



**FG approves N2.5bn satellite system to tackle illegal mining** Pg 6



**Tinubu appoints Ogunjimi as new Accountant-General of Nigeria** Pg 4

# The New Daily Prime

f @new\_daily\_prime x @prime\_dai11149 @ @new\_daily\_prime ...your prime source for excellence in journalism

## Trump's tariffs on Canada, China, Mexico draw quick retaliation **PAGE 29**



**Reddit co-founder Ohanian joins US bid to buy TikTok** Pg 28



Donald Trump



Justin Trudeau



Xi Jinping



Claudia Sheinbaum



**Olubadan, Oba Olakulehin alive, not dead - Oyo govt** Pg 11



**Reps advance bill enabling Polytechnics to grant bachelor's degrees** Pg 8



**EPL: Referee Michael Oliver suspended over suspicious refereeing** Pg 32

**FG to arraign MTN boss, others for concealing information** Pg 7



**Why we didn't fully intervene in Lagos Assembly crisis - Lagos APC** Pg 9

# Rivers: Fubara, lawmakers on warpath over budget ultimatum, LG administration

By Dave Oludare Oso

The 48-hour ultimatum issued by the Martin Amaewhule-led Rivers State House of Assembly to Governor Siminalayi Fubara to present the 2025 budget has signalled a fresh showdown between the governor and the lawmakers.

Also, Governor Fubara has waved off the lawmaker's opposition to his directive for outgoing local government chairmen to hand over to Heads of Local Government Administration.

The governor has, however, told his supporters, especially youths, to remain unperturbed, adding that the time had come for Rivers people to take their destinies in their hands.

The latest confrontation comes in the wake of the Supreme Court's February 28, 2025, ruling, which reinstated the 27 lawmakers loyal to the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike.

In the ruling, the apex court also ordered the seizure of the state allocation and nullified the October 2024 local government poll conducted by the Rivers State Independent Electoral Commission (RSIEC).

At their first sitting since the ruling, the pro-Wike legislators demanded that Fubara present the 2025 budget, titled, 'Budget of Inclusive Growth and Development,' within 48 hours.

The demand directly challenged the N1.1 trillion budget Fubara had signed into law on January 2, 2025, following its passage by the now-defunct Victor Oko-Jumbol-led Assembly.

The Supreme Court's ruling ended months of leadership tussle in the state House of Assembly, with both factions previously laying claim to legitimacy.

However, the reinstated lawmakers wasted no time in asserting their authority, insisting that Fubara's budget must be formally presented in line with constitutional provisions.

Amaewhule also criticised Fubara's directive on local government administration, arguing that the Supreme



Court had expressly ruled against non-elected officials administering councils.

The resolution of the Assembly lawmakers, sitting at the official legislative quarters along Aba Road in Port Harcourt, on Monday, followed a motion by the Deputy Speaker, Dumle Maol.

In his summation during plenary, Amaewhule kicked against Fubara's directive for the LG chairmen to hand over to the heads of council administration, saying it was against the ruling of the Supreme Court.

"It is actually in flagrant disobedience to the judgment of the Supreme Court last year, particularly that judgment in SC/CV/343/2024 where the Supreme Court specifically said that Heads of Local Government cannot administer local government.

"Only elected officials are permitted by the constitution, by the judgment of the Supreme Court and of course the Rivers State Local Government Amended Law 2023, to administer our local government," he asserted.

He also spoke on conducting the LG election in the state.

"Honourable members, you know that the Electoral Act amended by the National Assembly has made some adjustments to matters concerning

elections and our LG Law and the Rivers State Independent Electoral Commission Law which says how local government elections should be conducted in Rivers State definitely needs amendment, so that these two laws can now conform with the Electoral Act.

"These will be a prerequisite to any plan to conduct further local government elections in Rivers State. Once this House is done with this process of amending these two laws, the Rivers State Independent Electoral Commission can, on the basis of the new law, commence preparations for fresh local government elections," Amaewhule pointed out.

The government had earlier said it expected the Certified True Copy of the Supreme Court judgment by March 7, following which it would issue its positions on the apex court verdicts.

But the lawmakers, on Monday, resolved "That the House would proceed on a 12-week recess as from Friday 7th March 2025, but standing committees would be expected to continue statutory functions.

"Please be informed that our resolutions are geared towards a quick fix to the current financial quagmire occasioned by the absence of an Appropriation Law for Rivers State. We do not want the Rivers State people to suffer. We, therefore, urge you to act fast and do the needful in the best interest of the good people of Rivers State."

# THE NEW DAILY PRIME RATE CARD

## PUBLIC NOTICE COLOUR

## PRODUCT COLOUR

**EFFECTIVE FROM  
DECEMBER 1, 2024**

SIZE	TOTAL RATE
FULL PAGE	372,500.00
HALF PAGE	213,000.00
QUARTER PAGE	106,500.00
14X2	118,000.00
10X6	261,585.50
10X5	255,238.00
10X4	206,890.50
10X3	179,608.00
9X6	254,977.00
9X5	225,738.00
9X4	193,500.00
9X3	166,223.50
8X6	225,368.50
8X3	106,934.50
7X4	180,173.50
6X4	100,434.50
6X3	82,750.00
6X2	52,499.50
5X6	123,749.50
5X5	110,000.00
5X4	76,833.00
5X3	66,875.00
5X2	42,916.50
4X4	60,166.50
4X3	36,499.50
4X2	29,333.50
3X3	28,000.00
3X2	17,400.00
2X2	13,000.00
2X1	8,600.00
1X1	4,400.00

SIZE	TOTAL RATE
FULL PAGE	329,868.50
HALF PAGE	192,500.00
QUARTER PAGE	100,000.00
14X2	109,500.00
10X6	242,500.00
10X5	237,500.00
10X4	192,500.00
10X3	171,000.00
9X6	232,500.00
9X5	206,000.00
9X4	177,500.00
9X3	150,000.00
8X6	216,000.00
8X3	98,500.00
7X4	164,002.00
6X4	94,010.50
6X3	78,500.00
6X2	47,500.00
5X5	100,000.00
5X4	61,500.00
5X3	57,819.00
5X2	40,379.50
4X4	55,000.00
4X3	31,000.00
4X2	22,003.50
3X2	17,260.00
2X2	12,945.00
2X1	8,630.00
1X1	4,315.00

### POLITICAL COLOUR

SIZE	RATE
CENTRESPREAD	1,200,000.00
DOUBLE SPREAD	885,000.00
FULL PAGE	420,000.00
HALF PAGE	213,250.00
QUARTER PAGE	115,012.50

### POLITICAL BLACK & WHITE

SIZE	RATE
CENTRESPREAD	1,050,000.00
DOUBLE SPREAD	745,000.00
FULL PAGE	315,777.50
HALF PAGE	184,700.00
QUARTER PAGE	95,222.50

### CORPORATE BLACK & WHITE

SIZE	TOTAL RATE
FULL PAGE	254,533.50
HALF PAGE	142,787.50
QUARTER PAGE	80,706.50
14X2	78,222.50
10X6	217,830.00
10X5	192,305.50
10X4	142,787.50
10X3	121,355.50
9X6	192,305.50
9X3	107,757.50
8X6	170,725.00
8X3	70,390.00
7X4	58,666.50
6X4	67,048.00
6X3	53,361.50
6X2	37,694.00
5X6	83,850.00
5X4	55,900.00
5X3	43,705.00
5X2	27,938.00
4X4	44,493.00
4X3	33,524.00
4X2	22,350.00
3X2	16,763.00
2X2	10,877.00
2X1	5,588.50
1X1	2,795.50

### PUBLIC NOTICE BLACK & WHITE

SIZE	TOTAL RATE
FULL PAGE	280,690.00
HALF PAGE	164,178.00
QUARTER PAGE	84,641.50
10X6	228,000.00
10X5	201,600.00
10X4	149,440.00
10X3	127,108.00
9X6	201,600.00
9X5	169,050.00
9X4	137,875.00
9X3	112,875.00
8X6	179,368.00
8X5	143,500.00
8X4	93,500.00
8X3	82,434.50
7X4	111,173.50
6X4	82,434.50
6X3	59,250.00
6X2	40,000.00
5X6	98,749.50
5X4	65,833.00
5X3	49,375.00
5X2	32,916.50
4X4	52,666.50
4X3	39,499.50
4X2	26,333.50
3X2	19,750.00
2X2	13,000.00
2X1	6,500.00
1X1	3,292.00

### PRODUCT BLACK & WHITE

SIZE	TOTAL RATE
FULL PAGE	210,795.50
HALF PAGE	124,236.00
QUARTER PAGE	70,950.00
14X2	76,128.35
10X6	194,961.00
10X5	162,222.445
10X4	103,963.00
10X3	N/A
9X6	162,222.445
9X5	168,191.50
9X4	N/A
8X6	N/A
8X3	N/A
7X4	72,676.00
6X4	65,000.00
6X3	41,124.50
6X2	29,858.00
5X6	71,378.00
5X4	42,825.00
5X3	29,858.00
5X2	22,841.00
4x4	N/A
4X3	N/A
4X2	17,737.50
3x3	23,458.00
3X2	14,923.00
2X2	10,200.00
2X1	5,439.50
1X1	2,700.00

### SPECIAL POSITIONS

2X6 FRONT PAGE	700,000.00
2X6 BACK PAGE	300,000.00
2X6 INSIDE PAGE	155,000.00
3X6 FRONT PAGE	1,200,000.00
4X6 FRONT PAGE	2,250,000.00
5X6 FRONT PAGE	3,350,000.00
10X6 FRONT PAGE	8,250,000.00
EARPIECE FRONT PAGE(1.5X2)	246,500.00
EARPIECE INSIDE PAGE(1.5X2)	117,875.00
EARPIECE BACK PAGE	236,796.50
CENTRE SPREAD COLOUR (PUBLIC NOTICE)	1,027,000.00
CENTRE SPREAD COLOUR (PRODUCT)	929,000.00
CENTRESPREAD B&W	800,000.00
CENTRE SPREAD HALF COLOUR	575,000.00
CENTRESPREAD STRIP COLOUR	191,668.50
DOUBLE SPREAD COLOUR	721,500.00
DOUBLE SPREAD HALF COLOUR	432,881.00
DOUBLE SPREAD STRIP COLOUR	144,294.00
CENTRE SPREAD B&W	835,000.00
CENTRE SPREAD HALF PAGE B & W	550,000.00
DOUBLE SPREAD B & W	725,000.00
DOUBLE SPREAD HALF B & W	425,000.00
FULL WRAP AROUND	15,000,000.00
HALF WRAP AROUND	8,500,000.00
HALF PAGE FRONT	5,500,000.00

### ALLURE RATE

SIZE	RATE	TOTAL
CENTRESPREAD		967,500.00
DOUBLE SPREAD		806,250.00
ALLURE COVER		750,000.00
(IBC) Inside Back Cover		376,250.00
(IFC) Inside Front Cover		430,000.00
(BC) Back Cover		483,750.00
Full Page		430,000.00
10X5		295,625.00
Half Page		225,000.00
EVENT		250,000.00

