," the Kogi lawmaker added.



She called on international democratic bodies to intervene in what she perceived as a violation of her rights.

Following her speech, Akpoti-Uduaghan raised concerns about her safety, alleging that influential figures in Nigeria might attempt to detain her in New York for speaking out at the global event.

Last week, the Senate suspended the lawmaker in a move that has continued to generate debates across the country.

She had initially submitted a petition to the Senate accusing Akpabio of sexual harassment. But the lawmakers threw it out before suspending her even after submitting another petition.

Senator Natasha vowed to continue the fight against "injustice". But in the wake of the suspension, Akpabio denied the accusations and

maintained he has never assaulted women.

Her altercation with the Senate president started on February 20, 2025, after her seat was changed during plenary.

That is not the first time both individuals had issues. In July 2024, Akpabio had while trying to correct her for misconduct told her to follow the rules and that the Senate is not a nightclub where anybody can talk anyhow. The Akwa Ibom lawmaker, however, later apologised to her for the remark.



NELFUND highlights gender gap in loan applications

By **Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye**

The Nigerian Education Loan Fund (NELFUND) has expressed concern over the low number of female students accessing its educational loans compared to their male counterparts.

The revelation was made on Monday, March 10, during a ceremony marking the International Women's Day in Abuja.

Speaking at the event, NELFUND's Managing Director, Akintunde Sawyerr, represented by Oluwatosin Sanusi, Head of Investments and Funds Management, highlighted that only one in five loan applicants is female—a ratio that he described as “not encouraging.”

“The NELFUND initiative is designed to assist students in tertiary institutions with loans to pay their fees and cater to their general welfare. We also have a component that focuses on skill acquisition, which covers both educational fees and equipment for entrepreneurship training. However, we have seen a significant gender gap in uptake, with just one female applicant for every four male applicants.” Sawyerr explained.

Currently, the ratio of male to female applicants stands at 4:1, which has raised concerns within the Fund.

Despite efforts to make the initiative accessible, Sawyerr acknowledged that fewer women were taking advantage of the opportunity.

“While the initiative includes a monthly stipend for those engaging in skills training, the number of women benefiting from this scheme remains disappointing. This is an area we are looking to address by collaborating with female stakeholders and raising awareness about the importance of utilising these opportunities.” he said.



The NELFUND initiative is not only aimed at aiding students in federal and state-owned universities and polytechnics, but also includes a loan programme for skill acquisition.

Sawyerr reiterated that the programme's sustainability depends on timely loan repayments after graduation, which would allow the scheme to expand and benefit more students in the future.

“The future of this programme relies on the repayment of loans by graduates once they are employed. This repayment will help extend the reach of the initiative and ensure that more students can access the benefits,” he said.

In addition to NELFUND's efforts, the Minister of State for Education, Dr Suwaiba Ahmed, praised the initiative for its potential to support students facing financial challenges.

Dr Ahmed, who was represented by her Special Assistant on Education and Quality Assurance, Dr Mufida Hussain, encouraged students to make use of the funds to ensure their studies are not interrupted due to financial constraints.

“The girl-child must optimise every opportunity to break barriers and achieve her aspirations. Achieving gender equity requires bold and decisive action, and we must not delay in providing these opportunities,” Dr Ahmed said.

She also emphasised the federal government's commitment to gender equity, highlighting investments in initiatives that aim for a balanced representation of men and women in education and leadership roles.

The National President of the Female Students of Nigeria, Ms Choice Enebeli, also commended NELFUND for its efforts in advocating for greater female participation in the education loan programme.

Enebeli stressed the importance of equal access to education, healthcare, economic opportunities, and leadership positions for women and girls.

“Women's rights are human rights, and we must continue to strive for a world where women and girls are not limited by their gender. I will lead a campaign to raise awareness of the educational loan opportunities available to female students across the country.” she said.

Sanwo-Olu praises public-private partnership for safe building

By **Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye**

Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu, has commended the pivotal role of public-private collaboration in ensuring safer buildings across the state, as he officially launched the Certified Accreditors' Programme on Monday.

The event, held at the White Stone Event Centre in Ikeja, marks a significant initiative by the Lagos State Building Control Agency (LASBCA) to enhance building safety and regulatory standards.

In his keynote address, Governor Sanwo-Olu highlighted the importance of the programme in promoting safer, more sustainable buildings in Lagos, particularly in light of the tragic events of the Ikoyi building collapse in November 2021, which shook the city and its residents.

"You may recall the tragic events of November 2021 when we faced the heartbreaking collapse of a 21-storey building in Ikoyi. This incident was a stark reminder of the challenges we face in ensuring safety within our rapidly growing urban landscape," Sanwo-Olu said.

"It compelled us to take decisive action, leading to the establishment of a panel that investigated the causes of this tragedy and provided recommendations for reform."

The Governor stressed that the Certified Accreditors' Programme is not merely a regulatory initiative but a transformative measure that would directly impact the socio-economic well-being of Lagosians.

He emphasised the importance of fostering collaboration between the public and private sectors in the built environment to promote safety and



economic growth.

"The primary objective of this programme is to ensure the safety of our buildings. By effectively reducing the risk of building collapses, we not only protect lives and property but also foster a sense of security that is vital for any thriving community," he explained.

Sanwo-Olu also highlighted the programme's potential to attract investment and stimulate the local economy, noting that a safer built environment would lead to greater confidence among investors and residents alike.

The Governor urged all stakeholders—developers, homeowners, architects, engineers, and citizens—to join forces in upholding the highest standards of integrity and compliance with safety regulations.

He called for collective responsibility in ensuring that building projects are executed to the highest standards.

He also appealed to the public to remain vigilant and report any substandard construction or unauthorised developments that may pose a risk to

public safety.

