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Tinubu appoints Prof Jega as Special Adviser on Livestock Reform

By Oluwatosin Ologun



President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has appointed Professor Attahiru Muhammadu Jega, former chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), as Special Adviser and Coordinator of the Presidential Livestock Reform.

President Tinubu announced the appointment on Friday via a statement signed by his media aide, Bayo Onanuga.

According to the statement, the President hopes to drive meaningful progress in the livestock sector and further strengthen national development efforts.

In July 2024, Tinubu created a new ministry called the Ministry of Livestock Development.

This followed a recommendation by the National Livestock Reforms Committee the Ministry of Livestock Resources is to, among other deliverables, reduce the decades-long gory conflict between farmers and nomadic cattle herders nationwide.

Jega, former vice chancellor of Bayero University, co-chaired the Presidential Livestock Committee with President Tinubu.

The committee delivered comprehensive recommendations that underscored sustainable livestock reforms. One recommendation was the

creation of the Livestock Ministry, which now has a minister.

Jega, 68, is a member of the International Elections Advisory Council and the pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the Governing Council of Sa'adatu Rimi University of Education in Kano State.

He served as the chairman of INEC between 2010 and 2015.

His appointment as special adviser to the President will reinforce the gains of the presidential committee and ensure the continued momentum of the reforms already in motion.

THE NEW DAILY PRIME RATE CARD

PUBLIC NOTICE COLOUR

PRODUCT COLOUR

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SIZE	TOTAL RATE
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10X5	255,238.00
10X4	206,890.50
10X3	179,608.00
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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
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5X6	123,749.50
5X5	110,000.00
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3X3	28,000.00
3X2	17,400.00
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10X5	237,500.00
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POLITICAL COLOUR

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POLITICAL BLACK & WHITE

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PHOTO NEWS (4X4)	53,333.30	4,250.00	57,583.30
PRESS RELEASE (4X4)	30,000.00	2,250.00	32,250.00
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Senate suspension: Natasha kicks, heads for court

By Dave Oludare Oso

Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan has announced her intention to challenge the six-month suspension slammed on her after her spat with the Senate President, Godswill Akpabio over seating arrangements in the senate in court.

Victor Giwa, the legal counsel to the Senator Akpoti-Uduaghan, dismissed the Senate resolution as a violation of a court order.

Giwa spoke with journalists on Thursday after the Kogi lawmaker was suspended by the senate and walked out from the National Assembly complex.

This comes as former Vice President Atiku Abubakar and the Labour Party presidential candidate in the 2023 election, Peter Obi expressed displeasure over the handling of the case.

They faulted the Senate for not giving Akpoti-Uduaghan ample time to present her sexual harassment complaint against Akpabio.

Giwa said the Senate Committee on Ethics and Privileges acted in violation of a court order that allegedly restrained it from taking further action on the matter pending the determination of a motion on notice.

Giwa said, "The suspension is void, it cannot even take any effect. The suspension is illegal because there is a court order that restrained the Senate Committee on Ethics and Privileges from taking further action.

"The committee disobeyed a valid court order that was served on them, making a mockery of the chamber that is supposed to uphold the law."

He argued that if Senator Akpoti-Uduaghan had not sought legal intervention, the suspension might have stood.



The lawyer also expressed conviction that with a court order explicitly directing the Senate to halt disciplinary actions, the decision to suspend her was null and void.

Giwa further revealed that legal action would be taken against those responsible for violating the court's directive.

"We are going back to court. The case is coming up in about two weeks, and we will inform the court that despite being served, including the Senate President, they still acted in violation of the order by suspending the plaintiff," he stated.

When asked if there were plans to escalate the matter to international organisations, Giwa said, "For now, we are handling it locally. But, of course, the world is watching. The Senate must adhere to international best practices, which dictate that once a case is in court, no further action should be taken on it."

He highlighted that the Nigerian Constitution supersedes the Senate Standing Orders, stating that every citizen had the right to seek redress in court when their civil rights are breached.

"Section 6, subsection 6 of the Constitution grants every citizen the right

to seek redress when their civil rights are violated. Senator Natasha has done exactly that. Her suspension is an attempt to silence her for alleging wrongdoing against the Senate President, which amounts to a breach of her right to a fair hearing," he added.

The Senate imposed a six-month suspension on the lawmaker without pay over what it called the breach of its Standing Orders following her claim of sexual harassment, an allegation that Akpabio denied.

In an earlier interview with Arise Television on February 28, the Kogi senator, who made headlines the previous week after a public dispute with the Senate President over seating arrangements in the Senate, accused Akpabio of making sexual advances towards her.

Her sexual harassment complaint was referred to the Committee on Ethics, Privileges, and Public Petitions for disciplinary review, which later recommended her suspension.

**Continue reading
on next page**

cont from page 4

The resolution of the Senate followed the consideration and adoption of the report of the committee during plenary on Thursday.

The report of the committee during plenary on Thursday.

The Chairman of the Committee, Senator Neda Imasuen (LP, Edo South) presented the report on the floor of the red chamber.

The report, signed by all 14 members of the committee, offered seven recommendations against the Kogi Central senator.

The committee found her guilty of all allegations against her as she did not attend the investigative hearing to defend herself.

In its recommendations, it proposed that Akpoti-Uduaghan may have the six-month suspension reduced only if she tenders a formal apology to the Senate President for her outburst during last week's plenary session.

As part of the suspension, the legislator's salary and security details will be withdrawn and her office locked but her legislative aides would receive their remuneration throughout the period.

Meanwhile, the Senate rejected the Imasuen-led committee's recommendation of an apology, saying such would only be entertained at the end of the six-month suspension.

The seven-point recommendations by Imasuen read, "One, that the Senate do suspend Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan for six months for her total violation of Senate standing rules, bringing the presiding officer and the entire Senate to public opprobrium.

"Two, that for the Senate to consider lifting or reducing the duration of the suspension, Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan shall submit a written apology to the Senate before reconsideration.

"Three, that the Senate suspend Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan with effect from March 6, 2025, from all legislative activities.

"Four, that her office be locked up for the duration of her suspension and that she hands over all Senate properties in her

possession to the Clerk of the National Assembly.

"Five, that for the duration of her suspension, she must not be seen within the vicinity of the Senate or the National Assembly, including her staff.

"Six, that her salaries and allowances, including those of her legislative aides, be suspended, and that all security details assigned to her be withdrawn for the period of her suspension.

"Seven, that during her suspension, she be barred from representing herself locally and internationally as a Senator of the Federal Republic of Nigeria."

After the adoption of the report, Senator Akpoti-Uduaghan briefly interrupted the proceedings.

She said, "This injustice against me will not be sustained. I will fight against it."

The Kogi politician was, thereafter, escorted out of the chamber by the Sergeant-At-Arms personnel in the chamber.

She rebuffed efforts by journalists to speak with her as she drove away in her black Sports Utility Vehicle.

Earlier before her suspension, she had resubmitted a sexual harassment petition against Senator Akpabio during plenary, this time, on behalf of her constituents, led by one Zubairu Yakubu.

After confirming there were no legal barriers, Akpabio directed her to lay the petition before the Senate.

Her petition was then referred to the Senate Committee on Ethics, Code of Conduct, and Public Petitions, chaired by Imasuen with a mandate to report back within four weeks.

Atiku, Obi, LP condemn suspension

However, Akpoti-Uduaghan's suspension has continued to reverberate across the polity with former Vice President Atiku Abubakar and the Labour Party presidential candidate in the 2023 election, Peter Obi expressing displeasure over the handling of the case.

The former Vice President, speaking through his media adviser, Paul Ibe, told

journalists that Nigerian leaders are not creating an environment that enables women to thrive and contribute to the country's development.

The Waziri Adamawa expressed concern over the Senate's decision against Akpoti-Uduaghan, calling it an attack on affirmative action.

He stated, "Has there been an investigation? No. So, Atiku's position hasn't changed. Whichever way you look at this, there is a concern. Any society that does not optimally use the assets available to it, particularly by giving women the opportunity to thrive, is failing.

"About half of our population is women, and if we don't deliberately create an environment conducive to promoting women's interests—whether in politics, business, or any other human endeavour—we are underutilizing our potential.

"We're not providing half of our population the opportunities to thrive and add value to society. With International Women's Day coming up on March 8, it raises serious concerns. The Senate's action of suspending Natasha for six months without conducting an investigation is an attack on affirmative action."

Similarly, Obi, who spoke through his former media aide and the National Coordinator of the Obidient Movement Worldwide, Tanko Yunusa, also frowned on the development.

"The situation is quite disappointing," he lamented.

On its own, the leadership of the Labour Party on called on the Nigerian Senate to reconsider the suspension of the legislator.

In a telephone interview, the National Publicity Secretary of LP, Obiora Ifoh, described the verdict as a disheartening and shoddy arrangement.

He said, "The suspension is draconian. The woman, I am told, was not given the opportunity to properly defend herself. That is where I and most Nigerians have issues. Don't forget she is representing an entire senatorial zone with eight or more local governments.

Tinubu approves employment of 774 Health Fellows

By Dave Oludare Oso

President Bola Tinubu has approved the employment of 774 National Health Fellows, a pivotal initiative led by the Federal Ministry of Health to foster sustained improvements within Nigeria's healthcare system.

The president announced the fellows' employment on Thursday during the programme's launch at the State House in Abuja.

Nigeria's development partners, senior government officials, and traditional leaders, including the Olu of Warri, Ogiame Atuwatse III attended the ceremony.

The employment of these fellows, selected from each local council, stemmed from the recommendation of Professor Ali Pate, Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare.

Professor Pate lauded their selection as the best among 360,000 applicants, underscoring the merit-based nature of the process.

The President's surprising gesture drew wild applause from the fellows and other guests at the event.

President Tinubu praised the bold initiative and the rigorous selection process, highlighting its significance.

President Tinubu stated, "This programme is a transformative initiative that underscores my administration's commitment to harnessing the immense potential of Nigeria's greatest asset—its young people. With over 60% of Nigerians under 30, we boast one of the most energetic, resourceful, and dynamic youth populations globally. This presents unparalleled opportunities to drive innovation, economic prosperity, and social transformation."



President Tinubu said the National Health Fellows initiative is part of several platforms provided by his administration to empower Nigerian youths, enabling them to excel and contribute to national development.

The President encouraged the fellows, pioneers in the health service programme, to fully embrace the opportunities and view themselves as future leaders of Nigeria's health care system.

