

PUNCH

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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

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Surviving domestic violence inspired my podcast - Ayo Adesanya

Uncovered: Lagos factory selling newborns for N1m •Pg 8



Why military commanders are falling on frontlines •Page 4
10 senior officers killed in seven months

1,000 ABDUCTED NIGERIANS:

FAMILIES BEG AS KIDNAPPERS GO SILENT

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- We just want to hear their voices, say relatives
- Kwara, Borno, Niger, Kaduna, Zamfara worst hit
- Terrorists boast of converting victims to Islam

Poison on the plate:

How poultry antibiotics are entering Nigerian diets



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I was bathed with acid meant for my brother - Anambra graduate

Lagos frees policemen who killed six traders over land ... DCP, Falana fume •Page 5



Mixed reactions after Tinubu signs N68.32tn 2026 budget •Page 9

Petrol prices to crash as Strait of Hormuz reopens

MY MARRIAGE...



Could you tell us how you met your wife?

I met my wife in a bank training school in 2014. At that time, God told me that Mercy was meant for me. However, there were clear contradictions at the time; the bank's policy discouraged staff from marrying each other, and Mercy was not friendly towards me, even though we exchanged occasional greetings. What I believed didn't align with the immediate reality, but over time, things eventually unfolded differently.

How did you propose to her?

I simply delivered what God had revealed to me. We later met at her sister's place and again at an eatery. Although her acceptance was not immediate, she eventually agreed to marry me.

What qualities of hers did



With **Ken Ikiriale**

you find endearing?

I honestly didn't notice any specific quality at first. What stood out to me was the deep sense of peace I always felt whenever I saw her or heard from her.

It was different and unexplainable, but it felt right.

How long did you date before you tied the knot?

We dated for more than four months.

Can you recall an event on your wedding day which you still fondly cherish?

I can't forget when I sang a song for her at the wedding reception. The song was "You and I Will Live as One" by the late Onyeka Onwenu.

What are the lessons you have learned in marriage?

I learned two major things. First, issues in marriage should be resolved between both partners, with guidance sought through prayer and the Holy Spirit. If the need for a third party arises, it should not be a family member but a mature, neutral, and trustworthy individual who genuinely cares about us. Second, it is essential to take time to consider decisions that may have long-term implications, ensuring that such decisions are well thought through and beneficial to the marriage.

What advice would you give to a young person planning to get married?

Desire a good wife and seek her from God. When you find her, love and care for her deeply, treating her with tenderness and value. Both of you should always communicate openly, discuss everything together, share your thoughts, and resolve issues as a team. Strong communication builds unity, trust, and lasting peace in a marriage.

BEFORE STARDOM

With... **ONYELE EMMANUEL KING**

Could you tell us about your educational background?

I began my educational journey at Summerland Schools in Mushin, Lagos, where I completed my primary education. I then attended Prevalier Comprehensive College, Lagos, for my secondary school education. I proceeded to the Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro, Ogun State, where I earned my Ordinary National Diploma in Banking and Finance. In 2019, I graduated as the best student in my department, and I am looking forward to furthering my education this year.

You recently emerged as Mr Eco Nigeria; how did you start out on the journey?

My journey started with a desire to challenge myself and step out of my comfort zone. As an introvert, I knew I needed a platform that would push me to grow — and pageantry provided exactly that. I began with small steps: attending castings, building my portfolio as a model, and gradually preparing

myself mentally and physically for the competition.

What motivated you to join pageantry?

My biggest motivation was growth and purpose. I wanted more than just visibility — I wanted a platform to inspire people and promote something meaningful. Pageantry gave me the opportunity to amplify my voice, especially through my advocacy, Hope Alive, which focuses on encouraging resilience and positivity despite life's challenges.

What were some of the challenges you experienced while preparing for the contest?

One of my biggest challenges was overcoming self-doubt and stage anxiety. Being naturally introverted, public speaking did not come easily. There were also moments of physical and mental exhaustion from balancing preparation with my



daily responsibilities. However, those challenges became part of my transformation.

Could you share some of the pleasant experiences you had?

The journey was filled with unforgettable moments, meeting incredible individuals, building friendships, and receiving overwhelming support from my fans. One of the most touching experiences was seeing people genuinely believe in me and stand by me throughout the competition. That kind of love is something I will never take for granted.

Has fame changed you and your personal habits?

Fame has not changed who I am, but it has made me more conscious of my actions and responsibilities. I am more disciplined now, more intentional with my time, and more committed to personal growth. I understand that I represent more than just myself, and that awareness keeps me grounded.

How do you handle overzealous female admirers?

I handle admiration with respect and maturity. I am grateful for the love and support, but I also believe in maintaining boundaries. It is important to stay focused on my purpose while appreciating the people who support my journey.

What project are you currently working on?

I am currently working on my advocacy project, Hope Alive, which is centred on inspiring hope and resilience, especially among young people facing difficult circumstances. As I prepare to represent Nigeria internationally, I am also working on initiatives that connect personal development with environmental consciousness, aligning with the vision of Mr Eco International.

EVENT DIARY



• L-R: Founding Director, Endless Games and Learning Lab, Arizona State University, Mark Olilla; Chief Executive Officer, Maliyo Games, Hugo Obi; and Assistant Director, Endless Games and Learning Lab, Arizona State University, Bola Akinrolabu, during a media interaction to discuss the partnership between Maliyo Games and Arizona State University, in Lagos... on Thursday. Photo: Elliot Ovadje

INTERVIEW

Caring for three sick children has drained me emotionally, financially — Widow

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SATURDAY BEATS

I can't date who doesn't support my acting career — Pamela Okoye

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TODAY IN HISTORY

APRIL 18

April 18, 1506

- The cornerstone of the current St. Peter's Basilica is laid in the Vatican by Pope Julius II

April 18, 1593

- William Shakespeare's poem "Venus and Adonis" is registered for publication, becoming his first work to be printed and his most famous work during his lifetime

April 18, 1912

- Cunard liner RMS Carpathia brings 705 survivors from the RMS Titanic to New York City

April 18, 1924

- First crossword puzzle book published by Simon & Schuster

April 18, 1938

- Superman first appears in DC Comics' Action Comics Series Issue #1 (cover dated June 1938)

April 18, 1946

- The International Court of Justice holds its inaugural meeting in The Hague, Netherlands.

April 18, 1946

- League of Nations dissolves, three months after United Nations is formed

April 18, 1955

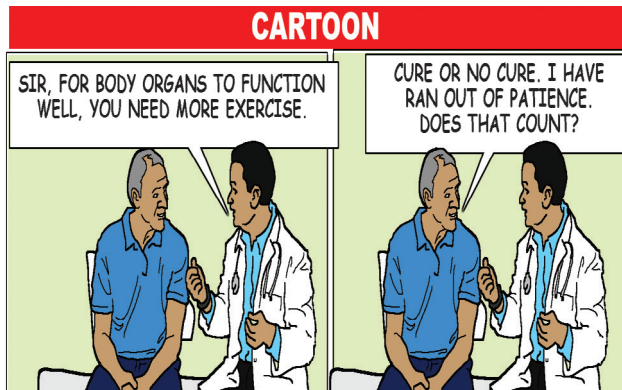
- Albert Einstein German-American physicist who developed the special and general theories of relativity and won the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1921 for his explanation of the photoelectric effect, died on this day in Princeton, New Jersey (aged 76).

April 18, 1963

- Dr. James Campbell performs the first human nerve transplant

April 18, 1977

- Alex Haley author of "Roots" awarded Pulitzer Prize



FG restricts cement, fertiliser, 15 other goods' imports

Sami Tunji, Abuja

The Federal Government has updated its import prohibition list, targeting cement, soaps, fertiliser, and 14 other categories of goods, bringing the total number of affected categories to 17. This was disclosed in a circular issued by the Federal Ministry of Finance and signed by the Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Wale Edun, following presidential approval of the 2026 fiscal policy measures. The document titled

"Approval for the Implementation of the 2026 Fiscal Policy Measures and Tariff Amendments" stated that the revised measures took effect from April 1, 2026, under the ECOWAS Common External Tariff framework. According to the circular, "This is to confirm that His Excellency, Mr President, has approved the implementation of the 2026 Fiscal Policy Measures made up of Supplementary Protection Measures (SPM)... with effect from 1st April 2026." The ministry explained that the import prohibition list

applies to goods originating from non-ECOWAS countries and forms part of broader trade protection measures. "The approved SPM, in line with the provision of the ECOWAS CET, comprises... Import Prohibition list (Trade), applicable only to certain goods originating from non-ECOWAS Member States. It consists of 17 items," the circular stated. Details from Annex III showed that the prohibited categories include live or dead birds, including frozen poultry; pork, beef and other meat products such as carcasses,

cuts, offal, tongues and livers; bird eggs, excluding those for breeding and research; refined vegetable oils, excluding specific categories like linseed, castor and olive oil; cane or beet sugar in retail packs; cocoa butter, cocoa powder and related cocoa preparations; tomatoes, whether fresh, in pieces or processed into paste and concentrates; waters, including mineral and aerated drinks and other non-alcoholic beverages containing sweetening matter; bagged cement; medicaments across multiple classifications; waste pharmaceuticals; mineral and chemical fertilisers containing nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium; soaps; detergents; corrugated paper and paperboard and cartons; hollow glass bottles exceeding 150 millilitres; flat-rolled iron or non-alloy steel products; as well as ballpoint pens and their parts, including refills.