### PICTURE & CAPTION

SIZE	RATE	7.5% VAT	TOTAL
PHOTO NEWS PAGE 2	50,000.00	3,750.00	53,750.00
PHOTO NEWS (3X3)	30,000.00	2,250.00	32,250.00
PHOTO NEWS (4X4)	53,333.30	4,250.00	57,583.30
PRESS RELEASE (4X4)	30,000.00	2,250.00	32,250.00
EVENT COVERAGE	100,000.00	7,500.00	107,500.00
FEATURES	200,000.00	15,000.00	215,000.00

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

**SERIES DISCOUNT**  
 5 PAGES 2.5%  
 10 PAGES 5%  
 15 PAGES & ABOVE 7.5%

**SURCHARGE**  
 PAGE 3 (100%)  
 PAGE 4, 5, 7 AND 8 (50%)  
 PAGE 2 (75%)

**LOOSE INSERT**  
 LEAFLET, POSTERS 1,000 COPIES  
 SPECIAL INSERTS (8 PAGES) COPIES  
 SPECIAL INSERTS (4 PAGES) 1,000 COPIES  
 HANDLING CHARGES FOR LESS THAN 35,000 COPIES  
 HANDLING CHARGES MORE THAN 35,000 COPIES

**CLASSIFIED ADVERT RATES**  
 CHANGE OF NAME  
 GUIDE BLACK & WHITE  
 GUIDE COLOUR

25,000.00  
 45,000.00  
 30,000.00  
 75,000.00  
 100,000.00

2,000.00  
 3,750.00  
 4,250.00

#### 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:  
[info@newdailyprime.news](mailto:info@newdailyprime.news)  
 Terms and Conditions apply

**ALL RATES ARE VAT INCLUSIVE**

# Tinubu appoints Ogunjimi as new Accountant-General of Nigeria

By Dave Oludare Oso



President Bola Tinubu has appointed Shamsudeen Ogunjimi as the new Accountant General of the Federation.

His appointment follows a thorough selection process and will take effect on March 7, 2025, the day the current officeholder, Oluwatoyin Madehin, is set to retire.

Ogunjimi, 57, was initially announced as Madehin's successor in December 2024.

A committee later conducted a competitive selection process involving Directors of Accounts in the Federal Civil Service.

The process included a written test, an ICT proficiency exam, and oral interviews before Ogunjimi was chosen for the position.

The new Accountant General earned a Bachelor of Science in Accountancy from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, in 1990.

He later obtained a Master's degree in Accounting and Finance from the University of Lagos.

He is a fellow of both the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria and the Chartered Institute of Taxation of Nigeria.

His appointment places him at the helm of the nation's public finance administration, where he will oversee

the management and disbursement of federal government funds, ensure fiscal accountability, and implement financial policies to enhance transparency in Nigeria's public sector.

President Tinubu congratulated Ogunjimi and urged him to carry out his duties with professionalism, integrity, and commitment to serving the nation.

The President further reiterated his administration's resolve to strengthen public financial institutions and uphold the principles of good governance in managing the country's resources.

# FG promises tangible benefits from 2025 reforms, says Minister

By **Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye**

The Federal Government has expressed confidence that the transformative reforms initiated by President Bola Tinubu's administration will begin to bear fruit in 2025, delivering tangible benefits for Nigerians.

The Minister of Information and National Orientation, Mohammed Idris, made this assertion during the Ministerial Press Briefing held on Tuesday in Abuja.

Since the administration took office in May 2023, Nigerians have faced significant economic challenges, attributed to policy shifts such as the removal of the fuel subsidy, the unification of the foreign exchange market, and the recent increases in the cost of data, calls, and electricity tariffs.

These measures, although controversial, have contributed to widespread economic hardship.

Despite these difficulties, Idris reaffirmed the government's commitment to the reforms, highlighting that they are designed to foster long-term economic growth, improve infrastructure, and enhance national security.

According to the minister, 2025 will be the year when the benefits of



these initiatives start to manifest.

He also pointed to the recent signing of the N54.2 trillion budget, the largest in Nigeria's history, as a testament to the administration's dedication to the country's socio-economic development.

"The 2025 budget is not just a financial document; it is a bold statement of intent—a roadmap for economic resilience, social stability, and national progress," Idris stated.

The budget focuses on key sectors such as security, infrastructure, education, health, solid minerals, and agriculture, all of which directly affect the well-being of Nigerians.

Idris assured the public that the government remains committed to the efficient implementation of this budget to maximize its impact on citizens' lives.

At the briefing, ministers including Dr Jumoke Oduwole, the Minister of Industry, Trade, and Investment, and Senator John Owan Enoh, Minister of State, also provided updates on their ministries' successes and progress under the current administration.

The event offered the government an opportunity to assure Nigerians that despite the immediate hardships, the reforms are aimed at creating a more stable and prosperous future for the country.

# FG approves N2.5bn satellite system to tackle illegal mining

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

The Federal Executive Council (FEC) has approved the procurement of a N2.5 billion satellite system aimed at curbing illegal mining activities across the country.

The approval came during the third meeting of the year on Monday, as announced by the Minister of Solid Minerals Development, Mr Dele Alake.

Speaking to State House Correspondents after the FEC meeting, Alake explained that the satellite technology was an integrated solution designed to monitor and combat unlicensed, unregulated, and underreported mining activities.

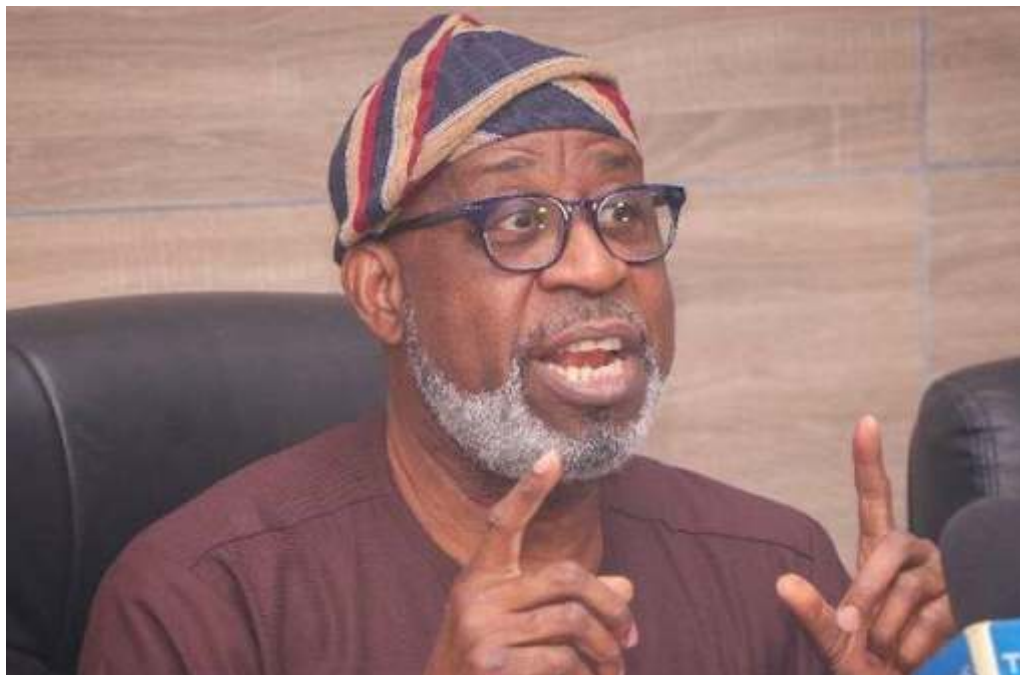
He emphasised that the deployment of this advanced technology would help mitigate issues such as revenue leakages and illegal extraction of the country's valuable minerals.

“This technology will provide real-time visual data of ongoing mining operations across the country, Satellite gadgets will be installed in strategic locations, enabling us to monitor mining sites remotely. The system will allow us to track the volume of minerals being extracted, the number of trucks transporting them, and even assess the security situation in these areas.” said Alake.

The technology will be connected to a central operation hub, including the Mines Martial Centre and the Minister's office, where real-time data will be accessible at the click of a button.

Alake assured that this new system would significantly enhance the government's ability to monitor mining activities, prevent illegal operations, and enforce regulations.

In addition to the satellite system, Alake



outlined a two-pronged strategy his ministry has adopted to address illegal mining in Nigeria. On assuming office, the ministry introduced both persuasive and coercive measures to tackle the issue.

The persuasive approach encourages artisanal miners to form cooperatives, which would allow them to formalise their operations, become more structured, and gain access to financial support from banks.

This, according to the minister, would also ensure they contribute to the country's revenue by paying taxes and other obligations.

“We have been able to persuade over 300 cooperative societies to form, which is a step towards legalising their operations and expanding their businesses, When they are formalised, they can access loans to grow their operations, and more importantly, contribute positively to the national economy.” Alake added

However, for those who have resisted the persuasive approach, the government has implemented a coercive strategy.

This includes the establishment of Mining Marshalls, who have been tasked with apprehending and prosecuting illegal miners, including foreign operators.

According to Alake, several arrests and convictions have already been made under this approach.

“Through the coercive strategy, we have arrested, prosecuted, and convicted many illegal miners. The law will take its course on anyone who refuses to comply,” he stated.

The government's move to address illegal mining comes amid growing concerns over the environmental and economic impact of unregulated mining in Nigeria.

With the introduction of both technological solutions and law enforcement measures, the Ministry of Solid Minerals Development aims to bring illegal mining under control and ensure that Nigeria's mineral resources are harnessed in a legal and sustainable manner.

# FG to arraign MTN boss, others for concealing information

By Dave Oludare Oso

The Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC) will on May 28, arraign Mr Karl Toriola, the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (MD/CEO) of MTN Nigeria Communications Plc.

Toriola, MTN Nigeria Communications Plc and others will be arraigned over alleged failure to produce documents and information required by the commission in compliance with a lawful summons contrary to the FCCPC Act.

The company and its CEO will be arraigned alongside Tobechukwu Okigbo, MTN's Chief Corporate Services and Sustainability Officer and Ikenna Ikeme, General Manager, Regulatory Affairs of MTN, before Justice H.J. Yilwa of the Federal High Court in Abuja.

FCCPC had, in the charge marked: FHC/ABJ/CR/354/2024, named MTN Nigeria Communications Plc, Toriola, Okigbo and Ikeme as 1st to 4th defendants respectively.

They were preferred with two counts in the charge, dated July 19, 2024, and filed July 22, 2024 by a team of lawyers led by Akoji Achimugu.

When the matter was called, they were not in court.

Justice Yilwa asked the FCCP lawyer, Chizenum Nsitem, the whereabouts of the suspects. Nsitem informed the court that though the matter was scheduled for the arraignment of the suspects, he was just briefed about the case and would need more time to study the case file.



The judge adjourned the matter until May 28 for arraignment.

The Nigerian Copyright Commission (NCC) had earlier filed charge against MTN Nigeria Communications Ltd; its CEO, Toriola; MTN Senior Executive Officer, Nkeakam Abhulimen; Fun Mobile Ltd, a telecommunications service provider; and Yahaya Maibe, its CEO.