"Your selection is more than a recruitment; it proves our commitment to creating a nation where equal opportunities are available to every Nigerian, irrespective of social status, gender, or creed. You are this country's greatest asset, and we are committed to fostering a bright future where Nigeria stands as a nation of pride for all," the President affirmed.

Tinubu emphasised the programme's vision to cultivate a pipeline of health leaders to drive meaningful, sustained change and innovation within Nigeria's healthcare sector.

"Healthcare is a critical pillar of national development. No country can thrive if its people are unhealthy. An unsustainable health program poses risks, while sustainable development hinges on a robust healthcare system. You are the pillars of this vision, and I am proud to be here with you today," said President Tinubu.

Professor Pate, expressed his enthusiasm for the initiative and the crucial role the 774 fellows will play in revolutionising Nigeria's health sector.

"I am here to inform you that the social movement to improve the health of Nigerians has begun, and we are already witnessing positive results," he remarked.

Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Wale Edun, Youth Minister Ayodele Olawande, and the Olu of Warri, Ogiame Atuwatse III, offered the fellows additional encouragement with inspiring messages.

Nigeria's livestock ministry holds workshop to tackle farmer-herder conflicts

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

The Federal Ministry of Livestock Development (FMLD), in collaboration with the Strengthening Peace and Resilience in Nigeria (SPRiNG) programme, has intensified its efforts to address the escalating farmer-herder conflicts in Nigeria through a high-level workshop aimed at refining the Ministry's five-year strategic plan.

The workshop, held on Thursday, March 6, brought together key stakeholders from government ministries, peace commissions, civil society, academia, and international development partners.

The event focused on developing inclusive, conflict-sensitive strategies to improve the security and productivity of Nigeria's livestock sector.

Alhaji Idi Mukhtar Maiha, the Minister of Livestock Development, opened the workshop with a strong call for structured conflict resolution frameworks to address the insecurity that has plagued the sector.

He highlighted the challenges facing the sector, including limited access to land, water, and grasslands, which have often fueled disputes between farmers and herders.

"This sector of the economy faces conflicts and insecurity, which have contributed to restricted access to key lands, water, and grassland resources across the country," Maiha said.

He reaffirmed the Ministry's commitment to ensuring peace, security, and social cohesion as part of its five-year strategic plan.



Magdalene Lagu, Head of Governance and Stability at the British High Commission in Abuja, also addressed the workshop, stressing the UK's continued commitment to Nigeria's stability and its support through the UK-Nigeria Security and Defence Partnerships.

The discussions focused on refining FMLD's Peacebuilding, Security, and Social Cohesion Pillar, ensuring that initiatives are practical, conflict-sensitive, and aligned with local realities.

Participants identified strategies to improve dispute resolution, coordinate livestock migration, and build trust between farming and pastoralist communities.

Dr. Ukoha Ukiwo, Team Leader of SPRiNG, described the workshop as a crucial step towards sustainable peace.

He expressed optimism that the outcomes would help craft effective interventions that could mitigate conflicts and promote socio-economic

development in the livestock sector.

The SPRiNG programme, funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office, aims to strengthen conflict management institutions, boost public confidence in key institutions, and create greater incentives for peace in Nigeria.

The Federal Ministry of Livestock Development was established in 2024 by President Bola Tinubu to initiate reforms that will transform the livestock sector, promote economic growth, and address the ongoing conflicts between herders and farmers.

The Ministry is currently working on implementing the 10-National Livestock Development Plan prepared by the Presidential Committee on Livestock Development.

The workshop marks a significant step towards addressing long-standing issues and improving the future of Nigeria's livestock sector, ensuring both peace and productivity for all stakeholders.

Ex-Labour Party campaign DG, Doyin Okupe is dead

By Dave Oludare Oso

A prominent Nigerian physician, politician, and former director general of the Labour Party campaign organisation, Dr. Doyin Okupe, has died.

He passed away at the age of 72 on Thursday.

According to sources close to the family, Dr. Okupe had been critically ill in the weeks leading up to his demise.

His health had reportedly deteriorated significantly, prompting concern among his loved ones and supporters.

According to reports, his death was linked to cancer, marking the end of a long struggle with the illness.

In October 2023, Okupe was hospitalized with prostate cancer and was flown to Israel for treatment.

However, it was learnt that his condition did not improve as he and his family expected.

Okupe was first diagnosed with prostate cancer 16 years ago and later developed sarcoma in his right shoulder.

THE MANDOYIN OKUPE

Adedoyin Ajibike Okupe, better known as Dr. Doyin Okupe, is a Nigerian physician and politician who co-founded Royal Cross Medical Centre and was the National Publicity Secretary of National Republican Convention (NRC).

He was once detained under General Sani Abacha, and subsequently disqualified from participating in United Nigeria Congress Party (UNCP) primaries; later on, he was a governorship aspirant of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Ogun State.

Okupe was Special Assistant on Media and Publicity to President Olusegun Obasanjo and Senior Special Assistant on Public Affairs to President Goodluck Jonathan.

Background

Born on 22 March 1952 in Iperu in Ogun State of Nigeria, Okupe is the son of Chief Matthew Adekoya Okupe, who was a banker with Agbonmagbe Bank.

His brothers are Kunle Okupe, Owo Okupe, Wemi Okupe and Larry Okupe, and his sisters are Aina Okanlawon and Bisola Ayeni. He attended St. Jude's School in Ebute Metta,



Lagos, Igbobi College in Yaba, Lagos and the University of Ibadan in Ibadan, Oyo State.

Although Okupe is a medical doctor, he is also active in party politics. He was also once a publisher of a health newspaper called Life Mirror.

Medical career

Okupe worked for some years for government and private hospitals, including St. Nicholas Hospital, Lagos, before establishing the Royal Cross Medical Centre (also known as Royal Cross Hospital) in Obalende, Lagos, along with his colleagues, Dr. Seyi Roberts and Dr. Ladi Okuboyejo. He was the Managing Director (MD) of Royal Cross Medical Centre.

According to Olusegun Osoba in a July 2019 interview with The Nation, on the night of 23 August 1994, Okupe and Dr. Seyi Roberts saved the life of his gatekeeper from a gunshot wound to the head.

Political career

During the Second Nigerian Republic, Okupe was a House of Representatives candidate of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) in the 1983 Nigerian parliamentary election.

In the Third Nigerian Republic, Okupe became the National Publicity Secretary of National Republican Convention (NRC). He was one of the representatives of the NRC that observed the collation of the 1993 Nigerian presidential election results at the headquarters of the National Electoral Commission (NEC).

The General Sani Abacha military government detained Okupe on 3 October 1996. Later on, in March 1998, during the

aborted transition programme of Abacha, he was among the politicians who were disqualified from participating in United Nigeria Congress Party (UNCP) primaries.

At the advent of the current Fourth Nigerian Republic, Okupe was appointed Special Assistant on Media and Publicity to President Olusegun Obasanjo.

Later on, in 2002, he was one of the governorship aspirants of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) primaries in Ogun State, and was a major contender along with Gbenga Daniel. In 2012, President Goodluck Jonathan appointed Okupe as his Senior Special Assistant on Public Affairs.

Okupe was publicist at various times to Nigerian presidential aspirants of the PDP, including President Olusegun Obasanjo, President Goodluck Jonathan, Bukola Saraki and Vice President Atiku Abubakar.

In July 2017, he announced his decision to leave the PDP to join the Accord Party, but for accepting to be the Chairman of the Campaign Media Council of Bukola Saraki for the 2019 presidential primaries of the PDP, the Accord Party expelled him in September 2018.

He subsequently returned to the PDP, and became a spokesman of the Presidential Campaign Organisation of Atiku Abubakar, the PDP candidate for president in the 2019 Nigerian presidential election.

Okupe joined the Labour Party ahead of 2023 Nigerian general election and stood in as the running mate and vice presidential candidate of the Labour Party until a substantive candidate was picked.

Personal life

Okupe is married to Aduralere Okupe with two children.

While Okupe supported the PDP candidate, Atiku Abubakar in the 2019 Nigerian general election, his son Ditan supported Muhammadu Buhari.

In May 2020, it was reported that Okupe and his wife, Aduralere tested positive COVID-19 on 23 April 2020 and have recovered.

In January 2021, his other son, Bolu Okupe, based in Paris, came out as gay on his Instagram page.

He and his son Bolu supported Peter Obi for 2023 Nigerian presidential election.

Renowned novelist, Mabel Segun dies at 95

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

World-renowned Nigerian author, diplomat and novelist, Mabel Segun, has died.

She was aged 95.

The development was announced by her family in a statement late Thursday.

Mabel Segun was also a tennis champion, broadcaster, and diplomat.

The family's statement disclosed that Segun, a retired administrator, died in the early hours of Thursday.

It added that her funeral arrangements will be announced later by the family.

The statement read, "It is with gratitude

to God for a life well spent in the pursuit of excellence in Literature, Broadcasting and Sports that we announce the passing of our beloved mother, grandmother and great grandmother, Mabel Dorothy Okanima Segun (nee Aig-Imoukhuede)."

Born on February 18, 1930, Segun was a true pioneer, breaking barriers throughout her illustrious career.

The novelist left behind a legacy of remarkable achievements and contributions to Nigerian society.

Segun attend university in Nigeria, graduating from the University College Ibadan (now University of Ibadan) in



1953 with a degree in English Literature, Latin, and History.

This achievement marked the beginning of a distinguished academic and professional career that would take her to various parts of the country and beyond.

Tinubu mourns Doyin Okupe

By Friday Omosola

President Bola Tinubu has expressed deep sorrow over the passing of Prince Doyin Okupe, a veteran politician, medical doctor, and strategist who played a crucial role in Nigeria's political landscape.

In a statement issued by his Special Adviser on Information & Strategy, Bayo Onanuga, the President extended his condolences to Okupe's family, friends, and associates, acknowledging his significant contributions to governance and national development.

Okupe, a prominent son of Iperu-Remo in Ogun State, served as the Senior Special Assistant on Public Affairs to former President Goodluck Jonathan and as the Special Assistant on Media to former President Olusegun Obasanjo.

His political career spanned over three decades, during which he held key positions, including National Publicity Secretary of the National Republican Convention (NRC).

He was also a notable figure in the United Nigeria Congress Party (UNCP), the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), and the Accord Party, where he served as the national leader.



Most recently, Okupe was the Director-General of the Labour Party's Presidential Campaign for the 2023 election.

