

11 Drug Kingpins Jailed 254 Years Across Nigeria

• As Ndlea Secures 974 Convictions In Three Months

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) has recorded a major breakthrough in Nigeria's fight against drug trafficking, securing 974 convictions within the first quarter of 2026, including 11 high-profile drug kingpins sentenced to a combined 254 years in prison.

The convictions, achieved between January and March, reflect an aggres-

sive crackdown by the anti-narcotics agency, with 899 male offenders and 75 females sentenced across courts nationwide. A monthly breakdown shows 265 convictions in January, 316 in February, and 393 in March.

This is contained in a statement issued by NDLEA's spokesman, Femi Babafemi on Friday.

Among the most prominent cases

is that of Italy-based businessman Adegbite Solomon, alias "Obama," who received a cumulative 130-year jail sentence after being found guilty on 15 counts by a Federal High Court in Lagos.

Although the sentences will run concurrently, the court also ordered the revocation of his pharmacy

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• Some of the convicts



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Iran Reopens Strait Of Hormuz As Ceasefire Sends Oil Prices Crashing

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Tinubu Signs N68.32trn 2026 Budget, Extends 2025 Spending



• President Tinubu

President Bola Tinubu has signed into law the 2026 Appropriation Bill of ₦68.32 trillion, while also approving an extension of the 2025 budget implementation period to June 30, 2026.

The new budget, which takes effect from April 1, outlines key spending priorities, with ₦4.799 trillion allocated for statutory transfers and ₦15.8 trillion earmarked for debt ser-

ving. Recurrent expenditure is set at ₦15.4 trillion, while ₦32.2 trillion has been designated for capital projects under the Development Fund.

With capital expenditure accounting for about 50 per cent of the total budget, the plan signals the administration's continued focus on infrastructure development, economic stability, national security and inclusive growth.

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Trump Hails Hormuz Reopening, Vows Continued US Naval Blockade On Iran

President Donald Trump took to Truth Social Friday afternoon to announce a major breakthrough in the West Asian energy crisis, declaring the Strait of Hormuz "completely open and ready for business."

The news sent global oil prices into a tailspin, with Brent Crude dropping nearly 10% in minutes as the specter of a total energy strangulation receded.

The announcement follows a morning statement from Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who confirmed that the strategic waterway would be open to all commercial vessels for the remainder of a two-week ceasefire.

The move appears to be a direct result of the U.S.-brokered truce between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon, which Iran had set as a precondition for easing its maritime grip.

Despite the diplomatic thaw, Trump made it clear that Washington is not finished with its "maximum pressure" campaign.

In a follow-up post, the President clarified that while global trade



• Trump

can resume, Iran's own economy remains under lock and key. "THE NAVAL BLOCKADE WILL REMAIN IN FULL FORCE AND EFFECT AS IT PERTAINS TO IRAN, ONLY, UNTIL SUCH TIME AS OUR TRANSACTION WITH

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Tinubu Signs

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The allocations reflect what the government describes as a balance between meeting statutory obligations, servicing debt and funding critical investments aimed at boosting productivity and improving living standards.

In a related move, the President also assented to the Appropriation (Repeal and Enactment) (Amendment) Bill, 2026, extending the implementation period for the capital component of the 2025 budget from March 31 to June 30, 2026.

The extension is expected to allow Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) complete ongoing projects, particularly those at advanced stages, and ensure better utilisation of public funds.

The presidency said the measure would help improve project completion rates and maximise value for government spending.

President Tinubu directed MDAs to ensure disciplined and transparent use of allocated resources, stressing the need for efficiency and timely delivery of projects.

He also commended the leadership of the National Assembly for what he described as swift consideration and passage of the budget, noting that cooperation between the executive and legislature remains key to achieving national development goals.

Reaffirming his administration's economic agenda, the President said efforts would continue to focus on fiscal reforms, improved revenue generation and strategic investments aimed at driving growth, creating jobs and strengthening social protection programmes.

The 2026 budget is expected to play a central role in advancing the government's policy direction as it seeks to stabilise the economy and accelerate development across key sectors.

Iran Reopens Strait Of Hormuz As Ceasefire Sends Oil Prices Crashing



• Strait of Hormuz

Iran on Friday declared the strategic Strait of Hormuz "completely open" for commercial shipping for the duration of an ongoing ceasefire, marking a dramatic shift from days of disruption that rattled global oil markets and heightened fears of a wider regional conflict.

The announcement, made by Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, followed the commencement of a 10-day truce in Lebanon involving Israel and the Iran-backed Hezbollah, a ceasefire brokered with the backing of the United States and announced by Donald Trump.

"In line with the ceasefire in Lebanon, the passage for all commercial vessels through Strait of Hormuz is declared completely open for the remaining period of ceasefire," Araghchi said in a statement, signalling a temporary easing of tensions in one of the world's most critical energy corridors.

The Strait of Hormuz, a narrow maritime chokepoint through which roughly a fifth of global oil supply passes, had been effectively shut since the outbreak

of hostilities, triggering panic across international markets. Oil prices surged sharply during the closure, reflecting fears of prolonged supply disruptions.

The reopening, however, sent immediate shockwaves in the opposite direction. Global oil prices plunged by more than 11 per cent, while major European stock markets rallied and US futures pointed to a stronger trading session, underscoring the strait's outsized influence on the global economy.

The closure had prompted a swift military response from Washington, with the United States imposing a naval blockade on Iranian ports.

The head of United States Central Command (CENTCOM) confirmed earlier that the blockade had been "fully implemented," effectively restricting maritime movement in the region.

Despite the heightened tensions, limited movement had begun to resume even before the official reopening. Data from maritime tracking platforms showed a Pakistani-flagged tanker

successfully navigating the strait on Thursday—one of the few vessels to transit the route during the standoff.

The Strait of Hormuz has long been a flashpoint in Middle East conflicts, given its strategic importance as the primary export route for crude oil from Gulf producers. Any disruption to its flow typically reverberates across global markets, affecting fuel prices, inflation, and economic stability far beyond the region.

11 Drug Kingpins

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licence and the forfeiture of assets, including pharmacy outlets and funds in multiple bank accounts.

Similarly, Ridwan Animashaun was handed a 25-year sentence by a Federal High Court in Ibadan for drug trafficking, marking a repeat offence after an earlier conviction in 2022.

Trump Hails

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IRAN IS 100% COMPLETE," Trump wrote. "THIS PROCESS SHOULD GO VERY QUICKLY IN THAT MOST OF THE POINTS ARE ALREADY NEGOTIATED."