The circular also introduced an Import Adjustment Tax on 192 tariff lines, noting that the levies would be gradually phased out in line with Nigeria's commitments under the African Continental Free Trade Area.

It stated, "With effect from January 2027, all Import Adjustment Taxes except for products on the African Continental Free Trade Area 3 per cent list, shall be gradually reduced on an annual basis until full elimination to 0 per cent by 2036."

The government further announced that excise duties, including a green tax surcharge, would take effect from July 1, 2026, alongside a 90-day grace period for compliance.

Govt urges airlines to halt shutdown over fuel crisis

Princess Etuk, Abuja

The Federal Government has appealed to domestic airlines to suspend plans to halt flight operations and reconsider any increase in airfares following the sharp rise in the price of Jet A1 fuel. The Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, Festus Keyamo, made the appeal in a letter addressed to the Airline Operators of Nigeria on Thursday. The move comes amid growing concerns over threats by airlines to suspend operations next week due to the rising cost of aviation fuel.

In the letter, the minister stated, "I write in reference to your correspondence dated April 14, 2026, concerning the operational challenges currently confronting your member airlines, especially the sudden hike in Jet A1 fuel from N900 per litre as at February 28, 2026, to N3,300 per litre as at today, representing a 300

per cent increase." He commended the resilience of airline operators despite the challenging operating environment. The letter read, "At the outset, I wish to commend the resilience, professionalism, and steadfast commitment of your members in sustaining air transport services under evidently difficult conditions." Reaffirming the Federal Government's commitment to the aviation sector under President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, the minister emphasised the strategic importance of the industry. He said, "Let me reiterate that the administration of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu accords the aviation sector the highest strategic importance. In line with the provisions of the Civil Aviation Act, 2022, the sector remains a critical national asset essential to trade facilitation, national security, employment generation, and overall economic integration."

Africa faces growth risks from global tensions – Afrieximbank

Justice Okangba

Africa's economic growth could be reduced by up to 0.2 percentage points in 2026 due to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, driven by higher energy costs, trade disruptions, and tighter financial conditions, Afrieximbank has said. The warning was contained in a statement obtained on

Friday, in which the bank said African economies remain vulnerable to external shocks despite ongoing recovery efforts from previous global crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war. The assessment was presented in Washington, DC, on Tuesday on the sidelines of the Spring Meetings of the International Monetary Fund

and World Bank by the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, and the United Nations Development Programme. The report, titled Impacts of the Conflict in the Middle East on African Economies, warns that African economies remain exposed to external shocks, particularly through energy imports and global supply chains, at a time when they are still navigating the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war, and tightening global trade conditions.

"The closure of the Strait of Hormuz has significant consequences for transport and trade," AfDB Chief Economist and Vice President for Economic Governance and Knowledge Management, Kevin Urama, who presented the findings, said.

He warned that such a move would worsen Nigeria's economic structure, noting that "in the long run, it will perpetually constrain Nigeria into the circle of exporting jobs and wealth, and importing poverty."

Nigeria earns \$70bn from ExxonMobil's Erha operations

Dare Olawin

ExxonMobil's Erha Deepwater project has generated over \$70bn in value, including about \$23bn remitted to the Federal Government, from more than 800 million barrels of crude oil produced over the past 20 years.

This was disclosed by the Chairman/Managing Director of ExxonMobil Affiliates in Nigeria, Jagir Baxi, when he led a delegation to pay a courtesy visit to the Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Gas), Ekperikpe Ekpo, at the Ministry of Petroleum Resources, Abuja, on Thursday.

The minister, while urging ExxonMobil to increase gas development, commended it for sustaining 20 years of production at the Erha Floating Production Storage and Offloading facility.

In a statement on Friday, Ekpo described the 20-year achievement as a benchmark in Nigeria's deepwater operations. He said the two-decade operation reflects exceptional technical expertise, a strong safety culture, and consistent operational discipline in a challenging offshore environment.

"This milestone represents a remarkable demonstration of resilience, efficiency, and long-

term commitment to Nigeria's energy sector," the minister said. Ekpo noted that the Erha project has significantly contributed to national revenue, job creation, and local capacity development, positioning it as a model for sustainable deepwater production.

MAN rejects petrol import proposal

Arinze Nwafor

The Manufacturers Association of Nigeria has urged the Federal Government to reject policy recommendations suggesting the reinstatement of petrol import licences, describing the proposal as flawed and harmful to Nigeria's industrialisation drive.

The position follows the now-retracted recommendation by the World Bank in its April 2026 Nigeria Development Update. In a statement on Friday, Director-General of MAN, Segun Ajayi-Kadir, said the idea of reopening the country to petrol imports as a long-term solution to inflation was misguided.

"It is not, and should not be considered as an option.

Suggesting that Nigeria should open its borders to imported Premium Motor Spirit to solve an inflationary crisis is structurally flawed, counterproductive, and highly detrimental to Nigeria's industrialisation agenda," Ajayi-Kadir said.

He warned that such a move would worsen Nigeria's economic structure, noting that "in the long run, it will perpetually constrain Nigeria into the circle of exporting jobs and wealth, and importing poverty."

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Legrande Properties Development Company Ltd hereby notifies the general public that Architect Abedo Omeiza is no longer a Director of the Company. His exit has been duly effected and reflected in the records of the Corporate Affairs Commission.

Accordingly, any person or entity who engages in any transaction or dealing with him on the assumption that he remains a Director of Legrande Properties Development Company Ltd does so entirely at their own risk. The Company shall not be liable for, nor bound by, any such transactions, representations, or agreements entered into with him on that basis.

The public is advised to take due note of this notice and be guided accordingly.

SIGNED:
MANAGEMENT

LEGRANDE PROPERTIES DEVELOPMENT COMPANY LTD

PUNCH CLASSIFIED

CHANGE OF NAME ADEYOSOLA: I, formerly known as MISS OSENI OLUWABUKOLA ADEYOSOLA now wish to be known and addressed as MISS OSENI OLUWABUKOLA ADEYOSOLA and my correct date of birth is 08/06/1996, not 08/06/1998. All former documents remain valid. General public and concerned authority take note.	CHANGE OF NAME LEMEHIN: I, formerly MISS BOLA LEMEHIN now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. BOLA ORIMIPINYE. All former document remain valid. The general public notice please take note.
CHANGE OF NAME ENDURANCE: I, formerly known and addressed as MISS JESSICA ENDURANCE JOSEPH now wish to be known and addressed as MRS JESSICA JOSEPH APKAN. All former documents remain valid. The general public should take note.	CHANGE OF NAME HASSAN: I, formerly known and addressed as MISS BARAKAT DAMILOLA HASSAN now wish to be known and addressed as MRS BARAKAT DAMILOLA HASSAN-ABDULHAKEM. All former documents remain valid. The general public please take note.
CHANGE OF NAME MOKOBIA: I, formerly known and addressed as MISS. FELICIA IJENWA MOKOBIA now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. FELICIA IJENWA OGUNDIPE. All former documents remain valid. The general public should take note.	CHANGE OF NAME AWAWU: I formerly known and addressed as MISS AYOOLA AWAWU DAMILOLA, now wish to be known and addressed as MISS AYOOLA HAWWAH DAMILOLA All former documents remain valid, general public take note.
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CHANGE OF NAME AKHABA: I formerly known and addressed as MISS. MARY IYESOMHI AKHABA. Now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. MARY IYESOMHI OSUAGWU. All former documents remain valid. The general public please take note.	ADDITION OF NAME My name was written as MISS ROBINSON OTONYE instead of MISS ROBINSON OTONYE FAVOUR. I hereby add Favour as my middle name. Henceforth, I wish to be known and addressed as MISS ROBINSON OTONYE FAVOUR. General public take note.

FOR ENQUIRIES CONTACT:
08033210218,
08023233775

28 diasporatales with BIODUN BUSARI

US-based Nigerian doctor risks \$1m fine for cutting trees

The Oakland City Council in California has begun a debate on whether to impose a \$1m fine on a Nigerian man, Matthew Bernard, for allegedly felling 38 protected trees on his property in the United States.

Bernard, a medical doctor, cut down dozens of protected trees without a permit in 2021 and 2022, sparking a heated argument among city officials and environmental advocates.

The incident has drawn the attention of Oakland council members, who described the removal of the 38 mature trees by Bernard and his domestic partner, Lynn Warner, from their property and nearby areas as a "clear violation of local environmental regulations."

Arborists said the trees were removed not only on the couple's undeveloped plot along Claremont Avenue in the upscale Oakland Hills, but also on public land and neighbouring properties.

In a report by the United Kingdom's *Daily Mail*, city lawmakers and tree experts said the act posed environmental degradation and safety risks.

Environmental groups, therefore, urged the Oakland City Council to impose the maximum \$1m penalty, warning that failure to do so could embolden others to disregard laws protecting urban forests.

One advocate described the action as treating "our land like trash" and urged authorities to set a strong precedent.

Bernard, who relocated to the US in 2001, told the council that the trees were felled after an arborist's advice, warning him that some posed wildfire risks.

The doctor said he and his partner acted in good faith and tried to comply with regulations, a claim disputed by city officials who argued he failed to obtain permits for the felling.

However, a council member, Carroll Fife, defended Bernard during the hearing on Tuesday, arguing that imposing the full fine on the Nigerian could be unfair.