"Building a safer, more organised, and sustainable Lagos is not just a responsibility; it is a commitment we owe to ourselves and future generations," Sanwo-Olu said.

With this new initiative, the Lagos State government aims to strengthen its regulatory framework and ensure that all building projects in the state adhere to the highest standards of safety.

The Certified Accreditors' Programme is seen as a key step in ensuring that Lagos continues to thrive as a world-class metropolis, where safety and sustainability are prioritised.

The event was well-received by stakeholders in the building sector, and the Governor's call for a united approach to safer construction practices resonated strongly across the room.

As Lagos continues to experience rapid growth, the Governor's emphasis on safety and accountability underscores the state's commitment to a secure and prosperous future for all its residents.

EFCC warns Nigerians about 58 illegal ponzi scheme operators

By Friday Omosola



The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has issued a public alert on the operations of 58 companies allegedly defrauding Nigerians under the guise of investment opportunities.

In a statement released yesterday, EFCC warned that these entities are not registered with the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) or the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), the two primary regulators of financial and investment activities in the country.

Both regulators, in separate correspondences with the EFCC, confirmed that the listed companies have no legal authorization to operate as investment firms.

According to the anti-graft agency,

several of these firms have been charged to court, with five already convicted, while another five have pleaded guilty and are awaiting a review of facts.

The remaining cases are at different stages of prosecution.

The EFCC provided a comprehensive list of the illegal operators, which includes Wales Kingdom Capital, Bethsaida Group of Companies, AQM Capital Limited, Titan Multibusiness Investment Limited, Brickwall Global Investment Limited, Farmforte Limited & Agro Partnership Tech, Green Eagles Agribusiness Solution Limited, and Richfield Multiconcepts Limited, among others.

Other notable names on the list

include Crowdyvest Limited, MBA Trading & Capital Investment Limited, Oxford International Group, Chinmark Homes & Shelters Limited, Adamakin Investment & Works Limited, Farm4Me Agriculture Limited, TRJ Company Limited, and Barrick Gold Mining Company.

The EFCC reassured Nigerians of its ongoing efforts to monitor and crack down on fraudulent investment schemes, emphasising its commitment to protecting citizens from financial exploitation.

The commission urged the public to remain vigilant and verify investment opportunities before committing their funds.

Police arrest 5 suspects in murder of Rivers CSO, son, recover arms

By Helen Okechukwu



The Rivers State Police Command, through the Anti-Kidnapping Unit, has arrested five suspects in connection with the tragic murder of the Chief Security Officer (CSO) of the Adokiye Amiesimaka Stadium, Richard Timothy in Omagwa and his son, Silas.

Recall that on February 4, 2025, the wife of the CSO and mother of the late UNIPORT student had called for the arrest of the perpetrators.

Due to several kidnapping incidents in the Rukpokwu, Igwuruta, Omagwa, and Etche areas, an intelligence-led operation was carried out on 8 March. The operation, which began at about 9:30 a.m., lasted for eight hours.

In a document shared with journalists on Tuesday, the spokesperson, Grace Iringe-Koko, stated that the apprehended suspects confessed to the crime and multiple kidnapping activities.

Read Also: Police arrest three suspected killers of LASU graduate

The operation also led to the recovery of two AK-47 rifles, six AK-47 magazines, sixty-six rounds of ammunition, three locally made pistols, ten live cartridges, and several mobile phones and SIM cards.

The suspects have been identified as Muhammadu Bello, 30, from Padiki LGA of Kwara State; Suleman Umar, 26; Adamu Musa, 30, both from Hadeja LGA of

Jigawa State; Bello Amadu, 35, from Keffi-Hausa LGA of Jigawa State; and Abubakar Mohammed, 22, from Azare LGA of Bauchi State. All the suspects reside in Rukpokwu.

Iringe-Koko stated, "The suspects are currently in police custody and are cooperating with investigators. Efforts are ongoing to uncover details of other crimes committed by the syndicate and to arrest others still at large.

"The Rivers State Police Command assures the public of its unwavering commitment to ensuring the safety and security of all residents. Further updates on this investigation will be communicated in due course," she added.

'AI should serve humanity, not control it'

- Lagos deputy gov

By Friday Omosola

Lagos State Deputy Governor, Obafemi Hamzat, has called on religious leaders to educate their congregations on the importance of balancing technological advancements with faith in God.

Speaking at the 4th Annual Ramadan Lecture/Iftar and Special Prayer held in memory of Late Oba Mufutau Olatunji Hamzat in Mushin, Lagos, Hamzat emphasised the need for responsible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in a manner that aligns with religious values.

The event was organised by Moses Oluwatoyin Fayinka, a member of the Federal House of Representatives representing Mushin Constituency II.

Hamzat highlighted the growing influence of AI on society, urging clerics to teach their followers that, despite technological advancements, humans remain under the control of the Almighty, not machines or algorithms.

READ ALSO: Aiyedatiwa frees 40 prisoners to celebrate 60th



birthday

He stressed that children, in particular, should be guided to use AI in ways that uphold moral and religious principles.

Beyond technology, the deputy governor also underscored the significance of honouring one's parents even after their passing.

He noted that remembering and praying for deceased loved ones preserves their legacy and strengthens family bonds.

However, Fayinka encouraged the Muslim faithful to foster peaceful coexistence and show love to people of all faiths.

He reminded attendees that Islam teaches unity, as all humans belong to one family under Allah.

Fayinka described the late Oba Mufutau Olatunji Hamzat as a leader committed to unity and service, whose legacy continues to inspire many.

He reiterated his commitment to sustaining the annual Ramadan lecture, emphasizing its role in promoting forgiveness, gratitude, and devotion to God.

Delivering a lecture on Justice, Sheikh Almudeen Mubarak stressed that true justice lies in treating everyone fairly and equally.