The "naval blockade" refers to the U.S. Navy's interdiction of ships entering or departing Iranian ports, a policy enacted earlier this month after initial peace talks in Islamabad hit an impasse.

The impact on the ground and in the markets was instantaneous: Brent Crude fell to approximately \$90 per barrel, providing much-needed relief to a global economy that has been reeling from 2026's skyrocketing fuel and fertilizer costs.

Negotiators including Vice President JD Vance and special envoy Steve Witkoff are reportedly preparing to return to Islamabad to finalize what Trump calls the "transaction," a 15-point proposal that includes the permanent dismantling of Iran's nuclear infrastructure.

While the Strait is open, the U.S. Fifth Fleet remains on high alert. Sources indicate the "coordinated routes" for commercial shipping are being monitored closely to prevent any "bad actors" from disrupting the flow of oil.

Earlier in the day, the President raised eyebrows by referring to the waterway as the "Strait of Iran" in a "Thank You" post to Tehran. While critics were quick to point out the geographical slip, the White House downplayed the terminology, focusing instead on the "historic" nature of the reopening.

In Ogun State, two traffickers, Rauf Asogba and Seun Olaniyi, were each sentenced to 17 years imprisonment for trafficking 1,779 kilograms of cannabis, while Jonathan Nuhu and Idris Yusuf received 15-year sentences in separate cases in Kano and Yobe states respectively. Other offenders across the country were sentenced to varying jail terms, including seven years for several convicts.

Reacting to the development, NDLEA Chairman, Mohamed Buba Marwa, described the outcome as a turning point in Nigeria's anti-drug war.

"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," Marwa said.

He added: "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."

Marwa also commended the judiciary for expediting the cases, stressing that swift justice remains the most effective deterrent against drug crimes.

"Your bravery in the face of danger is yielding fruit. We will continue to prioritise your welfare and provide the tools needed to stay ahead of these criminal syndicates," he said, addressing NDLEA personnel.

He further urged Nigerians to support the agency with timely intelligence, noting that public cooperation has been instrumental in recent successes.

"These victories belong to the citizens who provide the intelligence that fuels our operations," he added.

Jet A1 Fuel Hike: FG Moves to Stop Flight Suspension Nationwide

The Federal Government has appealed to airline operators to exercise restraint in raising airfares and to reconsider any plans to suspend flight operations following a sharp rise in aviation fuel prices.

Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, Festus Keyamo, made the appeal in a letter to the Airline Operators of Nigeria (AON), citing the impact of the surge in the price of Jet A1 fuel on the sector.

According to the minister, the cost of Jet A1 has risen from ₦900 per litre as of February 28, 2026, to about ₦3,300 per litre, representing a 300 per cent increase.

"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, representing a three hundred percent (300%) increase," he stated.

Despite the pressure on operators, Keyamo urged caution in passing the burden to passengers, warning of wider economic consequences.

"First, I urge your membersto exercise restraint with respect to any proposed



• Keyamo

increase in airfares at this time," he said.

"While the prevailing cost pressures on your operations are fully acknowledged, any immediate upward adjustment in ticket prices would impose significant hardship on the travelling public, potentially depress demand, and limit accessibility to air transport for a broad segment of Nigerians," he added.

He also appealed to airlines to avoid suspending operations, noting that such a move could disrupt the economy and weaken confidence in the aviation sector.

"Secondly, I appeal for the reconsideration of any planned suspension of flight operations," the minister said.

"Such action would have far-reaching adverse implications for the

national economy, disrupt critical mobility and logistics networks, erode public confidence, and undermine the progress recorded under the ongoing reforms within the aviation sector."

Keyamo assured operators that the Federal Government was already engaging the situation and would take steps to address their concerns.

"I wish to formally assure you that the concerns raised by your members have received the full attention of the Federal Government and we shall take immediate steps to address the issues," he added.

He reiterated the strategic importance of the aviation sector to the administration of Bola Ahmed Tinubu, describing it as a critical national asset for trade, security, job creation and economic integration.

To find a lasting solution, the minister disclosed that a high-level emergency stakeholders' meeting has been scheduled for April 22 in Abuja.

According to him, the meeting will bring together key industry players and regulators to work out "a prompt, practical, and sustainable resolution" to the challenges facing the sector.

Troops Nab 15 Suspected Oil Thieves At Dangote Refinery Discharge Point



• Troops nab 15 suspected Oil Thieves At Dangote Refinery Discharge Point

intelligence, according to operational report of the Nigerian Army seen on Friday in Abuja.

According to the report, the suspects were apprehended in the early hours of Friday while attempting to connect their pipes to the discharge point of the vessel.

“The vessel was discharging crude oil to the refinery for the production of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) and Automotive Gas Oil (AGO) when the suspects were caught trying to connect pipes to the discharge point,” it said.

The report said the operation led to the arrest of 15 suspects and recovery of several items used in the illegal activity.

According to the report, recovered items include a Mack tanker truck, a Lexus RX 350 sport utility vehicle, and a Ford Ranger pick-up truck.

Other items are a pumping machine, a 40HP Yamaha speedboat engine, and multiple hose pipes.

“The suspects and exhibits are currently in the custody of 65 Battalion, while further investigations are ongoing.

“The successful operation underscores ongoing efforts by the Nigerian Army to protect critical national infrastructure and curb crude oil theft across the country,” it said.

15 oil thieves have been arrested while attempting to illegally tap into a crude oil discharge point from a vessel supplying crude to the Dangote Refinery around

Ibeju Lekki axis of Lagos State. The suspected oil thieves were arrested by troops of Headquarters 9 Brigade in conjunction with 65 Battalion following credible

Nigeria Has No Immediate Need For IMF Assistance -Edun



Nigeria will not be seeking financial support from the International Monetary Fund in the near term, according to the Minister of Finance, Wale Edun.

Speaking in Washington at a session involving African finance ministers on the sidelines of the IMF/World Bank Annual Meetings, Edun said the government's current strategy is anchored on domestic reforms rather than external borrowing.

He explained that policy changes introduced over the past two years were beginning to stabilise the economy and rebuild confidence, even as global shocks continue to weigh on many African countries. According to him, these reforms have strengthened Nigeria's capacity to absorb external pressures.

The minister highlighted a shift towards market-driven policies, particularly in the areas of foreign exchange and fuel pricing,

noting that the government had deliberately stepped away from heavy administrative controls.

Edun maintained that, for now, Nigeria would continue to depend on internally driven measures to steer the economy, instead of turning to multilateral lenders.