She cautioned on racial issues, stating that it would be troubling for a Black man to be the first to be penalised for actions she suggested had previously gone unpunished among white residents.

"I have to express my confusion about how a Black man should be the first to receive consequences for things that white people have been doing for centuries," Fife said.

She also pointed to the historical exclusion of minorities from the Oakland Hills, describing the area as one developed primarily for white residents.

Countering her, a fellow council member, Janani Ramachandran, criticised the justification, describing it as "offensive," and insisting that healthy oak trees are generally fire-resistant.

While acknowledging the challenges immigrants may face in navigating property laws in the US, Ramachandran said such difficulties did not allow what he called a "blatant violation" of city rules.

Following a tense debate, the council was divided on the issue, and an initial vote on whether to impose the \$1m fine ended in a tie, with three members opposing and four supporting the penalty, while a member was absent.

A subsequent vote to reduce the fine to \$411,000 also ended in a deadlock.

With no clear resolution, the decision rests on a future council meeting scheduled for May 5, after the city's mayor declined to intervene and break the tie.



•Bernard and partner

Photo: San Francisco Chronicle

Two Nigerians face 100 years in jail over \$100m scam

Two Nigerian men, Akinade Raheem and Abayomi Eletu, are facing 50 years in prison each for an alleged multiple tax fraud scheme involving stolen identities to steal more than \$100m from the Internal Revenue Service in the United States.

In a statement by the Department of Justice on Wednesday, Raheem and Eletu allegedly conspired with their accomplices to claim fraudulent tax refunds by impersonating accountants and taxpayers.

They allegedly filed more than 300 false tax returns claiming over \$100m in refunds from the IRS, with conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud, money laundering, aggravated identity theft and other crimes.

Raheem, 43, and Eletu, 42, residents of the US and the United Kingdom, respectively, obtained identifying information for tax experts and taxpayers between 2018 and 2023.

They used the information, including names, addresses and social security numbers, to generate online accounts with the IRS and request private taxpayer information.

Both defendants are charged with one count of conspiracy to commit wire and mail fraud and one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering.

While Eletu was also charged with five counts of mail fraud, three counts of wire fraud, seven counts of access device fraud and 21 counts of aggravated identity theft, Raheem was charged with 14 counts of access device fraud and 14 counts of aggravated identity theft.

"The defendants face maximum penalties of



20 years in prison for conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud, 20 years for money laundering and 10 years for access device fraud, as well as a mandatory sentence of two years for aggravated identity theft," the statement read.

According to the report, indictments were unsealed in the Northern District of Georgia and the Western District of Texas concerning them.

As part of the scheme, they allegedly changed taxpayers' addresses to addresses controlled by co-conspirators so the IRS would correspond with the co-conspirators instead of the taxpayers.

They allegedly laundered some of the funds by purchasing money orders from US postal offices and local stores in amounts low enough to avoid reporting thresholds when refunds were deposited into prepaid debit cards.

They also used the money orders to purchase used cars from auction sites, some of which they shipped to Nigeria, as well as designer clothing and other items.

Eletu was arrested in the UK at the request of US authorities.

Nigerian woman caught with N360m drug at Indian rail station

Indian authorities have apprehended a Nigerian woman, Emmanuella Ikhanoba, carrying 2.017g of the banned synthetic psychoactive drug MDMA worth over Rs 2 crore (approximately N360m) at Surat railway station in Gujarat.

According to a report by the *Times of India*, she was caught on a train by officers of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence on Wednesday.

Ikhanoba had boarded the train from Delhi, but DRI officials intercepted her following a tip-off, and she was arrested under the provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985.

Officials said further investigation is underway to determine the intended recipient and destination of the drug consignment.

Investigators are also probing whether the Nigerian was an illegal resident in India.

Meanwhile, another Nigerian, identified as Ikechukwu, was arrested by police during a special operation that busted a drug syndicate in Mahendragarh.

Ikechukwu, who was described as a key supplier, was nabbed alongside 10 gang members of the drug syndicate.

Police said drugs, cash, fake rupee notes, a scooter and other items were recovered from the suspects.



Photo: TheGuardian

UK-based analyst hosts experts on education, energy

A non-governmental organisation, Temvert Empowerment Foundation, owned by a United Kingdom-based Nigerian policy analyst, Temitayo Olatunde, has hosted an event calling for adequate investment in energy to improve education.

The virtual side event, tagged Powering Education Equally: Energy Solutions for Girls and Boys, was held on Tuesday on the sidelines of the United Nations Economic and Social Council Youth Forum 2026 at the UN headquarters in New York, United States.

Olatunde said poor electricity supply in Nigeria has a negative impact on students' learning outcomes, noting that children with access to energy often learn, study and perform better than those without



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stable power supply.

He stressed that conversations around quality education must go beyond books and learning materials to include access to energy.

This was contained in a statement made available to *Diaspora Tales* by Olatunde.

He added that the foundation is

committed to addressing both visible and neglected barriers to education, including energy access.

Speakers at the event included Chief Executive Officer of PAM Africa, Patrick Agese; CEO of Vivacity Development, Oluwakemi Areola; Founder of Brace Up The Young Foundation, Obasanjo Fajemirokun;

and Executive Director of Wonderful Way CIC, Bolanle Oyediran.

Across the discussion, speakers stressed that energy must no longer be treated as an afterthought in education, emphasising affordability, sustainability, stronger policy support, and practical solutions that reflect community realities.

In Loving Memory

**Chief
AKINOLA PETER
OLORUNSOLA**
1957 – 2016

Dear Dad,

Ten years have passed, yet it still feels like yesterday that you left us. Time has moved on, but our hearts still pause when we think of you. There is a space you filled in our lives that no one else ever can, and we carry that absence with us every single day.

We miss you in the quiet moments, in the laughter we wish we could share with you, and in the milestones we wish you were here to witness. We miss your voice, your wisdom, your strength, and the comfort of simply knowing you were always there.

You were more than a father—you were our guide, our protector, our foundation. The values you instilled in us, the love you gave so freely, and the life you lived continue to shape who we are today. Because of you, we stand stronger. Because of you, we know what love, family, and integrity truly mean.

Though you are no longer here with us, you have never truly left. You live on in our hearts, in our choices, in our children, and in the legacy of love you built. We see you in the faces of your grandchildren, in the strength of your children, and in the bond that holds our family together.

Dad, we would give anything to sit with you one more time, to hear your laughter, to feel your presence. But until we meet again, we will hold on to every memory, every lesson, and every moment you gave us.

We love you more than words can ever express, and we miss you more than words can ever say.

Forever in our hearts. Forever our father.

Fondly Remembered by Your Family

Children

Dr. Morenikeji Owolabi (née Olorunsola)
Engr. Abayomi Olorunsola
Barr. Olumide Olorunsola
Engr. Olalekan Olorunsola

In-Laws

Mr. Tayo Owolabi – Son-in-law
Mrs. Oluremilekun Olorunsola – Daughter-in-law
Mrs. Abimbola Olorunsola – Daughter-in-law

Grandchildren

Ayomide Olorunsola
Ayowande Olorunsola
Ayotunde Olorunsola
Daniela Owolabi
Pearl Owolabi
Owen Owolabi
Olamide Olorunsola
Olasanmi Olorunsola
Elizabeth Olorunsola



Celebration OF LIFE



We commiserate with the family of Odukale on the passing of their Mother and Matriarch.

We pray that the Almighty God be with the family, and grant her eternal rest.

Adieu Mama,

Dame Matilda Ibidunni
ODUKALE KJW
(NEE ODUBIYI)

