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## BOLU OGUNYEMI BECOMES FIRST BLACK CMA PRESIDENT



Dr. Bolu Ogunyemi  
Pic by: intelregion.com

By Stanley Ugagbe

Dr. Bolu Ogunyemi, a Nigerian-born dermatologist and clinical associate professor at Memorial University of Newfoundland, has been elected as the president of the Canadian Medical Association (CMA), marking a historic milestone. He is the first Black individual to hold this position in the organization's 158-year history.

Dr. Ogunyemi, based in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, clinched the prestigious role after a closely contested race against Susan MacDonald. In his new capacity, he will serve as the public face of

the CMA, engaging with the media, provincial and territorial medical associations, government bodies, and various partner organizations across Canada.

His leadership credentials are well-established. From 2020 to 2023, Dr. Ogunyemi held the position of inaugural assistant dean of social accountability at Memorial University. He also serves on the Board of Directors of the Labrador Medical Association. In 2024, he completed a fellowship in health services improvement at the University of Alberta's School of Public Health, further solidifying his expertise in healthcare systems.

*continued on p(3)*

## NIGERIANS SHINE IN FORBES' 2024 WEALTHIEST BLACK AMERICANS LIST

By Stanley Ugagbe

Forbes has unveiled its 2024 compilation of the most influential, impactful, and affluent Black Americans, with three Nigerians—Wemimo Abbey, Tope Awotona, and Adebayo Ogunlesi—earning prominent spots on the prestigious list.

Wemimo Abbey: Revolutionizing Credit Accessibility

*continued on p(25)*



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# BOLU OGUNYEMI BECOMES FIRST BLACK CMA PRESIDENT

continued from p (1)

Although his presidency will officially commence in May 2025 following CMA's general council approval, Dr. Ogunyemi will first serve as president-elect.

In his acceptance remarks, he emphasized his commit-


ment to strengthening Canada's healthcare system.

"With 15 years of experience in medical leadership, I am equipped to tackle the critical challenges our healthcare system faces," Dr. Ogunyemi said. "As CMA president-elect, I will champion a unified and respected medical profession, advocate for a stronger healthcare system, and work towards healthier communities across the nation."

Dr. Ogunyemi's groundbreaking achievement is expected to inspire a new generation of diverse leaders in medicine while advancing the mission of a more inclusive and effective healthcare system.


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*Editorial*

# Tackling Cryptocurrency Fraud in Canada and Deadly Food Stampedes in Nigeria

Cryptocurrency has revolutionized the financial landscape, offering unprecedented opportunities for investment and innovation. But alongside its promise lies a dark underbelly—a burgeoning wave of fraud that is draining Canadians of millions and threatening to overshadow traditional scams like wire fraud. This is no longer a niche concern for the tech-savvy elite; it is a national crisis demanding immediate and decisive action.

The staggering losses reported by the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre are a wake-up call. Over \$94 million vanished into the digital ether between January and September this year alone, and with \$124 million lost in 2023, the trajectory is clear: fraudsters are sharpening their focus on crypto, exploiting its anonymity and the lack of robust regula-

tory oversight. Ontario's victims alone forfeited nearly \$23 million during the first nine months of 2024—a sobering statistic that underscores the urgency of addressing this epidemic.

The challenge for law enforcement is formidable. As Ontario Provincial Police Det.-Const. John Armit points out, once cryptocurrency is sent, it is nearly impossible to recover. Its decentralized nature and the ability to transfer funds across global jurisdictions make tracing and prosecuting fraudsters a Herculean task. Project Atlas, the OPP's recent initiative, is a commendable step toward combating crypto scams, but it is not enough. Coordinated efforts across provinces, the federal government, and international partners are essential to dismantle the sophisticated networks driving these

schemes.

This crisis is not just about numbers; it is about lives turned upside down. Canadians lured by promises of high returns often fall victim to scams disguised as legitimate investment opportunities. Many discover too late that the profits shown on glossy dashboards are illusions, leaving their savings obliterated. The psychological toll of these losses cannot be understated, and as criminal tactics grow bolder—evidenced by last month's brazen kidnapping of a Toronto crypto CEO—citizens are increasingly at risk.

Governments and regulatory bodies must act with urgency. Provincial securities commissions, like Ontario's, have begun regulating crypto platforms, but more stringent measures are needed. Registration requirements must be expanded, platforms held to higher accountability standards, and investor education prioritized. Citizens must be equipped with the tools to recognize red flags, such as unsolicited messages and celebrity endorsements, and be encouraged to approach crypto investments with skepticism.

Moreover, the federal government must accelerate its efforts to create a cohesive regulatory framework for cryptocurrency. It is not enough to react to fraud after the fact; we must build systems that prevent it. Stronger penalties for offenders, enhanced cross-border cooperation, and greater transparency within crypto exchanges are critical to creating an environment where Canadians can invest safely.

To those tempted by the allure of cryptocurrency, heed this warning: the digital gold rush is fraught with peril. As experts have repeatedly emphasized, never invest money you cannot afford to lose. If a deal sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Due diligence and caution are your first lines of defense.

Canada cannot af-

ford to let its citizens remain easy prey for fraudsters. The crypto market is here to stay, but so too must be robust safeguards to protect investors. Without decisive action, the cost will not just be financial; it will be the erosion of trust in a technology that has the potential to transform our economy. It is time to act—with clarity, with conviction, and with the full force of the law.

**MEANWHILE**, the recent food stampedes in Ibadan, Abuja, and Anambra, which claimed the lives of 115 Nigerians, are a tragic indictment of a failing system. These devastating incidents highlight a nation teetering on the edge of a humanitarian crisis, where desperation for basic sustenance drives citizens to their deaths. In a country blessed with abundant natural and human resources, such tragedies should be unthinkable. Yet, they expose the glaring failures of governance and a grossly inequitable society where survival for millions is a daily battle.

This catastrophe was not a freak accident but the inevitable outcome of years of mismanagement, corruption, and neglect. Widespread poverty and the rising cost of living have pushed Nigerians to their limits. Inflation continues to erode purchasing power, and many can no longer afford a day's meal. The government's inability—or unwillingness—to provide a robust social safety net has left vulnerable populations at the mercy of poorly organized charity drives and chaotic food distributions. These stampedes are not isolated incidents; they are the direct consequence of a broken system that prioritizes the elite while abandoning the masses.

It is unconscionable that in a country where political elites routinely squander public funds on opulent lifestyles, ordinary Nigerians are dying in the pursuit of food.