However, he urged the international community to accelerate financial support for more vulnerable African economies, especially as discussions continue around a proposed 50 billion dollar assistance package.

While Nigeria has built some level of economic buffers, he said, several countries across the continent remain exposed and in urgent need of coordinated external backing.

He added that Nigeria's embrace of market mechanisms had helped ease economic adjustments, limit disruptions and keep the broader macroeconomic outlook on a steady path despite global uncertainty.

I Can Solve Nigeria's Problems –Amaechi

Former Minister of Transportation, Rotimi Amaechi, has declared that he has the experience and capacity to fix Nigeria's challenges, citing his record in governance and infrastructure.

Amaechi made the statement during an appearance on Channels Television's The Morning Brief on Friday, where he described himself as a “Nigerian candidate” focused on solutions rather than ethnic politics.

“I don't care who else is running. I'm running because I'm a Nigerian candidate. Because I know the Nigerian problem. And I can solve the Nigerian problem,” he said.

The former Rivers State governor pointed to key projects executed during his tenure as Minister of Transportation, including the Abuja-Kaduna and Lagos-Ibadan rail lines, as well as the Lekki Deep Sea Port.

He also claimed success in addressing insecurity while in office, insisting that his experience gives him an edge over other contenders.

Amaechi further defended his time under former President Muhammadu Buhari, arguing that the administration performed better than the current government led by Bola Tinubu.

According to him, his track record demonstrates his readiness to tackle Nigeria's pressing issues if given the opportunity.



Lawma Intensifies Crackdown In Alimosho, Arrests Offenders, Seals Properties

The Lagos Waste Management Authority (LAWMA) has stepped up enforcement operations in Alimosho Local Government Area and adjoining Local Council Development Areas, leading to the arrest of offenders and the sealing of properties linked to environmental violations.

The exercise, carried out by the agency's Project W.I.S.E (West) enforcement team, targeted indiscriminate waste disposal, illegal dumping and other activities contributing to environmental degradation, particularly across the Ikotun axis and neighbouring communities.

During a night surveillance operation, a 15-year-old boy (name withheld) was arrested for illegally dumping waste at the Ikotun-Egbe roundabout around 10:00 p.m. He was subse-

quently handed over to the Task Force office in Oshodi for further action.

In a separate operation, enforcement officers sealed a car lot at Iroko Estate along LASU-Isheri Road for discharging waste into drainage channels. A furniture showroom was also shut down for similar infractions.

LAWMA further issued an intention-to-seal notice to a mini store in Diamond Estate for failing to patronise a registered Private Sector Participant (PSP) operator, in violation of state waste management regulations.

The enforcement drive was also prompted by complaints from residents of Kaslat/Sarumi Street in Alimosho, who reported the use of a gated, undeveloped plot as an illegal dumpsite. Cart pushers were said to have

been burning waste on the premises.

Following the report, LAWMA sealed the property and arrested a 65-year-old security guard, Abubakar Yunusa, who was allegedly complicit in the activity.

The Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of LAWMA, Dr Muyiwa Gbadegesin, reiterated the agency's resolve to sustain enforcement across the state in a bid to curb environmental violations and protect public health.

He warned that indiscriminate dumping of waste, burning of refuse and the use of illegal waste handlers remain serious offences under Lagos State environmental laws and would attract strict penalties.

Gbadegesin urged residents to take responsibility for proper waste disposal by engaging only LAWMA-accredited PSP operators and reporting environmen-



• LAWMA seals off premises

tal infractions through official channels.

He added that the Authority would continue to respond promptly to public complaints while strengthening collaboration with communities to ensure a cleaner and safer Lagos.



Nigerians Deserve Better Than This Telecom Service Mess

Across Nigeria today, one complaint is becoming louder by the day: mobile network service has become frustratingly poor. From dropped calls to slow internet speeds, many Nigerians are struggling to stay connected. Whether you are trying to send a message, attend an online class, run a business, or simply browse the internet, the experience is often stressful.

The major service providers—MTN Nigeria, Airtel Nigeria, Globacom, and 9mobile, have all come under heavy criticism from subscribers in recent months. The complaints are not isolated. They are widespread, affecting millions of users across cities and rural areas.

For many Nigerians, the problem starts with poor network signals. Calls break in the middle of conversations. Sometimes, you cannot even connect at all. It is common to dial a number several times before it goes through. This is not just inconvenient; it affects business transactions, emergency communication, and everyday life.

Then there is the issue of data services. Internet speed is often very slow, even when users have active data subscriptions. Videos take forever to load, emails fail to send, and simple web pages struggle to open. In a time when many people depend on the internet for work, learning, and communication, this is a serious problem.

What makes the situation worse is that subscribers are still paying high prices for these poor services. Data costs have continued to rise, but the quality of service does not match the price. Many Nigerians feel they are not getting value for their money. It is frustrating to buy data and still be unable to use it properly.

There are several reasons often given for these problems. Telecom companies sometimes blame poor infrastructure, power supply challenges, and damage to fibre cables. In some cases, they point to insecurity in certain areas, which makes it difficult to maintain equipment. These are real challenges, no doubt.

However, Nigerians expect more from these companies. These are large organisations with millions of subscribers and huge revenues. They should be able to plan ahead, invest in stronger infrastructure, and provide reliable services despite these challenges.

Another issue is network congestion. As more people use smartphones and consume more data, networks become overloaded. If telecom companies do not expand their capacity, the quality of service will continue to drop. This is something that should have been anticipated.

Regulation also plays a role. The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) is responsible for ensuring that telecom operators meet certain standards. But many subscribers feel that these standards are not being strictly enforced. When service is poor, there are rarely visible consequences for the operators.

So, what is the way forward?

First, telecom companies must invest more in infrastructure. This includes building more base stations, upgrading existing ones, and expanding fibre networks. Better infrastructure will improve signal strength and internet speed.

Second, there must be improved maintenance. Faults should be fixed quickly. When there are network outages, customers should be informed clearly and promptly. Good communication can at least reduce frustration when problems occur.

Third, companies need to match pricing with quality. If subscribers are paying more for data, they should get better service. Transparency in billing and data usage is also important. People want to know what they are paying for.

Fourth, the regulator must step up. The NCC should enforce quality standards more strictly and hold operators accountable. There should be penalties when companies fail to meet service requirements. This will push operators to improve.

Fifth, there is a need for healthy competition. When companies compete strongly, they are forced to improve their services to attract and retain customers. Policies that encourage fair competition will benefit consumers.