Friends,

YETUNDE ILORI
KUNLE AHMED
EKEOMA EZEIBE
IKECHUKWU UDOBI

WOLE OSHIN
AYO BANMEKE
SHOLA TINUBU
SAHEED EGBEYEMI

EDDIE EFEKOHA
GANIYU MUSA
BOLA TEMOWO
EBELECHUKWU NWACHUKWU

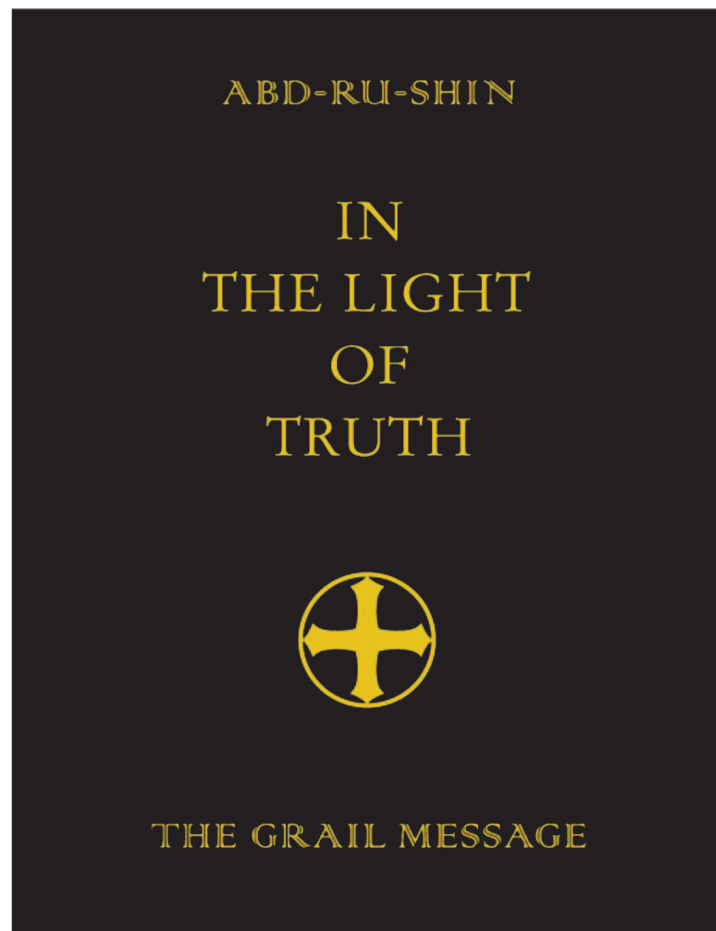
FATAI K. LAWAL
ABIMBOLA ONAKOMAIYA
BABATUNDE OGUNTADE
BABATUNDE FAJEMIROKUN

TOPE SMART
EDWIN IGBITI
FOLASHADE JOSEPH
BOLA ODUKALE

IN THE LIGHT OF TRUTH

THE GRAIL MESSAGE

ABD-RU-SHIN



“In order to convey to mankind such knowledge, which gives them a clear and intelligible conviction of the working of God in His Justice and Love, I have written the work “In the Light of Truth”, which leaves no gap, contains the answer to every question, and clearly shows to mankind how wonderful are the ways in creation...” **Abd-ru-shin**

Abd-ru-shin is the author's name of Oskar Ernst Bernhardt (1875-1941), who wrote the work “*In the Light of Truth The Grail Message*” - in the twenties and thirties of the last century. Abd-ru-shin's writings are available from the Alexander Bernhardt Publishing House, which is still based at Oskar Ernst Bernhardt's former place of work, Vomperberg in Tyrol, Austria.

This book as well as other writings are available from the publishing partners in Nigeria:

Alexander Bernhardt Publishing Company, Grailland, Iju Hills, P.O. Box 4157, Lagos, Nigeria, Africa.



— FOR FURTHER DETAILS/ENQUIRIES: —

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CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE



The Committee of Friends and Associates heartily congratulates **Chief Shina Luwoye, FCA** and **Chief Mrs. Olabisi Ruth Luwoye** on their conferment as **MAYEGUN OF EGBALAND** and **ERELU MAYEGUN OF EGBALAND** by **HRM Kabiyesi Alayeluwa Oba Adedotun Aremu Gbadebo, CFR, Okukenu IV, the Alake and Paramount Ruler of Egbaland**, today **Saturday, 18th April 2026**.

We celebrate this well-deserved honour and pray for continued wisdom, strength, and a successful reign in service to Egbaland.

A jé gbó, A jé tó o.

Oyè a móri.

Congratulations!

Signed:
**Committee of Friends
and Associates**

- Obalofin Kayode & Yeye Olufunke Ogunjimi
- Comrade Peter Esele
- Mrs. Omowunmi Adebayo & Family
- Chief Tony Attah (Aare Gbobaniyi Owu)
- Mrs. Toyin Madein
- Professor Yemi Oke, SAN (Bada Baamofin Egba)
- Pastor Kolawole Ajasa Sokunbi
- Otunba Babatunde & Yeye Mojisola Rufai-Lariba
- Barrister Sangatola Daniel
- Mr. Adedeji Akanbi Sowunmi
- Mr. Ladipo Madein Olufemi
- Dr. Gbenga Adeoye, FCA.
- Engr. Chris Coker
- Alhaji Suraju Adio Odewole





THANK YOU.

MR. PRESIDENT

The Government and good people of Ogun State extend our profound appreciation to our dear President, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, for honoring us with your presence during your historic official visit to our State.

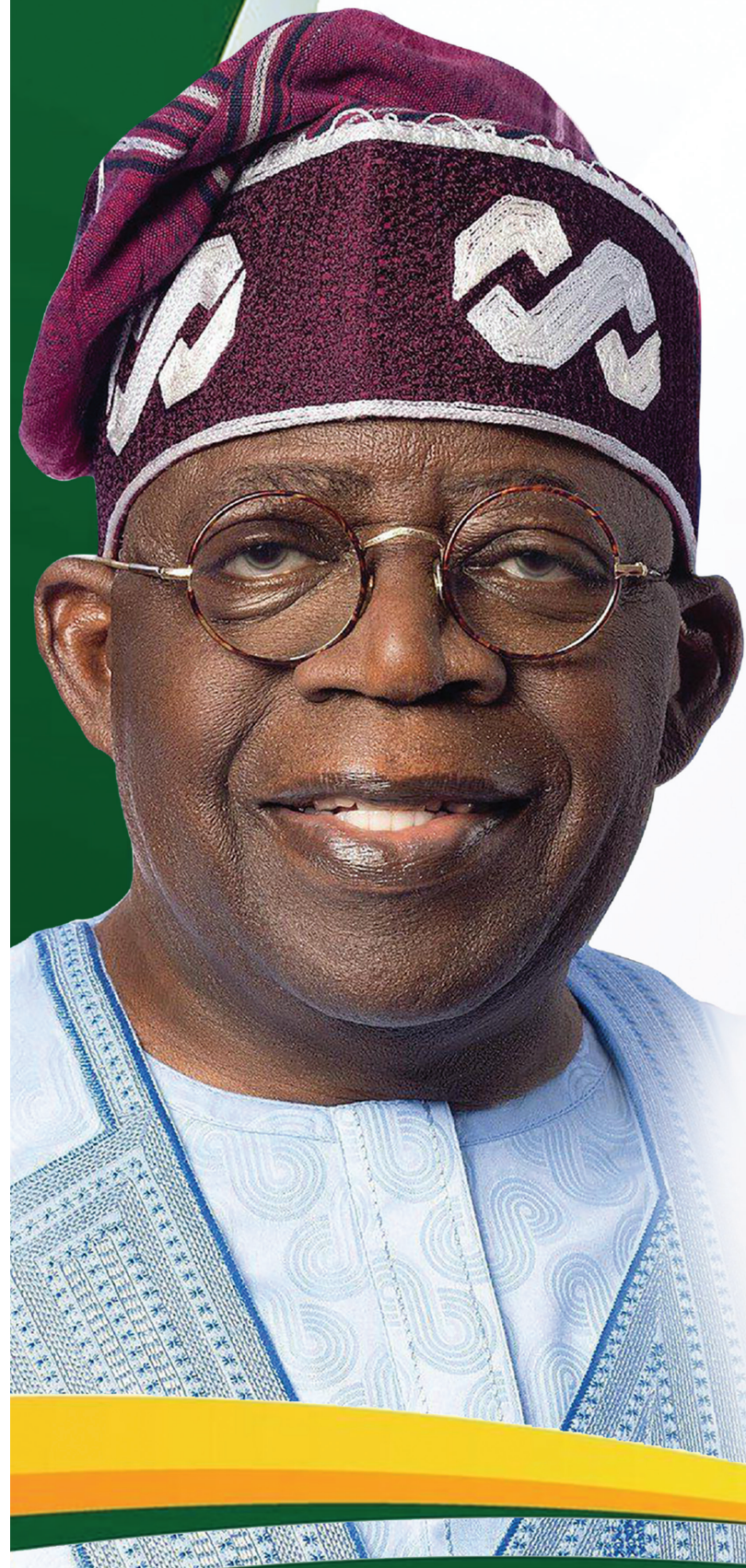
Your Excellency, your gracious attendance at the commissioning of key developmental projects, including the Gateway International Airport, the launch of our state's aviation initiative, and other strategic infrastructure, stands as a clear testament to your unwavering commitment to national growth, economic expansion, and inclusive development. Your leadership continues to inspire confidence and reinforces our collective vision of building a resilient and prosperous Nigeria.

We are particularly grateful for your steadfast support and encouragement as we position Ogun State as a leading hub for industry, logistics, and investment. Your presence not only added immense significance to the occasion but also further strengthened the enduring partnership between the Federal Government and our dear State.

As we forge ahead in delivering on our development agenda, we remain guided by your bold and forward-looking leadership. We reaffirm our unwavering commitment to policies and initiatives that align with the Renewed Hope Agenda, in the best interest of all Nigerians.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of our highest esteem and heartfelt appreciation.

Signed
PRINCE DAPO ABIODUN, CON
Governor of Ogun State



NDLEA secures 974 drug convictions

Victor Ayeni

No fewer than 974 offenders were convicted and sentenced to various jail terms during the first quarter of 2026. This occurred as the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency intensified its arrest, prosecution, and confiscation of the assets of drug traffickers and their collaborators across the country.

Among those convicted are 11 drug kingpins who were handed a combined 254 years imprisonment, according to a statement signed by the Director of Media and Advocacy at NDLEA, Femi Babafemi, on Friday.

Babafemi explained that of the 974 drug traffickers convicted between January and March, 899 of them were male and 75 were female, adding that 265 convictions were secured in January, 316 in February and 393 in March.

He said, "At the top of the list of the 11 drug kingpins who were successfully prosecuted and convicted within the period include a notorious Italy-based 42-year-old businessman, Adegbite Solomon (a.k.a Obama), who was arraigned on a 15-count charge before Justice Musa Kakaki of the Federal High Court, Lagos, in suit



• A drug offender Photo: NDLEA

number: FHC/L/851C/2025.