What we are witnessing is not just hunger—it is systemic violence against the poor. The deaths of these 115 individuals are not unfortunate; they are criminal. They demand accountability from both government officials and organizations whose negligence turned humanitarian gestures into deadly disasters. Who supervised these food distributions? Why were there no measures in place to ensure order and safety?

Nigeria's leaders must now confront the deep-seated issues fueling this crisis. First, there must be an immediate and transparent investigation into these stampedes, with those responsible for the lapses held to account. Beyond that, the government must urgently implement long-term strategies to combat poverty and hunger. This requires more than lip service; it demands actionable policies that include job creation, affordable food programs, and a living wage for workers. The establishment of a centralized, accountable, and well-regulated system for food distribution is essential to prevent further tragedies.

This tragedy must be a turning point. The loss of 115 lives cannot be swept under the rug, nor should it be reduced to mere statistics in the annals of Nigeria's troubled history. These were human beings—mothers, fathers, children—whose only crime was seeking food. If this does not jolt our conscience as a nation, what will? The time for excuses is over. Nigerians deserve leaders who value their lives and dignity over political gains. It is time for decisive action to ensure that no one in this country has to risk death for a meal.



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## FAMILY, HEALTH & WELLNESS

### No bones about it: Why bone density matters



(NC) Our bones are the structure that our entire body is literally built around, so it's important to do what we can to maintain bone health. It's also important to know that our bone density changes as we age. In fact, our bone mass and development peaks in our 20s and 30s.

For women, it's even more important to be bone aware. Women can lose up to 20 per cent of their bone density about five years after the onset of menopause. **STAY ACTIVE** When you're younger, 60 minutes a day of vigorous activity will keep your body

and bones healthy. You should also include some weight-bearing exercises to build muscle and boost bone health. As you get older, simple exercises like a brisk walk four or five times a week can help prevent osteoporosis. If mobility is an issue, there are exercises you can do in a chair or swimming pool to help boost bone health. **FOCUS ON FOODS** Most people know that calcium is important for bone growth and health, and dairy is a common source. But you may be surprised to learn that other foods including broccoli, kale and almonds are also good sources of calcium. For your bones

to absorb the calcium you're consuming, you also need vitamin D. The older you get the more you need. You'll find it in fish, like salmon and tuna, mushrooms, eggs and fortified milk. Vitamin K, boron and manganese are good for supporting bone maintenance. California prunes contain all three and also provide other health benefits, including muscle function and blood flow. Research has shown that a daily serving of five or six prunes can help slow down bone loss. Smoking and consuming alcohol have both been shown to increase the likelihood of developing osteoporosis, so consider quitting smoking and moderating your alcohol intake.

### Skincare issues seniors should be aware of



(NC) While we usually only think of our stomach when we're hungry, a healthy gut is important to your overall health. Your stomach is filled with countless good bacteria that help with everything from digestion to bone health and your immune system. Here are some easy ways to keep your stomach in top shape.

**EAT MORE FIBRE** You've likely heard that it's important to eat fibre to promote regularity. But fibre also feeds and promotes the diversity of beneficial bacteria in your gut. Some foods, including prunes, contain soluble and insoluble fibre. Soluble fibres can be digested, while insoluble fibres help foods pass through your digestive system. A serving of about five prunes has only 100 calories but provides a source of potassium, vitamin K,

antioxidants and other essential nutrients. They don't require refrigeration, so you can keep them in your desk drawer for a handy mid-day snack. **LOOK FOR NUTRITIOUS ALTERNATIVES** Looking for ways to reduce the sugar, eggs or oil in your favourite recipes? A simple prune puree is a great option. Their natural sweetness means you can swap out one-third to one-half of the sugar in a recipe. You can replace up to three large eggs in any recipe by using ¼ cup (60 ml) of puree for each egg. Reduce the amount of butter or oil a recipe calls for by using an equal amount of prune puree. To make the puree, simply blend about 8 pitted prunes with some hot water. *Learn more at californiaprunes.ca.*

### Busting myths about the disability tax credit



(NC) The disability tax credit (DTC) is an important program for those facing severe and prolonged physical or mental impairment. You may have heard it's too difficult to apply for the DTC or only certain conditions qualify. Don't let these myths stop you from applying. You may miss out on money in your pocket. Let's bust five common myths:

- 1. MYTH: I DON'T PAY TAXES, SO I WON'T BENEFIT FROM THE DTC.** Fact: Being eligible for the DTC doesn't only affect your taxes. It can help you access other federal programs like the Registered Disability Savings Plan and the Child Disability Benefit.
- 2. MYTH: THE APPLICATION PROCESS IS**

- DIFFICULT.** Fact: The Canada Revenue Agency has made it easier to apply. You can complete Part A of the T2201 form, which includes basic information, either online or by phone. After that, simply provide your medical practitioner with the reference number for them to fill in Part B of the form.
- 3. MYTH: ONLY CERTAIN CONDITIONS QUALIFY.** Fact: With the exception of Type 1 diabetes, eligibility is not based on specific medical conditions. Instead, it is based on the effects of one or more serious, long-term physical or mental impairments.
  - 4. MYTH: RECEIVING OTHER DISABILITY BENEFITS**

- MEANS I'M AUTOMATICALLY ELIGIBLE.** Fact: You must apply separately for the DTC and eligibility is determined independently from other benefits you may receive.
- 5. MYTH: I DON'T HAVE A DOCTOR SO I CAN'T APPLY FOR THE DTC.** Fact: There are several types of medical practitioners who can complete and certify the effects of the impairment in Part B of the T2201 application. These include doctors, nurse practitioners, optometrists, audiologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, psychologists and speech-language pathologists. Find information at [canada.ca/tax-credit-disability](http://canada.ca/tax-credit-disability).

**RICKETS IS CAUSED BY A LACK OF WHAT VITAMIN?**  
*ANSWER ON PAGE 25*

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# CANADA ANNOUNCES NEW BORDER RULES FOLLOWING TRUMP’S TARIFF THREAT

By Bunmi Akintilo

Canada has vowed to implement new set of security measures along its US border, including fortified surveillance and a joint “strike force” to tackle transnational organized crime.

The pledge came after a threat from President-elect Donald Trump to impose a 25% tariff on Canadian goods if the nation does not secure its border to the flow of illegal migrants and illegal drugs.

Economists have said such tariffs could strike a blow to Canada’s economy.

While announcing details of the plan, Canada’s minister of finance and intergovernmental affairs, Dominic LeBlanc, stated the federal government would commit C\$1.3bn (\$900m; £700m) to the plan.