The NCC, in the three-count charge marked: FHC/ABJ/CR/111/2024 presently before Justice Inyang Ekwo of a sister court, filed it on March 20, 2024.

The prosecution alleged that the defendants, between 2010 and 2017, "offered for sale, sold and traded for business, infringed musical works of Maleke Moye, an artiste, without his consent and authorisation."

The commission alleged that the defendants used Maleke's musical works and sound recordings with subsisting copyright, known as "caller ring back tunes" without the authorisation of the artiste.

The musical works and sound recordings of the musician allegedly infringed upon include "911, Minimini-Wana Wana, Stop Racism, Ewole, 911 instrumental, Radio, Low Waist, and No Bother."

They were also alleged to have illegally distributed the musical works to their subscribers, without authorisation, thereby infringing on the rights of the artiste.

In the third count, the suspects were alleged to have had in their possession, the musical works and sound recordings of the artiste, other than for their personal or domestic use.

The copyright commission said the alleged offence is punishable under Section 20 (2) (a) (b) and (c) of the Copyright Act, Cap. C28, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004.

Justice Ekwo had, on Feb. 25, adjourned the matter until May 15 for report, following the Attorney-General of the Federation (AGF)'s interest to take over the case.

# FG unveils new payment structure for LG officials

By Dave Oludare Oso

The Federal Government has announced that it has put in place a new system for paying local government officials directly from Abuja under the Federal Accounts Allocation Committee (FAAC).

This approach affects key officials in local government administration, with a total of eight to nine individuals receiving their salaries through the central payment system.

Under this new arrangement, each local government will have a Chairman and a Deputy Chairman, along with other key officials overseeing different sectors.

The positions include:

Chairman



Deputy Chairman

Secretary

Supervisory Councillor for Health

Supervisory Councillor for Agriculture

Supervisory Councillor for

Education/Social Services

Supervisory Councillor for Works

Statutory Adviser for People with Disability, Humanitarian Service & Traditional Institutions

Statutory Adviser for Security

Statutory Adviser for Youth Development & Community Work

Officials say this new system is meant to ensure that salaries are paid consistently and transparently.

By handling payments from Abuja, the government aims to maintain financial order in local administrations and reduce irregularities in salary distribution.

# Reps advance bill enabling Polytechnics to grant bachelor's degrees

By Friday Omosola

A proposed law allowing Nigerian polytechnics to confer bachelor's degrees has passed its second reading in the House of Representatives.

The bill, sponsored by Speaker Tajudeen Abbas and Lagos lawmaker Fuad Laguda of the All Progressives Congress (APC), seeks to amend the Federal Polytechnics Act of 2004.

One of its key provisions is an amendment to Section 3 of the existing law, which would add representatives from the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) to the governing councils of all polytechnics.



Additionally, Clause 3 of the bill proposes modifying Section 8 to require that candidates vying for the position of rector in federal polytechnics must hold a PhD.

Another major revision, outlined in

Clause 4, seeks to amend Section 15 to expand the powers of academic boards, allowing them to confer a Bachelor of Technology (B.Tech) degree on graduates.

During the debate, Laguda emphasised that the amendment would help polytechnics align with global educational standards and keep pace with evolving industry demands.

He urged his colleagues to support the bill, highlighting its potential to enhance technical education in Nigeria.

When Speaker Abbas called for a voice vote, the bill received widespread support from lawmakers.

# Why we didn't fully intervene in Lagos Assembly crisis – Lagos APC

By Adeniyi Yusuf

The Lagos State All Progressives Congress has explained why it did not intervene in the state's House of Assembly crisis.

The party also congratulated the house of assembly members for solving the issue.

This was stated in a statement obtained by The New Daily Prime and signed by Lagos APC Spokesman, Hon. Oluseye Oladejo.

According to the statement, the party congratulates the good people of Lagos State, most especially members of the Lagos State House of Assembly, the leadership and general members of APC for finding an amiable solution to the rift within the House of Assembly.

The statement read, "The crux of the disagreement which has been mainly to draw the attention of the general public and the party to intractable internal issues stretched the well tested and trusted internal conflict resolution mechanism of the party.

"As a truly Democratic Party, we refrained from needless interference in the affair of the legislature whose independence we hold in high esteem.

"However, the house deferred to the party when the conflict festered and defied all suggestions for settlement."



The party said it was notified of the issue ongoing in the chamber.

"We want to put it on record that the members of the house officially briefed the party about the onward development and requested for wise counsel from the party just a few days ago.

"It is noteworthy that 39 members of the Lagos State House of Assembly are APC members who won elections on our platform and are irrevocably committed to deliver on their mandate."

The party further stated that it met with all the members and proffered practical solutions which were sacrificial, stabilizing and in the best interest of the state.

It read, "You may wish to note that our role remained basically advisory and could only be binding if upheld in the

hallowed chamber of the House of Assembly.

"We commend all the members for jettisoning personal interests in favor of our collective over all goals and aspirations.

"There's no doubt that lessons have been learnt from the past incident and the house has been reunited and strengthened by renewed commitment and vigor to serve the state better.

"Overall, it is victory for democracy and underscored the sophistication of Lagos politics which is heads and shoulders above common standards. By this token, it's clear that the opposition rejoiced too early over a storm in a tea cup and will hopefully put their propaganda machinery in check."

# Sowore seeks release of passport for family visit amid court tensions

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

**F**ormer presidential candidate Omoyele Sowore has called on the Federal High Court in Abuja to release his international passport, allowing him to travel to the United States to visit his family.

Sowore, who is currently on bail, is facing a 16-count amended charge of cybercrime filed against him by the Inspector General of Police, Kayode Egbetokun.

Sowore's legal team presented the application on Monday, March 3, requesting the temporary release of his passport to enable him to travel for family purposes and a routine medical check-up.

Sowore, who has been on bail since January 30, 2025, was granted the release under stringent conditions, including a ₦10 million bond and the surrender of his passport. The court, however, stipulated that he must seek approval before travelling abroad.

At a previous hearing, Justice Musa Liman had suggested that the court would not oppose granting permission for Sowore to travel, provided that proper documentation was submitted.

Sowore's lawyer, Abubakar Marshall, informed the court that his client had a flight ticket and was seeking approval to visit his family in the United States, with plans to return in April for his



ongoing trial.

However, tensions arose in the courtroom on Monday as Justice Liman questioned the authenticity of the documents submitted in support of the application.

The judge expressed doubts over why Sowore had failed to mention the names of his wife and children in the affidavits, which he considered crucial in establishing the legitimacy of the request.

In addition, Justice Liman raised concerns about the validity of the flight booking, pointing out that the email ticket lacked the familiar format and, notably, Sowore's name was missing. Sowore's legal team later clarified the discrepancy.

Sowore, who pleaded not guilty to the charges when they were first read to him, has described the allegations as politically motivated and a witch-

hunt.

He faces charges related to allegedly using his social media platform, X (formerly Twitter), to refer to the Inspector General of Police with terms such as "Illegal IGP."

Prior to his arraignment, Sowore was invited for questioning by the Force Criminal Investigation Department over a tweet that the police deemed offensive.

The case has sparked tensions as Sowore and his supporters argue that the charges are a means of silencing his political activities and activism.

The outcome of the motion to release his passport will be decided in the coming days, as Sowore remains on bail awaiting his trial.

For now, the court has yet to make a ruling on the request, leaving Sowore's plans in limbo.

# Olubadan, Oba Olakulehin alive, not dead – Oyo govt

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Contrary to widespread rumours, Oba Akinloye Owolabi Olakulehin, the 43rd Olubadan of Ibadanland, is alive and not dead.

The rumours of the revered monarch's death began circulating on social media on Monday evening.

The Oyo State Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) spokesperson, Michael Ogunsina, has however, confirmed that the monarch is not dead in a terse statement, saying he spoke with the Commissioner for Culture and Tourism in Oyo State, Dr. Wasiu Olatubosun, who told him the Olubadan is alive.

Also, the Oyo State Government has denied media reports suggesting that the revered monarch is dead.

Also, in a chat with our correspondent, the Chief Press Secretary to the Olubadan, Gbenga Ayoade, debunked the death rumours, saying that the monarch is hale and healthy.

The statement shared by a prominent X user, Akin Akinwale reads; "The Commissioner for Culture and Tourism in Oyo State has confirmed that Kabiesi



Olubadan Oba Owolabi Olakulehin is alive, hale and hearty. Kindly ignore the purveyors of fake news. Olorun a bá wà di Baba mú."

Also, the Chief Press Secretary to the Olubadan, Gbenga Ayoade, debunked the death rumours, saying that the monarch is hale and healthy.

"By the time I left the palace around 8 pm, there was nothing of such incident. Things were moving well. There was no crisis. And when I contacted the palace after I left, they told me Baba is hale and healthy.

"The Olubadan just finished eating

amala. He is hale and healthy. It is just a rumour. There is nothing of such," he said.

Ayoade further debunked the rumour that the traditional ruler had been flown out of the town for medical attention.

He added, "Baba is still in Ibadan. He was not been flown anywhere. He is doing very fine."

Oba Akinloye Owolabi Olakulehin was crowned as the 43rd Olubadan on July 12, 2024.

He succeeded the 42nd king, Oba Mahood Lekan Balogun, who died on 14 March 2024 at 81

## 2027: LP dismisses merger plans, warns NLC against interference

By Dave Oludare Oso

The Labour Party (LP) has dismissed merger plans with any political party or association as the 2027 general elections inch nearer

The party's National Publicity Secretary, Obiora Ifoh, stating that such a move is not under consideration, following calls by the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) for rebranding efforts, including a possible merger or coalition in a statement on Monday in Abuja.

Ifoh warned the NLC leadership to steer clear of its administration and stop trying to make decisions on behalf of the party.

He was reacting to calls for rebranding efforts, including a possible merger or



coalition.

The NLC, had in a communique signed by its President, Joe Ajaero, after its National Executive Council meeting in Yola, Adamawa State, emphasised the need to reclaim the party and restore its ideological foundation.

The union directed its organ – the National Administrative Council – to take immediate steps to rebrand the party by merging or forming a coalition with like-minded parties to defend LP's interests and those of Nigerian workers in the party to reclaim the party.

In response, Ifoh reiterated that while the party is not considering a merger, it remains open to collaborations aimed at strengthening its position ahead of future elections.

The NLC has yet to recognize Julius Abure's leadership as the Labour Party's National Chairman following his re-election at a convention in Anambra last year.

## Ex-Immigration boss, Parradang gunned down in Abuja

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

A former Comptroller-General of the Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS), David Shikfu Parradang, has been killed by kidnappers in Abuja.

Citing sources, counter-insurgency expert, Zagazola Makama, said Parradang was abducted in the Area 1 axis of Abuja in the early hours of Tuesday.

Makama said after being trailed from a bank where he had withdrawn money, the assailants took the cash from him before eventually killing him.

“The tragic incident has raised fresh concerns over security in the Federal Capital Territory, particularly regarding the increasing cases of kidnappings and targeted attacks,” Makama said in a post.

Parradang, who served in the NIS for over



30 years, held various positions across the country, including Comptroller General.