"Justice Kakaki sentenced Adegbite Solomon (a.k.a Obama) to a total of 130 years in prison on 15 counts, with individual sentences ranging from four to 15 years for each count.

According to Babafemi, another top drug kingpin sentenced to long years in prison in the first quarter of the year was 32-year-old Ridwan

Animashaun, who was arraigned by NDLEA before Justice Nkenoye Maha of the Federal High Court, Ibadan, Oyo State.

"Two other convicts who bagged long years imprisonment are: Rauf Asogba, 28, and Seun Olaniyi, 24, who were convicted and sentenced to 17 years in jail each by Justice Abiodun Jordan Adeyemi of the Federal High Court Abeokuta, Ogun state on 28th January 2026 after NDLEA arrested and charged them to court for trafficking 1,779 kilograms of skunk in suit number: FHC/AB/160C/2025.

"Another set of two convicts got 15 years imprisonment each. They are: 54-year-old Jonathan Nuhu (a.k.a Doctor), who was convicted by Justice Mohammed Nasir Yunusa of the Federal High Court, Kano, Kano State, on 17th March 2026, following his arraignment by NDLEA in charge: FHC/KN/CR/96/2023, and 40-year-old Idris Yusuf, who was sentenced on 31st March 2026 by Justice Fatima Murtala Nyako of the Federal High Court, Damaturu, Yobe."

Other convicts who received seven-year imprisonment each for drug trafficking offences in parts of the country include Godday Obizuo, Asabe Abubakar, Godwin Peter, Asuquo Christian, and Olabode Sunday.

Reacting to the conviction of the drug offenders, the Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of NDLEA, Brig. Gen. Mohamed Buba Marwa (retd.) said, "Securing 974 convictions in just three months is a testament to the relentless spirit of our officers and the thinning patience of the Nigerian state toward drug merchants.

"To the 11 kingpins who thought they were untouchable, their 254-year collective residency in correctional centres is a firm reminder that the long arm of the law has finally caught up with their greed."

Court sentences two kidnappers to death

Linus Effiong, Yenagoa

A High Court of Bayelsa State sitting in Yenagoa on Thursday, April 16, 2026, sentenced two men to death by hanging for the abduction of Mrs Grace Omietimi, mother of the Chief Medical Director of the Federal Medical Centre, Yenagoa, Dr James Omietimi.

The convicts, Mr Felix Oburu, a native of Omoku Community in Ogba/Egbema Local Government Area, and Mr Anthon Eligwe, from Oyigba Community in Ahoada West Local Government Area, both in Rivers State, were found to have conspired with accomplices still at large to carry out the crime.

The court heard that the defendants abducted Mrs Omietimi on September 17, 2017, and held her

captive in Oyigba Community for several weeks before releasing her after the payment of a ransom.

They were subsequently apprehended by operatives of the Department of State Services, following intelligence-led operations that tracked their activities.

Delivering judgment in the case, the Chief Judge of Bayelsa State, Justice Matilda Ayemiyeye, upheld the prosecution's case, found the defendants guilty as charged, and sentenced them to death by hanging.

During the trial, the prosecution presented the victim, Mrs Omietimi, who gave a detailed account of her ordeal.

She identified the second defendant, Eligwe, as the individual in whose residence she was held throughout her captivity.

Gunmen behead 30-year-old man

James Abraham, Jos

Gunmen on Thursday night ambushed and beheaded a 30-year-old man, Mr Elisha Saku, at Riwhie-Chwo in Nzharuvo, Miango District of Bassa Local Government Area of Plateau State.

Residents said the incident occurred around 10 pm when the gunmen stormed the community, throwing it into panic and confusion.

A statement issued on Friday by the Irigwe Youth Movement confirmed the killing, describing it as brutal.

The group's National Publicity Secretary, Joseph Yonkpa, who signed the statement, prayed for the repose of the deceased's soul while calling for divine comfort for the entire Irigwe nation.

"Yesterday night, 16th April 2026, gunmen ambushed and beheaded Mr Elisha Abbas Saku, 30, at Riwhie-Chwo, Nzharuvo, Miango District of Bassa LGA, Plateau State," the statement read.

The spokesman for the state Police Command, Alabo Alfred, was unreachable when contacted about the incident.

This latest incident adds to the recurring security challenges in parts of Plateau State, particularly in Bassa LGA, where farming communities have repeatedly come under attack.

During the trial, the prosecution presented the victim, Mrs Omietimi, who gave a detailed account of her ordeal.

She identified the second defendant, Eligwe, as the individual in whose residence she was held throughout her captivity.

Her testimony was corroborated by the Investigating Officer from the DSS, Bayelsa State Command, who narrated how the suspects were tracked and arrested.

PCN seals 598 drug outlets in Kaduna

Godwin Isenyo, Kaduna

The Pharmacy Council of Nigeria has sealed no fewer than 598 pharmaceutical premises across Kaduna State for various regulatory violations, including illegal operations and improper handling of medicines.

Addressing journalists at the council's zonal office in Kaduna on Friday, the Head of Enforcement, Dr Suleiman Chiroma, said the exercise, which lasted four days, also led to the arrest of two vendors for gross violations of the law.

He said the exercise was carried out in line with the council's mandate under the Pharmacy Council of Nigeria Act to regulate pharmacy practice and enforce standards across the drug distribution chain.

Chiroma explained that a total of 828 premises were inspected, comprising 123 pharmacies, 631 patent medicine stores and 74 unlicensed outlets across 10 local government areas, including Kaduna North, Kaduna South, Zaria, Igabi and Chikun.

According to him, 598 premises were sealed, including 68 pharmacies, 456 patent medicine stores and all 74 unlicensed facilities.

"In addition, four compliance directives were issued, while two vendors were arrested for gross violations of the PCN Act," he said.

He noted that some patent medicine vendors were found stocking and dispensing prescription-only and controlled medicines, an offence he described as a serious threat to public health.

"Such practices exceed their authorised scope and pose significant risks to public safety," Chiroma warned.

The enforcement chief, however, said the council recorded improved compliance levels, with only nine per cent of the premises visited operating illegally.

He added that 28 per cent of the total premises inspected were fully compliant with regulatory standards, noting that 45 per cent of pharmacies and 28 per cent of patent medicine stores met required conditions.

Chiroma listed offences that led to the sealing of premises to include failure to present valid licences, operating unregistered facilities, unauthorised clinical practice, stocking ethical medicines in patent medicine shops and obstruction of pharmaceutical inspectors.

He reiterated the council's commitment to sanitising the drug distribution system, stressing that only qualified personnel and licensed premises would be allowed to operate.

saturday beats

with **Faith Ajayi, Oghenovo Egodo-Michael, Naomi Chima & Kehinde Ajose**

Surviving domestic violence inspired my podcast – Ayo Adesanya

Kehinde Ajose

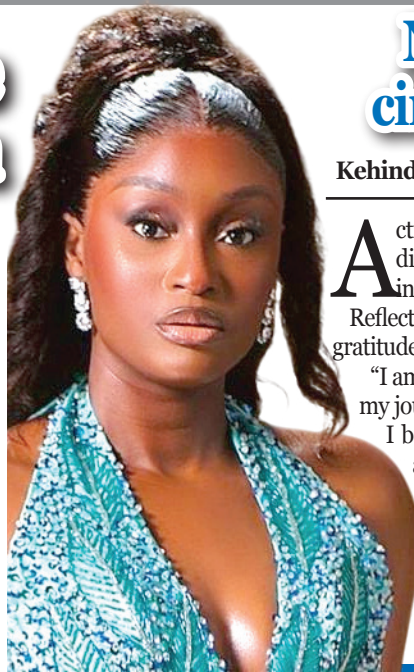
Popular actress, Ayo Adesanya, has revealed that her personal experiences, including surviving domestic violence, inspired her to start her podcast, 'Real Life With Aunty Ayo'.

Adesanya disclosed this in an interview with Saturday Beats, noting that her motivation is rooted in a desire to create a safe space for shared learning and healing.

"I have been through domestic violence, and I like to talk about other people's stories. I want us to learn together and heal together, if possible. I like hearing about people's challenges—what they are facing in life and how we can overcome them," she said.

Speaking further, the actress described the opportunity to have people open up to her as deeply meaningful.

"It's a new field for me, but I studied Communication and Language Arts at the University of Ibadan, so I already have the background. The fact that people are able to open up to me is a privilege. Being able to bring people on the show to talk about these issues means a lot. Years ago, we couldn't discuss some of these things openly. It shows we have come a long way," she added.



Not all films belong in cinemas – Scarlet Gomez

Kehinde Ajose

Actress, Scarlet Gomez, has shared her views on film distribution, as well as the challenges she has faced in the course of her career.

Reflecting on her career progression, the actress expressed gratitude for how far she has come.

"I am grateful; that's all I can say. Everyone who knows my journey understands it has been a long time coming. I believe God makes everything perfect in His time, and this is just my time," she stated.

On the possibility of venturing into music, Gomez remained non-committal. "Maybe, maybe not. I don't know," she said.

She also highlighted key lessons she has learnt over the years, emphasising hard work, faith, and respect.