The measures “will secure our border against the flow of illegal drugs and irregular migration while ensuring the free flow of people and goods that are at the core of North America’s prosperity”, LeBlanc said.

The five pillars of the measure cover the disruption of the fentanyl trade, new tools for the enforcement of law, improved coordination with US law enforcement, better information sharing and minimizing traffic at the border.

The pillars include a proposed aerial surveillance

task force which includes helicopters, drones and mobile surveillance towers between ports of entry.

Also, the government is giving the Canada Border Service Agency funds to train new dog teams to detect illegal drugs, and new tools to detect high-risk ports of entry.

LeBlanc revealed further details on the “joint strike force” for Canadian and US authorities, saying it would include “support in operational surges, dedicated synthetic drug units, expanded combined forces, special enforcement units, binational integrated enforcement teams, and new operational capacity and infrastructure”.

The new plan seems to correspond to the concerns raised by Trump in recently: the flow of fentanyl and illegal immigrants into the US.

According to US Border Patrol data on migrant encounters, the number of crossings at the US-Canada border is much lower than at the southern border.

LeBlanc stated that he and other officials had a “preliminary” conversation with Trump’s incoming “border tsar” Tom Homan about the new plan.

He said: “I’m encouraged by that conversation.”

Recall that LeBlanc was present at last month’s meeting between Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Trump at Mar-a-Lago.

# CANADIANS ENJOY TWO-MONTH TAX BREAK

By Stanley Ugagbe

The two-month tax break introduced by the Liberal government, designed to ease the financial burden on Canadians for certain essential items has begun. The initiative, formalized through Bill C-78, successfully passed its third Senate reading and received royal assent recently.

According to official statement, between December 14, 2024, and February 15, 2025, specific goods will be exempt from GST/HST, provided they are fully paid for and delivered by the end of the designated period. According to federal guidelines, an item is considered delivered when it is handed over to a shipping service or dispatched via mail, rather than upon its arrival at the buyer’s address.

Consumers are not required to take any additional steps to benefit from the tax exemption. Retailers are instructed to exclude GST/HST charges at the point of sale. Should an error occur, buyers are advised to seek a refund directly from the supplier or retailer. The tax relief extends through the supply chain, ensuring that manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers are not taxed on qualifying goods sold to distributors.

In provinces with harmonized sales taxes (HST), such as Ontario, New

Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island, the full harmonized tax will be waived. The parliamentary budget officer estimates the measure will cost the federal government \$1.46 billion and the HST provinces an additional \$1.26 billion, though the federal government may absorb the latter cost if provinces forgo compensation.

A detailed list outlines the items eligible for the tax holiday:

## FOOD AND GROCERIES

- **Prepared Foods:** Includes sandwiches, salads, platters, and pre-made meals.
- **Snacks:** Covers chips, candy, baked goods, and granola bars.
- **Energy Bars:** Only those deemed food by Health Canada, excluding enhanced variants.
- **Gift Baskets:** At least 90% of the contents must be qualifying food or beverages.
- **Prepared Meals and Beverages:** Tax-exempt if delivered by the food establishment; third-party delivery fees are not exempt.

## BEVERAGES

- **Non-Alcoholic Drinks:** Includes coffee, tea, carbonated beverages, juices, and smoothies, except those sold via vending machines.

- **Alcoholic Drinks:** Beer, wine, cider, and sake with an alcohol volume of 22.9% or less.
- **Premixed Alcoholic Beverages:** Spirit-based coolers with an alcohol volume of 7% or less.
- **Energy and Protein Drinks:** Tax-free if Health Canada classifies them as food or beverages.

## RESTAURANT MEALS

- Meals and drinks purchased at bars, pubs, and food trucks.
- Tax-exempt mixed drinks, such as sparkling wine with juice; vodka soda does not qualify.
- Included tips if added to the bill.
- Catering services featuring qualifying food and beverages.

## CHILDREN’S CLOTHING AND ACCESSORIES

- Infant and children’s apparel, including bibs, hats, gloves, and mittens.
- Footwear with an insole length of 24.25 cm or less.
- Sports clothing usable outside athletic contexts, such as ski jackets and jerseys.
- Diapers and training pants.
- Car seats that meet Canadian safety standards (excludes stroller/carrier combos).

## TOYS AND GAMES

- Board and card games, including collectible cards like Pokémon.
- Building toys and dolls marketed to children under 14.
- Jigsaw puzzles for all ages.
- Video game consoles and physical video games (excludes downloadable content).

## BOOKS, MAGAZINES, AND NEWSPAPERS

- Printed books, including guidebooks and audiobooks.
- Religious scripture in bound or unbound formats.
- Subscription-based magazines with minimal advertising.
- Newspapers providing general-interest content.

Excluded items include Christmas decorations (though Christmas trees qualify), imported goods outside the qualifying list, e-books, and digital publications. Collectibles marketed to adults and specialized clothing like wetsuits and tap shoes are also ineligible.

This GST/HST holiday offers a financial reprieve for Canadian households while fostering consumer spending on essential goods and services during the holiday season.

# EMEFIELE LINKED TO 753 ABUJA APARTMENTS SEIZURE

By Bunmi Akintilo

Court filings by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has linked Godwin Emeziele, the former Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), to a massive Abuja estate that contains 753 duplexes and apartments.

The EFCC announced the seizure of the property recently, describing it as a major step in its fight against corruption.

The estate, is located in the prime Cadastral Zone of Abuja and it spans an expansive 150,500 square meters, which makes it one of the most significant single recoveries in the EFCC’s history since its establishment in

2003.

The property was forfeited after a decisive recent ruling by Justice Jude Onwuegbuzie of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) High Court, Apo.

Court documents obtained offered a detailed narrative of Emeziele’s alleged involvement in illegal activities like fraud, abuse of office, and money laundering, which allegedly facilitated the acquisition of the estate.

Emefiele, who served as CBN governor under former President Muhammadu Buhari, is battling different separate cases before various courts.

The EFCC alleges that the estate was bought using kickbacks and funds from illegal activities during Emeziele’s

Festus Keyamo, Nigeria’s Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, has stated that the Department of State Services (DSS) has no business searching passengers’ bags at the nation’s various airports.

This is even as Keyamo lamented the presence of multiple government agencies carrying out joint inspections at the airports which in turn leads to congestion due to the lack of space.

Keyamo voiced out

tenure as CBN governor.