Finally, the voice of the consumer must not be ignored. Nigerians are speaking out because they are tired. Their complaints should not be seen as noise but as feedback that can help improve the system.

In today's world, telecom services are not a luxury; they are a necessity. Businesses depend on them. Students depend on them. Even government services rely on digital communication. Poor network quality slows down progress and affects the economy.

Nigerians are not asking for too much. They simply want reliable calls, fast internet, and fair value for their money. The telecom operators have the responsibility to deliver this. The regulator has the duty to ensure they do.



Opinion

My dear Waziri,

You know I love you very much and have expressed admiration for your efforts from time to time over the last 36 years, since I have known you.

You will recall that we first met under the auspices of the now defunct September Club in 1989.

You attended our meeting as a mentee and loyalist of the late and great General Shehu Musa Yar'adua, who we all revered, loved and admired. It was a great event and those of us who hosted you and the General, despite being so young at the time, learnt so much from his wisdom and experience and your unalloyed and abiding devotion and loyalty towards him, which was glaring for all to see.

Despite that, I am constrained to write the following.

With the utmost respect and in spite of your cultural sensitivities, permit me to remind you of the following and to offer some unsolicited counsel.

You said you cannot answer Vice President Kashim Shettima because he is disrespectful and because you are older and far more experienced than him.

That is strange coming from you, because I recall that between 1999 and 2007 when we were in power, you openly insulted, disrespected and led a full scale rebellion and unrelenting mutiny against President Obasanjo, who was not only your boss and our leader, but who also had far more working experience than you and was much older.

The only reason you cannot answer VP Shettima is because you have nothing to say. You have no answer to his challenge and finally, unlike you ever were or could be, he is totally and completely loyal to his principal and our leader, President Tinubu.

As Vice President you could not find the courage to do the same. As a matter of fact, from day one of the eight years that you were VP, till the day we left office, you were plotting to remove President Obasanjo from his seat, with the help of other dissidents, and make yourself president. What could be more disrespectful than that to an elder or anyone else?

I am a living witness of the whole thing and I am pleased to say that you failed.

Please do not invoke age and experience as a reason for not responding to others when they criticise you. You forfeited that right long ago.

It takes courage and character to be loyal. Kashim Shettima has that courage and character, but you never did.

Outside of this, I wish you well in your endeavours sir and I hope and pray that you can resolve the grave challenges you are facing in your party, so that you can meet us in the field of battle, and we can trounce you at the polls in 2027.

Permit me to conclude with the following observations.

You said the following to Charles Anigololu of Arise Television yesterday:

"I know Goodluck Jonathan very well, he is a decent young man but also inexperienced, which contributed to his failure to manage the affairs of the country."

You refer to a man that has lived on the earth for 68 years and who has had the privilege of not just enjoying the position you once attained as Vice President but actually went further than you to become President as a "young man"?

I am astounded by the sheer arrogance of your words.

This is all the more so given the fact that you are only 11 years older than he is, if reports about your age are to be believed.

You went further by saying that Jonathan was "inexperienced" and "he failed"?

You forgot that during Jonathan's time, Nigeria had the fastest growing economy on the African continent and did so much more, but I leave it to his former government officials and ministers to defend his record in public office and prevent you from distorting and revising history and attempting to rubbish that record.

What I will say though, as the Director of Jonathan's Media Presidential Campaign Organisation in 2015, is that he was a loyal Vice President to President Umaru Yar'Adua and that he never betrayed his principal, coveted the latter's office or tried to rubbish his legacy.

I can also attest to the fact that he was not only humane, gentle,

With Love To Waziri

BY FEMI FANI-KAYODE

restrained, kind and compassionate to a fault as a leader, but that he also did his very best as president at a difficult time when bombs were being dropped all over the North, in order to discredit and destroy him and his government by the usual suspects, just as they are attempting to do to Tinubu today in an attempt to bring him down.

Jonathan also displayed the virtues of leadership and decency towards his followers, the likes of which you cannot possibly imagine, match or emulate.

Through thick and thin, even during the most challenging years when many of us faced savage and unrelenting persecution, he abandoned none and he stuck by his friends and supporters, which is more than I can say for most leaders.

These qualities cannot be taken away from him by anyone, least of all your good self.

When a man that is incapable of trust, loyalty or fidelity runs down a man like Jonathan who embodies and epitomises all three, it is not only painful but also unacceptable, and even if the whole world sits by quietly and allows you to get away with it, I will not.

I am glad that the Center for Responsible Governance (CRG) responded to you effectively on this issue and defended the honour of Jonathan and I subscribe to all that it said in its communique. I commend the organisation and I salute its courage.

Most important of all is the fact that Jonathan had the courage and decency to walk away from power and hand it to President Buhari on a platter of gold, after he lost the election in 2015.

If nothing else, you must at least commend him for that.

Given your obsession with power and craving for it, I wonder whether you would have done the same.

It is obvious that despite all your efforts to cobble your platform together, you are already anticipating a crushing defeat in next year's election and your grave fears and desperate disposition are betrayed by the words you spoke at your so-called party Convention a few days ago, where you said the following:

"It is clear that INEC is being used in this country. Let the Federal Government know that we fought the military to bring democracy to this country and we will fight the Federal Government to restore democracy."

You can smell your defeat coming and you know that your ambition to be president of our country is slowly melting away like an iceberg that is approaching the tropics.

Like the mighty ship they called the Titanic, your ambitions are about to crash and sink and you are already looking for excuses and threatening fire and brimstones.

Please do those of us that care for you and that respect you a favour by learning to lose with dignity and accepting the virtue of humility, because all power comes from God.

When you lose, and lose you will, it will not be because of INEC but because you are running against a man who is far better than you in every shape and form, and every way and manner.

It is also because God resists the proud and exalts the humble.

Please leave INEC out of it and prepare to accept the failure that is your portion, and that is coming your way.

As for your threats to "fight the Federal Government" when the inevitable happens, I can only say that good luck to you and advise you that at your distinguished old age you should know far better.

Whichever way, I doubt anyone is losing any sleep over your threats because your assertions and allegations against INEC are not only baseless but also utterly (forgive me for using these words) asinine and nonsensical.

Outside of that, they are also very dangerous and may affect the stability and peace of our nation, which is precisely what you are attempting to achieve.

I advise you to desist from this reckless course sir and shun those around you who are advising you to tread it, because it will not augur well for you or for them.

You are a respected democrat and not a lawless anarchist who seeks to scatter the entire table and pull down the entire house, simply because you cannot have your way.