LP sets up three-member committee to mend ties with NASS lawmakers

By Friday Omosola

In a bid to foster unity and strengthen its relationship with members of the National Assembly, the Labour Party has inaugurated a three-member Intervention and Truce Committee.

This was disclosed in a statement by the party's National Publicity Secretary, Obiora Ifoh on Tuesday.

The committee, chaired by Ben Etanabene, with Mathew Nworgu and Chinedu Obika as members was tasked with addressing existing challenges between the party leadership and its lawmakers in both chambers of the National Assembly.

Inaugurating the committee at the Labour Party's National Headquarters in Abuja yesterday, the party's National Chairman, Julius Abure, emphasised the need for cohesion.

He urged the lawmakers to work towards harmonizing the party's position with that of its representatives in the legislature.

"We have entrusted you with this



crucial assignment of bringing together all our members in the National Assembly—both in the Senate and the House of Representatives—to bridge gaps and resolve any issues that may have arisen," Abure stated.

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The party leader stressed the importance of unity among its approximately 40 lawmakers, describing them as ambassadors of the party.

While commending some members for their dedication, he acknowledged areas needing improvement and underscored the urgency of the committee's mandate.

"We expect that within two weeks, you will complete this

assignment and report back to the party leadership.

"We assure you that the party is committed to achieving lasting harmony, particularly with key stakeholders like the National Assembly caucus," he added.

In their response, the committee members pledged their loyalty to the party and assured its leadership of their commitment to carrying out the assignment with diligence.

The party has faced internal tensions in recent months, and this latest move signals a concerted effort to solidify party unity ahead of future political engagements.

PDP backs Governor Fubara amid impeachment threats

By Dr. Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi

The political turmoil in Rivers State has reached a boiling point, with Governor Siminalayi Fubara facing intensified pressure to step aside by the opposition party in the state.

Despite mounting calls for his resignation, the National Publicity Secretary of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), Debo Ologunagba, has strongly defended Fubara, insisting that the governor remains committed to constitutional governance.

The crisis deepened today when The New Daily Prime gathered that the Chairman of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Rivers State, Tony Okocha, demanded Fubara's resignation, warning that failure to do so could lead to impeachment proceedings.

This demand followed the governor's invitation to the 27 pro-Wike House of Assembly members for a crucial meeting aimed at resolving the ongoing power struggle.

However, reports indicate that the state House of Assembly, largely aligned with former Governor Nyesom Wike, is making attempt to impeach Fubara—efforts that have been fiercely resisted by his supporters, triggering legal battles and political maneuvering that further destabilize governance in the state.

In an exclusive interview with The New Daily Prime, the PDP National Publicity Secretary Debo Ologunagba dismissed the impeachment threats as baseless, labelling them as part of a larger strategy to destabilize the Fubara administration.

“Impeachment is a legal and constitutional process that must follow due procedures and be based on valid grounds—none of which apply to Governor Fubara,” Ologunagba stated.

He further described any attempt to



unseat the governor as politically motivated and devoid of legal merit.

He asserted that “the governor has done nothing wrong. He has remained steadfast in upholding constitutional values, and his leadership is fully backed by the PDP.” Ologunagba further remarked: “The government is performing exceptionally well, and there is absolutely no justification for impeachment. The idea is merely a speculative exercise by political opponents.”

Brushing off suggestions that Fubara is at risk of losing his position, Ologunagba confidently stated: “We have no concerns about the governor's impeachment. Those spreading such rumors are engaging in wishful thinking. As a lawyer, I understand the constitutional framework, and I can categorically state that the APC's impeachment threat is a nonstarter.”

Ologunagba reaffirmed that the PDP remains committed to working with Governor Fubara to ensure good governance and implement policies that enhance the welfare of Rivers State residents. He commended the governor's leadership style, emphasizing his “humility, timeliness, and unwavering

focus on the needs of the people.”

He added that Fubara's approach embodies the principles of democracy and effective governance.

A Call for Democratic Integrity

Amid the political tension, Ologunagba called on President Bola Tinubu to uphold democratic principles and refrain from any actions that could undermine opposition parties. He cautioned that failure to ensure a level playing field in Nigeria's democratic process could result in national instability.

“The President must avoid interfering in opposition affairs and instead focus on addressing the pressing issues affecting Nigerians. Governance should be about the welfare of the people—reducing inflation, ending insecurity, reducing excessive taxation, and ensuring economic stability which will promote investment and productivity.”

He urged Nigerians, including the media, to remain vigilant and hold the government accountable to prevent any actions that could threaten democracy. “It is crucial that all stakeholders resist any attempt to destabilize democracy, particularly efforts aimed at weakening the opposition,” he added.

Ologunagba also warned of the broader consequences of political instability, stating that unrest in Nigeria could have far-reaching effects across the West African region and beyond. “The survival of democracy in Nigeria is essential, not just for our country but for regional and global stability. The President has a responsibility to protect democratic institutions and ensure Nigeria remains secure,” he concluded.

Ondo doctor dies of Lassa fever as cases surge in Nigeria

By Helen Okechukwu

The Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC) has raised alarms over the increasing spread of Lassa fever across the country following the death of a 31-year-old doctor in Ondo State.

According to the NCDC, the doctor had traveled to the UK on February 19, 2025, and returned to Nigeria on February 27. Shortly after, he developed symptoms of viral hemorrhagic fever and was admitted to a private hospital, where he passed away on March 1. Test results later confirmed he had contracted Lassa fever.

Health officials are now working to trace individuals who had contact with him, as he visited his fiancée in Edo State, as well as family and friends, before falling ill.

Lassa Fever Cases Continue to Rise

As of March 2, 2025, Nigeria has recorded 535 confirmed cases and 98 deaths from a total of 2,728 suspected cases across 14 states, according to Vanguard. Ondo, Bauchi, Edo, Taraba, and Ebonyi account for 91% of all reported cases, with ten local government areas—Owo, Akure South, and Akoko South-West among them—contributing to 68% of the outbreak.