Beyond politics, he made remarkable contributions to the medical field as the co-founder of the Royal Cross Medical Centre in Lagos and as the publisher of Life Mirror, a health-focused newspaper.

President Tinubu described Okupe as a bold

and articulate advocate for national progress, noting that his experience and insights remained invaluable to the nation.

He also commiserated with the people and government of Ogun State, particularly the Iperu-Remo community, mourning the loss of a distinguished leader.

The President prayed for the repose of Okupe's soul and for God's comfort upon his family and loved ones.

Harassment claims: Omokri challenges Natasha to take lie detector test

By Dave Oludare Oso

A former presidential media aide to ex-President Goodluck Jonathan, Reno Omokri has challenged just-suspended lawmaker, Senator Natasha Akpoti to undergo a lie detector test following her allegations of sexual harassment against Senate President Godswill Akpabio.

In a detailed video posted on social media, Omokri revealed that Akpoti-Uduaghan made similar allegations against him in 2021.

He said: “On Tuesday, October 12, 2021, Natasha Akpoti had a dispute with me and after the dispute, she went on social media and accused me of sexually harassing her.

“She claimed that at a state banquet at the Aso Rock Presidential Villa, held by President Goodluck Jonathan for the visiting Kenyan President, Uhuru Kenyatta on Tuesday, May 6th 2014, I had sexually harassed her.

“Now the thing is, a month before, the Chibok girls had been abducted, and as one of his presidential spokesmen, President Jonathan sent me to the United States as a special envoy to try to clean up Nigeria’s image. I left in April and I wasn’t back in Nigeria until the end of May. So, obviously, Natasha Akpoti lied.

“So what I did, I went on social media and I published my passport stamp, with my passport leaving Nigeria, And then, entering the United States, showing the stamps, and I also published a first-class



British Airways ticket showing that I left Nigeria for the United Kingdom, and from the United Kingdom to the United States, and I wasn’t in Nigeria throughout the time when Natasha Akpoti accused me. So she obviously lied.

“So what happened is that after the newspapers published my evidence, Natasha deleted all traces of her accusation. She deleted everything. She had made a video insulting me, my wife and my newborn daughter. She also deleted that.

“The next day, I got a phone call from a prominent Christian clergyman and they felt that as a fellow pastor, I would listen to a senior member of the body of Christ. He called me on three-way with Emmanuel Oritshejolomi Uduaghan, Natasha Akpoti’s present husband.

“They appealed to me, they quoted the scriptural references about Christians taking each other to court and I listened to them and we settled the matter out of court. I was paid a large amount of money as damages, and I let the matter go.

“So fast forward to four years later, Natasha Akpoti had a dispute with the Senate President. After that dispute, she went on Arise TV and accused him of sexual harassment. It sounds like deja vu.

“The thing is, I do not know if those allegations are true. But one thing I know is that Natasha Akpoti is a liar, a known liar. So, here’s the thing. The best predictor of future behaviour is past behaviour.”

Omokri said before Nigerians crucify Akpabio, Akpoti-Uduaghan should be compelled to take a lie detector test.

“Come out. Take the test. You know, be escorted by one senator that is in your support and another senator that is just objective,” he said.

He added that because he had evidence, the Kogi senator retracted her false allegations and deleted every trace of them.

“Until she takes a lie detector test, the presumption is that she is acting on her past behaviour,” he concluded.

Court orders final forfeiture of Emezie-linked \$1.4m

By **Elizabeth Jenrola Oso**

A Federal High Court in Lagos on Thursday ordered the permanent forfeiture of \$1.4 million linked to fraud involving the embattled former governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, Godwin Emezie.

Justice Ayokunle Faji, in his ruling, stated that the sum was proven to be proceeds of unlawful activities and must be forfeited to the federal government.

The judge ruled in favour of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) which had established the illegitimacy of the funds.

The EFCC, through its counsel, Bilkisu Bahri-Bala, informed the court that \$1,426,175.14 was found in the account of Donatone Limited at Titan Trust Bank (Account No. 2000000500), and investigations confirmed the money was



linked to fraudulent activities.

An affidavit deposed by EFCC investigator David Jayeoba revealed that intelligence reports led to the discovery of funds concealed in Donatone Limited's account.

According to Jayeoba, the investigation uncovered a scheme involving Emezie and his associates, including Donatone Limited directors Uzebo Anthony and Adebajo Olurotimi, who allegedly helped hide and disguise the proceeds of illicit activities.

Between 2021 and 2022, when foreign exchange was scarce in Nigeria, many international companies struggled to access forex.

The EFCC alleged that Emezie and his associates collected bribes and kickbacks from businesses seeking forex approvals.

One such entity, identified as NP, reportedly paid \$26,552,000 into Donatone Limited's account at Titan Trust Bank.

Justice Faji had previously issued an interim forfeiture order on May 30, 2024, before ruling on the permanent forfeiture of the funds.

Abia Labour Commissioner, Sunny Onwuma is dead, aged 61

By **Elizabeth Jenrola Oso**

The Abia State Government has announced the death of Sunny Onwuma, the Honourable Commissioner for Labour and Productivity.

According to a statement signed by the Commissioner for Information, Prince Okey Kanu, Onwuma passed away in the early hours of Monday, March 3, 2025, after a brief illness.

A native of Ihie in Ugwunagbo Local Government Area, Onwuma was an alumnus of Government College Umuahia and Abia State University, Uturu.



He was a dedicated member of the Labour

Party and a respected leader in his community.

He was 61 years old and is survived by his wife and four children.

The Abia State Government extended its condolences to his family, friends, and the people of Abia, praying for the strength to bear the loss.

The family is expected to announce burial arrangements in due course.

Shockwaves as Senate suspends Natasha! Nigerians react with fury

By Adeniyi Yusuf

The suspension of Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan has sparked outrage across Nigeria, following allegations of sexual harassment that have ignited widespread debate and division.

In a report gathered by the New Daily Prime, the legal counsel for the Kogi lawmaker, Victor Giwa, dismissed the Senate's resolution as a violation of a court order. It was also indicated that the lawmaker would challenge the suspension in court.

This as the Senate imposed a six-month suspension without pay on Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan, citing a breach of its Standing Orders following her sexual harassment allegations, which were denied by Senate President Godswill Akpabio.

In an interview with Arise Television on February 28, the Kogi senator, who had already made headlines the previous week due to a public altercation with the Senate President over seating arrangements, accused Akpabio of making sexual advances towards her.

Her complaint was then referred to the Committee on Ethics, Privileges, and Public Petitions for a disciplinary review. The committee later recommended her suspension after reviewing the matter.

The Senate's resolution came after considering and adopting the report from the committee during Thursday's plenary session. Senator Neda Imasuen (LP, Edo South), Chairman of the Committee, presented the report to the floor of the Senate. The report, which was signed



by all 14 members of the committee, included seven recommendations against the Kogi Central senator.

The committee found Akpoti-Uduaghan guilty of all allegations, noting that she failed to attend the investigative hearing to defend herself. One of the recommendations suggested that her six-month suspension could be reduced if she issued a formal apology to the Senate President for her outburst during the previous week's plenary.

As part of her suspension, Akpoti-Uduaghan's salary and security details will be revoked, and her office will be locked. However, her legislative aides will continue to receive their pay during the suspension period.

The Senate, however, rejected the committee's recommendation for an apology, stating that any such gesture would only be considered at the end of the six-month suspension.

In an investigation by the New Daily Prime, some Nigerians have lent their voices on the issue.

Reacting to the matter, A notable member of Labour Party, Ife Salako, said Akpabio withdrew Natasha's security details sighting the case of a car that was handed over to him after he became Senate President.

He said, "Car to security details? Senator Lawan was even trying to let him know Natasha is only suspended and that does not mean she's stopped being a Senator but of course Natasha may be deprived of security detail while Akpabio continues to EAT!"

A Nigerian on X, @IruohaWinner, said, "My question is, why is Akpabio not suing Natasha for false accusations, if what Natasha is saying, is a lie. The number 3rd citizen of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, is being accused of sexual harassment but he's not suing the person. It's very confusing to me."

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Another Nigerian, Ben Osayi EKEKHOR (@BenEkekhor), noted, "It is a reflection of the character and emptiness of the kind of people we have in our senate. Lazy people who do not know what to do to move Nigeria forward."

Responding, Chika (@chykablessed), stated she's such a force, and that's why they want to really shut her down. Very, very unfortunate.

Also, Bim's (@Bims73362652), was quoted saying, "She has been fighting for long. I just nothing happened to her. The country is a joke, both rulers and followers."

Meanwhile, knocking the senators, (@az_1mula), expressed dissatisfaction saying, "When problem arises it's our issue... when the benefits come it's their issue #RevolutionNow."

Another Nigerian who condemned the senators' luxurious life, "Bobby 'Hakimi' Axelrod (@donpascal22), noted, "Mar 6 It is not my issue, when she was enjoying plush committee chairmanships, expensive trips abroad with Akpabio, courtesy of her cozy relationship with the SP, it was not made my issue, she should provide evidence to back up her claims."

Also, Adefemi Samuel Oreyomi (@_seamas), stated, "Stop looking for unnecessary relevance in a matter that is done and dusted. The

Nigerian Senate is an Institution that as established law or practices just like every other institution. Even the Judiciary knows how to punish one of it own when they miss behave."

Natasha fights back

Suspended Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan criticised her suspension from the Senate, stating that it violated the principles of natural justice, fairness, and equity.

She argued that the suspension does not diminish her legitimacy as a senator.

In a statement on her Facebook page on Thursday, Akpoti-Uduaghan insisted she would continue to serve her constituents under the title of "Senator."

She wrote, "Against the culture of silence, intimidation and victim-shaming; my unjust suspension from the Nigerian Senate invalidates the principles of natural justice, fairness and equity.

"The illegal suspension does not withdraw my legitimacy as a senator of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and I will continue to use my duly elected position to serve my constituents and country to the best of my ability till 2027 ... and beyond."

APC boss backs Akpabio

The South-South Zonal Organising Secretary of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Blessing

Agbomhere, has voiced concerns over the insults directed at Senate President Godswill Akpabio on social media.

In a statement issued to journalists in Abuja on Friday, Agbomhere came to the defense of the former minister, calling the backlash unnecessary.

The APC chieftain described the negative sentiments towards Akpabio as part of the challenges that any great leader must face while serving the people.