Court documents also revealed that the property was initially designated for mass housing but was repurposed for personal enrichment.

The papers claim that Emeziele allegedly channeled N2.2 billion through three shell companies to buy the

these concerns while speaking on the Arise News programme recently.

He said: “We’ll sit down, but we needed to take this step. DSS, you are not, you have no business searching people’s bags.

“You are profiling individuals who are going out of the country, people who have been, maybe who are under security checks and all that.”

He spoke about the queues at airports caused by multiple agency checks and said the congestion often leads to blockages that extend to the entrance gates.

estate. The companies paid N900 million, N700 million, and N600 million, respectively.

EFCC investigators said the transactions were traced through financial audits and discovered the property’s documents during a search of an associate’s office.

Reports have it that

He said: “What is that joint inspection table? You will see customs, DSS, NDLEA, quarantine, and on and on, all lined up on the same table.

“Each of them telling you to open your bags, and they’ll be dipping their hands into your bags one by one, passing you on to the next agency on the same table, and all, you know, I have not seen this in any part of the world.”

Keyamo said the ministry has eradicated the joint inspection table at airports and added that the agencies

now work with aviation security at the screening machine to eliminate repetitive searches.

He said: “So, you can then observe all the bags passing through the machine jointly, without harassing anybody.

“That is why the machines are there in the first place. You, NDLEA, customs, if you notice anything like drugs inside or a suspicious package, pull the person aside, take the person away into your private screening room, and do your further searches there.”

obtained kickbacks in exchange for foreign exchange allocations to companies desperate for hard currency.

The EFCC stated: “Our investigation equally revealed that the erstwhile CBN Governor received kickbacks from contractors who were awarded contracts by the Central Bank of Nigeria.”



# Sean Fraser Steps Down as Housing Minister

By Stanley Ugagbe

Nova Scotia MP Sean Fraser has announced his resignation as Canada's federal housing minister and confirmed he will not be running for re-election. Fraser, who has represented Central Nova since 2015, made the announcement during a press conference.

"I informed the prime minister earlier this fall that I would not be seeking re-election as the MP for Central Nova in the next campaign. This decision allows me to focus more on my family," Fraser stated.

Fraser, who previously held the role of immigration minister following the Liberal Party's 2021 electoral win, emphasized his personal reasons for stepping back. "My kids are growing up fast, and they deserve to have their dad more present," he said.

His departure coincides with a turbulent period for Nova Scotia's Liberal Party. The party recently suffered a staggering defeat in the provincial legislature, securing only two seats while the Progressive Conservatives claimed a commanding 42-seat majority. This loss led to the resignation of provincial Liberal

leader Zach Churchill.

When asked about whether he might consider a future in provincial politics, Fraser deflected, saying, "Today's decision is purely personal. It's not about a new role, though I appreciate the speculation."

However, Fraser hinted that he plans to remain politically active and is open to exploring new opportunities in the future.

The resignation adds another layer of uncertainty to the provincial Liberals' search for a new leader, potentially positioning Fraser as a figure to watch despite his current focus on family priorities.

# Ontario Woman Scammed of \$14,000 in Taxi Fraud Scheme

By Stanley Ugagbe

In a shocking twist of events, a woman from Woodbridge, Ontario, lost \$14,000 in what seemed like a simple act of kindness. Maria Padagdag shared her ordeal, which began when she encountered a stranger in a parking lot in early August.

"A woman approached me from behind my car and asked if I could help pay her taxi fare," Padagdag recounted in an interview.

Without hesitation, Padagdag handed over her debit card, entered her PIN into the machine, and received \$10 from the stranger as reimbursement. Believing the matter was settled, she went on her way without checking her account.

Four days later, Padagdag received an

alarming call from her bank, informing her that her account had been drained of \$14,000.

"I was just trying to help someone who seemed in need," said Padagdag, visibly distressed. "I'm still shaken and unsure of what steps to take next."

Toronto Police have sounded the alarm about a surge in taxi-related scams, with over 800 incidents reported this year alone, resulting in losses exceeding \$1.6 million.

"These fraudsters use duplicate cards that look almost identical to yours, while keeping your real card and PIN," explained Det. David Coffey from the Toronto Police Fraud Division.

Coffey noted that scammers often use generic taxi signs, easily purchased online, to make their operations ap-

pear legitimate. He also pointed out a telltale sign of fake taxis: makeshift charging cables running through windows to power roof-mounted signs.

"If you see that, it's almost certainly a fraudulent taxi," Coffey said.

Police advise the public to remain cautious, especially when a taxi does not accept cash or lacks a proper meter. They stress that debit cards should never be handed over during payment transactions. Scammers frequently target high-traffic areas like bars, sporting events, and movie theatres to catch unsuspecting victims.

Padagdag, a Bank of Montreal (BMO) customer, reported the incident to her bank, which investigated the matter over several months.

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# Nigerian government renames University of Abuja Yakubu Gowon varsity

By N.Ugoh

The Federal Executive Council has approved the renaming of the University of Abuja as Yakubu Gowon University.

This development was disclosed to State House Correspondents by Minister of Information and National Orientation,

Mohammed Idris, after the council held its last meeting for 2024 at the Aso Rock Villa, Abuja.

Idris said: "The third item is that there is also a decision taken by the Federal Executive Council to rename the University of Abuja to honour elder statesman, General Yakubu Gowon."

"The University of

Abuja will, henceforth, be called Yakubu Gowon University.

"Of course, the process will have to go to the National Assembly for all legislative work in that direction, but FEC has taken that decision to write to the National Assembly to change the name of the University of Abuja."

fall victim to such a scam, and we're committed to supporting our customers," a BMO spokesperson said in a statement.

It was gathered that after CTV News Toronto reached out to the bank, Padagdag received a full refund of the stolen

funds.

"I'm so relieved this nightmare is finally over," Padagdag said with gratitude.

# MISSISSAUGA MOURNS THE DEATH OF YOUNG SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

By N.Ugoh

Omar Zia, a principal at The Woodlands Secondary School, has died. According to Muslims of Mississauga, he died after a brief battle with cancer.

Zia, who died at the age of 32 recently, is survived by his wife and two daughters.

Muslims of Mississauga said- "Omar was a

precious asset to our community who touched thousands of lives with his activism and leadership."

In a statement to IN-sauga.com, the Peel District School Board revealed that since 1999, Zia served with honour and integrity since September 1999.

The statement read: "Principal Zia embodied the true essence of servant leadership, demonstrating unwavering commitment

and upholding the highest standards, even in the face of adversity. The board stated further that Zia was "a beacon of empathy, kindness, gentleness and care" who guided his school community "with compassion and resilience."