That is not you and you are far better than that. When you lose, kindly take it in good faith, move on and either try again in 2031 or retire from politics, accepting that God never intended you to be president.

There is absolutely no shame in that because you have already achieved so much and established a strong and enviable legacy.

Please do not destroy it all out of blind ambition and the desire to get what God has chosen not to give you.

Nigeria has been good to you. Please do not try to set it on fire.

Back to the point.

My dear Waziri, both Kashim Shettima and Goodluck Jonathan were loyal to their bosses and you were incapable of doing the same.

That is where the story begins and ends. Ambition is like a drug that blinds and kills slowly.

I am sorry to say that this affliction has seized you since 1993 and appears to have become even more pronounced today, otherwise you would not even dream of opposing the candidacy of President Bola Tinubu after all he did for you over the years, after you were driven out of the PDP.

Both the late President Muhammadu Buhari and Tinubu housed you in their new party at the time, rehabilitated you and gave you a new lease of political life, only for you to leave them, go back to PDP, and oppose them by running against their party for the presidency, six years later in 2019.

Not only that, after you lost the 2019 election, you thoroughly destroyed the same PDP that took you back, forgave you and gave you a platform to run on, by dividing the party along regional, religious and ethnic lines.

You violated and destroyed its zoning formula by insisting that its presidential candidate (which of course had to be your good self) must again come from the North in 2023 and you attempted to truncate, destroy and bury the aspirations, political career and trajectory of men like Governor Nyesome Wike, who had not only funded the party for years but had welcomed you back into its ranks with open arms in 2017 and supported you for the Presidency in 2019.

Forgive me for saying so but loyalty and commitment to a collective and common cause does not appear to be your forte sir.

The Bible says "He who repays good with evil, evil will never leave his house".

I do not wish you or yours evil but kindly consider this.

Both Goodluck and Kashim repaid their boss's good with good whilst you repaid your boss Obasanjo's good with evil and that is precisely why they have risen and will continue to rise to greater heights than you ever will.

Finally in the same interview with Charles Anigololu you said the following about your colleagues in your factional ADC party.

"Kwankwaso, El Rufai and Tambuwal are not as popular as I am".

Again forgive me for saying so but the truth is that you have displayed such a lack of humility, such arrogance and such a glaring display of hubris with these words.

I wonder how those three names you mentioned all feel about what you have said about their popularity or lack of it.

Clearly this is the beginning of the disintegration of the ADC.

By the time this is all over, you may well end up having ten factions in your party and not just three.

One thing is clear in all this and that is the fact that you sir are loyal to your ambition and to no one and nothing else.

It is only a matter of time before your new found friends in the ADC appreciate that and see you for who and what you really are.

I come in peace and I wish you well sir.

-Femi Fani-Kayode is a former Minister of Aviation, a former minister of Culture and Tourism and a former special adviser to President Olusegun Obasanjo on Public Affairs.

Smuggling Crackdown: Customs Intercepts N98m Contraband

The Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), Adamawa/Taraba Command, has recorded a series of seizures valued at nearly N98 million as part of its intensified anti-smuggling operations.

Comptroller of the Command, Mohammed Mato, disclosed this during a media briefing in Yola, stating that the interceptions were made over a six-week period between February and April 2026.

According to him, the confiscated items included second-hand clothing, petroleum products, donkey derivatives, and unregistered pharmaceutical products.

Mato explained that the operations were largely intelligence-driven and carried out across multiple border routes known for illicit activities.

He noted that among the early seizures was a consignment of 43 jumbo sacks of used clothing, along with several cartons and packages of Viagra tablets, intercepted along the Savannah–Nunan corridor in February.

In March, operatives intensified surveillance along key routes, leading to the interception of 500 pieces of raw donkey skin and 460 kilogrammes of dried donkey meat along the Mubi–Sangere axis.

Petroleum products also featured prominently in the seizures. The Comptroller said officers impounded hundreds of jerricans of Premium Motor Spirit and Automotive Gas Oil across different locations, including the Likitaba–Gembu and Mubi–Saguda routes.

He added that another batch of

petrol was intercepted in April along the Ganye–Toungo highway near the Cameroon border.

Mato stressed that the operations were in line with the Nigeria Customs Service Act 2023, which mandates the agency to prevent the illegal movement of restricted goods, particularly petroleum products and wildlife-related items.

Reaffirming the command's position, he said the Service would maintain a strict stance against smuggling and ensure that offenders are prosecuted in accordance with the law.

The Comptroller also urged individuals involved in illicit trade to redirect their efforts into lawful enterprises, warning that smuggling continues to threaten both economic stability and national security.



NHA Raises Alarm Over Criminal Activities In Unregistered Hotels

The Nigeria Hotel Association (NHA) has signalled plans to clamp down on unregistered hotels nationwide, warning that erring operators could soon face closure.

Its President, Eze Patrick Anyanwu, issued the warning on Thursday in Owerri while speaking to



journalists at a meeting involving the association's national executives and state chairmen.

Anyanwu, a traditional ruler, linked the proliferation of unregistered hotels to rising insecurity, noting that such facilities are often exploited for criminal activities. He urged operators to align with the association or risk sanctions through legal channels.

"In the near future, hotels that refuse to register with the NHA will face penalties and may be shut down as part of efforts to sanitise the industry.

"We cannot continue to allow hotels that are not registered to operate and damage the reputation of our association, as such facilities are used to commit crimes that affect the nation at large," he said.

He described the hospitality sector as "one of the most important drivers of economic growth in Nigeria", while appealing to authorities at all levels to introduce support measures, including grants and bailout packages, for operators.

The NHA president also acknowledged efforts by the Federal Government and the Imo State Government in advancing tourism and fostering

a conducive business environment, but raised concerns over what he described as excessive taxation on hotel businesses across the country.

Calling for a more collaborative approach, he urged state governments to engage constructively with industry players.

"In consideration of our significant contribution to employment, revenue generation, accommodation of government visitors from around the world, and national development, it is only fair that the government supports us.

"The recent actions of the National Institute of Hospitality and Tourism (NIHOTOUR) have been adversely affecting the hospitality industry, especially hotels, over the implementation of the NIHOTOUR Act 2022, and this is not in line with the Renewed Hope Agenda of the Federal Government.

"This runs contrary to the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, which places tourism services on the residual list, and it must stop. We will not allow any agency or group to harass or intimidate our members," he said.