He said, "Vilifying the third highest-ranking citizen of Nigeria based on unsubstantiated allegations is unfair and reflects a society where political opponents routinely use a pull-him-down strategy against leaders in office.

"As we mark International Women's Day, I urge discerning Nigerians to recognise that the allegations against Akpabio have nothing to do with seeking justice or inclusion for women, as some claim, but are purely a calculated plot to remove him from office through the back door.

"We warn fifth columnists bent on bringing down the Senate President to remember that what goes around comes around. What leaders need at this critical juncture in Nigeria's history is support, not attacks and betrayal, especially from once-trusted friends and allies."

4 Nigerian drug barons jailed 95 years over 4.6bn cocaine, others

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

The Federal High Courts in Lagos and Yola, Adamawa State, have sentenced four drug traffickers to a total of 95 years in prison for trafficking cocaine and cannabis worth over N4.6 billion.

The convicts identified as Ogbuji Christian Ifeanyi, Iludoba Augustine Chinonye, Shuaibu Nuhu Isa (a.k.a Don), and Zidon Zurga, were arrested in separate operations by the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA).

Femi Babafemi, NDLEA Director of Media & Advocacy in a statement on Friday, said Ogbuji Christian Ifeanyi was intercepted on September 18, 2024, at Murtala Muhammed International Airport (MMIA), Lagos, while arriving from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

He was caught with 19.40kg of cocaine concealed in 817 wraps, worth an estimated N4.65 billion.

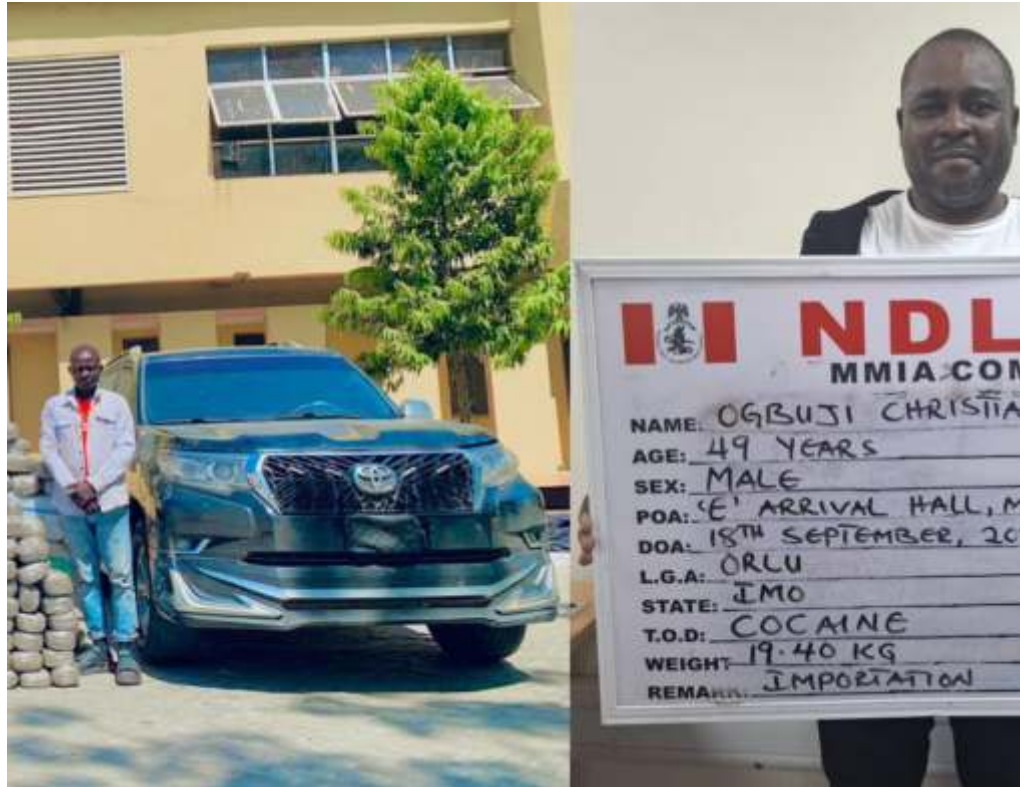
According to the statement, this was not his first offence. Ogbuji was previously arrested in May 2023 at Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja, for ingesting 93 pellets of cocaine.

He was convicted in July 2023 and sentenced to two years in prison or a N3 million fine, which he paid to regain freedom.

The statement partly reads, "Ogbuji was intercepted by operatives of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, NDLEA, at the Murtala Muhammed International Airport, MMIA Ikeja Lagos on Wednesday 18th September 2024 during an inward clearance of Ethiopian Airlines flight passengers from Addis Ababa to Lagos for importing 817 wraps of cocaine weighing 19.40 kilograms with an estimated street value of Four Billion Six Hundred and Fifty-Six Million Naira (N4,656,000,000.00).

"That was barely 16 months after the 48-year-old businessman was arrested and convicted for ingesting 93 pellets of cocaine. He was first arrested at the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, NAIA, Abuja, on Wednesday 10th May 2023 upon arrival from Uganda via Addis Ababa, onboard Ethiopian Airlines flight ET 951 for ingesting 93 pellets of cocaine with a gross weight of 1.986kg.

"He was subsequently arraigned before Federal High Court 12 Abuja presided over by Hon. Justice Mobolaji Olajuwon in charge no: FHC/ABJ/CR/192/2023 and convicted on 13th July 2023. Ogbuji was sentenced to two years imprisonment with an option of paying a fine of Three Million Naira (N3,000,000.00), which he paid and was set free.



"Not done with crime, Ogbuji was again arrested at the Lagos airport with the large consignment of cocaine on 18th September 2024, after which he was arraigned before Justice Yellim Bogoro of the Federal High Court Lagos in charge number: FHC/L/845C on 16th January 2025.

"He was eventually sentenced on 28th February to five years imprisonment on count one with an option of seven million naira fine and 10 years imprisonment on count two without an option of fine.

"In the event that he failed to pay the N7million fine, the judge ruled that the convict will serve a total of 15 years in jail consecutively. The court ordered the forfeiture of monetary exhibits and other items found on him at the time of his arrest.

"In his own case, 51-year-old Iludoba was arrested by NDLEA operatives on New Year's Eve, 31st December 2021 at the Akanu Ibiam International Airport, Enugu, for cocaine trafficking.

"He was found to have ingested 58 wraps of the illicit drug, 48 of which he excreted on transit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia while he expelled the balance of 10 in NDLEA custody after his arrest on 1st January 2022. He was thereafter arraigned on two counts in charge number FHC/EN/CR/18/2022 before Justice Folashade Giwa Ogunbanjo of the Federal High Court, Enugu.

"After three years of diligent prosecution, Iludoba was convicted and sentenced to five years imprisonment on each count, bringing his total years in jail to 10 years, which will run concurrently from the date of his conviction, Wednesday 5th March 2025.

"In the case of Shuaibu Nuhu Isa (a.k.a Don), 55, and Zidon Zurga, 50, they were arrested by NDLEA operatives on 25th November 2024 along Numan- Yola Road with 500.800kg skunk, a strain of cannabis, concealed in a pilot Toyota Hilux vehicle marked Lagos NT 829 AAA and a Prado SUV with a fake presidency number plate 01B-266 FG.

"They were later arraigned before Justice Bala Usman in charge number: FHC/YL/150/2024 and convicted on 7th February 2025 to 35 years imprisonment each on two counts, bringing the combined years in jail for both of them to 70 years or pay a fine of N25 million each. The court also ordered the interim forfeiture of the two jeeps used in trafficking the illicit drug consignment.

"Reacting to the conviction of the trio, Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of NDLEA, Brig Gen Mohamed Buba Marwa (Rtd) commended the trial courts, the teams of officers who investigated and prosecuted the three cases at the MMIA Strategic Command in Lagos, Akanu Ibiam International Airport Special Area Command, Enugu and the Adamawa State Command for their diligence and professionalism.

Electricity distributors demand justice after military attack on IKEDC staff, journalists

By Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye

The Association of Nigerian Electricity Distributors (ANED) has called on the Nigerian Air Force, the military, and the presidency to identify and punish officers involved in the violent attack on staff and journalists at Ikeja Electric on Thursday, March 6.

The association vowed to continue pressing for justice following the brutalisation of civilians at the Ikeja Electric headquarters in Alausa, Lagos.

Among those assaulted was a correspondent, who was also reportedly beaten by the military personnel involved in the incident.

Following the attack, Air Vice Marshall AK Ademulegun, the Area Officer Commanding of the Logistics Command, visited the Ikeja Electric office and promised an investigation.

However, Sunday Oduntan, ANED's Executive Director for Research and Advocacy, expressed disbelief at Ademulegun's ignorance of the incident during a Friday, March 7, interview on TVC.

Oduntan, who also serves as the



spokesperson for all electricity distribution companies (DisCos), said the association would not back down until the perpetrators were brought to justice.

He highlighted that the Ikeja Air Force Base owes N4.3 billion in unpaid electricity bills, yet no efforts have been made to settle the debt. Oduntan likened the military's actions to an attack on the entire DisCo sector, calling it a "coup" against electricity distributors.

He stressed that political leaders must take the matter seriously, as such actions demonstrate the military's ability to "plan and

execute a coup."

Oduntan also condemned the military for removing key evidence, including the CCTV database, during the attack, and called for its full restoration.

He warned that unless the culprits were identified and punished, such incidents could occur again on a larger scale.

"This is not just an attack on Ikeja Electric, it's a message to all Nigerians. If we allow this, the military can do anything," Oduntan declared, urging the presidency to respond decisively to ensure the safety of all citizens.

Fubara confident of Rivers people's support

By **Gbenga Oluranti Olaleye**

Governor Siminalayi Fubara of Rivers State has expressed his delight in the overwhelming support from the people of the state for his administration, particularly highlighting the successful revitalisation of the Rumuodomaya Fire Service Substation in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony on Friday, Governor Fubara emphasised that the newly upgraded fire station would now offer more efficient services, enabling a quicker response to fire emergencies.

This, he said, would ensure the safety of lives and property for residents of Rumuodomaya, Obio/Akpor, and the surrounding communities.

Governor Fubara said: "I feel very happy again to stand before you to showcase one of the things that we have done to show that the interest of our people is most important in our administration. We have been unveiling these projects because we want to make living safer for the people of Rivers State."

The Governor referred to this inauguration as the third fire service station launched in recent days, with others unveiled in Borokiri and at the Rivers State Fire Service Headquarters.