Lassa fever primarily spreads through contact with the urine, feces, or bodily fluids of infected multimammate rats. It can also be transmitted from person to person, particularly in healthcare settings. Symptoms often resemble malaria but can escalate into severe conditions like internal bleeding and organ failure.

Ondo State Steps Up Containment Efforts

In response to the doctor's death, the Ondo State Ministry of Health has intensified surveillance and launched a rigorous contact-tracing campaign. Health officials, in collaboration with both national and international agencies, including Port Health Services, are also monitoring possible exposure risks during the doctor's recent travels.

The NCDC has assured the public that efforts are underway to curb the spread. "Early detection, diagnosis, and treatment significantly improve survival rates. Prompt reporting of symptoms ensures timely intervention, thereby increasing the chances of survival," the agency advised.

Public Urged to Take Preventive Measures

With Lassa fever cases peaking between October and May, health experts emphasize the importance of rodent control, proper food storage, and maintaining good hygiene to prevent infections.

Authorities continue to stress that early detection and prompt medical attention are crucial in managing and reducing the spread of the virus.

Kebbi govt urges meningitis report as death hits 26, 248 suspected

By Helen Okechukwu

The Kebbi State Government has urged residents to report suspected cases of cerebrospinal meningitis to the nearest health facilities following the outbreak which has claimed 26 lives in the state.

About 248 suspected cases reported across Aliero, Gwandu, and Jega Local Government Areas (LGAs).

The state's Commissioner for Health, Yanusa Ismail, disclosed the figures during a press briefing on Tuesday, adding that 11 samples were taken for laboratory examination, with three testing negative.

Additional samples have been sent to Abuja for further testing, and if confirmed, the government will request vaccines to contain the disease.

In response, the Kebbi State government has approved N30 million for the procurement of essential drugs. Isolation centers have also been established to manage and contain the infection effectively.

While urging residents to remain vigilant to prevent further fatalities, the commissioner encouraged residents to prioritize personal hygiene and avoid crowded areas to reduce the risk of infection.



However, the publics were advised to take precautionary measures.

Similarly, in neighboring Sokoto State, Commissioner for Health, Faruk Wurno, confirmed the outbreak in a statement issued on Tuesday through the ministry's Information/Public Relations Officer, Nura Maikwanci.

Wurno revealed that laboratory tests have identified several cases in Sokoto, prompting the state's health ministry to intensify surveillance, case management, and public health interventions to curb the spread.

"We call on residents to take preventive measures, including seeking immediate medical attention if they experience

symptoms such as fever, severe headache, or neck stiffness," Wurno stated.

Wurno reassured the public that Sokoto State Governor Ahmed Aliyu has provided essential medications to health centers across the state.

Meningitis is a severe infection affecting the membranes surrounding the brain and spinal cord.

The disease, primarily caused by bacteria, fungi, or viruses, is transmitted through droplets of respiratory or throat secretions.

Common symptoms include fever, headache, nausea, vomiting, neck stiffness, and altered consciousness levels.

Why Tuface wears my beads – Natasha

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigerian singer Tuface Idibia's new lover, Natasha Osawaru, has addressed accusations of using traditional beads to control him spiritually.

She denied the claims in a recent interview, explaining the cultural and personal significance of the jewelry.

Speaking to journalist Stella Korkus, Natasha dismissed the allegations. She emphasized that Tuface chose to wear the beads on his own, rejecting the idea that she imposed them on him for any spiritual influence.

Beads hold cultural, personal value

Natasha explained that the beads have deep-rooted cultural importance. She received them as gifts from her family and cherishes their symbolic meaning.

"These beads were my birthday gifts," she said. "They represent royalty. I come from the Igbinedion Royal Family. My mother gave me three beautiful beads on my last birthday. They call them 'EZENEKA,' meaning 'River that never runs dry.'"

She further revealed that one of the beads Tuface wears has a significant history. "The one on his neck was a gift from my grandfather. He was a knight to the Queen of England. The Queen herself gave it to him when she was alive," Natasha stated.

Tuface's personal choice

Natasha made it clear that Tuface willingly wears the beads. She refuted claims that she forced him to put them



on.

"He likes them, and that's why he wears them," she explained. "They are not diabolical. They don't contain any spiritual powers. I didn't put them on him. He made the choice himself. If you've been paying attention, you'll notice he has always loved beads and has worn many in the past."

Tuface's mother accuses Natasha

The controversy began when Tuface's mother, Rose Idibia, raised concerns about the beads. She accused Natasha of using them to spiritually bind the singer to her. According to reports, Rose Idibia believes her son is under Natasha's influence.

Her claims sparked public debate, with fans and critics questioning whether the beads had any supernatural connection. Some sided with the singer's mother, while others dismissed the allegations as baseless.

Public reactions mixed

As the issue gained traction online, social media users shared their opinions. Some supported Natasha, saying she had the right to give Tuface gifts. Others sided with Rose Idibia, believing that there could be more to the beads than Natasha admitted.

Despite the controversy, Tuface himself has remained silent on the matter. He has neither confirmed nor denied his mother's allegations, leaving room for speculation.

Conclusion

Natasha Osawaru continues to stand by her statement. She insists that the beads are purely cultural and sentimental. According to her, Tuface wears them out of personal preference, not because of any supernatural influence.

While the debate rages on, one thing is clear: the singer's choice of accessories has become an unexpected source of controversy. Whether this matter will settle down or escalate further remains to be seen.

I'm only 32 – DJ Cuppy responds to marriage pressure

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigerian disc jockey Florence Otedola, better known as DJ Cuppy, has responded to mounting pressure for her to settle down.