Oyetunde Akangbe tells stories with narrative-driven fashion

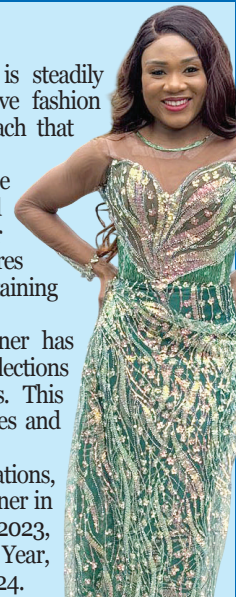
Tofarati Ige

Lagos-born fashion designer, Oyetunde Akangbe, is steadily carving a niche for herself in Nigeria's competitive fashion industry, drawing attention for a distinctive approach that blends daring creativity with refined craftsmanship.

Since beginning her professional career in 2021, Akangbe has built a reputation for producing garments that go beyond aesthetics, focusing instead on storytelling through fabric. Her work, described as both experimental and grounded, explores themes of elegance, resilience and individuality, while maintaining a strong connection to cultural identity.

Rather than following fast-changing trends, the designer has positioned herself as a narrative-driven creative, using her collections to communicate personal and cross-cultural experiences. This approach has earned her recognition within industry circles and beyond.

Akangbe's growing profile is reflected in a series of nominations, including Creative Stylist in 2022, Emerging Creative Designer in 2023, and a Fashionpreneur nomination slated for 2025. In 2023, she was also nominated for Best Student Designer of the Year, followed by a nomination for Best Designer of the Year in 2024.



Spotlight on Uche Montana's rise in Nollywood

Faith Ajayi

In Nollywood's fast-moving attention economy, where relevance is fleeting and visibility is currency, actress Uche Montana is quietly building a career that resists fading into the background.

While she has long maintained a presence in the industry, her recent momentum is widely traced to her appearance in 'Behind the Scenes', a project by filmmaker Funke Akindele. The movie not only amplified Montana's visibility but also appears to have repositioned her within the industry's value chain.

One of her notable works, 'Monica', stands

out as her most widely viewed project based on engagement indicators across streaming platforms. The film, which explores themes of romance, betrayal and emotional conflict, continues to generate strong audience interaction, with sustained discussions across social platforms and comment sections reflecting its resonance with viewers.

However, industry observers note that Montana's rise is not driven by visibility alone. In an era where screen presence and digital appeal often influence casting decisions, she has built a strong visual identity that complements her on-screen performances.



Currencee explores love, obsession in 'Go Crazy'

Faith Ajayi

Toronto-based afro-fusion artiste, Currencee, has announced the release of his latest single titled, 'Go Crazy', a genre-blending record that fuses Afrobeats, hip-hop, and melodic storytelling.

In a statement shared with Saturday Beats, the track is described as a "vibrant and emotionally charged offering that explores themes of love, obsession, and passion,

with the artist aiming to capture intense emotional experiences through rhythm-driven production and expressive lyrics".

Speaking on the inspiration behind the song, Currencee said it reflects overwhelming emotional connection and desire.

"This record is about that kind of love that takes over you completely; the energy, the madness, the passion. It's real, and people will feel it," he said.

Evolution Records unveils new signee, Divine Reo

Kehinde Ajose

It was an evening of music, interaction, and artistic discovery as Evolution Records recently unveiled its newest signee, Divine Reo, at an event that took place at the Oriental Hotel, Lagos.

The event brought together industry stakeholders, media personalities, and music enthusiasts, who gathered to witness the introduction of a new voice emerging in Nigeria's music scene.

Guests were treated to live performances and curated showcase moments that highlighted the new signee's vocal ability, stage presence, and artistic direction.

Speaking at the unveiling, Divine Reo expressed her passion for music and commitment to creating relatable, story-driven content that connects with listeners across different age groups.



Sceed Barms reflects on rise as master of ceremonies

Anjola Dawodu

Nigeria's fast-growing events industry is fuelling the rise of a new class of masters of ceremonies, with performers like Sadiq Adebimpe, popularly known as Sceed Barms, emerging as key figures in the country's vibrant social scene.

According to a statement shared with Saturday Beats, Sceed Barms is said to have recorded 111 bookings in 2025.

It added, "The figure—equivalent to more than two events weekly—highlights both the surging demand for professional hosts and the evolving structure of Nigeria's celebration economy, where weddings, corporate events and political gatherings have become highly organised, big-budget affairs.

"Having entered the industry about four years ago, Barms has built a reputation for high-energy performances and adaptability across diverse audiences. Industry observers say such qualities are now essential as more entrants crowd the space.



Askofroyal expands online presence with lifestyle content

Anjola Dawodu

Digital content creator, Oladele Praise, popularly known as Askofroyal, is emerging as one of Nigeria's fast-rising online personalities, building a strong following across TikTok and Instagram through consistent and high-performing content.

With more than two million followers on TikTok, Askofroyal has recorded significant traction on the platform, with several of his videos attracting between one million and 17 million views. His growing audience is driven largely by lifestyle and relationship-focused content that resonates strongly with young Nigerians.

Known for a distinct creative approach that blends visual aesthetics with relatable storytelling, he has continued to record strong engagement across social media platforms, positioning him among a new wave of creators shaping Nigeria's online entertainment space.

2027: Be worried about defeat, ADC tells Tinubu

Abdulrahman Zakariyau, Abuja

The African Democratic Congress has told President Bola Tinubu to be concerned about a possible electoral defeat in 2027, saying that widespread hardship and worsening living conditions have eroded public confidence in his administration's policies.

In a statement issued on Friday by its National Publicity Secretary, Bolaji Abdullahi, the ADC said Tinubu appeared increasingly detached from the realities of hardship, insecurity, and widespread frustration confronting millions of Nigerians.

Reacting to criticism from former Vice President Atiku Abubakar, former governors Peter Obi (Anambra) and Rotimi Amaechi (Rivers), among other African Democratic Congress leaders during their April 14 national convention,

President Tinubu said he would be intimidated, while accusing the coalition figures of trying to privatise the ADC and describing their gathering as a "street convention."

In response, the ADC described the President's comments as unpresidential, alleging that he appeared more focused on politics while many Nigerians continued to grapple with worsening poverty and increasing vulnerability to

insurgency and kidnappings.

The party stated, "The African Democratic Congress has taken note of the comments made by Bola Ahmed Tinubu at the Presidential Villa concerning the ADC and the state of the opposition. What Nigerians saw was not the confidence of a leader in control. It was the anxiety of a President increasingly disconnected from the reality of hardship, insecurity, and frustration facing millions of citizens."

INEC ends CVR's second phase, registers 3.7 million voters

Deborah Musa

The Independent National Electoral Commission has concluded the second phase of the nationwide Continuous Voter Registration exercise, recording a total of 3,748,704 completed registrations across the country.

In a statement issued on Friday

and signed by INEC's Director of Voter Education and Publicity, Mrs Victoria Etta-Messi, the commission said over three million people have completed their registration across the country, adding that the figure reflected a combination of online and physical registrations.

"The Independent National Electoral Commission has concluded the second phase of the nationwide Continuous Voter Registration exercise today, Friday, April 17, 2026, recording a total of 3,748,704 completed registrations across the country."

"The figure contained in the commission's weekly update for Week 14 of the second phase of the exercise comprises both online pre-registrations and in-person completions at designated centres nationwide, reflecting sustained public participation in the voter registration process ahead of the 2027 general election," the statement said.

FG releases hotlines to fight school bullying

Adebayo Folorunsho-Francis, Abuja

The Federal Government on Friday released emergency hotlines for victims of bullying, schools and parents to report cases for prompt action.

The help lines were unveiled at a one-day Stakeholders Consultative Dialogue on Anti-Bullying in Schools organised in Abuja by International Alert Nigeria.

The event was attended by students, parents, school owners, activists, members of the National Youth Service Corps and government officials.

School bullying, which includes physical, verbal and psychological abuse, remains widespread in Nigeria, with studies showing that between 70 and 85 per cent of students have experienced it.

In his address, the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Education, Abel Enitan, represented by the Assistant Director (Gender), Augustina Apakasa, said the ministry had set up reporting channels under its

anti-bullying framework.

She said, "At the Implementation Committee on Anti-Bullying in the Federal Ministry of Education, we have a hotline that you can call. In fact, they are two numbers. For calls, you can reach us on 09012660044 while the other number to send us a message on WhatsApp is 08052536133."

TikToker, bread company at war over 'everlasting' loaf

Olufemi Adediran and Ayoola Olasupo

The Chief Executive Officer and founder of Bon Bread, Maria Abdulkadir, has explained the company's decision to institute legal action against a TikTok user over a viral video in which she questioned the safety of a loaf allegedly remaining fresh for two months.

The controversy began after a TikTok user, identified as "Love", posted a video expressing concern over what she described as the unusually long shelf life of a loaf of

bread, which she claimed remained unspoiled two months after purchase.

The video sparked widespread reactions online, with the content creator later alleging that Bon Bread had served her a N50m lawsuit. She also claimed the brand took legal action despite her not mentioning any company name or displaying any logo in the video.

In a follow-up post, she said, "Hello guys, you won't believe what I'm holding in my hands. Bon Bread sent their solicitors to serve me this letter."

A TOAST TO LEGAL EXCELLENCE AND INSPIRING LEADERSHIP

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Management, and Staff of our company, we joyfully celebrate you,



Prof. Yusuf Olaolu. Ali, SAN, FCI Arb, Kuliyan Ngeri of Ilorin,

on the conferment of an Honorary Doctorate Degree (L D, Honoris Causa) by the University of Abuja today, April 18, 2026.