Zia commenced his career at John Fraser Secondary School and served in a various positions and locations in Peel including

*continued on p(25)*

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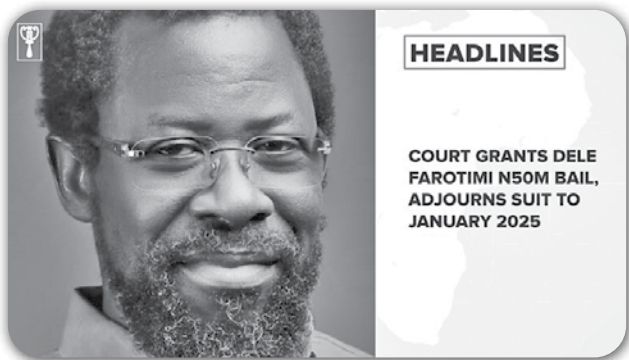
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## Court grants Dele Farotimi N50m bail



By N.Ugoh

Human rights lawyer, Dele Farotimi, has been granted bail by Ekiti State High Court.

Farotimi was granted bail in the sum of N50 million with a surety of the same amount by the court.

According to the court ruling, the surety must possess a landed property and adjourned the matter to January 29, 2025, for further proceedings.

Farotimi was taken to court by Chief Afe Babalola, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN), after he was arrested by operatives of the Ekiti State Police Command.

Babalola accused Farotimi of defaming him in a book titled: "Nigeria and Its Criminal Justice System."

The arrest triggered outrage across Nigeria, prompting civil society organizations and the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) to call for the activist's release.

## Megan Thee Stallion Seeks Restraining Order Against Tory Lanez

By N.Ugoh

Megan Thee Stallion has filed a restraining order against Tory Lanez, claiming he con-

tinues to harass her from prison through surrogates. Lanez is currently serving a 10-year sentence for shooting her in the feet in 2020.

## Adeleke pardons man convicted for stealing chicken in Osun

By Bunmi Akintilo

The Executive Osun State Governor, Ademola Adeleke, has pardoned Segun Olowokere, the man who was sentenced to death for stealing chicken and eggs 14 years ago.

Recall that an Osun State High Court in Iki-run convicted Olowokere and others for robbing a poultry farm in Oyan, Odo-Otin local government area of the state in 2010.

He was 17 years old when he was convicted.

The governor also

commuted the sentences of 52 other convicts.

In a recent statement issued in Osogbo, the Governor's Chief Press Secretary, Olawale Rasheed, said in a statement the order was in line with the recommendations of the State Advisory Council on Prerogative of Mercy.

He added the recommendation by the council was to mark this year's Christmas celebration.

The letter of commutation dated December 24 has since been received and acknowledged by the relevant

prison authorities.

Rasheed said the inmates recommended for the prerogative of mercy were inmates convicted of simple offences and had served substantial portions of their sentences.

According to him, the prerogative of mercy extends also to convicts sentenced to death but have spent a minimum of 10 years in custody.

He said: "In the case of the 30 inmates convicted of simple offences, I have decided in accordance with the said recommendation to remit and forgive the remain-

der of the said sentences in whole.

"Whereas, I have decided in accordance with the said recommendation to grant outright pardon to 12 inmates convicted of simple offences.

"Four convicts have their sentences commuted from death to outright pardon.

"And whereas I have decided in accordance with the said recommendation to commute the sentences as follows, one convict has his sentence commuted from death to 15 years imprisonment."

## Apple Faces \$1.2 Billion Class-Action Lawsuit Over Child Sexual Content on iCloud

By Marcel Chukwuka

Apple Inc., the world-renowned technology giant, is facing a \$1.2 billion class-action lawsuit in California over allegations that it failed to prevent the distribution of child sexual content on its iCloud platform. The lawsuit highlights growing scrutiny of on-line safety measures in the tech industry and raises questions about corporate accountability.

### ALLEGATIONS AGAINST APPLE

The lawsuit claims that Apple failed to implement adequate safeguards to detect and remove harmful material

from its iCloud services. Plaintiffs argue that Apple initially proposed a highly publicized system in 2021 to identify and eliminate child sexual abuse material (CSAM) but subsequently abandoned its deployment. This alleged inaction, they contend, has left victims vulnerable and subjected them to further trauma.

Under U.S. law, victims of child sexual abuse are entitled to a minimum of \$150,000 in damages each. With the class-action case involving multiple victims, Apple could face a total payout exceeding \$1.2 billion if found liable.

### VICTIMS DEMAND

### ACCOUNTABILITY

The plaintiffs are urging Apple to implement stricter monitoring mechanisms to prevent the spread of child sexual content. They argue that the company's failure to act represents a serious lapse in its duty to protect vulnerable users, particularly children.

"Apple must be held accountable for its negligence," stated a representative for the plaintiffs. "A corporation of this size and influence has the resources and responsibility to ensure its platforms are safe for everyone."

### WHAT'S NEXT FOR APPLE?

As the case unfolds,

Apple finds itself under intense public and legal scrutiny. Experts argue that this lawsuit could serve as a wake-up call for tech companies to prioritize stronger measures against harmful content.

"Technology companies must take proactive steps to safeguard their platforms," said an industry analyst. "Failing to act not only damages their reputation but also puts users at significant risk."

Apple has not yet commented on the ongoing litigation. However, the case underscores the mounting pressure on tech giants to balance innovation with user safety in an increasingly connected world.

## Ontario Court Approves the Body Shop Canada Sale Amid Store Closures and Job Losses

By N.Ugoh

An Ontario court has approved The Body Shop Canada's sale of most of its operations to a private equity firm, a move expected to result in store closures and job losses.

Justice Peter Osborne granted the cosmetics retailer permission to proceed with the sale to a subsidiary of Markham-based Serruya Private Equity Inc. According to court filings, Serruya will acquire 59 of The Body

Shop Canada's properties. The company previously operated 72 stores earlier this year, but locations not included in the sale are set to be liquidated following the deal's closure on Monday.

The transaction will impact about 600 employees, including 100 seasonal workers, who are expected to receive termination notices. However, approximately 500 employees will be rehired by Serruya Private Equity Inc., which has a diverse portfolio of investments,

including Yogen Früz, St. Louis Bar and Grill, Second Cup, and Swensen's.