FRSC Arrests Suspect, Condemns Assault On Personnel

The Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) has cautioned motorists and the general public against attacking its personnel, warning that offenders will be prosecuted.

This position was conveyed by the Favour Ofili, in a statement issued on Thursday in Abuja through the Corps Public Education Officer, Osondu Ohaeri.

The warning follows the arrest of a suspect linked to a violent incident involving FRSC officials in Edo State. Mohammed stressed that the agency maintains a firm stance against assaults on its officers and will not hesitate to ensure that

culprits face legal consequences.

Recounting the episode, he explained that the confrontation began in the early hours of Saturday, April 11, when a patrol team from the RS5.1 Edo Sector Command stopped a motorist for failing to wear a seat belt.

According to him, the driver ignored the directive and sped off while an officer was still carrying out enforcement duties. He later returned with a group of commercial tricycle operators who launched an attack on the officers.

"In defiance, the driver fled the scene while an FRSC marshal was still engaged in enforce-

ment, and later mobilised a group of commercial tricycle operators who attacked the officers.

"During the assault, the marshal was pushed into a gutter and beaten, while the team leader was also physically attacked. The suspect subsequently escaped.

"The suspect was later tracked and apprehended through collaboration with security agencies, including the Nigeria Police Force and the Department of State Services.

"The suspect has confessed to the crime and expressed remorse for his actions," he said.

The corps marshal commended the swift intervention of the Nigeria Police Force and the Department of State Services, noting that their cooperation led to the suspect's arrest.

He reiterated that assaulting law enforcement officers is a serious criminal offence, adding that due legal procedures would be followed to ensure justice is served and to deter similar behaviour.

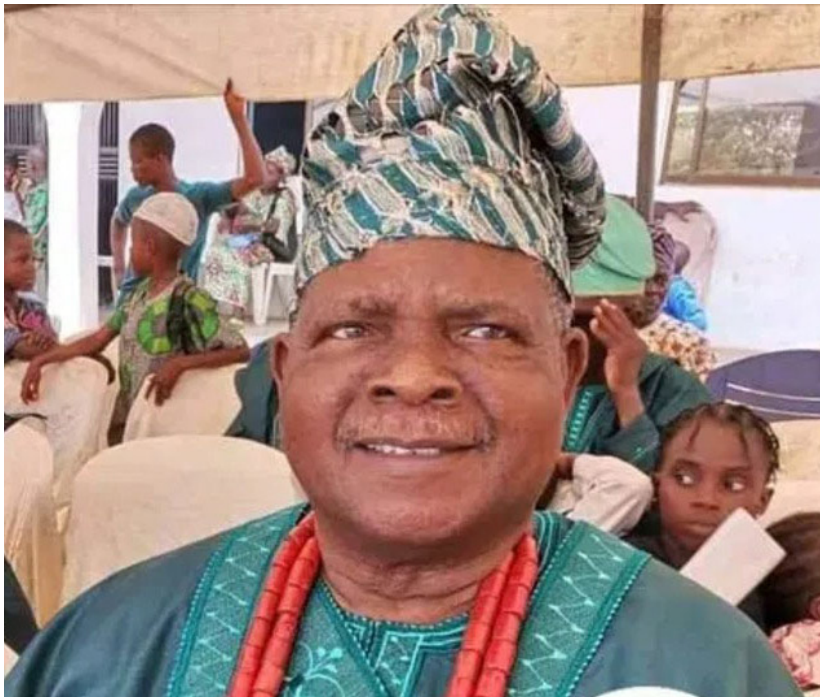
"While we acknowledge the suspect's remorse, the law will take its course," Mohammed said.

He urged road users to cooperate with FRSC officials and seek lawful channels to resolve grievances instead of resorting to violence.

Mohammed further disclosed that the injured marshal is responding to treatment and remains in a stable condition. He added that the corps would continue working with relevant agencies to track down and prosecute anyone involved in attacks on its personnel.



Kola Oyewo Opens Up On Battle With Prostate Enlargement



The actor, while speaking about his disappearance from the screen, revealed that the condition has restricted him from playing certain roles in the movie industry.

Oyewo recalled his experience with the initial diagnosis, disclosing that sometimes it makes him urinate on his body before he gets to the restroom.

Despite his condition, the 80-year-old expressed his gratitude to God for keeping him alive, adding that his condition has improved. "Before now, I could go from one location to another and play any role, but the illness has laid me back. I can no longer play certain roles except for some minor roles. I thank God because I'm getting better now. You can't go through some kind of sickness and go back to how you've been before, but I thank God. There are so many people of my age that are still stronger than I am, but I thank God for preserving my life. I drove myself to the hospital after having sleepless nights, frequent urination and sometimes urinating on my body before I got to the toilet. After a series of tests, I was diagnosed with an enlarged prostate," he said.



Yul Edochie Releases 'Prophecy' On 2027 Election

Nollywood actor and public commentator, Yul Edochie, has released what he describes as a prophecy concerning the outcome of the 2027 general elections, stating that President Bola Tinubu will defeat the African Democratic Congress (ADC). In a post shared on his official Xaccount, Edochie declared: "Before 12pm on Election Day 2027, President Tinubu will defeat ADC."

The statement has generated mixed reactions online, with supporters describing it as a bold spiritual prediction, while critics argue it amounts to political endorsement ahead of the polls. Edochie has in recent years publicly expressed support for President Bola Tinubu, a position that has consistently drawn attention in political discussions on social media.



Iyabo Ojo's 'Return Of Arinzo' Maintains Top Spot At Box Office

Iyabo Ojo's latest movie, "The Return of Arinzo", has recorded N224 million at the West African Box Office. The film, which continues to dominate the box office, achieved the milestone as the number one film for two consecutive weekends. The distributor, FilmOne Entertainment, expressed its

appreciation to the audience for their continued support towards the success of the movie. "With N224 million and counting, The Return of Arinzo is not just winning; it's making history as the number one film for two consecutive weekends. Thank you, West Africa, for showing up and showing out. Your love is taking this film higher and higher," it said in a statement. With its impressive box office performance and continued screenings, the film is expected to sustain momentum in the coming weeks.

Damola Olatunji Fires At OPM Pastor For 'Paid Husband' Plan

Nollywood actor Damola Olatunji has called out Apostle Chibuzor over his plan to marry off his 21-year-old autistic adopted daughter. The actor on his social media page questioned the pastor's intention, noting that the autistic lady cannot genuinely consent to marriage because of her condition. Olatunji urged the pastor to establish a proper care home, instead of pursuing marriage for individuals with special conditions. "This situation has crossed a line and must be addressed seriously.