He served in Kano, Lagos, Kwara, Enugu, and the Federal Capital Territory. He also attended several professional courses both within Nigeria and internationally.

In recognition of his service, he was awarded the national honour of Officer of the Order of the Federal Republic (OFR) and was a distinguished graduate of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS).

Security agencies have reportedly launched an investigation into the circumstances surrounding his abduction and killing, with efforts ongoing to apprehend the perpetrators.

The Nigerian Immigration Service is yet to confirm the tragic development but an official at Immigration headquarters in Abuja said it is true.

“The report is true but we need to wait for Immigration authorities to make official publication,” he said.

# Harassment allegation: Why we can't probe Akpabio – Senate

By Dave Oludare Oso

The Senate has stated that it cannot launch an investigation into the allegation of sexual harassment leveled against its president, Dr. Godswill Akpabio by the senator representing PDP, Kogi Central, Natasha Akpoti-Uduagha because there is no formal petition before it.

Senator Yemi Adaramodu, the Chairman Senate Committee on Media and Publicity, stated this during an appearance on ARISE TV on Monday.

Adaramodu, who represents APC, Ekiti South, also described Akpoti-Uduaghan's allegation against the Senate President as a storm in a teacup, even as he insisted that all senators, including the accuser (Akpoti-Uduaghan) must adhere to Senate rules in their conduct and utterances.

The senate spokesman explained that the Senate, as an institution, would not react to speculations or issues raised on a television programme or other media platforms.

Adaramodu noted that as an arm of government, parliamentary business was conducted within the confines of either the Senate or the House of Representatives.

He said, "The Senate does not conduct its affairs based on what is trending on social media. There must be a formal petition or a matter raised before the Senate before any investigation can



take place.

"There is no formal matter before the Senate regarding these allegations. The only issue before the Senate is Senator Natasha's non-compliance with the standing orders."

Speaking on the controversy surrounding sitting arrangement which sparked the chain of events, the Senate spokesman explained that his colleague, Akpoti-Uduaghan, must submit herself to rules of the Senate.

Citing Order 6 of the Senate rules which empowers the Senate President to assign seats to senators, he noted that all lawmakers, by the rules of the Senate, were expected to speak from their designated seats.

According to him, any breach of this rule undermines order in the chamber.

Adaramodu argued further that if a senator followed due process in

raising a point of order, no Senate President would deny him or her recognition.

He equally dismissed insinuations that the President of the Senate could intimidate his colleagues by denying them recognition, noting that the Senate President was one among equals.

The Senate spokesman also re-echoed views expressed by most of his colleagues who rejected the call by former Senate President, Bukola Saraki, on Senator Godswill Akpabio to submit himself to an open investigation to clear himself and the Senate of the allegations raised by Senator Akpoti-Uduaghan.

Senator Akpoti-Uduaghan is to appear before the Senate Committee on Ethics Privileges, and Public Petitions for investigation over her conduct at plenary last week.

# Aiyedatiwa reaffirms commitment to funding Ondo's tertiary institutions

By Friday Omosola

Ondo State Governor, Lucky Aiyedatiwa, has assured that his administration will continue to provide adequate funding for all government-owned tertiary institutions in the state.

He spoke at the 3rd Convocation Ceremony of the Olusegun Agagu University of Science and Technology (OAUSTECH) in Okitipupa on Tuesday.

Governor Aiyedatiwa commended the institution's remarkable growth in recent years and pledged more support, including backing its plans to establish a new Faculty of Medical Sciences.

Highlighting the critical role of education in societal development, the Governor reiterated his administration's commitment to enhancing the state's education sector through improved infrastructure and funding.

"As we gather here to celebrate the achievements of our graduating students, I want to assure you that our government remains dedicated to transforming the education sector. OAUSTECH is a reflection of our collective aspirations for academic excellence and intellectual advancement," he stated.

Governor Aiyedatiwa outlined several projects aimed at boosting the university's development.

These include the completion of the Maritime Transport and Logistics Academy at Ugbonla, the rapid execution of abandoned hostels under the Ondo State Oil Producing Areas Development Commission (OSOPADEC), and the rehabilitation of ageing facilities.



He also revealed ongoing discussions with the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) to complete an abandoned hostel project.

The governor underscored OAUSTECH's strategic role in the emerging Marine and Blue Economy fields, aligning with the state's plans to develop a deep-sea port.

He noted that the project would significantly drive economic growth and position Ondo State as a major maritime hub.

Commending the university's management, led by Vice-Chancellor Prof. Temi Emmanuel Ologunorisa, Governor Aiyedatiwa lauded the institution's steady rise in student enrollment, from 400 in the 2020/2021 academic session to 2,800 in 2024/2025.

He also celebrated two faculty members for their outstanding contributions to

academia: Dr Bartholomew Adeleke, recognised among the world's top two per cent of scientists by Elsevier and Stanford University.

Dr Alaba Joseph Adebayo won the 2025 Nigerian Society of Physical Sciences (NSPS) Best PhD Thesis Prize in Chemistry.

Congratulating the graduating students, the governor encouraged them to embrace continuous learning, innovation, and excellence in their future pursuits.

In response, Vice-Chancellor Prof. Ologunorisa expressed gratitude for the Governor's support and reaffirmed the university's commitment to sustained academic growth and excellence.

During the ceremony, 995 students received their first-degree certificates, with 31 graduating with First Class honours.

# DSS officers brutalise policeman at Abia Assembly complex

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

All hell broke loose at the Abia state House of Assembly, on Tuesday, as some operatives of the Department of State Services (DSS) allegedly beat a policeman attached to the Assembly to pulp.

The development almost turned to a free-for-all between the two sister security agencies as other policemen attached to the Assembly came out to defend their colleague.

Vanguard reports that the DSS personnel numbering about four held a staff of the Assembly riding in a vehicle for dropping off a passenger close to the entrance of the Assembly, against laid-down regulations.

The DSS personnel stationed near the entrance of the Assembly were said to



They quickly left the driver and pounced on the policeman, landing a barrage of blows and kicks on the hapless cop.

“The DSS personnel immediately pounced on the policeman and beat him up, questioning why he came to defend the staff. The policeman was only trying to explain the situation before he was assaulted,” an eyewitness said.

It was said that it took the intervention of a senior DSS personnel in the state to calm the situation, even as some legislators were said to have driven past the scene without stopping.

The police in the state is yet to react to the development as of the time of filing this report.

have approached the driver of the vehicle querying why he dropped off passenger at the gate, despite the order barring vehicles to stop in the area.

However, an attempt by the policeman attached to the Assembly to explain to the DSS personnel that the said driver of the vehicle, was also a staff of the House of Assembly infuriated them.

# 19 senators prevented from landing at Taraba airport

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

The senator representing Taraba South Senatorial District at the National Assembly, David Jimkuta, has said 19 senators were denied landing permit at the Kashimbilla airport in Taraba.

The All Progressives Congress senator made the complaint at his Senatorial Empowerment Programme in Wukari, Taraba, where he donated assorted items to the constituents on Tuesday.

He explained that the 19 senators were selected by the Senate to accompany him and to witness his empowerment programme.

The senator lamented that he got the report that the Kashimbilla airport was temporary shut down, after he had completed every procedure required to fly into the airport.



prevented the senators from gracing the occasion, thus depriving the constituents of the numerous financial and material empowerment that would have come their way from the visiting lawmakers and the senate itself.

Jimkuta also promised to support the security apparatus of the community with logistics to enhance security of lives and properties in the district.

He advised the beneficiaries of the empowerment programme not to sell their items but use them to better their lots.

Jimkuta, who is the Chairman, Senate Committee on Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Area Councils, said that the visit would have allowed the senators know the needs of the state to be of support.

He lamented that the development

Earlier, Chief David Kente, Chairman of the event, thanked the senator for the massive distribution of items to his constituents.

# Ekiti prophet bags life imprisonment for raping 13-yr-old girl

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

**4** 7-year-old Prophet Adeleye Akingbaso has been sentenced to life imprisonment for the heinous crime of raping a 13-year-old girl by an Ekiti High Court sitting in Ado-Ekiti, the state's capital town.

Delivering her judgment on Tuesday, Justice Blessing Ajileye said, "In conclusion, this court has found the defendant guilty on the two-count charge of rape and coercion and convicted him accordingly."

Akingbaso was first arraigned in September 2022 before Justice Ajileye on a two-count charge of rape and coercion.

The judge said this would serve as deterrent to others in the class of the convict who have not been caught up with by nemesis.

During the trial, the prosecution counsel, Taiwo Ajibulu told the court that the convict committed the offences sometime in July 2022, in Ado-Ekiti.

He said that the defendant raped the 13-year-old girl (names withheld) and also coerced the victim to engage in sexual acts to the detriment of her physical and psychological well-being.

According to him, the offences contravened Section 31(2) of the Child's Rights Law, Cap. C7, Laws of Ekiti State, 2012 and Section 4 of the Ekiti State Gender-Based Violence (Prohibition) Law, No.18 of 2019.



To prove its case, the prosecutor called four witnesses and tendered the defendant's statement and the girl's medical report as exhibits.

In another development, a magistrate court in Kano has sentenced TikTokers Ahmad Isa and Maryam Musa for posting vulgar videos online that violated the state's religious and moral sensitivities.

The social media users were arrested by the state's censorship board.

Garzali Maigari Bichi, the state's counsel, charged them with criminal conspiracy and posting illicit content.

They pleaded guilty to the charges and were sentenced to one year imprisonment each or a fine of N100,000.

Hadiza Muhammad Hassan, the judge, also cautioned them to be of good behaviour.

This is not the first time TikTokers have faced legal issues in Kano.

The Kano Hisbah Board has arrested several TikTok users in the state for violating Islamic laws.

In February 2024, Murja Kunya was apprehended and remanded in prison over allegations that she was involved in immoral acts.

G-Fresh al-Amin, another TikToker, was arrested for allegedly making inappropriate remarks in June 2024.

He was said to have recited Fatiha, the first chapter of the Quran, improperly during the last Salah celebration.

To prove its case, the prosecutor called four witnesses and tendered the defendant's statement and the girl's medical report as exhibits.

In another development, a magistrate court in Kano has sentenced TikTokers Ahmad Isa and Maryam Musa for posting vulgar videos online that violated the state's religious and moral sensitivities.

# Court remands seven over killing of Kwara final-year student, adjourns trial

By Friday Omosola

Seven individuals accused in connection with the murder of Mojisola Awesu, a final-year student, have pleaded not guilty to the charges brought against them before Justice Ibrahim Yusuf of the Kwara State High Court in Ilorin.

The court proceedings took place on Tuesday.

At the previous hearing, the defendants were remanded in a correctional facility due to the absence of their legal representatives.

The case revolves around the tragic killing of Awesu, who was a student at the Kwara State College of Health Technology, Offa.

Prosecuting the case, the state's Director of Public Prosecution (DPP), Idowu Akande, urged the court to proceed with the trial following the defendants' plea of not guilty.



However, the defense counsel objected, arguing that they were unprepared for trial since the last court sitting was scheduled for arraignment, not a full hearing.

Justice Yusuf subsequently adjourned the case until March 12, 2025, for further proceedings.