The Body Shop Canada has been seeking a buyer since July after filing for creditor protection

in March. At that time, the retailer closed 33 stores and attributed its financial troubles to its parent company, accusing it of stripping the business of cash and pushing it into debt.





REFLECTIONS ON RELATIONSHIPS

A HOLE IN MY HEART  
Continued from the last issue

EPISODE 16 ©FRANCA UWUIGIAREN

It was past dinner time, Lizzy sat on a plastic chair outside receiving fresh air when the gate-man opened the small gate. It was Tunde entering the compound with a nylon in his hand. It's been a long time Lizzy saw him. Tunde was always out of the house before she wakes up and comes in late.

"Welcome!" She greeted.

Tunde smiled and took a seat beside her.

"How have you been?" He asked.

Lizzy looked at him and smiled weakly.

"What response do you want me to give? That I am doing great?"

Ignoring her response, he handed her the nylon.

"I got this for you"

Lizzy opened the nylon, stared at the content and smiled.

"Thank you!"

Lizzy began to contemplate whether to tell Tunde that she was raped again by Tolu.

"No need" She said in her heart.

"I received my salary today" He told her bringing out his wallet from his pocket.

"This is N3,000. Hold it for yourself" He told her.

She collected the money and began to sob. Tunde was startled.

"Why are you crying?"

"Nothing"

"Don't tell me nothing. There is a reason for your tears"

"Your mother took my money. She searched my bag and collected all my money"

Tunde was quiet for a long time. He listened to Lizzy as she cried and many thought began to go through his mind.

"She is not my mother" He said and walked into the house leaving Lizzy to wonder.

"Maybe he's upset with his mother that is why he said that." She said shrugging her shoulder and wiping her tears.

Lizzy opened her eyes to see Tolu holding a knife. Quickly, she sat up and shifted to the edge of the bed.

"If you shout, I will kill you" He threatened.

Lizzy's eyes were already bulging out in fright. She nodded her head frantically.

"Stand up and undress" He ordered.

Lizzy stood up and began to act as instructed. Her clothes dropped on the floor and Tolu began to smile.

"Come here" He ordered again.

She walked timidly towards him.

Tunde was not happy with the way things were. He has since lost his peace after Abike announced she was not his mother. Tunde tossed here and there on the bed for he couldn't sleep.

Since Lizzy moved into the house, he had had to share Tolu's room with him.

Tunde noticed that Tolu left the bed and had not returned back to the room. He tried to listen if the television was on, probably he was watching a program.

When it seems Tolu was not coming to the bed, Tunde stood up and went to the sitting room. He could see the light in Lizzy's room reflecting in the sitting room because the door was half opened. Tunde could also hear faint sound from there too.

Moving quietly, he went to the door and gently pushed it. Tunde could see Tolu having his way with Lizzy who was sobbing gently. Tolu held a knife in his hand.

"Jesus!" He exclaimed as he rushed in.

Tolu was startled. He pushed Lizzy away and went for Tunde with his knife but because his trouser was half down, he tripped and fell. Tunde quickly picked the knife but Tolu wriggled the knife from him.

Lizzy was dressing up and screaming in fright. By the time Abike would rush to Lizzy's room, Tunde and Tolu were on the floor fighting.

It was a fierce battle. Tolu stabbed Tunde and his scream could be heard. Tunde fought tooth and nail until he succeeded in driving the knife into Tolu. Both of them lay spent on the floor bleeding profusely.

"Shut up your dirty mouth and call the gate-man" Abike thundered.

Lizzy rushed outside and started hitting the gate-man who was far asleep. He had not heard Lizzy screamed. The startled gateman followed her inside to see both brothers in their own blood. He assisted them into the car and Abike drove them to the hospital. Lizzy, terrified by the whole thing began to wail.

Not once did Lizzy close her eyes to sleep. She was worried and afraid. Afraid that something bad might have happened to Tunde. Flashes of both of

*continued on p(25)*

Things You Should Avoid Discussing  
with Your Partner

By N. Ugoh

When it comes to maintaining a healthy relationship, open communication is often hailed as the key to success. However, there are certain topics that may not serve the relationship well, especially when they are unnecessary, overly sensitive, or potentially damaging. Understanding what not to discuss with your partner can help you build trust, respect, and harmony. Below, we'll explore the kinds of conversations that may be better left unspoken and why.

1. COMPARING THEM  
TO EXES

Bringing up your ex-partners, especially in a comparative manner, is one of the quickest ways to create insecurity and tension in a relationship. Comments like "My ex used to do this for me" or "You remind me of my ex when you..." may make your partner feel inadequate or unappreciated. Even if your intentions are harmless, such remarks can plant seeds of doubt. Instead, focus on the present and celebrate your partner's unique qualities. If you need to discuss past relationships for context or closure, approach the conversation with sensitivity and tact.

2. CRITICIZING THEIR  
FAMILY OR FRIENDS

No one has a perfect family or group of friends, but openly criticizing your partner's loved ones can lead to resentment. Even if you have legitimate concerns, attacking their family or friends may come across as disrespectful. If there's a situation you genuinely need to address, frame it constructively. For instance, instead of saying, "Your friend is so annoying," you could express, "I felt uncomfortable when your friend said [specific comment]." This

approach minimizes defensiveness and fosters understanding.

3. OVER-SHARING PAST  
MISTAKES

While honesty is critical in relationships, not all past mistakes need to be shared in detail. For example, discussing every poor decision, financial misstep, or embarrassing moment from your past can overwhelm your partner and unnecessarily complicate the relationship. Focus on what's relevant to your current dynamic. If a past mistake has ongoing consequences (e.g., debt or legal issues), it's fair to disclose it, but there's no need to dredge up every skeleton in your closet.

4. UNFILTERED  
OPINIONS ABOUT  
THEIR APPEARANCE

Partners often value honesty, but being too blunt about someone's looks can harm their self-esteem. Phrases like "You've put on weight" or "I don't like that outfit" can stick with them and create lasting insecurities.

If your partner asks for your opinion, frame your feedback positively. For instance, "You look great in other colors; maybe try something like that next time?" Small kindnesses go a long way in preserving confidence and mutual respect.

5. SECRET CRUSHES OR  
ATTRACTIONS

It's natural to find other people attractive, but discussing these feelings with your partner is often unnecessary and hurtful. Even casual comments like, "That actor is so hot," or "I saw someone today who looked amazing," can ignite jealousy or create tension. Instead, focus on your partner and the qualities that drew you to them. If you're struggling with deeper feelings for someone

else, reflect on why this is happening and address any underlying issues within your relationship privately or with the help of a therapist.