This latest recognition is a testament to your intellectual depth and your four decades of invaluable contributions to both the Nigerian legal landscape and corporate governance. It is also a fitting celebration of a life dedicated to advancing the cause of justice, fostering education, and cultural enrichment in service to both humanity and the nation.

Prof, your Journey-from the hallowed chambers of our courts to the strategic heights of the boardroom-continues to be an inspiration. We at Multi-Trex Integrated Foods Pie are immensely proud of having you on our board and your achievements.

We congratulate you on this well deserved honour!

Signed:

For & on behalf of the Board of Directors & Management,
Multi-Trex Integrated Foods Plc





Ex-staff accuse firm of withheld salaries, untold hardship

• They were guilty of workplace misconduct – Firm's MD

employee to suspect

Adetunji said that on October 15, 2025, he was issued a non-confirmation letter while out of town. He said he responded formally, seeking clarity on the payment timeline.

"Thank you for the notification. Before I proceed with the handover, I would appreciate clarification on the following: the exact date my salary will be paid, a detailed breakdown of the days recorded as my absence, and the final computed total of the salary I am entitled to. Once I have these details and confirm their accuracy, I will proceed with the handover," he said.

Adetunji said his efforts to get responses were unsuccessful, and he remained blocked from all communication channels.

The ordeal, he said, peaked on January 14, 2026, when he was arrested by police officers from the Zone 2 Police Command Headquarters, Onikan, without prior notice.

"There was no response to my messages, and all attempts to reach the MD were unsuccessful. On January 14, 2026, when I returned from my state and alighted from a bike around 8 pm, I was arrested by the police. The company vehicle was retrieved, and I was taken to Zone 2 Police Command Headquarters at Onikan," h Adetunji said.

Life at Kirikiri

Adetunji said he was initially invited by the police for settlement discussions but was later issued a court summons from the Yaba Magistrate's Court.

He was arraigned on charges of unlawful seizure and conversion of a company vehicle, to which he pleaded not guilty.

The summons read: "Unlawfully seized, tampers with Renault Logan Sedan Saloon car with Reg No RSH 05 XF, property of Zenith Carex International Limited, and thereby committed an offence punishable under Section 34 of the Criminal Law of Lagos State, 2015.

"COUNT II: That Samson Adetunji 'M', on the said date, time and place in the aforementioned Magistrate District, did unlawfully and intentionally convert to his own personal use one Renault Logan Sedan Saloon car with Reg No RSH 05 XF, valued at N10,000,000, property of Zenith Carex International Limited, and thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 280 and punishable under Section 287 of the Criminal Laws of Lagos State, 2015."

Adetunji said he was granted bail of N1m with two sureties, but due to administrative delays, he spent seven days and four hours at the Kirikiri Correctional Centre, where he said he endured harsh conditions.

"My time in Kirikiri Prison was a difficult and unfamiliar experience, as I had to adjust to conditions I had never encountered before. I observed that many inmates were awaiting trial, and in my view, it was concerning that they were housed together with convicted prisoners.

"The environment was challenging, with overcrowding, restricted movement, and a strict daily routine. These conditions took an emotional toll on me and were mentally stressful," he said.

Adetunji maintained that he never used the company vehicle for personal purposes.

"Never. I could not use the car for personal reasons because the company's name was painted on it, and I feared the red plate number. Even while performing company duties, local government officials frequently stopped me over incomplete vehicle documents," Adetunji added.

Another colleague's ordeal
Another dismissed staff member, Oluwatobi Adeyemo, told *Saturday PUNCH* that unanswered calls, ignored emails, and lack of accountability made his dismissal particularly frustrating.

Adeyemo explained that he joined the company in June 2025 after successfully completing both virtual and physical interviews with its management.

• Continued on www.punchng.com

IBRAHIM ADAM reports how months of unpaid salaries, amid accusations of misconduct and absenteeism by employers, have left workers financially stranded, emotionally drained and legally uncertain, raising urgent questions about labour compliance, workplace accountability, and the gap between employment rights and reality in Nigeria's job market

For Samson Adetunji, who hails from the Olode/Alakia community in Egbeda Local Government Area of Oyo State, what began as a promising job quickly spiralled into crisis when his wages stopped coming.

Adetunji said he was employed as an Operations Officer at Zenith Carex International Limited, a logistics company known for its broad range of services. He told *Saturday PUNCH* that he took up the role with enthusiasm, eager to contribute to the company's operations and build a promising career.

According to him, his responsibilities included transporting parcels between the Lagos mainland and island branches, as well as the airport, using a company-assigned vehicle.

The 30-year-old said the initial excitement soon gave way to hardship, as financial difficulties and operational instability began to take a toll on his work life.

Adetunji explained that his personal life was also severely affected, with rent deadlines looming, repeated borrowing from friends, and constant stress becoming part of his daily reality.

"I was hit by serious hardship during that period. I had promised my landlord that I would pay my house rent in August 2025, but the money never came. I kept postponing and making promises, which angered him, and he eventually served me a quit notice.

"If not for friends and family pleading on my behalf, I would have had no choice but to borrow from various apps and friends to settle the rent," he said.

Adetunji explained that he applied for the position in early June 2025, attended a virtual interview, and was subsequently invited to meet the Managing Director, Adelana Olamilekan, on Monday, June 30, 2025.

Early signs of trouble

Adetunji alleged that within weeks of resuming work, the first signs of instability emerged when his July 2025 salary was delayed, leaving him anxious and uncertain.

Although the salary was eventually paid on August 4, 2025, he said the delay set a troubling precedent.

"I continued my duties diligently throughout August. However, at the end of that month, my

take-home salary of N262,300 was not paid, and there was no communication from management regarding the delay. I assumed it was a temporary issue and continued working despite serious financial difficulties," he said.

By September 2025, according to him, the situation had worsened to the point where he had to borrow money from friends to meet basic needs.

He claimed that dispatch riders, frustrated by non-payment, began refusing to carry out deliveries, forcing him to contribute small personal amounts to keep operations running.

"Dispatch riders began refusing to carry out deliveries due to non-payment, and I often had to give them small amounts, like N500, from my personal funds to keep operations running," Adetunji said.

Adetunji also alleged that operational challenges extended to fuel stations, as delayed payments forced him and the manager to negotiate credit arrangements to sustain deliveries.

He said he made repeated attempts to reach management via WhatsApp but received no response.

By the end of September 2025, he said some staff members had resigned, and several riders had stopped working, yet he remained committed, determined not to abandon his responsibilities despite the mounting personal cost.

Mounting pressure

Adetunji said that in early September 2025, when the MD, Olamilekan, attended a wedding in Lagos from Abuja, he volunteered to drive him to the venue.

He said that during the trip, he informed the MD about the poor condition of the company vehicle and the need for repairs.

Adetunji said Olamilekan instructed him to either use the car as it was or collect another vehicle from a consultant, Yetunde, but he considered the options impractical due to ongoing internal issues.

"I fuelled the car with N4,500 before going to the airport, attended the wedding with him, and returned him to the airport after the ceremony, for which he gave me N20,000.

"On my way back, the FRSC stopped me for not having a spare tyre, despite my repeated communications with the company about this issue. I had to pay for the ticket before being released," he said.

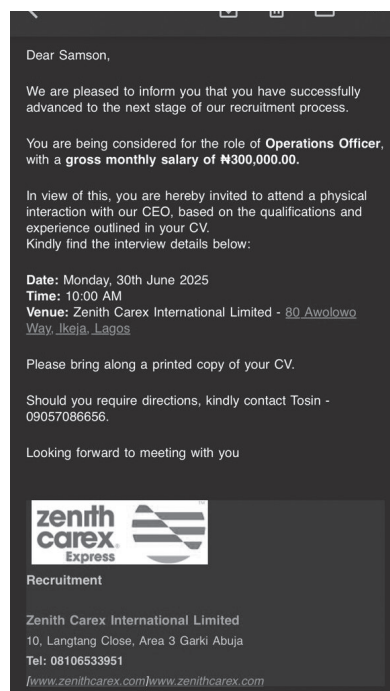
Adetunji added that the situation worsened in October 2025 as his financial condition became critical.

He said he informed the MD that he could not report physically to work due to lack of funds and fuel, but was willing to continue working remotely.

Adetunji said he requested at least a partial salary payment but received no response. On October 8, 2025, after requesting financial assistance to attend a burial in his hometown, he received a message stating he would not be paid for the days he was absent.

"We will not pay you for the number of days you have been absent from work," the message read.

He claimed he was shortly afterwards removed from all company communication groups.



•Sesi

•Olamilekan

•Ubani

•Adetunji

From

SALUTE TO EXCELLENCE

WE heartily congratulate our
bosom friend and brother
Prof. Yusuf Olaolu Ali, SAN
and the first Kuliya Gari
Of Ilorin Emirate
on the conferment of the

Honorary Doctor of Laws (LLD)

by the Yakubu Gowon University
(formerly University of Abuja) today,
18th April, 2026.

This prestigious honor is another
credence and testimony of your
outstanding contributions to law,
justice and advancement of
education.

We are proud to join in celebrating
you - a man of excellence, integrity
and selfless service.

We pray Allah to protect you with
many more years of useful service
to humanity.