Happiness Adebayo and Timileyin Kolawole have been identified as the primary suspects, accused of orchestrating Awesu's murder on August 9, 2024.

Reports suggest that the victim was lured to Ilorin under false pretenses before being killed, with her remains later abandoned at a dumpsite in Warah community.

Happiness Adebayo, along with his parents, Adeniyi and Bukola, faces additional charges related to evidence tampering and obstruction of justice, offenses punishable under Kwara State's Penal Code Law of 2006.

Meanwhile, three other co-defendants—Adeoye Adeola, Lawal Aminat, and Peter Bulus—stand accused of aiding in the disposal of the victim's body, in violation of the Kwara State Prohibition of Dealing in Human Parts Law of 2018.

# FAAN urges aviation unions to embrace dialogue over airport concessions

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

The Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) has called on industry unions to engage in dialogue with the Federal Government concerning the planned concession of key airports.

This follows growing resistance from unions, including the Association of Nigeria Aviation Professionals (ANAP), the Air Transport Services Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (ATSSSAN), and the National Union of Air Transport Employees (NUATE), who have raised concerns about job security and transparency in the process.

The unions have voiced their opposition after the release of concession documents, which they claim excluded their representatives—contrary to prior agreements.



They have since issued a 14-day ultimatum for the government to reverse its decision.

In response, FAAN's Director of Public Affairs and Consumer Protection, Mrs. Obiageli Orah, stated that these concerns, along with issues regarding the delay in implementing a new minimum wage adjustment, were

addressed in a recent meeting with the Minister of Aviation, Festus Keyamo.

She confirmed that the minister had promised to include union representatives in the ongoing discussions to ensure transparency and that staff salary reviews would be expedited.

Despite assurances from Keyamo, including a pledge to protect jobs in the concession arrangement, the unions remain sceptical.

NUATE President Ben Nnabue highlighted their surprise upon discovering that the government was moving forward with airport concessions, contrary to earlier promises from the minister.

# NAFDAC bans multi-dose Artemether/Lumefantrine suspension

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

The National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) has announced an immediate ban on the registration, renewal, and variation of Multi-Dose Artemether/Lumefantrine dry powder for oral suspension in Nigeria.

In a statement issued on its website on Monday, March 3, NAFDAC cited concerns over the product's instability after reconstitution, which compromises its effectiveness over time.

The agency noted that this ban applies to both locally manufactured and imported versions of the drug.

NAFDAC explained that stability studies had revealed that the reconstituted form of Artemether/Lumefantrine becomes unstable, leading to a gradual loss of its therapeutic efficacy.

This degradation, the agency warned, could have severe health implications, including the exacerbation of malaria symptoms, increased complications, treatment delays, and in extreme cases, potentially fatal outcomes.

"The loss of effectiveness in the reconstituted oral suspension poses significant health risks, jeopardising patient safety and public health," NAFDAC stated, underscoring the importance of effective malaria treatment in the country.



The ban will halt the legal circulation of Multi-Dose Artemether/Lumefantrine dry powder for oral suspension in Nigeria.

NAFDAC has directed its zonal directors and state coordinators to conduct surveillance operations nationwide to ensure the affected products are removed from circulation.

Importers, distributors, retailers, healthcare professionals, and caregivers have been instructed to immediately cease the import, distribution, sale, and use of these unstable formulations.

NAFDAC also urged the public to report any sightings of the affected products, as well as any incidents involving substandard or falsified medicines, to the nearest NAFDAC office.

The agency also provided details on how healthcare providers and



consumers can report adverse events or side effects related to medicines through NAFDAC's e-reporting platforms available on its website.

NAFDAC confirmed that the ban would be communicated to the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Surveillance and Monitoring System to ensure international awareness and compliance with the decision.

The agency reiterated its commitment to safeguarding public health, stating, "NAFDAC remains customer-focused and agency-minded, prioritising the health and well-being of Nigerians."

This move is part of NAFDAC's ongoing efforts to ensure that only safe and effective medicines are available in the Nigerian market, reinforcing its role in the protection of public health.

## Catholic Bishop donates 93 wheelchairs to PWDs at Adamawa, promises more

By Helen Okechukwu

To improve mobility for People Living with Disabilities (PWDs), the Catholic Bishop of Yola Diocese, Rev. Stephen Mamza, presented 93 wheelchairs and disclosed that additional wheelchairs would be distributed to those who were unavailable at their various residential homes.

According to Voice of Nigeria, Mamza presented the wheelchairs on Tuesday in Yola, Adamawa State.

The bishop is the immediate past chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Adamawa chapter.

He explained that this initiative was made possible through a request for support from the members of the Knights of Columbus in the U.S., a charity



organization within the Catholic Church.

Highlighting the benefits of the wheelchairs, Mamza noted that the high cost of obtaining one had left hundreds of physically challenged individuals without mobility aids.

Read Also: Oyebanji presents N21m donation to PWDs

“They are also convenient because you can fold them and easily board a vehicle with them,” he added.

Mamza urged the government and wealthy Nigerians to follow the example of the donors and positively impact the lives of physically challenged individuals.

Speaking on behalf of the beneficiaries, Mr. John Anthony, Assistant Secretary of the PWDs, Adamawa chapter, expressed gratitude to the church for its generosity.

## Fubara enhances Rivers fire service for better emergency response

By Helen Okechukwu

Governor Siminalayi Fubara, has inaugurated the remodeled Rivers State Fire Service Headquarters at Isaac Boro Park Flyover, Port Harcourt.

The upgraded facility, equipped with modern firefighting tools, aims to improve emergency response and reduce fire disasters.

Governor Fubara highlighted past fire incidents, including the Mile One and Fruit Garden Market fires, where inadequate response led to severe losses.

“We lost the Mile One Market because we couldn’t respond adequately. We lost, even what we call, the Fruit Garden Market because we could not respond. Are we talking about houses, lives that have been lost in this State because of inadequate fire service?” he stated.



Read Also: Tinubu inducts RMAFC, FCC commissioners, Perm Secs

He commended the swift response of the state’s fire service in a recent tanker fire at Woji-Elelenwo Road, emphasizing its new found independence from multinational fire services.

“Some days ago, a tanker fell along the Woji-Elelenwo Road. If it were before, lives would have been lost. But

immediately, the fire service, not the multi-nationals, it was the Rivers State Fire Service that responded and arrested the situation. What else are we talking about?” he noted.

Commissioner for Special Duties, Dr. Samuel Anya, noted this was the first major upgrade since the 1960s, with features like a gym, sickbay, offices, and new fire trucks.

“Before now, we did not have any truck, and when incidents happen, we have to call the Federal Fire Service or call Agip or Shell Fire Service. But thank God that His Excellency, in his wisdom, has given us state-of-the-art facility, and we don’t need to call any other person again,” Anya stated.

Mr. Clifford Paul, Head of Local Government Administration, described the upgrade as a milestone in the state’s fire safety efforts.

# Market traders at high risk of hypertension, diabetes, say Experts

By **Helen Okechukwu**

Healthcare professionals have raised concerns over the increasing cases of hypertension and diabetes among market traders, attributing the trend to poor diet, financial constraints, and limited access to medical care.

Speaking during a free medical outreach in Lagos, the Medical Director of General Hospital Mushin, Dr. Oluyemi Taiwo according to the Punch, highlighted the urgent need for regular health screenings, especially among traders who are often unaware of their health conditions.

According to Taiwo, hypertension remains the most common ailment among market women, with many failing to monitor their blood pressure regularly while some can't afford the payment.

She noted that diabetes cases are also on the rise due to unhealthy eating habits and a lack of awareness about proper nutrition.

"Many are unaware of the severity of the condition because they do not regularly monitor their blood pressure or have access to proper care," she said.

She explained that the outreach was designed to bridge this gap by providing free medical check-ups and health education to the community.

The programme, organized in collaboration with Odi-Olowo/Ojuwoye Local Council Development Area, aimed to offer preventive healthcare services and



promote awareness of non-communicable diseases.

Data from the World Health Organization indicates that diabetes affects 4.3% of Nigerians, while hypertension-related complications account for 25% of emergency admissions in urban hospitals.

Additionally, non-communicable diseases contribute to 27% of all deaths in the country.

Chairman of Odi-Olowo/Ojuwoye LCDA, Rasaan Ajala, reaffirmed the council's commitment to improving healthcare access for residents.

He emphasized the importance of regular check-ups and urged residents to take proactive steps in managing their health.

The outreach event provided market traders with free consultations in various medical fields, including

obstetrics, pediatrics, ophthalmology, and dentistry.

Medications were distributed at no cost, while optometrists provided free eyeglasses to those in need.

Taiwo stressed that proper diagnosis and tailored treatment plans are crucial in addressing these health challenges. She urged individuals to move away from self-medication and instead seek professional medical advice to prevent severe complications.

"We believe that by regularly engaging with the community, we can help prevent the onset of serious health issues through early intervention and education," she added.

With more healthcare initiatives being introduced, experts believe that increased awareness and accessibility to medical services will help curb the rising cases of hypertension and diabetes among market traders.

# Electricity tariff hike: Is the NLC Still the Voice of the People?

By **Damilola Olufemi**

Over time, the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) has been a vocal advocate for workers' rights and social justice in Nigeria. However, over the past five years, Labour's threats—widely reported in the media—have been increasingly dismissed as empty rhetoric, failing to inspire real action.

Many stakeholders believe these pronouncements are mere political theatrics, designed to deceive the public into believing that the NLC still champions the struggles of ordinary citizens.

With low turnout at protests and strikes across the nation, Labour's influence appears to be fading, raising doubts about its relevance in today's political landscape. Yet, some still argue that the NLC remains a formidable force, capable of shaping national policies when the stakes are high.

In this report, Damilola Olufemi examines the effectiveness of the NLC's actions in the eyes of the Nigerian public, particularly considering its recent threats to shut down operations over the planned electricity tariff hike.

Recently, the Labour union threatened to embark on a strike over data tariff increases and epileptic power supply across the country. The union issued a warning to mobilize workers and citizens nationwide in protest if the Federal Government proceeds with the proposed electricity tariff hike.

This comes as the National Union of Electricity Employees (NUEE) also warned the Federal Government against the planned tariff increase, arguing that Nigerians should not be paying for darkness.

The union stated: "It is an economic violence against the working class and the broader Nigerian populace."

While the NLC has previously issued threats without follow-through, its recent stance on data tariff hikes and the failing power supply has been particularly contentious.

Does the NLC Still Matter?

Public sentiment on Labour's effectiveness remains divided. For some, the NLC remains an important voice for Nigerians, defending



the rights of workers and citizens against unfavourable government policies.

Lagos resident Tunde Oyedele expressed support for the union, stating: "The NLC has been a voice for the voiceless. They're fighting for our rights, and we should support them."

Similarly, another Lagos resident, Kazeem Alimi, commended the union for standing up against government policies that negatively affect Nigerians.

"The NLC has been doing well. It has actually been standing up for Nigerians against unfavourable government policies."

However, others remain sceptical, arguing that while the NLC has historically played a strong role, its failure to take decisive action in recent years has weakened its credibility.