She questioned why some people consider her “old” at 32, challenging society’s expectations about marriage and age.

On Tuesday, she took to X (formerly Twitter) to express her frustration. In her post, she pointed out how unfair it is for people to judge her based on her age.

“I am 32 years old, and some of you are calling me old,” she wrote. “If that is the case, what are we calling people in their 40s? Prehistoric? Fossilized? Museum exhibits? Nawa.”

Social Media Reacts

Her remarks quickly gained attention online. Many fans and social media users engaged with her post, debating age-related expectations, especially for women. Some supported her stance, arguing that age should not define a person’s worth or dictate their life choices. Others, however, insisted that societal norms still encourage early marriage.

Facing Public Scrutiny

This is not the first time DJ Cuppy has addressed public scrutiny. As a well-known figure, she often faces criticism about her personal life. In past interviews, she has spoken about the pressures of being a woman in the public eye, particularly when it comes to marriage.



The Pressure to Marry Early

In many cultures, women are urged to marry before reaching a certain age. Nigeria is no exception. Many believe that by the time a woman reaches her early 30s, she should be married or at least planning to. This belief places significant pressure on women, especially those in the spotlight.

However, DJ Cuppy is not alone in challenging these norms. More women are speaking out against societal expectations that tie their value to marriage and age. Celebrities, professionals, and activists are pushing for a shift in mindset. They argue that personal success and happiness should not be measured by marital status.

Focused on Success

Despite the debate, DJ Cuppy remains focused on her career. Over the years, she has built a name for herself in the music industry. She has also ventured into philanthropy and business, proving that success comes in many forms.

Defining Life on Her Terms

Her latest post serves as a reminder that age should not be a limitation. Whether in marriage, career, or personal growth, everyone should have the freedom to make their own choices without pressure from society.

As her statement continues to spark conversations, one thing is clear—DJ Cuppy is not letting public opinions dictate her life.

Singer Spyro denies rumours of fathering Nengi's newborn

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Nigerian Afrobeats singer Spyro has addressed swirling rumours linking him to reality TV star Nengi Hampson's newborn, setting the record straight.

Speculation spread after Nengi announced she welcomed her first child in February.

Spyro, known for openly admiring Nengi in the past, congratulated her on social media. His message, meant as a warm gesture, quickly fueled speculation that he was the father of the baby. The rumors gained traction, prompting the singer to clear the air.

Spyro's response to the rumours

Addressing the claims on his Instagram story, Spyro criticized those spreading false information. He wrote, "Nigerians, very ignorant set. Exactly why the rich get richer and the poor get poorer... But then again, what do I even know? Congratulations again, my Nengs."

His statement made it clear that he found the speculation baseless. However, his response did not stop social media users from discussing the matter further. Some fans defended him, while others continued to speculate about the baby's father.

Previous rumours about Nengi's pregnancy

This is not the first time Nengi's pregnancy has sparked controversy. A few weeks ago, similar rumours linked Bayelsa State Governor Douye Diri to her unborn child. The claims suggested that the governor was responsible for her pregnancy.

However, Governor Diri strongly



denied the allegations. He dismissed the rumors as false and accused his political enemies of trying to tarnish his reputation. His response did little to stop the gossip, as discussions about Nengi's baby continued to spread online.

Social media reactions

Fans and followers of both Spyro and Nengi have reacted differently to the ongoing speculation. Some believe the rumors are a result of their past interactions, while others see it as an invasion of their privacy.

Nengi has remained silent on the matter, choosing not to respond to the rumors. Instead, she has focused on celebrating the birth of her child and sharing her joy with her supporters.

The dangers of social media speculation

This situation highlights the power and risks of social media. A simple congratulatory post turned into a heated debate, proving how quickly misinformation can spread. Public

figures often face such scrutiny, with fans and critics quick to make assumptions without evidence.

Spyro's reaction reflects his frustration with the rumors, but it also serves as a reminder of the impact false information can have. While some fans may see these speculations as harmless gossip, they can affect the lives and reputations of those involved.

Moving forward

For now, Nengi and Spyro continue with their personal and professional lives. Nengi has yet to reveal the identity of her child's father, and Spyro remains focused on his music career.

As the rumors fade, this incident serves as another example of how social media can fuel unfounded stories. It also emphasizes the importance of verifying facts before spreading information.

'I'm tired of living in America' – Rapper DDG announces plans to relocate to Nigeria

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Rapper and YouTuber DDG plans to leave the U.S. for Lagos, Nigeria, citing frustration with America in a recent post on his X account.

The Los Angeles-based entertainer made this revelation on Monday through a post on his X (formerly Twitter) account. Expressing his frustration with life in the U.S., he wrote, "I wanna move to Lagos... I'm tired of being in America."

DDG's growing interest in Nigeria

While DDG did not provide further details about his decision, his statement quickly sparked discussions among fans. Many speculated on what might be driving the move. Some pointed to his growing connection to Nigerian culture, while others wondered if music or personal relationships played a role.

DDG, known for blending rap with YouTube content creation, has a massive online following. His music career has earned him millions of streams, while his YouTube videos often give fans a glimpse into his personal life.

A possible connection to Burna Boy?

Interestingly, DDG's announcement comes at a time when Chloe Bailey, the sister of his ex-girlfriend, Halle Bailey, has been visiting Nigeria frequently. Chloe has been rumored to be in a relationship with Grammy-



winning Nigerian artist Burna Boy.

Nigerian stars.

This has led some fans to speculate whether DDG's decision is influenced by Chloe's recent trips. However, he has not confirmed any link between his relocation plans and the singer's visits.

Nigeria's growing appeal to global artists

In recent years, Nigeria has gained international attention as a cultural and entertainment hub. Afrobeats has taken the global music scene by storm, attracting artists from around the world. Lagos, in particular, has become a hotspot for international collaborations and performances.