He reiterated that improving emergency response infrastructure was part of his government's core mission to protect citizens.

"This is a primary function of governance — to safeguard the lives of our people and the property of every citizen of Rivers State," Fubara added.

In his speech, the Governor also took a moment to express his gratitude to the people of Obio/Akpor Local Government Area for their continued support, assuring them that his



administration would remain committed to improving the state's infrastructure and services for the betterment of all citizens.

"Your trust is our strength. We know that your trust is the right thing, and that you are standing on the side of truth, We will continue to do what is right to make life better and advance the state" Governor Fubara said.

The event also featured a speech from elder statesman Hanny Woko, who praised the revitalisation of the fire service substation as a vital project for the state. He warned that a state without a functional fire service station could be considered "partially a failed state," as residents would have to rely solely on divine intervention in the event of a fire.

"Your Excellency, we thank you for demonstrating genuine love to the Ikwerre people and Rivers people in general, Even amid the crisis, you have continued to serve the state, commissioning essential projects that ensure the safety and well-being of the people" Woko said.

Woko also made a call for unity in the state, highlighting the importance of supporting governance and moving away from ethnic and political divides.

He stressed that the Ikwerre people would support the tenure of Governor

Fubara, ensuring that his administration continues without interruption.

In his remarks, Dr. Samuel Anya, the Commissioner for Special Duties, provided further details on the revitalisation project, explaining that the fire service substation had been abandoned after its initial construction during the administration of former Governor Chibuike Amaechi.

Governor Fubara's intervention had ensured the rehabilitation of the facility, now equipped with 54 offices, staff quarters, brand-new fire trucks, and a 45,000-litre water tank to enhance operational efficiency.

The Head of Local Government Administration for Obio/Akpor, Mr Ichechi Amadi, also commended the efforts of the state government.

He stated that the rehabilitated structures and the new fire trucks would motivate personnel, improving their capacity to respond effectively to fire incidents that had previously caused significant loss of life and property.

The revitalisation of the Rumuodomaya Fire Service Substation is seen as another step in Governor Fubara's commitment to improving public safety and essential services across Rivers State, reinforcing his administration's promise of progress and development.

Lagos boosts environmental sustainability through collaboration, innovation

By Friday Omosola

The Lagos State Government has reaffirmed its dedication to environmental resilience by fostering collaboration and innovation for sustainability.

Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu made this commitment at the Art Exhibition and Symposium titled 'The Intersecting Worlds of Climate Change, Mangrove, and Art', held at the Nigerian Conservation Foundation in Lekki on Thursday.

Represented by the Secretary to the State Government, Bimbola Salu-Hundeyin, Sanwo-Olu highlighted the event as a fusion of culture, creativity, and commitment in tackling climate change.

He emphasised that mangroves, though often overlooked, play a crucial role in protecting coastal areas from erosion and flood surges while supporting local fisheries and livelihoods.

Beyond their ecological benefits, the governor noted that mangroves help combat global warming by storing large amounts of carbon dioxide.

"Protecting these ecosystems is not just about conserving biodiversity but securing our future," he stated, urging continued collaboration to build a more resilient Lagos.

Vice President Kashim Shettima, represented by the Special Adviser to the President on NEC and Climate Change, Rukayat El-Rifai, underscored the interconnectedness of climate change policy, mangrove



conservation, and artistic expression.

He stressed that leveraging these connections could be key to addressing climate challenges.

Commissioner for the Environment and Water Resources, Tokunbo Wahab, described the event as a critical step toward raising awareness and driving action.

He pointed out that Lagos, with its extensive coastline and mangrove forests, must act decisively against deforestation, pollution, and urbanization threats.

"We cannot afford to stand by while our natural defenses disappear. Our government remains committed to mangrove conservation, ensuring these ecosystems continue to protect our communities and serve as a lasting legacy," Wahab said.

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

(UNFCCC) Executive Secretary, Simon Stiell, stressed the need for inclusive climate policies, highlighting the economic opportunities in green growth and sustainable development.

He noted that countries investing in clean energy and human capital would be the biggest beneficiaries of the \$2 trillion global clean energy boom.

The event ended with a media briefing, where key stakeholders, including representatives from the UNFCCC, Climate Change Council Secretariat, and the Nigerian Conservation Foundation, engaged with journalists on climate change initiatives.

The state government reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening its partnership with the Nigerian Conservation Foundation and other stakeholders to drive environmental sustainability efforts.

PDP condemns Natasha's suspension, demands probe into allegation against Akpabio

By Friday Omosola



The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has condemned the suspension of Kogi Central Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan over her sexual harassment allegation against Senate President Godswill Akpabio.

In a press statement signed by its National Publicity Secretary, Debo Ologunagba, the PDP described the suspension as a desperate attempt to cover up the allegation.

The party criticised the hasty decision to suspend Senator Akpoti-Uduaghan without an open investigation, arguing that it violates parliamentary convention and undermines the principle of fair hearing.

“The excessively harsh six-month suspension denies the people of

Kogi Central Senatorial Zone their constitutional right to representation in the Senate,” the statement read.

The PDP also questioned Mr Akpabio’s role in the process, stating that it was inappropriate for him to preside over a matter in which he is the accused.

The party recalled that this was not the first time Akpabio had faced such allegations, referencing a previous sexual harassment claim made by Joi Nunieh, former acting Managing Director of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC).

“If Senator Akpabio has nothing to hide, what Nigerians expected of him was to step aside in line with established parliamentary practice and submit himself to an open and

unbiased investigation,” the PDP stated.

The party further described Akpabio’s leadership as scandal-ridden, pointing to allegations of financial mismanagement and corruption during his tenure as Akwa Ibom State Governor and Minister of Niger Delta Affairs.

PDP noted pending EFCC investigations into the alleged looting of N108.1 billion belonging to Akwa Ibom State and an N86 billion contract scam in the NDDC.

With growing public outrage and protests at the National Assembly, PDP urged the Senate to reinstate Senator Akpoti-Uduaghan and allow an independent probe into the sexual harassment allegation to restore its credibility.

Oyebanji reaffirms commitment to sports development

By **Friday Omosola**

Ekiti State Governor, Biodun Oyebanji, has reiterated his administration's commitment to sports development as a tool for job creation and wealth generation.

Speaking on Friday during an inspection of the ongoing renovation of Oluyemi Kayode Stadium in Ado-Ekiti, the governor emphasised that sports in the state would no longer be viewed merely as a recreational activity but as a strategic platform for empowering athletes.

Expressing disappointment at the poor conditions under which athletes train, Oyebanji assured them that such challenges would soon be addressed.

He reaffirmed his administration's determination to upgrade the stadium to international standards, ensuring that Ekiti athletes have the necessary facilities to compete effectively at national and international levels.

The governor further revealed that his administration had awarded a contract worth over N7 billion for the construction of a state-of-the-art indoor sports hall, which is expected to be completed before the end of his tenure.

He assured the athletes that his government would continue to



provide a conducive environment for sports development, including modern facilities and structured training programs to enhance their skills and career prospects.

Oyebanji

“I came here this morning to follow up on what we started yesterday and to see the progress at the stadium. When I visited last year, I was dissatisfied with what I saw and promised to revamp sports in Ekiti State.

“One of the pillars of our administration is human capital development, and sports are a key part of that. We will use sports as an avenue to create jobs and wealth. It will no longer be just for recreation; it will be a platform for athletes to earn a living.

“But to achieve this, we must put

the right structures in place to help them maximize their potential,” Oyebanji stated.

Olusola Osetoba, Technical Advisor on Sports Development, commended the governor's vision and proactive approach to repositioning sports as a vehicle for youth empowerment, economic growth, and job creation.

Speaking on behalf of the athletes, Captain of Ekiti United Football Club, Makanjuola Ayodeji, expressed his gratitude to the governor for prioritizing their welfare.

He noted that since Oyebanji's administration began, athletes had experienced significant improvements, including salary increments, new uniforms, travel allowances, and bonuses.

Court to rule on Bello's school fees case evidence May 8

By Friday Omosola

A Federal High Court in Abuja has scheduled May 8 to rule on the admissibility of a previous judgment from the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) High Court.

The judgment involves Ali Bello and the Incorporated Trustees of American International School and is being considered as evidence in the ongoing trial of former Kogi State Governor, Yahya Bello.

Justice Emeka Nwite set the date following arguments between the defence and prosecution over the relevance and timing of the document's submission in the case brought against Bello by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC).

Bello's lawyer, Joseph Daudu, sought to introduce the judgment, which had ruled on the payment or refund of school fees, as well as receipts for the re-certification of the documents.

However, EFCC's counsel, Kemi Pinhero, objected, arguing that the prosecution had not yet closed its case and that admitting such documents at this stage would be premature.

Citing Section 232 of the Evidence Act, Pinhero contended that the defence could not submit evidence while the prosecution was still presenting its case.

In response, Daudu insisted that the admissibility of documents in any trial—whether civil or criminal—is determined strictly by relevance.

“Once it is adjudged, we submit that the document is relevant, it becomes automatically admissible. That is what



is contained in Sections 4, 5, and 6 of the Evidence Act, 2011,” Daudu argued.

He maintained that the document in question was a public record involving the American International School in Abuja and that Nicholas Ohehomon, a witness in the case, was the school's sole representative in the matter.

Daudu further dismissed the prosecution's objections as speculative.

“Because he (Pinhero SAN) is not comfortable with the document does not stop its admissibility,” he added.

Pinhero, however, urged the court to reject the document, asserting that the defence had not demonstrated its compliance with Section 232 of the Evidence Act.

After hearing both sides, Justice Nwite stated that a ruling on the matter would be delivered on May 8, with the trial continuing on May 9.

Earlier in the proceedings, the EFCC's counsel requested that the court registrar provide witness Nicholas Ohehomon with Exhibit 13P1.

Ohehomon identified it as a bank telex sent to the school via email by Ali Bello. He also confirmed that Exhibits 13P2 to 13P4 were transfer records from Forza Oil and Gas for school fee payments.

Additionally, he verified Exhibit 13P5 as a payment telex from Whales Oil and Gas to the American International School.

During examination, the prosecution asked the witness to state the names on four payment receipts.

He initially hesitated but later, after being prompted, identified them as belonging to four children of the former governor.

However, the defence objected, insisting that the witness should read the names directly from the receipts rather than rely on prompting.

The defence was unable to proceed with its cross-examination, as the judge adjourned the session to await the ruling on the admissibility of the FCT High Court judgment.