**Nigerians React to Ineffective NLC**

Some stakeholders see the threats as a necessary step to push for change. Others argue that it will only lead to more hardship for the largely impoverished citizens.

One of the many ineffectiveness of the NLC recently was the national protest in 2024, which recorded a low turnout across the country.

In Rivers State, there was a poor turnout that greeted the exercise. The protest couldn't take off early as NLC officials were waiting for enough people to gather before commencement.

The poor turnout had earlier emerged from the reactions of participants in radio call-in programs. Many expressed a lack of interest in the protest, pointing to their distrust of labour, and complaining that they did not have the people's welfare at heart. They also pointed to previous alleged failures of the NLC in mobilizing people. The result was the same in Jos, Zamfara, Kano, and FCTA.

Also, in Kaduna where the protest was called by the NLC, there was a low turnout of protesters.

In 2020, the NLC vowed to mount massive pressure on job creation. However, after five years, no impact has been made.

**Continue reading  
on next page**

## Cont from page 21

“The Nigeria Labour Congress will mount a very robust campaign for the generation of mass jobs and for already existing jobs to be decent. To this end, the NLC is perfecting plans for a National Job Summit in 2020. We will get stakeholders: experts, policymakers, concerned demographics and workers on a roundtable to find answers and solutions to Nigeria’s burgeoning unemployment crisis,” former President Ayuba Wabba said in 2020.

“I’m not sure if the NLC is really making a difference,” says Abuja resident, Amaka Uzoh. “They keep threatening strikes, but nothing seems to change.”

However, a Benin -City resident and public servant, Paul Chinaza, stated that the NLC may have to devise other options aside from strike to tackle the government’s anti-people policies.

“I understand that the NLC is fighting for our rights, but a strike will only make things harder for us. We’re already struggling to make ends meet.”

Meanwhile, a Public Affairs analyst, Dr. Ibrahim Adebayo, while speaking with New Daily Prime, said that the NLC faces significant challenges in its quest for social justice.

“One of the major challenges is the lack of trust among citizens. Many Nigerians question NLC’s motives and effectiveness. To overcome this, the NLC needs to be more transparent about its activities and finances,” he stated.

He further noted that the NLC’s limited resources are a major hindrance to its

effectiveness.

“The NLC needs to form strategic partnerships with other organisations and stakeholders to amplify its voice and mobilise resources. This will enable them to have a more significant impact on policy decisions.”

Dr Adebayo stressed the need for the labour union to adopt innovative approaches to advocacy and mobilisation.

“The NLC needs to think outside the box and come up with creative ways to engage citizens and push for change. This could include leveraging social media, collaborating with influencers, and using data-driven advocacy,” he added.

As the debate continues, one thing is clear: the NLC’s effectiveness in bringing about positive change in the country is a matter of perspective. While some see it as a powerful force for change, others question its approach and impact.

The NLC’s commitment to social justice is undeniable, but its ability to deliver on its promises remains a subject of debate.

Dr Adebayo noted, “The NLC has a crucial role to play in shaping Nigeria’s future, but it needs to adapt and evolve to remain relevant.”

Only time will tell if the umbrella labour union can overcome its challenges and achieve its set goals. One thing is certain, however: the NLC’s fight for social justice will continue to be a major issue of discourse in Nigeria.

As the NLC moves forward as a catalyst of

positive change, it is still essential for Nigerians to remain engaged and informed about its varied activities. By doing so, the citizenry can hold the labour union accountable and ensure that it remains a powerful force for positive change.

Adebayo added, “The NLC’s effectiveness is not just about its ability to deliver on its promises, but also about its ability to inspire and mobilize citizens to demand change. If the NLC can achieve this, then it will truly be a force to be reckoned with.”

Moreover, the NLC’s ability to collaborate with other stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organizations, and private sector entities, will be crucial in achieving its goals.

Adebayo further noted, “The NLC cannot do it alone. It needs to build alliances and partnerships to amplify its voice and boost its impact.”

The NLC’s recent engagement with the federal government over the issue of data tariffs and irregular electricity is a step in the right direction. However, more needs to be done to ensure that labour’s demands are met and that Nigerian citizens benefit from its advocacy.

The NLC’s relevance and effectiveness in the polity is a complex issue that requires proper and unbiased evaluation of the many dynamics affecting its functionality.

By adapting to changing circumstances, building alliances, and inspiring citizens to demand change, the NLC can remain a truly potent ally for positive change in Nigeria.

# Psychotic Nigerian can stay in the UK because he believes he is affected by Witchcraft

By New Daily Prime

The increasing use of human rights laws by foreign criminals to avoid deportation from the UK has become a growing concern in recent months.

In the latest case, a psychotic Nigerian armed robber and crack cocaine dealer has been spared deportation because he would be considered “possessed” in his home country.

This case follows similar rulings where convicted foreign criminals have successfully used human rights claims to remain in the UK. Examples include:

An Albanian criminal who avoided deportation after claiming his son had an aversion to foreign chicken nuggets.

A Pakistani paedophile convicted of child sex offences who was allowed to stay as deportation was ruled “unduly harsh” on his own children.

Serial Offender Avoids Deportation Over Mental Health Concerns

The Nigerian-born offender, whose identity is protected for legal reasons, has spent much of his time in the UK in a secure mental health hospital, claiming that he “hears voices all the time”. However, he has since been released into the community.

His criminal record includes:

2011: Jailed for seven years for armed robbery of a brothel.

2018: Jailed again for supplying crack cocaine.

A deportation order was issued in April 2014, but he appealed on human rights grounds and remains in Britain a decade later.

A judge has now ruled that he cannot be deported because he believes he is possessed, and the treatment available in Nigeria is insufficient to address his condition.

Concerns Over Public Safety

Despite his criminal history and ongoing mental health struggles, the offender has been allowed to stay in the UK. Experts



warn that he presents a “high risk of serious harm” to the public and is still addicted to crack cocaine. However, because he is undergoing treatment in the UK, and similar medical care is reportedly unavailable in Nigeria, the court ruled in his favor.

Belief in Demonic Possession’ a Key Factor in the Case

Upper Tribunal Judge Stephen Smith ruled that a previous judge had made a legal error.

He stated:

“We note the appellant’s recurring belief that his mental ill-health is a result of being possessed. Expressing this belief would increase the likelihood that others in Nigeria would see his illness as a manifestation of possession.”

A report by Amnesty International submitted as evidence stated:

“On return to Nigeria, the appellant is likely to encounter widespread attitudes that confirm and amplify his belief in demonic forces and witchcraft as the root of his problems. He is, moreover, at substantial risk of being identified as suffering from demonic forces and faces a resultant risk of being targeted as a result.”

A doctor’s assessment confirmed that the man suffers from a trauma-related disorder with psychotic features.

The report further noted that:

He experiences intrusive memories and nightmares.

He is preoccupied with demonic forces ‘playing tricks on his mind’.

His sleep is severely affected, and he claims that demons prevent him from moving upon waking up.

‘I Want to Live a Normal Life’ – Offender Speaks Out

Judges ruled that deportation would require a comparison between the specialized treatment he currently receives in the UK and the lack of such provisions in Nigeria.

The man told the court:

“I really want to stay away from crime. I don’t want to get into that predicament again ... I want to live a normal life.”

While living in the community, his key worker reported that he:

Attends the gym five to six days a week.

Works as a volunteer once a week.

Public Outrage Over UK’s Handling of Foreign Criminals

Alp Mehmet, chairman of Migration Watch UK, criticized the decision, stating:

“This is a deeply concerning case. Why should Britain take responsibility for the health problems of foreign criminals?

This man has serious mental health issues, but why should it be up to Britain to solve them, fund them, and allow him to stay when he has committed serious crimes? It highlights major flaws in our immigration laws.”

A new hearing is expected to take place in the near future.

This case adds to the growing list of convicted foreign criminals who have successfully used human rights laws to avoid deportation.

The ruling has sparked concerns over public safety, legal loopholes, and the UK’s immigration policies, raising questions about whether the system is being abused.

# Every moment with you is a gift, actor Itele celebrates wife on birthday

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Taking to his Instagram page to celebrate his woman on her special day, he referred to her as his greatest blessing and his peace.

Popular Nigerian actor, Ibrahim Yekini-Itele is celebrating his wife as she turns a year older today (Tuesday).

Taking to his Instagram page to celebrate his woman on her special day, he referred to her as his greatest blessing and his peace.

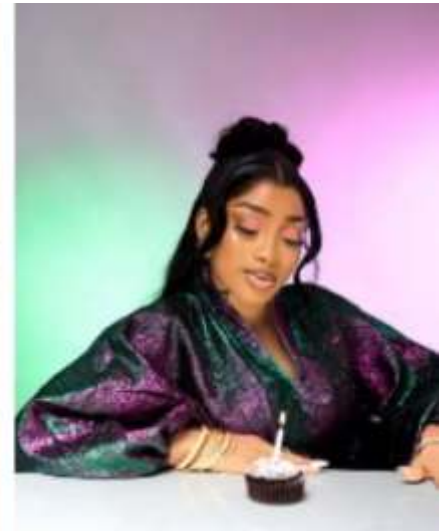
He wrote;

"Happy Birthday to the Queen of my heart!

Today is a special day because it marks the day a queen was born-my greatest blessing.

Every moment with you is a gift, and I am endlessly grateful for your love, kindness, and the joy you bring into my life.

You are my peace, my strength, and my happiness. May this new year bring you



all the love, success, and happiness you deserve. I pray that God continues to bless you abundantly, grant you good health, and fulfill your heart's desires.

Ibrahim Yekini Bakare (born January 21, 1980), also known by his stage name Itele D Icon, is a highly acclaimed Yoruba actor and TV personality in Nigeria.

His exceptional talent and skills as an actor, screenwriter, movie producer, and

director have significantly impacted the entertainment industry.

An award winning actor, bakare was born in Lagos State, but experienced childhood in the northern area of Nigeria, explicitly in Kano State.

Ibrahim Yekini is acclaimed for Kesari (2018), Késári: The King (2023) and Romeo (2022).

# Never compare me to Wizkid again, May D warns fans

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Nigerian singer Akinmayokun Awodumila, also known as Mr. May D, has stirred up a lot of reactions online with his latest message to fans who compare him to Wizkid, whose real name is Ayo Balogun.

May D, famous for his hit song "Ile Ijo," took to Twitter to boast about his impact on the Nigerian music scene.

He cautioned fans and critics not to make comparisons with anyone in the music industry, particularly Wizkid.

"Don't ever compare me to anyone in this industry again !! Especially Wiz!! I'm a different breed!!! GOD's baby," May D wrote.



In the midst of the controversy surrounding his remarks about Wizkid, Mr. May D shared a story about when Wizkid sang his song "Too Fine" alongside Kel.

"I remember when I went to an event and Wizkid was performing my song with Kel "too fine" and I was in the crowd I still love him till date but never compare," he added.

May D gained fame when he signed a record deal with the now-defunct P-Square's Square Records in 2011.

In August 2012, it was announced that he had parted ways with the label.

The Ile Ijo coroner believes that his issues with P-Square played a major role in shaping his career in music.