Several foreign musicians have visited Nigeria to explore its vibrant music industry. Some have even hinted at future projects with local artists. With DDG now expressing interest in moving to Lagos, his fans are eager to see if this could lead to new music collaborations with

Fans react to DDG's announcement DDG's post has generated mixed reactions online. Some fans welcomed the idea, encouraging him to explore Nigeria's rich culture and music scene. Others questioned whether he was serious or simply venting frustrations about life in America.

One fan responded, "Lagos is the place to be! You'll love the energy and culture here." Another wrote, "Is this for real, or just a random thought? Moving is a big decision!"

Despite the speculation, DDG has not shared any concrete plans about when or how he intends to relocate. It remains to be seen whether his statement will turn into action or remain just an idea.

For now, fans will be watching closely to see if the rapper makes any moves toward his Lagos dream.

Ukraine agrees to 30-Day ceasefire as Washington resumes military aid

By Dr. Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi

In what is observed as progress, Ukraine has accepted a 30-day ceasefire brokered by the United States, prompting Washington to immediately restore military aid and intelligence-sharing. The agreement, which still requires Russia's approval, was reached after hours of negotiations between US and Ukrainian officials in Saudi Arabia.

The US confirmed that it would restart weapons deliveries and intelligence-sharing, which had been suspended following a diplomatic dispute between President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and US President Donald Trump.

"Ukraine has agreed to it, and hopefully, Russia will agree to it," Trump told reporters outside the White House.

Maria Zakharova, spokesperson for Russia's Foreign Ministry, indicated that Moscow was open to discussions, saying "contacts with US representatives are not excluded in the coming days."

The ceasefire agreement goes beyond the limited truce Zelenskyy initially proposed, which focused only on long-range drone and missile strikes and military activities in the Black Sea. Instead, the US plan calls for a complete halt in hostilities along the entire front line for 30 days, with the possibility of extensions if both sides agree.

"The US must convince Russia to do this," Zelenskyy said, adding that Ukraine sees the ceasefire as a positive step toward peace.



The agreement came just hours after one of the largest drone attacks on Moscow since Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022. More than 90 drones targeted the Russian capital, while 343 drones were reported across the country. Meanwhile, Ukraine also suffered missile and drone strikes on several regions overnight.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who led the American delegation in Saudi Arabia, emphasized the importance of ending hostilities before further negotiations. "Before you can negotiate, you have to stop shooting at each other," he said.

Long-Term Security and Peace Talks

Beyond the ceasefire, the Jeddah negotiations also covered long-term security guarantees for Ukraine. US National Security Adviser Mike Waltz noted that discussions included "what guarantees Ukraine will have for its long-term security and prosperity, and what it will take to finally end this war."

Waltz confirmed that Trump had already lifted the US pause on military aid, ensuring that weapons and security assistance would resume immediately. He also announced plans to engage with his Russian counterpart in the coming days.

Zelenskyy had previously resisted calls for a ceasefire, arguing that any pause without proper enforcement mechanisms would allow Russia to regroup and launch further attacks. However, his stance angered Washington, leading to a diplomatic fallout with Trump on February 28, followed by the suspension of military aid and intelligence-sharing.

To repair relations, Ukraine proposed a partial cessation of drone, missile, and air strikes, as well as a halt to maritime operations. European officials supported this approach, stating it would be easier to monitor and enforce.

A senior Ukrainian official in Jeddah said that while Ukraine is ready for the ceasefire, "the question is Russia — what are they ready for?"

US-Canada Trade War: Trump doubles metals tariffs

By Oluwatosin Ologun

United States President Donald Trump, Tuesday announced massive new tariffs on Canadian steel and aluminum while threatening to “shut down” its auto industry and saying the best way to end the trade war was for Washington’s ally to be absorbed into the United States.

Trump’s shock new threats came hours before a midnight deadline for ramping up the Republican’s increasingly global trade offensive.

On his Truth Social platform, Trump announced that he would double planned 25-percent tariffs on steel and aluminum to 50 percent for imports of the metals from Canada.

A 25-percent levy is still due to kick in Wednesday for other US trading partners, hitting Brazil, Mexico, the United Arab Emirates and other countries.

The upcoming levies, which currently allow for no exceptions, threaten to hit everything from electronics to vehicles and construction equipment — and have manufacturers scrambling to find cost-effective domestic suppliers.

The country facing the most aggressive action is Canada, historically one of the United States’ closest allies and top trading partners.

Ottawa is now locked in an extraordinarily bitter war of words with the Republican, facing constant threats over its sovereignty.

Canada’s incoming prime minister Mark Carney struck a defiant note Sunday, vowing to stand up for “the Canadian way of life” and saying Canadians are “always ready” for a fight if needed.



Reacting to Trump’s announcement on MSNBC, Ontario Premier Doug Ford said the US president made “an unprovoked attack on our country, on families, on jobs,” promising an appropriate response.

Canada supplies half of US aluminum imports and 20 percent of US steel imports, noted industry consultant EY-Parthenon.

Electricity emergency?

Trump said his new supercharged tariffs were in response to Canadian province Ontario’s imposition of a 25-percent surcharge on electricity exports to three US states.

Trump said he would be announcing an electricity national emergency in the area hit by the price increases.

He also ramped up his threats, warning that if what he called “egregious” Canadian tariffs are not dropped he would step up tariffs on cars from April 2.

This would “essentially, permanently shut down the automobile manufacturing business in Canada,” he

said.

Trump has vowed reciprocal levies as soon as April 2, to remedy trade practices Washington deems unfair.

In the same lengthy social media post Tuesday, Trump said the “only thing that makes sense” is for Canada to join the United States as a 51st state.

“This would make all Tariffs, and everything else, totally disappear. Canadians taxes will be very substantially reduced, they will be more secure, militarily and otherwise, than ever before, there would no longer be a Northern Border problem,” Trump said.