COURTESY:

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Furniture & fittings

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Redefine your space with room dividers

In modern interior design, the need to balance functionality with aesthetics has led to the rising popularity of room dividers as more than just practical tools. Once used to separate spaces, room dividers have now evolved into decorative furniture pieces that enhance the overall look and feel of a home. As open-plan living becomes more common, homeowners are increasingly turning to stylish dividers to define spaces without sacrificing openness or visual appeal.

Redefining space without walls

Open-plan layouts are a defining feature of contemporary homes, blending living, dining, and working areas into one continuous space. While this design promotes interaction and flow, it can sometimes lack structure. Room dividers offer a flexible solution by subtly separating areas without the permanence of walls. Whether it is dividing a living room from a dining area or creating a private workspace within a bedroom, these pieces allow homeowners to organise their spaces efficiently while maintaining a sense of openness.

A blend of function and style

What sets modern room dividers apart is their ability to combine functionality with design. They are no longer plain or purely utilitarian; instead, they come in a wide variety of materials, patterns, and finishes that contribute to the room's aesthetic. Wooden slats, glass panels, metal frames, and even fabric screens can serve as artistic elements within a space. Some dividers feature intricate carvings or geometric designs, turning them into statement pieces that draw attention while serving a practical purpose.

Versatility in modern homes

One of the greatest advantages of room dividers is their versatility. They can be easily moved, adjusted, or replaced, making them ideal for dynamic living environments. Folding screens, open shelving units, and sliding panels are popular options that cater to different needs. For instance, a bookshelf divider not only separates spaces but also provides storage and display opportunities. This adaptability makes room dividers particularly suitable for small apartments and multi-functional rooms where flexibility is essential.

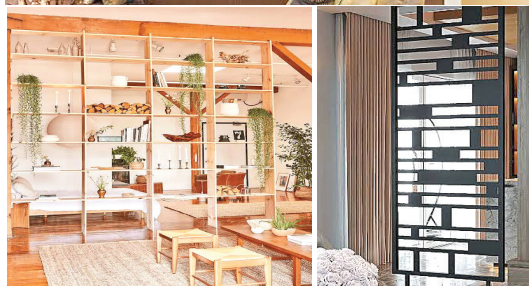
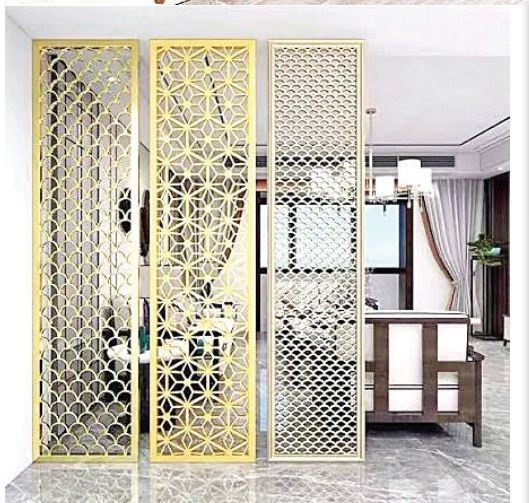
Enhancing privacy and comfort

In addition to defining spaces, room dividers also enhance privacy and comfort within the home. In shared living environments, they can create personal zones without the need for construction. A divider can transform a corner into a quiet reading nook or a temporary workspace, offering a sense of separation and focus. This is especially valuable in homes where multiple activities take place within the same area.

Creating visual interest

Beyond their functional benefits, room dividers play a significant role in adding depth and character to interiors. They break the monotony of large, open spaces and introduce layers that make a room more visually engaging. By carefully selecting a design that complements existing furniture and décor, homeowners can use dividers to enhance the overall theme of their interiors.

As homes continue to evolve to meet the demands of modern living, room dividers stand out as a smart and stylish solution. They prove that it is possible to create structure, privacy, and beauty within a space without the need for permanent walls. In doing so, they transform everyday interiors into thoughtfully designed environments that reflect both function and personality.



dream wedding
Economic hardship strains marital connection
 pg 30

FIBA seeds D'Tigress in pot 2 for World Cup draw
 Olamide Abe

Nigeria's D'Tigress have been seeded in pot 2 ahead of the FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup 2026 draw, which will take place in Berlin on April 21, with 16 nations set to discover their group-stage opponents for the expanded global tournament, *Saturday PUNCH* reports.

The draw, one of the key milestones in the build-up to the competition, will be held at Kraftwerk Berlin.

This year's tournament marks an expansion from 12 to 16 teams following the success of the 2022 edition in Sydney.

The competition will run from September 4 to 13 in Germany, with host nation Germany placed in pot 1 alongside the United States, France and Australia.

Nigeria will be appearing at the showpiece event for the third time after their outing in 2006 and 2018 as reigning champions United States will be aiming for a fifth consecutive title, while Korea extend their record appearance streak to 18 editions.

Italy return to the competition for the first time in 32 years, while Hungary will feature for the first time in 28 years. Mali also make history by qualifying for consecutive World Cups for the first time.

Age fraud, poor structures undermining sports – MTN

Ademola Adegbite, Ibadan

The Operations and Head of Resources Manager at Making of Champions, the organiser of MTN CHAMPS, Moshood Hassan, has disclosed that the organisers are working relentlessly to address age manipulation, which has been one of the clogs in the wheel of the annual competition.

He made this disclosure while speaking with *Saturday PUNCH* on the sidelines of the ongoing MTN CHAMPS held at the Lekan Salami Stadium, Adamasingba in Ibadan, the Oyo State capital, on Friday.

Hassan explained that the competition was designed to celebrate the development of athletics in Nigeria and to serve as a platform for young Nigerian talents in track and field to grow, develop, and progress through the ranks, with the ultimate goal of producing future Olympians.

Saturday PUNCH reports that MTN CHAMPS is a premier Nigerian grassroots athletics talent search program launched in 2023 by MTN Nigeria and Making of Champions (MoC) to discover, train, and support young athletes to become global champions.

Speaking further on Friday, the operation manager said since the commencement of the programme, age manipulation has been its major challenge and the organizers are determined to find permanent solution to it.

Foundation for Cancer Care holds charity golf tourney

Abiodun Adewale

The fourth edition of the Foundation for Cancer Care's charity golf tournament, tagged "Swing Against Cancer," was held on Friday at the Golf Section of Ikoyi Club 1938, bringing together golfers, advocates, and partners to raise funds for cancer screening, treatment, and awareness, *Saturday PUNCH* reports.

Leading the lineup of players and advocates was capital market executive and cancer survivor, Farooq Oreagba.

Featuring about 100 golfers in a team format, the 18-hole tournament was won by Team 4D Cure—comprising Olaide Okubanjo, Oladejo Odunuga, Kunle Olawale, and Olamide Ayanbadejo—with 88 points. Team Pepsi finished second

with 83 points, while 2025 champions, Team Sacvin, came third with 82 points.

There were also individual honours in both the men's and ladies' categories. The organisers stated that proceeds from the event would support screening and treatment programmes, including plans to acquire a mobile screening unit



to improve access to breast, cervical, and prostate cancer screening at the community level.

Chairman of the Foundation for Cancer Care, Prof. Chummy Nwogu, emphasised the importance of the tournament in promoting awareness about early detection in the fight against cancer.

NSC urges Ofili to return, promises Olympic support

Olamide Abe

The National Sports Commission has reaffirmed its commitment to Nigerian sprint star Favour Ofili, urging her to return to the national team following the decision by World Athletics to block her transfer of allegiance to Turkey, *Saturday PUNCH* reports.

The ruling, delivered by the World Athletics Nationality Review Panel on Thursday, rejected an application by the Türkiye Athletics Federation to switch Ofili's nationality, citing concerns over the integrity of international competition and coordinated recruitment of athletes across multiple countries.

In response, the commission's director general on Friday, Bukola Olopade, said Nigeria remains fully supportive of the athlete and is ready to provide the necessary backing to help her succeed at the highest level.

He stressed the importance of re-engaging Ofili and those around her, while reiterating that the country remains her home despite the recent developments.

"She's our daughter. We love her so much and I've always said we must speak to her to come home. I am urging Ofili and those close to her that home is waiting for her," Olopade said.

Olopade also appealed to the sprinter not to be discouraged by the failed transfer, assuring her of long-term support, particularly with the Olympic Games on the horizon.

"Don't be dejected or angry. Know that we love you and we still want you back. We promise you all the support that you require to shine at the Olympics in two years' time," he added.

The decision by World Athletics forms part of a broader rejection of 11 transfer applications linked to what the governing body described as a coordinated recruitment strategy backed by the Turkish government ahead of the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games.

The panel ruled that the move risked undermining the credibility of national representation in athletics, warning against a system driven primarily by financial incentives rather than genuine national ties.

"The Application by the TAF for Favour OFILI to transfer allegiance from NGR to TUR is not approved."

Turkey is expected to challenge the ruling at the Court of Arbitration for Sport, with reports indicating that a legal appeal is already being prepared in what could become a landmark case for nationality transfers in athletics.

Despite the uncertainty surrounding the appeal, Nigerian authorities have moved swiftly to close ranks around Ofili.



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MR LIVINUS Chukky

Panel 1: "YOU TAKE A LOT OF BEER EVERY DAY. WHY WON'T YOU FEEL SICK AND DIZZY?"

Panel 2: "I WISH YOU WELL BUT YOU SHOULD THINK ABOUT YOUR FUTURE."

Panel 3: "I DID. THAT'S WHY STOCK THE FRIDGE WITH BEER IN ADVANCE."