# Bukky Wright unveils 'The Return of Omotara Johnson' project

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

**V**eteran actress Bukky Wright has announced her latest film, *The Return of Omotara Johnson*, a project she believes will leave a lasting mark on the entertainment industry.

In an interview with Ebuka Obi-Uchendu on Channels TV, Wright shared her excitement about the film, revealing that production is complete and post-production is underway in the United Kingdom. She hinted that this could be her biggest project yet, fueling anticipation among fans.

## Multiple projects in the pipeline

Alongside *The Return of Omotara Johnson*, Wright has several other projects in the works. She highlighted *Something About the Briggs*, which is currently playing in cinemas. Additionally, two more films, *Red Circle* and *Asoebi Diary*, are set for release soon.

“Well, right now, *Something About the Briggs* is in cinemas. We have *Red Circle* coming up, *Asoebi Diary*, and of course, keep an eye out for *The Return of Omotara Johnson*. We’ve already filmed it, and we’re editing it in the UK. I tell you, it’s big—if not the biggest project I’ve ever worked on,” she said.



## The legacy of Omotara Johnson

Wright’s announcement has sparked excitement among movie lovers, many of whom remember the original *Omotara Johnson* film. The first installment was a fan favorite, making this sequel one of the most anticipated Nollywood releases of the year.

Her involvement in multiple projects also underscores her commitment to storytelling and her passion for the Nigerian film industry. With a career spanning decades, Wright has built a reputation for delivering powerful performances. Her latest projects show that she has no plans of slowing down.

## Excitement builds for upcoming releases

As *Something About the Briggs* continues to attract audiences in cinemas, industry insiders are eager to see what Wright brings to the table with her upcoming films. The buzz surrounding *The Return of Omotara Johnson* suggests that it could be a game-changer.

With post-production in progress and several projects lined up, Bukky Wright is proving once again why she remains a force in Nollywood. Fans eagerly await the official release date for *The Return of Omotara Johnson* and the other exciting films she has in store.

# Kano TikTokers imprisoned for posting offensive videos

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

**A** Kano magistrates' court has sentenced two TikTok users to one year in prison or a fine of N100,000 each for their alleged misconduct on the platform.

The court ruled that their videos contained vulgar content and violated religious and moral values in the state.

The defendants, Ahmad Isa and Maryam Musa live in Ladainai, Hotoro Quarters. The Kano State Censorship Board arrested them and brought them before the court.

State counsel Barrister Garzali Maigari Bichi led the prosecution. He charged them with criminal conspiracy and distributing illicit content on social media. When presented with the charges, both pleaded guilty.

Justice Hadiza Muhammad Hassan presided over the case. She delivered the sentence and urged the defendants to conduct themselves properly in the future.

## Arrest and charges

The Kano State Censorship Board acted on reports about the TikTok videos. Authorities found the content offensive and unsuitable for public viewing. Officers traced the suspects, arrested them, and handed them over to the court for prosecution.

During the hearing, the prosecution argued that the defendants knowingly posted videos that went against societal norms. The court found enough evidence to support the charges. Both defendants admitted to their actions, which led to the swift



sentencing.

## Court's decision

Justice Hassan emphasized the importance of respecting religious and moral values in society. She stated that social media users must be mindful of the content they share. The court offered the defendants an option: serve one year in prison or pay a fine of N100,000 each.

The ruling aligns with the state's commitment to enforcing content regulations. Authorities in Kano have been cracking down on online activities that violate cultural and religious principles.

## Reactions to the verdict

The case has sparked mixed reactions among residents and social media users. Some support the decision, saying it promotes decency in online spaces. Others argue that the punishment is too harsh for a social media offence.

Legal experts point out that this case highlights the growing scrutiny of

digital content in Nigeria. They warn that content creators must be aware of local laws to avoid legal trouble.

## Growing concerns over online content

The rise of social media has led to increased concerns about the spread of offensive material. In Nigeria, authorities continue to monitor and regulate online content to maintain cultural and religious values.

The Kano State government has previously taken action against individuals accused of spreading inappropriate content. This case serves as a reminder that digital platforms are not beyond the reach of the law.

## Conclusion

Ahmad Isa and Maryam Musa now face the consequences of their online activities. Their case underscores the importance of responsible content creation. As social media continues to evolve, users must balance freedom of expression with respect for local laws and traditions.

# Odumodublvck is the best rapper from Africa – MayD

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

**N**igerian singer Akinmayokun Awodumila, better known as MayD, has shared his thoughts on rising rap sensation Odumodublvck.

According to him, Odumodublvck is currently the top rapper in Africa.

MayD made this statement on his official X account, where he praised the young artist. In his post, he wrote, “Can’t lie @Odumodublvck\_ the biggest rapper from Africa ATM!!” His words quickly gained attention, sparking discussions among music lovers and fans.

Odumodublvck’s rise to fame

Odumodublvck, whose real name is Tochukwu Gbubemi Ojogwu, has made a name for himself in the Nigerian rap industry. Known for his unique blend of hip-hop, Afrobeat, and street-style flows, he has captured the attention of many listeners. His energetic delivery and bold lyrics have set him apart from other rappers.

Over the past year, he has released several hit songs, earning him a strong fan base. His music resonates with young Nigerians who appreciate his raw and unapologetic style. Many believe he is bringing a fresh wave to African rap, and MayD’s endorsement only adds to the conversation.

Reactions to MayD’s statement

MayD’s post quickly spread on social media, drawing mixed reactions. Some fans agreed with his claim, praising Odumodublvck’s



talent and influence. Others, however, felt that other African rappers deserve the title.

A few users pointed out that Nigeria has a strong rap industry, with artists like M.I Abaga, Olamide, and Phyno paving the way. Some also mentioned top rappers from Ghana and South Africa, arguing that the title of “Africa’s best rapper” is highly competitive.

Despite the debate, MayD’s statement has sparked renewed interest in Odumodublvck’s work. Many listeners who had not paid much attention to his music are now curious to explore his songs.

MayD’s influence in Nigerian music

MayD himself is not new to the Nigerian music industry. He gained fame in the early 2010s with hit songs like “Ile Ijo” and “Soundtrack.” He was once affiliated

with P-Square’s Square Records before going independent.

While his career has seen ups and downs, he remains a respected figure in the industry. His endorsement of Odumodublvck carries weight, as he has witnessed the evolution of Nigerian rap firsthand.

Odumodublvck’s future in African rap

With more artists recognizing his talent, Odumodublvck’s future looks bright. He continues to push boundaries and redefine the rap game in Nigeria. If he maintains his current momentum, he could become one of the most influential rappers on the continent.

MayD’s statement may be bold, but it highlights the rapper’s growing impact. As fans continue to debate, one thing is clear—Odumodublvck is a name to watch in African music.

# Reddit co-founder Ohanian joins US bid to buy TikTok

By Dave Oludare Oso

**R**eddit co-founder, Alexis Ohanian announced Monday that he is joining a US bid to buy TikTok, becoming a strategic advisor to the effort.

Ohanian said he would join an initiative called “The People’s Bid for TikTok,” launched by real estate and sports tycoon Frank McCourt’s Project Liberty initiative, in a campaign joined by investor Kevin O’Leary, known from the “Shark Tank” television show in which entrepreneurs pitch ideas in bids for venture capital.

The group’s approach includes a crowdfunding element aimed at giving individuals and small businesses a stake in the future of TikTok, which is facing a US law ordering it to divest from its Chinese owner ByteDance.

“I’ve spent my entire career building tech that puts power back in people’s hands — that’s what got me excited about The People’s Bid,” Ohanian said in a release.

“This isn’t just about TikTok, it’s about fundamentally rewiring how the internet works.”

Project Liberty has promised to integrate a custom-made blockchain platform into TikTok that will let users control and own their data.

TikTok returned to Apple and Google app stores in February but



still faces being banned in the United States over national security concerns about the data it gathers on users.

The popular video-sharing app briefly went dark late on January 18 and disappeared from app stores, to the dismay of millions of users.

The service was restored when US President Donald Trump began his second term in January and ordered a 75-day pause on enforcing the law, signed by his predecessor Joe Biden and passed overwhelmingly by Congress.

The TikTok ban was passed due to concerns that the Chinese government could exploit the app to spy on Americans or covertly influence US public opinion through data collection and content manipulation.

The law ordered the company to divest from ByteDance or be banned.

As the clock ticks down on TikTok’s reprieve, which ends early April, several contenders are in the running to buy the app.

The list of TikTok suitors includes Microsoft, Oracle and a group that includes Internet personality MrBeast, whose real name is Jimmy Donaldson.

TikTok does not appear overly motivated regarding the sale of the app, and Chinese firm DeepSeek’s AI chatbot has grabbed the tech community’s attention — potentially taking the spotlight off TikTok.

# Trump's tariffs on Canada, China, Mexico draw quick retaliation

By Dave Oludare Oso

President Trump's imposition of blanket 25% tariffs on all goods imported from Canada and Mexico drew swift vows of retaliation from the United States' immediate neighbours on Tuesday.

China, which was hit with a second 10% tariff on U.S. exports since Trump took office, bringing the total levy to 20%, immediately announced its own reciprocal measures — deliberately targeting America's agricultural sector.

Below is a look at the measures being imposed or planned by Canada, China and Mexico, and the rhetoric coming from officials in those countries as Trump ramps up his trade war against one of America's biggest adversaries, and its two closest neighbours.

Canada announces reciprocal tariffs; Trudeau calls Trump's move "a very dumb thing to do"

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced immediate retaliation to the new U.S. tariffs in a statement late Monday evening. He said Canada would impose a \$30 billion counter-tariff on goods imported from the U.S. immediately, escalating to \$155 billion worth of American products within the next 21 days.

Trudeau has said previously that Canada would target American beer, wine, bourbon and home appliances, along with Florida orange juice, with its measures.

"Canada will not let this unjustified decision go unanswered," Trudeau said, adding that he was already discussing with Canada's provincial leaders various non-tariff measures that could be imposed if the Trump administration doesn't lift its tariffs.

"Because of the tariffs imposed by the U.S., Americans will pay more for groceries, gas, and cars, and potentially lose thousands of jobs. Tariffs will disrupt an incredibly successful trading relationship. They will violate the very trade agreement that was negotiated by President Trump in his last term," Trudeau said.



In a news conference Tuesday, Trudeau lashed out at President Trump's decision.

"We should be working together to ensure even greater prosperity for North Americans in a very uncertain and challenging world," he said. "Now, it's not in my habit to agree with the Wall Street Journal, but Donald, they point out that even though you're a very smart guy, this is a very dumb thing to do."

"Today the United States launched a trade war against Canada, their closest partner and ally, their closest friend. At the same time, they're talking about working positively with Russia, appeasing Vladimir Putin, a lying murderous dictator. Make that make sense," said Trudeau. "We two friends fighting is exactly what our opponents around the world want to see."

Trudeau also said Canada will challenge the U.S. action by filing dispute resolution claims at the World Trade Organization and through the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, the trade deal that replaced NAFTA.