Costs and opportunities

Former Treasury Secretary Larry Summers said on X that Trump’s tariff threats on Canada would be “a self-inflicted wound to the US economy that we cannot afford, at a moment when recession risks are rising.”

But if some companies were bracing for a damaging period of higher production costs, others sensed an opportunity.

Ex Philippine president Duterte arrested over drug war killings

By Dr. Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi

In a dramatic turn of events, former Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has been arrested and transferred to the Hague under an International Criminal Court (ICC) warrant for alleged crimes against humanity. The arrest, carried out on Tuesday, marks a significant milestone in the long-standing global scrutiny of Duterte's controversial anti-drug crackdown.

Duterte, 79, was detained in Manila upon his return from a trip to Hong Kong, the office of Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. confirmed.

Manila is the capital and the second-most populous city of the Philippines. He was later flown to The Hague at 11 PM local time, according to a statement from Marcos, who said the former president must "face charges of crimes against humanity in relation to his bloody war on drugs."

Footage showed Duterte boarding a plane at Villamor Air Base, escorted by security officials.

Duterte's daughter, Sara Duterte, who once served as the Philippine Vice President under Marcos Jr., denounced the arrest, calling it a 'blatant affront to our sovereignty.' She further alleged that her father was 'forcibly taken' to the Netherlands.

However, President Marcos Jr. denied that the arrest was politically motivated. "Duterte was arrested in compliance with our commitments to Interpol. This is what the international community expects of us as the leader of a democratic country," Marcos stated.



Marcos Jr. is the 17th and current President of the Philippines. New Daily Prime gathered that the clash between Marcos Jr. and former President Rodrigo Duterte stems from political power struggles, policy differences, and personal rivalries, particularly involving former Vice President Sara Duterte. Sara Duterte, the daughter of the former president, initially aligned with Marcos Jr. during the 2022 elections as his running mate, but they later fell apart due to political differences,

The ICC issued an arrest warrant for Duterte, citing "reasonable grounds to believe that he is individually responsible for the crime against humanity of murder." The warrant details "widespread and systematic attacks on civilians" during his tenure as Mayor of Davao City (2011–2016) and President of the Philippines (2016–2022).

Duterte's controversial war on drugs,

which began in 2016, resulted in the deaths of thousands of suspected drug users and dealers, predominantly from poor communities. The Philippine government acknowledges at least 6,200 drug-related killings, while human rights groups estimate the actual toll to be much higher—potentially exceeding 30,000 deaths.

However, during Duterte's presidency, crime rates dropped significantly. Serious crimes like murder, robbery, and rape decreased by over 60%, according to Philippine National Police data. Davao City (Duterte's hometown), previously known for high crime rates, became one of the safest cities in the country under his governance.

Additionally, major terrorist groups like Abu Sayyaf and the Maute Group were significantly weakened under his administration.

Duterte's legal team has filed a petition

US, Ukraine begin peace talks in Saudi Arabia to end war with Russia

By New Daily Prime

In a major diplomatic development, the United States and Ukraine have commenced high-stakes talks in Saudi Arabia, signaling a potential shift in the trajectory of the ongoing war with Russia. The discussions, held in Jeddah on Tuesday, come as Kyiv seeks to mend strained relations with Washington and secure the resumption of military aid and intelligence-sharing.

The Ukrainian delegation, led by Andriy Yermak, a top aide to President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, has presented a proposal for a partial ceasefire. The plan includes a mutual agreement between Ukraine and Russia to halt long-range drone and missile strikes, refrain from attacks on energy and civilian infrastructure, and suspend military activities in the Black Sea.

“The meeting with the US team started in a very constructive manner. We’re working towards a just and lasting peace,” Yermak said via Telegram.

EU divided over Ukraine: Hungary, Slovakia challenge military support plans
US-Ukraine Relations Under Pressure
Tensions between Kyiv and Washington have escalated in recent weeks, with the US pausing military assistance and intelligence-sharing, both of which Ukraine heavily relies on to target Russian positions beyond the frontline. Washington postponed the signing of a minerals deal and placed a hold on all military aid following a contentious meeting between Zelenskyy and US President Donald Trump at the White House.

Yermak emphasized Ukraine’s need for



security guarantees from the US to prevent further aggression from Russia. “The security guarantee is important because we never want this aggression to be repeated,” he stated.

Russia-Ukraine Conflict Escalates

As the diplomatic negotiations unfold, both Ukrainian and Russian forces have launched fresh attacks on each other’s territories. Moscow was targeted by 91 drones, marking one of the largest drone assaults on the Russian capital since the full-scale invasion began in 2022. Also, Ukraine reported missile and drone strikes on multiple regions overnight, with 126 kamikaze drones launched by Russian forces in a continued assault.

A Ukrainian drone attack on Russian soil killed two people and injured 14 others, according to Russian authorities. The Russian defense ministry also reported 337 unmanned aerial vehicles crossing into its airspace, though officials claim their air defenses intercepted all of them.

On the eve of the talks, senior US officials hinted at the possibility that Ukraine may

have to cede some territory to Russia as part of a negotiated peace deal.

“The Russians can’t conquer all of Ukraine, and obviously, it’ll be very difficult for Ukraine in any reasonable time period to sort of force the Russians back all the way to where they were in 2014,” US Senator Marco Rubio stated.

Joining the US delegation are Mike Waltz, National Security Adviser, and Steve Witkoff, Trump’s special envoy for the Middle East. Zelenskyy, meanwhile, met with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman but is not directly participating in the talks with the US.

Amid the diplomatic discussions, intelligence-sharing remains a contentious issue. US envoy Steve Witkoff told Fox News that intelligence-sharing would be discussed but denied that Washington had stopped providing intelligence for defensive operations. He also claimed Zelenskyy had apologized for his prior dispute with President Trump.