Okpebholo vows justice for victims of Ovia killings

By Friday Omosola

Edo State Governor, Monday Okpebholo, has vowed to bring to justice those responsible for the February 21 killings in seven communities of Ovia South West Local Government Area.

The governor made this commitment during an on-the-spot assessment visit to the affected communities, where he assured residents of his administration's dedication to restoring peace and security.

Addressing community members, Governor Okpebholo condemned the attacks, describing them as acts of criminality that will not go unpunished under his leadership.

He pledged to facilitate the establishment of a police outpost to prevent future violence and ensure sustained security in the region.

"From the testimonies I have heard and the investigations conducted, these are criminals who invade your farms to steal the crops you have laboured for. As a government, we will go after them. I assure you that you will live here in peace.

"Our actions will prove that lasting peace is coming. No individual should be more powerful than an entire community—burning houses and killing people just to steal farm produce. Wherever they are hiding, we will hunt them down, bring them to justice, and ensure that peace prevails," the



governor declared.

He urged residents to remain calm and avoid retaliatory actions, emphasizing that government intervention was underway.

"I understand your pain, but I urge you to take heart. Do not fight anyone or resort to violence. Maintain the peace as you have been doing. I assure you that we will work here so you can feel the presence of the government and experience real development.

"We have already deployed soldiers to the area, and we now have three additional Operation Rescue patrol vehicles to support them. Once I return to Benin, I will liaise with the Commissioner of Police to expedite the establishment of a police outpost to ensure sustained security,"* he stated.

As part of his peace-building efforts, Governor Okpebholo also met with leaders and members of Gbelebe, a neighbouring Ijaw community, calling for unity and assuring them of

government support.

"My core mission as Governor is to restore peace and bring development. Without peace, there can be no progress. These killings and conflicts must stop.

"This is a large community with no roads and no electricity, and yet, instead of focusing on development, criminality persists. I assure you that my administration will gradually bring meaningful development here," he promised.

Community leaders from Madoti and Gbelebe recounted that the crisis began when hoodlums attempted to steal farm produce from farmers in Madoti's settlements but were confronted by a newly formed local vigilante group.

They decried the long-standing threat of farm theft and called on the governor to intensify efforts to protect lives and property, ensuring that farmers can work without fear of attacks.

2027 Elections: Hon. Gana speaks out on who will lead the PDP party

By Dr. Olaoluwa Vincent Ajayi

A member of the House of Representatives in Niger State, Hon. Joshua Gana has spoken about the People's Democratic Party's (PDP) crises and hope for 2027.

PDP, once Nigeria's most dominant political force, has been struggling with leadership tussle and internal disagreements.

The party held power from 1999 to 2015, ruling for 16 consecutive years. However, since losing the presidency in 2015, PDP has faced repeated setbacks in its attempts to reclaim power, resulting in numerous defections by its members.

The current Senate President, Godswill Akpabio, a former PDP member, previously served as Governor of Akwa Ibom State and Senate Minority Leader before defecting to the All Progressives Congress (APC) in August 2018.

Also, David Umahi, a former PDP Governor of Ebonyi State, switched allegiance to the APC in November 2020, citing perceived injustices against the Southeast region by the PDP.

More recently, Senator Ned Nwoko (Delta North) and former PDP governorship candidate for Lagos State, Azeez Olajide Adediran, have also defected from the party.

However, Hon. Joshua Gana, a rising star in Nigerian politics and a PDP lawmaker in the House of Representatives,



representing the Lavun/Mokwa/Edati Federal Constituency in Niger State, remains optimistic about the party's ability to regain lost ground and emerge stronger.

In this exclusive interview with New Daily Prime, Gana shares his insights on the party's challenges, strategic reforms, and roadmap to 2027.

“PDP Must Fix Internal Divisions & Stop Further Defections”

Speaking on the recent wave of defections, Hon. Gana acknowledges that the party has been weakened by internal disputes. However, he remains confident that defections are not permanent, and that PDP can win back former members through strategic reconciliation efforts.

“Yes, we have seen some of our members leave, but politics is dynamic. Many who left did so due to disagreements or personal interests, not because they no longer believe in the PDP. If we address these concerns and put our house in order, many of them will return.”

He noted that the key to stopping further losses is a firm commitment to internal restructuring, particularly at the state and national levels.

“What we need now is unity and leadership that listens to the concerns of every member. If the PDP remains divided, we will struggle in 2027. But if we rebuild trust, we will regain our lost strength.”

Hon. Gana dismissed the notion that APC is unbeatable, stating that the ruling party has failed to deliver on many of its promises.

“The economy is struggling, inflation is skyrocketing, and insecurity remains a problem. Nigerians are tired of APC's excuses. PDP must position itself as the credible alternative.”

He further argued that the massive youth engagement witnessed in the 2023 elections signals that Nigerians want a government that truly represents them.

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“Young people are no longer passive in politics. They want leaders who genuinely care about their future. PDP must embrace this new reality and give young Nigerians a reason to believe in us again.”

Who Should Lead the PDP in 2027?

As 2027 approaches, speculation is mounting over who will lead the PDP into the presidential election. While many anticipate Atiku Abubakar, Bukola Saraki, and Nyesom Wike to throw their hats in the ring, others are advocating for the return of Peter Obi and Rabiú Kwankwaso to the party. There is also growing discussion about the possibility of a fresh face, with Seyi Makinde emerging as a potential contender. However, Hon. Gana believes it is too early to make any definitive predictions.

“How I wish I had the spiritual power to foresee the future. Atiku or Obi, Saraki or Wike, Kwankwaso or Makinde—this is a crucial question for the party’s future.”

He acknowledged the influence of these political heavyweights, saying:

“All of them are prominent figures with strong support bases. Although Obi and Kwankwaso are not currently PDP members, there are those who believe they could return.”

He also hinted at the potential emergence of new political figures,

adding:

“Some are calling for a younger candidate—someone who can learn from experienced leaders and chart a new course. Keep an eye out for fresh faces who may enter the race.”

What PDP Is Doing to Prevent Further Losses

Hon. Gana reassured party supporters that PDP is actively working to prevent further defections by engaging aggrieved members, rebuilding trust, resolving internal disputes and strengthening the party’s grassroots presence.

He dismissed rumours that some PDP governors plan to defect to APC, saying, “That is not true. Those who left PDP were already frustrated, and many of them are on their way back. It is actually APC governors who will defect to PDP before 2027.”

My Role in Strengthening the PDP Before 2027

As a young and internationally experienced leader, Hon. Joshua Gana is committed to playing a key role in rebuilding the PDP and positioning it for electoral success in 2027.

Drawing from his role as the Deputy Chairman of the Standing Committee on Power in the 10th Assembly, House of Representatives, which is statutory until the end of the 10th Assembly, he highlights how his

experience in diplomacy, strategic negotiations, and international cooperation can be effectively applied to strengthen the party.

Hon. Gana outlines his contributions to PDP’s revival, emphasizing the importance of party unity and reconciliation, youth engagement and mobilization, strengthening grassroots support and reshaping PDP’s public image as a credible alternative to APC, “As a young leader, I am committed to playing an active role in PDP’s revival, ensuring that we stand strong as a united party ready to lead Nigeria toward progress and prosperity.”

Through strategic engagement and proactive leadership, Hon. Gana is determined to ensure that PDP emerges stronger, more united, and well-positioned for victory in the 2027 elections.

Finally, as 2027 fast approaches, PDP’s ability to regain power will depend on: resolving leadership disputes, winning back defectors, engaging young Nigerians and effectively countering APC’s dominance.

The party must prioritize unity, strategic reforms, and grassroots mobilization to present itself as a viable alternative to Nigerians.

Hon. Joshua Gana remains optimistic, believing that PDP’s future is bright—provided decisive action is taken now.

I date younger men for fun – Amber Rose

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

Amber Rose, the famous American model and media personality, has opened up about dating younger men and why she chooses to keep things casual.

Speaking with Shannon Sharpe on the Club Shay Shay podcast, she explained that these relationships were casual and purely for fun. She made it clear that she never intended to take them seriously.

Why younger men pursue older women

During the interview, Rose highlighted how her former partners often ended up dating attractive women, or “baddies,” after their time with her. She suggested that her influence played a role in making them more desirable.

“With women my age, these young guys have been watching us for years. Now that they’re old enough, they want to pursue us,” she explained. “I wouldn’t take them seriously, but I’d have my fun and move on.”

The ‘Bad b*tch’ effect

She also pointed out a pattern she noticed in her past relationships. “All my exes ended up dating bad btches after me. I was their first bad btch. Then, after me, other bad b*tches wanted to date them. That’s just how the game works.”



A history of dating younger celebrities

Amber Rose has been romantically linked to several younger celebrities over the years. Some of her most notable relationships include rapper 21 Savage, NBA player Jalen Green, and media personality Draya Michele.

One of her most talked-about relationships was with 21 Savage. When they dated, Rose was 33, while the rapper was 24. Their romance made headlines, and many fans followed their journey. However, like her other relationships with younger men, it did not last.

The influence of celebrity dating trends

Her comments shed light on a

common trend in celebrity dating culture. Many high-profile women attract younger admirers, especially those who grew up watching them in the spotlight. Rose believes that her presence in their lives boosts their social appeal, making them more desirable to other women after the relationship ends.

Embracing her choices

Despite the media attention on her love life, Rose remains confident in her choices. She embraces the fun and excitement of dating without feeling the need to settle down with younger partners.

Her openness about her dating preferences adds to the ongoing conversation about relationships, age gaps, and modern dating dynamics in Hollywood.

Mr Eazi's mother, Ifeoma Ajibade is dead (PICS)

By Elizabeth Jenrola Osmo

A prolific Nigerian singer and songwriter, Mr. Eazi has announced the passing of his beloved mother, Mrs. Ifeoma Edith Ajibade.

The deceased woman, Ifeoma, was of Igbo descent.

She passed on late Thursday.

Many of his colleagues in the music industry have sent messages of condolence and commiserated with him during this difficult time.

The artist, who is married to Temi Otedola, a younger sister of Florence Otedola, better known as DJ Cuppy, has penned emotional note,



detailing his love for his departed mother.

He wrote: "Thank you, Mummy For your strength, your sacrifices, your unwavering faith. For raising us with love, discipline, and devotion to God. For teaching

me confidence, entrepreneurship, forgiveness, and family.