6. UNREALISTIC  
FANTASIES ABOUT  
LIFE WITHOUT THEM

Daydreaming about a life without your partner, especially if shared aloud, can make them feel unwanted or undervalued. While occasional frustration in relationships is normal, vocalizing thoughts like, "Sometimes I think about how peaceful it'd be to be single," can severely damage trust and security.

If you're feeling trapped or overwhelmed, discuss your emotions in a way that focuses on finding solutions together rather than projecting blame.

7. GOSSIP OR  
NEGATIVE THOUGHTS  
ABOUT MUTUAL  
ACQUAINTANCES

Discussing mutual friends or acquaintances in a negative light can backfire, as it creates an atmosphere of distrust. Your partner may wonder what you say about them when they're not around. Instead, keep conversations about others respectful. If there's a concern worth discussing, frame it diplomatically, focusing on facts rather than personal judgments.

8. BRINGING UP  
"TABOO" TOPICS  
DURING HEATED  
MOMENTS

Arguments are an inevitable part of any relationship, but dragging sensitive topics like past betrayals, personal insecurities, or financial struggles into a fight can escalate conflicts unnecessarily. When tempers are high, it's best to focus on the issue at hand. Save sensitive discussions for calm, neutral times when both of you can approach the sub-

ject thoughtfully.

9. PERSONAL  
INSECURITIES THAT  
THEY CAN'T HELP  
WITH

While partners are there for support, sharing every insecurity—especially ones they can't do anything about—may place undue emotional burden on them. For instance, constantly expressing dissatisfaction with your career or body without taking action can leave your partner feeling helpless. Consider seeking external support, like therapy or coaching, to address deeper personal issues. Reserve discussions with your partner for moments when you genuinely need their input or encouragement.

10. SECRETS THAT  
DON'T AFFECT THE  
RELATIONSHIP

Finally, not every secret is meant to be shared. Minor details, like a childhood crush or a forgotten faux pas, don't necessarily need to be disclosed. Sharing every little thing can sometimes overwhelm your partner and clutter your relationship with unnecessary information. When in doubt, ask yourself whether sharing the information will strengthen your bond or cause undue stress.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Navigating what to discuss with your partner is an essential skill for maintaining a strong, healthy relationship. While honesty and communication are vital, discretion and tact are equally important. By understanding which topics to avoid or approach carefully, you can foster a bond built on trust, respect, and mutual understanding. Remember, the goal is not to keep secrets or avoid tough conversations, but to handle them in a way that nurtures your relationship rather than jeopardizing it.

INSPIRATION

THE BAMBOO FARMER

By Ngozi Ugoh

There once was a farmer in a small village who decided to grow bamboo. Unlike other crops that sprouted quickly, bamboo demanded extraordinary patience. The farmer planted the seeds and watered them diligently

every day. For an entire year, nothing happened—no shoots, no growth. Villagers mocked him for wasting time and resources. But the farmer stayed determined. He continued nurturing the bamboo with unwavering faith. The second year came and went, still no sign of growth. By

the third year, even his closest friends advised him to give up, but he refused. In the fourth year, something miraculous happened. A small sprout broke through the soil. Within six weeks, the bamboo grew over 80 feet tall! What the farmer knew—and others did not—was that during

those years of apparent nothingness, the bamboo was growing its roots deep and strong to support its towering height. The bamboo's growth wasn't just about the six weeks but the years of preparation and perseverance that preceded it.

*continued on p(10)*



# CANADA TIGHTENS IMMIGRATION, INCREASES FEES FOR TEMPORARY RESIDENTS

By N.Ugoh

OTTAWA — The Canadian government is taking steps to curb immigration, announcing a tightening of its policies and a significant increase in fees for temporary residents, including students and workers. The changes, effective December 1st, come amidst a growing housing crisis and mounting pressure on public services, prompting the government to prioritize sustainable population growth.

The 2025-2027 Immigration Levels Plan, unveiled in October 2024, aims to reduce the number of temporary residents from 6.5% to 5% of the total population over the next three years. This represents a significant shift from previous policies that actively encouraged higher immigration levels.

The fee increase will affect a wide range of applications, including visitor visas, student visas, work permits, and applications for restoring temporary resident status. Immigration, Refugees and Citizen-

ship Canada (IRCC) will be announcing the exact fee amounts in the coming weeks.

Applicants are urged to pay careful attention to the updated fee schedules on the IRCC website to avoid delays in processing. For mailed applications, IRCC will typically not reject applications if fees increase during processing. However, applicants will be contacted to pay the difference.

The government's decision to tighten immigration comes amid growing concerns over the impact of rapid population growth on Canada's infrastructure and social services. Housing shortages have become a pressing issue in many major cities, while strained public services, including healthcare and education, are struggling to keep pace with demand.

While acknowledging the significant contributions of immigrants to Canada's economy and cultural diversity, the government emphasizes the need to manage immigration levels sustainably to ensure the long-term well-being of both newcomers and existing residents.

## THE BABBOO FARMER CONTINUED FROM - PAGE 9

### Life's Lesson

This story teaches us that success often requires unseen effort and relentless persistence. The work you put in today may not show immediate results, but it lays the foundation for something extraordinary in the future.

Like the bamboo farmer, stay committed to your goals even when the results seem invisible. Growth takes time, and the

journey itself builds resilience, determination, and character.

Remember, the race isn't always about speed—it's about enduring, learning, and finishing strong. Your breakthrough may be just around the corner, and when it comes, it will be worth every effort you've made.

So, water your dreams daily, stand tall like bamboo, and trust in the process.

# RHODES-VIVOUR ANNOUNCES 2027 GOVERNORSHIP BID

By N.Ugoh

In a recent interview on Gold Room anchored by Iyabo Ojo, Rhodes-Vivour expressed his determination to run the race again and stated that opposition parties must remain active and vocal post-election.

He said: "By God's grace, I will run for governorship again in 2027."

"We are working. We gained a lot of traction, saw our mistakes. We saw the loopholes we made, and we're working on that."

"I think the biggest mistake that has happened in Lagos politics is after elections, the opposition goes quiet. That is not happening this time."

He pledged to main-

tain a strong presence, engage in health outreaches and hold the government accountable for its actions.

He added: "We're in people's faces. We're doing our best in terms of health outreaches. We have a micro health insurance plan that we're taking all across the state where people can get treatment of up to



**Gbadebo Rhodes-Vivour, the Labour Party governorship candidate in the 2023 election in Lagos State, has declared his intention to participate in the 2027 poll. (pic by ripplesnigeria.com)**

N6,000 for free."