Chelle drops Musa, Iheanacho in Eagles 23-man squad for Rwanda, Zimbabwe

By Oluwatosin Ologun

Super Eagles coach Eric Chelle listed his final 23-man squad for the crunch 2026 World Cup qualifiers against Rwanda and Zimbabwe, however, Ahmed Musa and Kelechi Iheanacho were missing on the list.

In the final list for the games billed for next week, the Malian gaffer who will be leading the Super Eagles out for the first time yanked off the Kano Pillars man and Iheanacho of Middlesbrough.

Although Musa was part of the Super Eagles side that went to the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) in Cote d'Ivoire early last, he did not play a minute. Iheanacho also featured in that silver medal-winning team.

In the final squad released on Tuesday, Chelle listed regulars like Alex Iwobi, William Troost-Ekong, Victor Osimhen, Ademola Lookman, Victor Boniface, Simon Moses, and Stanley Nwabali.

Others include Ola Aina, Calvin Bassey, and Wilfred Ndidi among others. Nathan Tella and Joe Aribo are back in the squad after a long time out.

The coach equally handed a maiden call-up to Tolu Arokodare, Igoh Ogbu, and Papa Mustapha for the games.

Nigeria will play Rwanda on March 21 in Kigali before returning home to battle with the Warriors of Zimbabwe at the Godswill Akpabio Stadium four



days later.

The games will be the acid test for Chelle who took over the reins in January. He faces a herculean task reviving Nigeria's hopes of qualifying for the World Cup after a poor start to the series. The 1980 AFCON champions have managed just a miserable three points – all draws – in four games since the start of the qualification race. They are four points behind the leaders of the Group C African qualifiers for the World Cup – Rwanda.

Below is the list of players invited for the Super Eagles games against Rwanda and Zimbabwe:

Defenders

William Ekong (Al-Kholood FC, Saudi Arabia); Bright Osayi-Samuel (Fenerbahce SK, Turkey); Bruno Onyemaechi (Olympiacos FC, Greece); Calvin Bassey (Fulham FC,

England); Olaoluwa Aina (Nottingham Forest, England); Igoh Ogbu (SK Slavia Prague, Czech Republic)

Midfielders

Wilfred Ndidi (Leicester City, England); Raphael Onyedika (Club Brugge, Belgium); Alhassan Yusuf Abdullahi (New England Revolution, USA); Alex Iwobi (Fulham FC, England); Joseph Ayodele-Aribo (Southampton FC, England); Papa Daniel Mustapha (Niger Tornadoes)

Forwards

Samuel Chukwueze (AC Milan, Italy); Victor Osimhen (Galatasaray FC, Turkey); Ademola Lookman (Atalanta FC, Italy); Victor Boniface (Bayer Leverkusen, Germany); Simon Moses (FC Nantes, France); Sadiq Umar (Valencia FC, Spain); Nathan Tella (Bayer Leverkusen, Germany); Tolu Arokodare (KRC Genk, Belgium)

Harry Kane fires Bayern into Champions League quarter-finals

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

Bayern Munich are through to the Champions League quarter-finals after securing a commanding 2-0 win over Bayer Leverkusen on Tuesday, completing a dominant 5-0 aggregate victory.

Having already taken a commanding 3-0 advantage in the first leg, Bayern had one foot firmly in the last eight before the return fixture even kicked off.

However, it was Harry Kane's brilliance that ensured Leverkusen never stood a chance, with the England captain scoring once and setting up another.

The first half ended without a goal, with Leverkusen throwing caution to the wind in search of a lifeline.

Yet, it was Bayern who struck first early in the second period. A deft cross from Joshua Kimmich found Kane, who made no mistake, tapping in to open the scoring for the visitors in the 52nd minute.

With Leverkusen pushing for an equaliser, Bayern sealed the win in the 71st minute. Kane produced a clever chip into the path of Alphonso Davies, who lashed home low and hard to double the lead and extinguish any hopes of a remarkable Leverkusen comeback.

Kane, often criticised for his perceived lack of impact in big matches, was in commanding form once again, following his brace in Munich last week.

The striker's performance highlighted both his technical finesse and physical presence, as he continued to lead Bayern's charge towards a potential



dream final on home soil — a chance to avenge their 2012 defeat to Chelsea.

Despite missing influential midfielder Florian Wirtz, Leverkusen showed heart and spirit but were ultimately overwhelmed by Bayern's superior quality.

Coach Xabi Alonso's side, already trailing Bayern by eight points in the Bundesliga, now faces a difficult challenge to salvage silverware this season, with their only remaining hope being the German Cup, where they are through to the semi-finals.

The tie marked a sharp contrast to a month ago, when Leverkusen dominated Bayern at the BayArena but failed to score. This time, the hosts struggled, as they were forced to play without their talisman Wirtz and were unable to break down a Bayern team that looked in complete control.

After taking heavy criticism for his team selections in Munich, Alonso made several changes, most notably restoring

striker Patrik Schick to the starting XI and bringing back goalkeeper Lukas Hradecky.

The Czech forward had the best chance of the first half, heading just wide in the 38th minute, but Leverkusen were unable to build on that opportunity.

Bayern, with Vincent Kompany making just one change to his line-up, had the upper hand from the off. Kane was a constant threat, forcing Hradecky into two brilliant saves within the first 15 minutes.

As the match wore on, Leverkusen's attacking intent left gaps at the back, and Bayern capitalised. Kane's clinical finish from Kimmich's pass dashed any hope of a comeback before he turned provider, laying on the assist for Davies to score Bayern's second and seal the tie.

With the win, Bayern Munich advance to the quarter-finals, where they will continue their quest for European glory, while Leverkusen's Champions League hopes come to an end.