"You were my greatest protector, my toughest critic, and truest Fan . You were not perfect, but you were perfect to me. Your legacy lives on. Rest well, Ifeoma Edith Ajibade."



‘Good idea’ – FIFA President Infantino on potential Drake World Cup halftime show

By Ifedamola Joseph Fayomi

FIFA President Gianni Infantino has hinted at the possibility of Canadian rapper Drake headlining the first-ever halftime show at the 2026 World Cup final.

This would mark a historic shift for the tournament, introducing a Super Bowl-style entertainment spectacle to the world’s biggest sporting event.

FIFA recently announced that Coldplay’s lead singer, Chris Martin, is curating the inaugural halftime show. The initiative aims to bring a fresh entertainment experience to the World Cup final, set to take place at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey on July 19, 2026.

Infantino supports the idea of Drake

During an interview with Fox5, Infantino responded positively to the idea of Drake leading the performance. When the host suggested, “I have a great idea for the halftime show—Drake! Because Kendrick Lamar did his thing at the Super Bowl,” Infantino immediately welcomed the proposal.

“So we can create a bit of rivalry, right?” Infantino said. “That’s a good idea. Actually, Drake was with us when we announced the host cities. We will do that.”

The biggest World Cup in history

The 2026 World Cup final will be a major event, drawing millions of viewers worldwide. The tournament, co-hosted by the United States, Canada, and Mexico, will be



the biggest World Cup yet, featuring an expanded 48-team format.

Adding a halftime show aligns with FIFA’s broader efforts to enhance the fan experience. The move follows the model set by the NFL’s Super Bowl, where halftime performances have become a global entertainment phenomenon. With past Super Bowl headliners like Beyoncé, Rihanna, and Michael Jackson, FIFA aims to create a similar cultural moment.

Drake’s Deep connection to sports

Drake, one of the best-selling music artists of all time, has deep ties to the sports world. The Grammy-winning rapper has been a passionate supporter of Canadian teams, particularly the Toronto Raptors. His presence at major sporting events is well-documented, making him a fitting choice for FIFA’s bold new initiative.

FIFA plans a grand celebration in New York

Beyond the halftime show, FIFA is planning a grand spectacle in New York City to celebrate the final. Infantino revealed that FIFA will take over Times Square for the final weekend, creating a massive fan experience in one of the world’s most iconic locations.

A new era for the World Cup

If Drake is confirmed as the headline performer, it would mark another significant crossover between music and sports. With his global fan base and chart-topping hits, his presence would bring even more excitement to the already historic World Cup final.

As FIFA continues to shape the future of the tournament, the inclusion of a star-studded halftime show signals a shift toward making the event even more entertainment-driven. Whether Drake takes the stage or another global artist steps in, the 2026 final is set to be a landmark moment in World Cup history.

Trump administration cancels \$400m in funds to Columbia University

By Dave Oludare Oso

The Donald Trump administration announced on Friday that it had canceled \$400m in federal grants and contracts to Columbia University in New York because of what it alleges as the college's repeated failure to protect students from antisemitic harassment.

The announcement comes after Columbia set up a new disciplinary committee and initiated its own investigations into students critical of Israel and its war on Gaza after Hamas' own attack on Israel.

That move by the university has alarmed advocates of free speech.

It also comes at a time of widespread backlash to American universities by the Trump administration and conservatives more broadly who see the higher education sector in the US as dominated by liberals and ripe for a rightwing attack on its influence.

Linda McMahon, the Trump-appointed secretary of education, had warned on Monday that Columbia would lose federal funding if it did not take additional action to combat antisemitism on its campus.

A statement issued on Friday by the Department of Justice, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Education, and the US General Services Administration, states: "These cancellations represent the first round of action and additional cancellations are expected to follow."

"For too long, Columbia has abandoned that obligation to Jewish students studying on its campus," McMahon said in the statement.

The statement also refers to ongoing "illegal protests" on college and university campuses, a phrase Trump has used to refer to some student protests, though what makes these illegal remains unclear.

Columbia was central to campus



protests that broke out across the US over Gaza last spring. Pro-Palestinian demonstrators set up an encampment there in April and inspired a wave of similar protests in many other colleges.

The first amendment to the US constitution protects the rights of people to "peacefully assemble" and to petition the government for a "redress of grievances."

The extent that pro-Palestinian demonstrations on campuses can be considered antisemitic is still debated across political and academic spheres.

Republican lawmakers viewed the protests as antisemitic, despite the fact many protesters denied the accusations or were Jewish themselves.

Trump has threatened college students with imprisonment and deportation on Tuesday on his Truth Social platform, writing: "Agitators will be imprisoned/or permanently sent back to the country from which they came. American students will be permanently expelled or, depending on the crime, arrested."

A Columbia University spokesperson wrote in a statement to the Columbia Spectator, that it is "reviewing the announcement from the federal agencies and pledge to work with the federal

government to restore Columbia's federal funding."

"We take Columbia's legal obligations seriously and understand how serious this announcement is and are committed to combatting antisemitism and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our students, faculty, and staff," the spokesperson wrote.

It is not immediately clear what contracts or grants would be cut under the directive. Columbia University currently holds more than \$5bn in federal grant commitments, the GSA statement said.

Columbia is one of five colleges that currently under the new federal investigation, and it's one of 10 being visited by a taskforce in response to allegations of antisemitism.

A college campus with students walking around Columbia students organize rallies both for Israel and Palestine on 7 October 2024 in New York City. Photograph: Alex Kent/Getty Images

Others under investigation include the University of California, Berkeley; the University of Minnesota; Northwestern University; and Portland State University.

Financing Ukraine's war effort would 'ruin Europe' – Hungary PM

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

The European Union (EU) cannot afford to finance Ukraine's military efforts as U.S. financial aid is no longer guaranteed, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban said on Friday after the leaders of 26 EU countries signed a statement voicing support for Ukraine without Hungary.

Orban, an ally of U.S. President Donald Trump, who is also cultivating ties with Moscow, told state radio that his government would launch a domestic "public consultation" on Ukraine's European Union accession in the coming weeks.

The state-funded political campaign will come as Orban, in power since 2010, faces elections in 2026 with the economy just clambering out of an inflation crisis and with a surging new opposition party posing the strongest challenge yet to his rule.

European leaders on Thursday backed plans to spend more on defence and continue to stand by Ukraine in a world upended by Donald Trump's reversal of U.S. policies.

The European Union's defence summit in Brussels took place amid fears that Russia, emboldened by its war in Ukraine, may attack an EU country next and that Europe can no longer rely on the U.S. to come to its aid.

But Orban, who has refused to send weapons to Ukraine since the start of the war, and kept close relations with Moscow, said that instead of prolonging the war, Europe should support Trump's peace talks.

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the war, Europe should support Trump's peace talks.

He said the way the EU wants to support Ukraine now, while also boosting Europe's own defence spending, would "ruin Europe."

"If now the US quits (financing the war)...why would the other 26 member states have a chance to take this war to the end?," Orban told state radio. "Today it appears that I have vetoed. But within weeks they will come back and it will turn out that there is no money for these goals."

Trump has said Europe must take more responsibility for its security.

On Thursday he cast doubt on his willingness to defend Washington's NATO allies, saying that he would not do so if they are not paying enough for their own defence.

His decision to shift from staunch U.S. support for Ukraine to a more conciliatory stance towards Moscow has deeply alarmed Europeans who see Russia as the biggest threat.

U.S, Israel reject Arab states' proposed alternative to Trump's Gaza plan

By Dave Oludare Oso

The United States and Israel have rejected a Gaza Strip reconstruction plan that sees the devastated enclave being fully rebuilt without displacing Palestinians, as envisioned under President Donald Trump's proposal to transform the territory into the "Riviera of the Middle East."

Under the \$53 billion reconstruction plan proposed by Egypt at an emergency summit in Cairo on Tuesday, Gaza, which has been largely destroyed in Israel's nearly year-and-a-half military offensive in the enclave, would be rebuilt over the span of under six years.

Artificial intelligence-labelled images, released as part of a version of the plan agreed at a summit that included representatives from across the 22-member Arab League, show modern housing developments and busy city streets, with the document outlining plans for tourist destinations, including resorts.

The proposal, which also includes plans for a commercial harbor and an airport, suggests it be funded by a variety of international sources, including the United Nations and international financial organizations, as well as foreign and private sector investments.

Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi said the proposal would enable the reconstruction of Gaza while ensuring Palestinians are able to "stay on their land without displacement."

The White House swiftly dismissed the plan, with National Security Council spokesperson Brian Hughes saying late Tuesday that the proposal did not "address the reality that Gaza is current uninhabitable."

He said Trump stood by his "vision to rebuild Gaza free from Hamas," according to Reuters.

According to local officials, more than 48,000 people have been killed in the Gaza Strip as a result of Israeli shelling and bombing. Most of the population has also been displaced and more than half of the infrastructure destroyed, including hospitals and schools, according to estimate from the United Nations.

Trump's proposal for the U.S. to "take over" the Gaza Strip and turn it into the



"Riviera of the Middle East" sparked outrage across the region and around the world last month, with some analysts warning that his plan to see Palestinians at least temporarily and possibly permanently displaced was tantamount to ethnic cleansing.

The Israeli Foreign Affairs Ministry echoed Trump's proposal Tuesday, saying it provided an "opportunity for the Gazans to have free choice based on their free will." "This should be encouraged," it added.

While Israeli officials have repeatedly suggested Trump's plan would give Palestinians in Gaza the ability to leave the enclave freely — something they have not been able to do under Israel and Egypt's nearly two-decade-long blockade on the territory — it has not expanded on whether they would just as easily be able to regain access to the territory.

The Israeli Foreign Ministry also condemned the Egyptian proposal's plan for a committee of independent Palestinian technocrats to govern Gaza in preparation for the eventual return of the Palestinian Authority, accusing the Fatah-controlled government body of "corruption" and "support for terrorism."

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas commended the reconstruction plan in a statement, also thanking Trump for his efforts surrounding the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas.

Hamas, which has run the enclave for almost two decades and is a bitter rival of the Palestinian Authority, welcomed the

proposal embraced by Arab nations in a statement Tuesday.

In Gaza, Palestinians balanced hope with doubt that the plan agreed by Arab nations would be enacted.

"We want this suffering to end," Usen Abdul Jawad told NBC News' crew on the ground in Khan Younis in southern Gaza. "We want the rebuilding of Gaza again."