Trump responded with a post on social media threatening to raise tariffs further: "Please explain to Governor Trudeau, of Canada, that when he puts on a Retaliatory Tariff on the U.S., our Reciprocal Tariff will immediately increase by a like amount!"

Some of Canada's governors have pushed

for a tougher response.

"If they want to try to annihilate Ontario, I will do everything, including cut off their energy with a smile on my face. And I'm encouraging every other province to do the same; Quebec, Manitoba, BC [British Columbia], we all have to act in unison," Doug Ford, the Premier of Ontario, Canada's most populous province, said at an industrial convention on Monday. "They rely on our energy. They need to feel the pain. They want to come at us hard. We're going to come back twice as hard."

Ford said retaliatory measures that Canada could consider going forward included halting shipments of critical minerals such as uranium, potash and nickel, in addition to cutting the energy supply, which he said could leave 1.5 million people without power in New York, Michigan and Minnesota, potentially causing significant disruptions to the U.S. economy.

He said he had also asked officials in his province to end billions of dollars in contracts with the U.S. and to stop the import of American alcohol to Ontario.

"It's going to be an absolute disaster for both countries," he acknowledged in a separate interview with NBC News. "I don't want to respond, but I will respond like they have never seen before."

# Ukraine's Army faces collapse within six months

By New Daily Prime

Ukraine's battlefield resilience could collapse within six months without continued U.S. military aid, top military officials have warned, as President Donald Trump announced a pause on all U.S. military supplies to the war-torn nation.

A senior U.S. Defence Department official confirmed that military aid packages not yet delivered—including weapons currently in transit or stockpiled in Poland—will be suspended pending further review.

The decision has raised serious concerns about Ukraine's ability to withstand Russian advances, particularly as Moscow ramps up attacks on strategic positions in Kherson, Odesa, and Sumy.

'We Will Last Six Months Without U.S. Aid'

Speaking to Al Jazeera, Lieutenant-General Ihor Romanenko, former deputy chief of Ukraine's General Staff, warned: He expressed that Europe alone will not fill the gap left by the U.S., a sentiment echoed by Nikolai Mitrokhin, a researcher at the University of Bremen, who estimated that Ukraine's current U.S. military supplies could only last until mid-summer or early autumn if rationed carefully.

As Ukraine faces intensified Russian assaults, Kherson Governor Oleksandr Prokudin reported that Moscow has ordered troops to "force the river at any cost," even though Russian intelligence acknowledges the mission is suicidal.

Documents recovered from fallen Russian soldiers confirm that casualties include both new recruits and seasoned veterans who have been fighting for over two years.

Meanwhile, Russian forces are stepping up their offensive, targeting:

Kherson's Lvove and Zmiivka villages,



Strategic marshy islands at the mouth of the Dnipro River, Key road and rail bridges east of Kherson city.

The attacks are reportedly part of Moscow's efforts to seize new territory ahead of potential peace negotiations between Russia and the U.S., talks that have largely sidelined Ukraine.

Zelensky Under Pressure as Trump Signals a Hardline Approach

Trump, speaking at the White House on Monday, hinted that Zelensky's political future was uncertain if he did not agree to a peace deal with Russia.

"If somebody doesn't want to make a deal, I think that person won't be around very long. That person will not be listened to very long."

Trump's National Security Advisor, Mike Waltz, reinforced this stance in an interview with FOX News, stating:

"The American people's patience is not unlimited, their wallets are not unlimited, and our stockpiles and munitions are not unlimited. The time to talk is now."

With U.S. support no longer guaranteed,

Zelensky now faces increasing pressure to negotiate with Moscow, despite previously stating that a peace deal with Russia remains "very, very far away."

European Allies Scramble to Respond

In response to the U.S. aid suspension, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen has proposed a "Rearm Europe" plan, which could unlock €800 billion (£661.59 billion) in additional defense spending.

The proposal, sent to national governments on Tuesday, includes:

€150 billion in loans for EU countries to boost military spending.

Increased joint defense procurement for arms and ammunition.

Accelerated production of weapons and military technology to assist Ukraine.

Von der Leyen stated:

"Europe is ready to massively boost its defense spending—not just to respond to Ukraine's urgent needs, but also to take more responsibility for our own security."

Despite this bold initiative, questions remain over whether Europe can effectively replace the U.S. as Ukraine's primary military supplier.

# Journalist shot dead in Mexico, 3rd such murder this year

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

Authorities in Mexico were investigating the killing of a local reporter Monday in the central state of Guanajuato, the country's homicide leader.

The state prosecutor's office identified the victim only by his first name, but local media outlets said the victim was Kristian Zavala, who covered local goings on in the city of Silao on his Facebook page.

Zavala and another person were killed Sunday, according to the office. According local media, Zavala and his companion were shot dead by unknown individuals aboard a vehicle after midnight

It was at least the third killing of a media worker so far this year, though it remained unclear if the motive was connected to his work.

The U.S.-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) and Mexico's chapter of Artículo 19 demanded a thorough investigation.

Violence in Guanajuato is linked to ongoing conflict between the Santa Rosa de Lima gang and the Jalisco New Generation cartel, one of the most powerful in the Latin American nation.

Last month, the Trump administration formally labeled eight cartels as terrorist groups, including the Jalisco cartel.

For years, Mexico has been one of the world's most dangerous countries outside a war zone for journalists. A record number of journalists were killed worldwide in 2024, the Committee to Protect Journalists said in a report released last month.

How journalist killings are counted

Sometimes authorities say the victim was



a journalist, but usually only if it was someone well known. More commonly, press advocacy organizations share the information.

The information, however, can vary between sources. In many cases, like that of Zavala, the victims cover very local events using social platforms rather than for a traditional newspaper, television or radio station.

In those cases, it's also common that the coverage is only one of the person's jobs. They may also drive a taxi or do something else to make ends meet.

The same authorities who are looked to for answers in some cases quickly dismiss a journalist's work as a possible motive or suggest they were involved with unseemly people or business.

The number of journalist killings is down, but does that mean it's safer?

No. Mexico had its deadliest year for journalists in 2022 with 13 killings, according to CPJ and Artículo 19. In 2023 and 2024, that fell to half or fewer, but non-lethal attacks shot up.

In 2023, Artículo 19 recorded 561 such

attacks, which includes disappearances as well.

Hyperlocal journalists like Zavala are frequently the most exposed. They cover crime in places where cartels operate with impunity or cover local politics where justice is difficult to access and politicians may consider it easier to simply silence a critical voice.

All but a handful of media workers' killings and abductions remain unsolved.

"Impunity is the norm in crimes against the press," the the Committee to Protect Journalists said in a report on Mexico last year.

What do authorities do?

Press advocates criticize authorities for frequently downplaying aggression toward the press and sometimes not investigating at all.

During the administration of former President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, he used his daily press briefings frequently to attack journalists, calling them enemies or adversaries and leaving the impression they were fair game.

# EPL: Referee Michael Oliver suspended over suspicious refereeing

By Dave Oludare Oso



Referee Michael Oliver has been handed a suspension after his controversial officiating in the FA Cup fifth-round tie between Crystal Palace and Millwall.

He will now miss a Premier League match this weekend.

Recall that he failed to stop play after Palace striker Jean-Philippe Mateta was kicked in the head and suffered an injury.

Oliver only showed a straight red card to Millwall goalkeeper Liam Roberts after being asked to review the incident on the VAR pitchside monitor.

Mateta was stretchered off the field after receiving lengthy treatment.

The 27-year-old was assessed for a head injury and required specialist care, receiving 25 stitches to patch up a severe laceration to his left ear at St George's Hospital.

Former Premier League referee and PGMOL chief Keith Hackett criticized Oliver's initial decision.

Hackett said: "What an appalling challenge, and I have to ask the question—why did one of the world's top referees fail to immediately show a red card?"

"It is, frankly, an absolute no-brainer."

However, Oliver will still referee the Champions League clash

between Bayern Munich and Bayer Leverkusen on Wednesday night.

The Professional Game Match Officials Limited (PGMOL) stated that "referee rotation is normal" and that it is "more noticeable" when high-profile referees are involved.

Former Crystal Palace owner Simon Jordan criticized Roberts' challenge, describing it as "diabolical" and "cowardly."

Jordan questioned whether Roberts had a duty of care to fellow professionals, adding that the challenge had potentially ruined the game for Millwall.

# Legendary Brazilian footballer, Ronaldinho unveils STAR10 cryptocurrency token

By Dave Oludare Oso

Legendary Barcelona and Brazilian footballer, Ronaldinho Gaúcho has launched a new cryptocurrency token called STAR10 on the Binance Smart Chain.

The token offers holders exclusive benefits, including signed memorabilia and access to an AI-powered assistant.

Ronaldinho promoted STAR10 on social media, inviting fans to join him in this new venture.

Upon its release, STAR10 experienced an immediate surge in value, climbing over 20% and reaching a peak price of \$0.2492. Later, the token was trading at \$0.23, reflecting a 13% gain since launch.

With a circulating supply exceeding 82 million tokens, STAR10 has already amassed a market capitalization of nearly \$20 million, with a fully diluted valuation of \$241 million. Its trading volume has surpassed \$26 million, according to data from CoinGecko.

Ronaldinho's involvement in cryptocurrency has not been without controversy. In June 2024, he hinted at a return to the crypto industry, urging his followers to embrace digital assets.

However, blockchain investigator ZachXBT reminded the public of Ronaldinho's past associations with questionable crypto projects, including World Cup Inu, Atari Chain, Lord Society NFT, and meme coins like WATER and Baby Doge. Lionel Messi also endorsed the WATER coin alongside Ronaldinho.

One of the most significant scandals involving Ronaldinho was the 18k



Ronaldinho project, a cryptocurrency initiative linked to a \$61 million pyramid scheme that falsely promised investors daily returns of 2%. Ronaldinho denied involvement, claiming his name and image were used without his consent.

The launch of STAR10 coincided with a surge in the memecoin sector, with the market cap increasing from \$20 billion in January 2024 to over \$120 billion by December.

This 500% rise was fueled by social media hype, celebrity endorsements, and viral trends, boosting coins like DOGE, SHIB, and PEPE.

DWF Labs noted that community engagement and aggressive marketing strategies were pivotal, while platforms like Twitter and TikTok played crucial roles in spreading ideas quickly and attracting influencers.

Despite the successful launch, security concerns emerged quickly. Web3 security firm GoPlus Security initially warned that the token contract allowed its creator to burn any holder's tokens at will. This capability would have let the contract owner destroy investor assets without

warning.

This security issue raised red flags among potential investors, especially given recent incidents in the celebrity token space.

However, blockchain security firm SlowMist later reported that the token's creator had renounced ownership over the contract, effectively eliminating this particular risk.

Blockchain analytics firm Onchain Lens revealed that an individual with close ties to Ronaldinho made nearly \$5 million in profit through early token purchases.

This insider reportedly acquired 20.79 million STAR10 tokens for 48 BNB (approximately \$29,247). After selling a small portion immediately, the wallet still holds tokens valued at about \$4.93 million.

Another suspicious transaction was reported by Lookonchain. Their analysis found a wallet that purchased 122.45 million STAR10 tokens (12.24% of the total supply) for just 80 BNB (\$50,000).