Marriage is a decision that requires full, informed consent from both parties. Rather than pursuing marriage, establishing a proper care home would be a far more appropriate and compassionate solution. The key question to ask is: would this person genuinely choose to get married at 21 under normal circumstances, free from any external influence? If the answer is no, then that must be respected unconditionally," he stated. Olatunji emphasised the need for proper care for people with

special needs in Nigeria, noting that they deserve protection and dignified treatment. "No one should exploit a vulnerable person's condition as an opportunity for marriage. People living with autism deserve dignity, protection, and better-structured support systems, not situations that could potentially be manipulative or harmful. There are far more ethical and effective ways to provide care and support for individuals with autism," he added.





US Singer D4vd Arrested Over Alleged Murder Of Missing Teenager



US singer D4vd has been arrested on suspicion of murdering a teenage girl who went missing last year, according to police in Los Angeles.

The Los Angeles Police Department said the 21-year-old was taken into custody and is being held without bail. Authorities added that the case will be presented to the District Attorney's office on Monday.

D4vd, whose real name is David Anthony Burke, had been under grand jury investigation over the death of 14-year-old Celeste Rivas Hernandez, whose remains were discovered in September 2025 inside a Tesla linked to him.

Police said he was arrested "for the murder of Celeste Rivas," marking a significant development in a case that has been under investigation for months.

The teenager had been reported missing by her family in April 2024 after previously running away from home. Her remains were later found at a Hollywood tow yard after authorities re-

sponded to reports of a strong odour coming from the vehicle.

The Los Angeles County Medical Examiner said the body was severely decomposed, adding that the cause of death has not yet been determined, with investigations still ongoing.

Officials also said the remains may have been in the vehicle for several weeks before they were discovered.

Authorities had earlier treated the matter as a death investigation while gathering evidence, and a judge later ordered the sealing of some records linked to the case.

Investigators had previously identified D4vd as a "target" of the grand jury proceedings, according to court filings.

The singer, known for the track *Romantic Homicide*, had reportedly been cooperating with authorities through representatives while remaining largely silent publicly on the matter.

He has since faced professional fallout, including cancelled tour dates and the loss of brand partnerships.

It's Official! Kim Kardashian, Lewis Hamilton Confirm Relationship

Kim Kardashian has gone Instagram official with Formula 1 star Lewis Hamilton after sharing intimate photos from their weekend at the Coachella Music Festival.

The reality star posted a carousel of images from the California event, including a subtle shot of Hamilton as she sat on his lap in one of the pictures—marking the first time he has appeared on her Instagram page.

Kim, 45, stunned in a striking black outfit featuring a plunging bodysuit and figure-hugging leather trousers, complemented by a matching headscarf and bold silver jewellery.

The post also captured moments from the festival, where she attended performances, including Justin Bieber's set, alongside friends and the British racing driver.

The appearance follows months of speculation linking the pair romantically after they were spotted together at events across the United States, Europe and Japan.



Hamilton had earlier featured Kim on his own social media during her visit to the Japanese Grand Prix, further fuelling rumours.

The pair was also seen in a separate video, with Hamilton behind the wheel of a sports car while

Kim, seated beside him, reacted in surprise to his drifting skills.

Their latest public outing at Coachella now appears to confirm the relationship, bringing months of speculation to an end.

MGM Confirms Return Of James Bond Franchise

Amazon MGM Studios has confirmed that the James Bond franchise will return, assuring fans that the next chapter of the iconic spy series will be handled with care and patience.

Speaking at CinemaCon 2026 in Las Vegas, the studio's head of film, Courtenay Valenti, said preparations for the next Bond film are

underway, although no casting or release details have been announced.

"I know you're all wondering when we're going to announce who's playing James Bond," she said.

"Please know that we're taking the time to do this with care and deep respect. It is the dream of a lifetime for all of us to bring audiences this next chapter, and it's a responsibility we don't take lightly."

Valenti added that the studio is focused on assembling a strong creative team, stressing that the next instalment

will honour the legacy of the character.

"What I can tell you is this: when you pair one of the most beloved franchises in history with a world-class filmmaking team, you're setting the stage for something truly worthy of the Bond legacy," she said.

"That film is coming, and when the time is right, we'll have much more to share."

The update comes amid growing global anticipation over who will take on the role of James Bond in the next phase of the long-running spy franchise.



Avengers Return As Marvel Unveils 'Doomsday' Trailer

Robert Downey Jr. (Iron Man) and Chris Evans (Captain America) at CinemaCon 2026. Photo: Monica Schipper/Getty Images for CinemaCon.

Marvel Studios has unveiled the first official trailer for its upcoming blockbuster, *Avengers: Doomsday*, signalling a bold new direction for the superhero franchise and confirming the return of several major characters.

The trailer, which debuted at CinemaCon 2026 in Las Vegas, delivered a major surprise as Robert

Downey Jr. appeared as the masked villain, Doctor Doom, a striking departure from his iconic role as Iron Man in previous Marvel films.

The film, set for release on December 18, brings together a wide array of Marvel characters in what is expected to be one of the studio's biggest crossover events yet.

Footage shown at the event featured a clash between *Gambit* and *Shang-Chi*, portrayed by Channing Tatum and Simu Liu, while veteran actor Patrick Stewart reprised his role as Professor Xavier, warning of an impending threat.

The trailer also confirmed the return of Chris Evans as Steve Rogers, alongside Chris Hemsworth as Thor, with scenes hinting at a reunion of the Avengers.

Speaking on stage at CinemaCon, Evans said his return was driven by a compelling storyline.

"I said I would only come back if there was a real reason. And in *Doomsday*, there is a very real reason these heroes need Steve

Victoria Beckham Finally Addresses Feud With Son Brooklyn

Victoria Beckham has publicly addressed her strained relationship with her son, Brooklyn Beckham, amid ongoing reports of a family rift.

The fashion designer spoke on the issue in an interview with *The Wall Street Journal*, where she was asked about the reported fallout following Brooklyn's earlier public comments about the family.

Although she did not mention her son by name, Victoria spoke emotionally about parenting and protecting her children in the public eye.



"We've always, we love our children so much," she said.

"We've always tried to be the best parents that we can be. And, you know, we've been in the public eye for more than 30 years, and all we've ever tried to do is protect our children and love our children."

"And that's all I really want to say about it," she added.

Victoria also dismissed suggestions that the reported tension had affected her business, insisting that customers are drawn to the quality of her products rather than her personal life.