Ebrahim Al Khalili, 27, warned that the humanitarian crisis in the enclave, where the Muslim majority was marking the month of Ramadan, was becoming "much more dire" after Israel halted the flow of aid and goods.

Israel also warned of "further consequences" after Hamas refused to accept its proposal to extend the first phase of the ceasefire deal.

Israel launched its offensive following the Hamas-led Oct. 7, 2023, terrorist attacks, in which some 1,200 people were killed and around 250 others taken hostage, per Israeli tallies, marking a major escalation in a decades-long conflict.

The first phase of the ceasefire agreed between Israel and Hamas in January expired Saturday, with negotiations for the second of three phases stalled for weeks.

"Palestinians in Gaza have suffered beyond measures, and the risk of even greater devastation looms," United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres warned Tuesday.

US visa applicants to disclose social media handles in new policy

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso



The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has proposed a new rule that requires applicants for green cards and visas to disclose their social media handles.

The initiative aims to strengthen security screening, but it has raised concerns about privacy and potential misuse of data.

The proposed rule would apply to various immigration forms, including applications for US citizenship, asylum, and adjustments of status from an H-1B visa to a green card.

Specifically, forms like the N-400 for naturalisation, I-131 for

advance parole, I-485 for green card applications, and I-589 for asylum will be affected.

US Africa Online reports that the immigration experts have expressed concerns about how social media information will be interpreted and used.

Immigration attorney Jonathan Wasden stated, "It remains unclear how USCIS will interpret posts, how long they will store data, or what guidelines they will use to flag concerns."

He also warned that applicants may face denials based on online activity taken out of context, saying, "There is also a risk that applicants could face denials based

on online activity that is taken out of context," as quoted by TravelBiz.

The USCIS has opened a 60-day public comment period, allowing individuals and organisations to provide feedback on the proposed rule. This is an opportunity for the public to express concerns about the rule's necessity, effectiveness, and impact before it is finalized.

Reports indicate that this move by the US Immigration to request social media handles of visa applicants is part of the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) effort to enhance security vetting through more comprehensive background checks.

Trump threatens Russia with massive sanctions over military offensive

By New Daily Prime

Kiyiv – The war in Ukraine has taken a significant turn as Russian forces break through Ukrainian lines in Kursk, effectively splitting the Ukrainian offensive and threatening a major supply route.

Telegraph documented that open-source intelligence and live battlefield maps indicate that Russian gains have been aided by North Korean troops, marking an intensified phase of the conflict.

The only Ukrainian access road into Sudzha, a strategic town in the Kursk region, is now reportedly within range of Russian first-person view (FPV) drones, further complicating Ukraine's defensive efforts and limiting the ability to conduct an organized retreat.

The situation on the ground suggests that Ukraine could face major logistical challenges as Russia closes in on tens of thousands of Ukrainian troops fighting inside Russian territory.

Trump Threatens Large-Scale Sanctions to Halt Russian Offensive
As the battlefield shifts in Moscow's favor, U.S. President Donald Trump has issued his strongest warning to Russia, threatening massive banking sanctions and tariffs if the Kremlin does not halt its military push.

"Based on the fact that Russia is absolutely 'pounding' Ukraine on the battlefield right now, I am strongly considering large-scale banking sanctions, sanctions, and tariffs on Russia until a ceasefire and final settlement agreement on peace is reached," Trump declared.



In an unusual direct address to both Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, Trump urged immediate peace talks, stating:

"To Russia and Ukraine, get to the table right now, before it is too late. Thank you!!!"

Despite Trump's verbal support for Ukraine's sovereignty, his administration has halted all military aid to Kyiv. Additionally, intelligence-sharing channels between Washington and Ukraine have been suspended, further weakening Ukraine's defensive posture.

The policy shift has sparked concerns among European leaders, as Ukraine becomes increasingly vulnerable amid Russia's growing offensive momentum.

Overnight, Russia launched missile and drone strikes targeting Ukrainian gas infrastructure, crippling essential energy supplies. The strategic bombardment suggests that Moscow is intensifying

economic warfare, aiming to disrupt Ukraine's domestic stability as well as its military operations.

Reports indicate that tens of thousands of Ukrainian troops who captured Russian territory in Kursk are now at risk of being encircled, raising fears of a large-scale surrender or catastrophic battlefield losses.

Zelensky Pushes for Partial Truce at EU Summit

At a high-stakes EU leaders' summit in Brussels, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky proposed a partial ceasefire, urging Russia to stop attacks on air, sea, and critical infrastructure. His request seeks to test whether Putin is open to negotiations or remains committed to a prolonged war effort.

With over 10,000 Ukrainian soldiers fighting inside Russian territory, the unfolding crisis puts further pressure on Kyiv to secure international support, while Russia's latest gains suggest an increasingly difficult road ahead for Ukraine.

Zelenskyy calls for truce after Russia's attack on Ukraine infrastructure

By Dave Oludare Oso



We need Russia to stop attacks, Zelenskyy says, backing calls for truce in air, at sea

Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy has responded to overnight attacks by Russia, saying that “the first steps toward real peace must include forcing the sole source of this war, Russia, to stop such attacks against life.”

He also reiterated his call for a limited truce in the skies and at sea, as originally proposed by French president Emmanuel Macron.

Here is what he said:

”Last night, the Russian army carried out another massive attack on our energy infrastructure.

”Various facilities were targeted in

several regions – Odesa, Poltava, Chernihiv, and Ternopil. In total, the Russians used nearly 70 missiles, both cruise and ballistic, as well as almost 200 attack drones.

” All of this was directed against infrastructure that ensures normal life. Currently, repair and restoration work is ongoing wherever needed. Unfortunately, ordinary residential buildings have also been damaged.

”In Kharkiv, a Russian missile hit close to an apartment building. People were injured. They are receiving the necessary assistance.

”Today, F-16 fighter jets and Mirage aircraft provided by France were used to protect Ukrainian skies.

”In particular, the Mirages successfully

intercepted Russian cruise missiles.

”Thank you! I also want to recognize the performance of our anti-aircraft missile forces, army aviation, all our electronic warfare units, and mobile fire groups.

”The first steps toward real peace must include forcing the sole source of this war, Russia, to stop such attacks against life. And this is something that can be effectively monitored.

”Silence in the skies – banning the use of missiles, long-range drones, and aerial bombs. And silence at sea – a real guarantee of normal navigation.

” Ukraine is ready to pursue the path to peace, and it is Ukraine that strives for peace from the very first second of this war. The task is to force Russia to stop the war.”

Trump plans to negotiate new nuclear deal with Iran

By Dave Oludare Oso

President Donald Trump today discussed the possibility of a new nuclear deal between the United States and Iran, telling reporters that “there’ll be some interesting days ahead, that’s all I can tell you.”

“We’re down to final strokes with Iran,” Trump said at the White House. “We can’t let them have a nuclear weapon.”

“We have a situation with Iran that something’s going to happen very soon, very, very soon, you’ll be



talking about that pretty soon, I guess, and hopefully we can have a peace deal,” he added.

Trump said in Fox Business News interview that he sent a letter to Iran’s Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei in which he urged for negotiating a nuclear agreement and threatened military action otherwise.

“I’m not speaking out of strength or weakness, I’m just saying I’d rather see a peace deal than the other, but the other will solve the problem,” Trump said at the White House.

Connecticut toddler allegedly kidnapped by own mom 25 years ago found alive in Mexico

By Elizabeth Jenrola Oso

A Connecticut toddler who was abducted 25 years ago has been found alive in Mexico, with her identity confirmed by DNA testing, according to authorities.

Andrea Michelle Reyes was just 2 when she vanished from her home in New Haven in 1999, with cops long suspecting she had been snatched by her mom, Rosa Tenorio, who did not have custody.

Reyes’ family also believed the girl may have been in Mexico, but could never locate her, even as her dad repeatedly traveled there looking for them.

produced image of andrea michella reyes

Andrea Michelle Reyes was allegedly kidnapped by her non-custodial mother in 1999. DNASolves

An investigation involving the FBI also went cold, until it was reviewed in 2023, according to the New Haven Police Department.

That was when cold-case Detective Kealyn Nivakoff managed to trace Reyes to Puebla using info from



interviews, search warrants and social media accounts.

The identity of Reyes, now 27, was confirmed through “Rapid Relationship Testing” using her dad’s DNA, forensic genealogy company Othram said.

She remains in Mexico, while a warrant for her mom’s arrest remains active in the US, police said.

Othram said it is the seventh such case it has helped authorities with in Connecticut.



Rosa Tenoria, mother of Andrea Reyes

The warrant for mother Rosa Tenoria remains active in the United States, though she is suspected to still reside in Mexico. DNASolves

“Whether it is unidentified human remains, the identity of a suspect in a crime or, like in this case, confirming the identity of a woman who has been missing for decades, we do the same thing every day — we find answers for families,” its chief development officer, Kristen Mittelman, said.

Guardiola will judge Grealish 'on the pitch' after pub pictures

By Oluwatosin Ologun



Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola says he will judge players like Jack Grealish solely on what they do “on the pitch”, and not what they do in their spare time.

Earlier this week, pictures were shared on social media of forward Grealish at a social club with friends, with further reports published on Mail Online of him on a night out in Newcastle on the same evening.

Both events were said to have been on Sunday, the day after City’s FA Cup fifth-round win over Plymouth, when England international Grealish played the full 90 minutes.

Mail Online said Grealish spent time speaking to locals, posing for pictures and put money behind the North East social club bar to pay for

other customers’ drinks.

Last month the £100m signing – who has started just one Premier League game since 4 December – was filmed leaving a London hotspot.

Asked about the images of Grealish, Guardiola said: “A day off is a day off.

“They have private lives to do whatever they want. I’m not going to control what they do in their private life.

“I judge what I see on the pitch, the training sessions and the performances in the game.”

Guardiola brought in four new players during the winter transfer window, including Egypt forward Omar Marmoush from Eintracht Frankfurt for £59m.

Further additions are anticipated in the summer as City look to reset after disappointing Premier League and Champions League campaigns.

Grealish’s contract expires in 2027 and there are question marks over his future heading into a World Cup year, after he missed out on selection for Euro 2024.

“It’s so good to have a dream to play in the World Cup and Euros with his national team,” said Guardiola. “I’m not bothered with that.

“What happens in terms of Jack, in terms of everyone, they will be treated at the end of the season.

“I don’t know what is going to happen but now we are playing for many important things.”