"I think that ultimately people are buying my product because the product is really good," she said.

"I don't think they're buying my eyeliner just because it's me."

The interview marks the first time Victoria has publicly addressed the reported rift since Brooklyn released a critical statement distancing himself from his family.

The alleged feud is believed to have intensified following Brooklyn's 2022 marriage to actress and model Nicola Peltz. Reports suggest the tension stems from disagreements surrounding the wedding and broader family dynamics, with Brooklyn previously accusing his parents of prioritising their public image over family relationships.

He has also made claims about his upbringing and events during the wedding ceremony, allegations that have been widely reported but strongly denied by the Beckham family.



Türkiye Moves To Appeal Favour Ofili Ruling At Cas

Türkiye will appeal World Athletics' decision to block Nigerian sprinter Favour Ofili's transfer of allegiance, with the case set to be heard before the Court of Arbitration for Sport, (CAS)

The move follows Thursday's ruling by the World Athletics Nationality Review Panel, which rejected an application by the Türkiye Athletics Federation to switch Ofili's nationality from Nigeria to Turkey, citing concerns over the integrity of international competition and athlete recruitment practices.

According to Jamaican veteran, journalist Kayon Raynor, Turkish authorities are already preparing a legal challenge to the decision.

"Turkey will be appealing the decision by World Athletics to turn down the transfer of allegiance applications of 11 athletes, and they will also take the appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS)," Raynor wrote on X.

The World Athletics panel ruled that Ofili's case was not an isolated request but part of a wider, co-ordinated recruitment strategy involving 11 athletes across multiple countries.

The group included five Kenyans: Brigid Kosgei, Brian Kibor, Ronald Kwemai, Nelvin Jepkemoi and Catherine Relin Amanang'ole; four Jamaicans: Jaydon Hibbert, Rajindra Campbell, Wayne Pinnock and Rojé Stona; and Russian athlete Sophia Yakushina.

All 11 applications were rejected, with the panel concluding that the initiative, backed by the Turkish government, was designed to recruit established international athletes through lucrative contracts in a bid to strengthen its team ahead of the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games.

The panel determined that such a model undermines core principles

of the sport, including the credibility of national representation and the need for countries to invest in developing their own athletes.

It warned that allowing the transfers would incentivise nationality changes driven primarily by financial considerations rather than genuine nationalities.

"The application by the TAF for Favour Ofili (the 'athlete') to transfer allegiance from NGR to TUR is not approved," the panel stated.

The ruling means Ofili and the other affected athletes are not eligible to represent Turkey in major international competitions, including the Olympic Games and World Championships, although they remain free to compete in one-day meetings or at club level.

Following the decision, the Athletics Federation of Nigeria moved quickly to welcome Ofili back, with its president, Tonobok Okowa, calling for unity and support around the athlete.

He emphasised that the priority should be to provide the right environment for her to succeed, adding that what she needs most is "love, support, encouragement and more love".

Former AFN president Solomon Ogba also backed the World Athletics ruling, praising the leadership of Sebastian Coe and describing the outcome as a victory for fairness in global sport.

He said, "I want to specially thank the president of World Athletics, Sebastian Coe, a true friend of developing countries, members of the panel and the World Athletics family for standing with the truth."

Ogba criticised the practice of wealthier nations recruiting athletes developed elsewhere, arguing that it undermines the efforts of countries that invest in nurturing talent at the grassroots level.

STARS TO WATCH AT THE WORLD CUP



•Neymar Jr.

Unfit Neymar Jr: Brazil's Cult Hero Or Needless Luggage In Seleção Squad For The World Cup?

As the world counts down to the next FIFA World Cup, few names spark as much debate as Neymar. Once the undisputed face of Brazilian football, the 32-year-old now arrives at a crossroads, still revered, yet increasingly questioned.

In Brazil, Neymar is more than a player; he is a symbol. From dazzling defenders in his early days at Santos FC to becoming a global superstar at FC Barcelona and later Paris Saint-Germain, his legacy is already secure. His flair, creativity, and match-winning ability have made him a cult hero for millions.

But football moves quickly and brutally. Injuries have become a recurring theme in Neymar's career, disrupting his rhythm, consistency and, crucially, Brazil's tactical planning. Heading into another World Cup cycle, questions about his fitness and durability are louder than ever.

For the Seleção, the dilemma is clear: do you build around Neymar or begin to move beyond him?

Brazil's new generation is already knocking hard. Players like Vinícius Júnior bring explosive pace and directness, while Rodrygo offers versatility and composure in big moments. There is also Endrick, the teenage sensation widely seen as the future of Brazilian football. These players represent a shift,

faster, more dynamic, and less dependent on a single talisman.

Yet writing Neymar off entirely would be reckless.

Even at less than peak fitness, he remains Brazil's most gifted playmaker. His vision, ability to draw defenders and knack for producing moments of magic in tight games are qualities that cannot easily be replaced. In tournament football, where one moment can define a nation's fate, that experience is priceless.

The real question may not be whether Neymar should go, but what role he should play.

No longer the untouchable centerpiece, he could evolve into a more strategic weapon, deployed when needed, protected from excessive physical strain and surrounded by younger legs capable of carrying the intensity.

As the World Cup approaches, Neymar stands as both a legacy figure and a tactical gamble. If fit and firing, he could still inspire Brazil to glory. If not, he risks becoming what many fear, a symbol of nostalgia holding back a new era.

Either way, all eyes will be on him.

Because in Brazil, the story is never just about the team; it is about the myth. And Neymar, for better or worse, is still at the heart of it.

Season So Far

Neymar's 2025/2026 season with Santos FC has been defined by a mix of sharp attacking output and recurring fitness setbacks. Since rejoining the Brazilian side, he has struggled to maintain a consistent run of matches, with injuries repeatedly interrupting his rhythm and limiting his overall involvement.

So far, he has recorded four goals and three assists in around eight appearances across competitions. Despite the limited game time, those numbers highlight his continued effectiveness in the final third. Whenever he has featured, Neymar has remained central to Santos' attacking play, contributing with his creativity, close control and ability to unlock defences in tight situations.

However, his season has largely been shaped by cautious fitness management. He has not been able to sustain momentum over consecutive matches, with his minutes carefully monitored to avoid further setbacks. This stop-start pattern has reduced his overall impact across the campaign, even though his per-game contributions remain strong.

In essence, Neymar's season so far reflects a player who is still capable of delivering decisive moments, but whose influence has been limited by a lack of continuity due to ongoing injury concerns.



•Favour Ofili