# ONTARIO GOVERNMENT INVESTS \$15M TO EXPAND RENAL CARE AT SCARBOROUGH HEALTH NETWORK

By Bunmi Akintilo

The Ontario government has announced a significant investment of nearly \$15 million to enhance renal care services at the Scarborough Health Network (SHN). This expansion will add 27 new hemodialysis stations, with 21 at the Centenary site and six at the General site, addressing the increasing demand for dialysis services in Scarborough and its surrounding areas.

SHN's Regional Nephrology Program currently provides life-saving hemodialysis treatments to over 6,000 patients annually. The program is one of 26 Regional Multi-Care Kidney Disease clinics in Ontario, offering comprehensive care to patients living with kidney disease.

Deputy Premier and Minister of Health Sylvia Jones highlighted the importance of this investment, stating:

"This expansion en-



ures more people in Scarborough and the GTA can access vital renal care close to home when they need it most, now and in the future."

This initiative is part of the Ontario government's larger strategy, "Your Health: A Plan for Connected and Convenient Care," which focuses on modernizing healthcare facilities and providing faster, more accessible care to residents.

Renovations at both SHN sites will include creating state-of-the-art spaces

to house the new hemodialysis stations, ensuring patients receive top-tier treatment. Hemodialysis is a critical treatment for individuals whose kidneys cannot effectively clean the blood, helping to remove waste products, manage fluid levels, and regulate blood pressure.

Dr. Raymond Cho, Member of Provincial Parliament for Scarborough North, lauded the investment as a milestone for the region:

"This funding repre-

sents another landmark commitment by our government to improve access to life-sustaining care for patients in Scarborough."

As the demand for dialysis grows in Scarborough, this expansion solidifies SHN's role as a leader in nephrology care, offering both conventional and nocturnal dialysis treatments. The new stations will enhance capacity, reduce wait times, and ensure patients and families receive timely and comprehensive care in their community.

# QUEBEC TV HOST JULIE SNYDER TESTIFIES IN SEX TRIAL AGAINST JUST FOR LAUGHS FOUNDER

By N.Ugoh

MONTREAL — Prominent Quebec TV host and producer Julie Snyder took the stand today in a civil trial, accusing Gilbert Rozon, the founder of the Just for Laughs festival, of sexually assaulting her over three decades ago.

Snyder, now 56, recounted an incident from 1991 when she was 23 years old. She testified that Rozon assaulted her while she was staying at the Just for Laughs com-

pany apartment in Paris. Snyder told the court she went to bed and woke up to being assaulted by Rozon.

"I was terrified, and I stayed silent for years because I feared the impact it would have on my career," Snyder said. She revealed that she decided to report the incident to Montreal police in 2017, inspired by other women coming forward with similar allegations.

Snyder is not one of the nine women behind the nearly \$14-million

civil lawsuit against Rozon but agreed to testify as part of the ongoing trial. Quebec Superior Court Justice Chantal Tremblay is presiding over the case, which consolidates the lawsuits into a single trial.

Rozon, 70, has denied all allegations. His legal team argued last week that the women suing him had shared details of their experiences with one another, which they claim has "contaminated" the credibility of their sto-

ries.

The allegations against Rozon have sent shockwaves through Quebec's entertainment industry. Rozon stepped down as president of Just for Laughs in 2017 following the public allegations. The company has since been sold and restructured.

The trial continues, with testimonies expected from the nine plaintiffs as they seek damages for the alleged harm caused by Rozon's actions.



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I recently had the pleasure of visiting Lauri Meats Market & Groceries at 1696 Jane Street, Toronto, where I congratulated Fabio Lauri on his well-deserved award. As a pillar in the community, the Lauri family has been serving top-quality meats for over four decades.

Originally from Italy, the Lauris bring a rich tradition of excellence to their craft. I have fond memories of purchasing a whole cow from them in the early 90s for my wedding celebration! The meat business can be challenging, and many have attempted

but failed. However, the Lauris' dedication, hard work, and commitment to quality have earned them a loyal customer base. Hats off to the Lauri family for their remarkable achievement! I wish them continued success and prosperity in 2025 and beyond.

HOW LONG CAN YOU EAT THOSE LEFTOVERS?



(NC) There's nothing quite like a nice home-cooked meal. Well, except maybe for the leftovers. Who doesn't love a tur-

key sandwich in the days after a holiday meal? And some dishes, like chilis and stews, just taste better after the flavours have had time to mingle. But how long after cooking can you safely consume leftovers? Here are tips on how to avoid getting sick from leftovers.

SAFETY FIRST



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While it may be tempting to move from the dinner table to the sofa to watch TV or catch a quick nap after a big meal, you should take care of the leftovers first. You want to make sure that the food temperatures don't drop into the "danger zone" of 4°C (40°F) to 60°C (140°F) where bacteria can thrive. You can't rely on smell, sight or even taste to determine if something is contaminated. Anything that has been left out for two hours or more should be tossed out.

**COOL IN THE FRIDGE**  
Any cooked food that

will be eaten over the next few days should be stored in the fridge. Pack items into storage containers but leave them uncovered at first. Only seal the lid once the food has fully cooled down. Very hot items can be left at room temperature to cool down, but move them to the fridge or freezer once they stop steaming. Defrosting advice Never defrost leftovers in the sink or on the counter. If you have time to plan ahead, defrost them in the fridge. Place items on a lower shelf to avoid any leakage contaminating other food. If you don't have time to defrost in the

fridge, use your microwave's defrost setting. Track the time Leftovers stored in the fridge should be consumed within three to four days. If you want to keep them longer, freeze them. However, once fully defrosted and reheated, leftovers should be consumed immediately and never refrozen. Depending on the type of food, cooked dishes can be safely frozen for two to six months. To help keep track, label containers with the type of food stored in them and the date they were frozen. Find more tips at [canada.ca/foodsafety](http://canada.ca/foodsafety).





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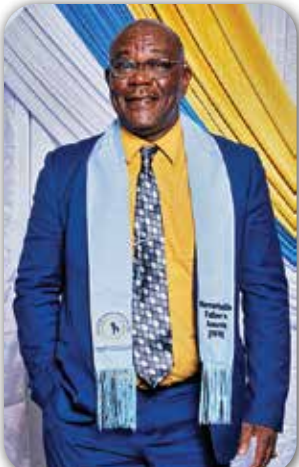
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2024  
PHOTOS OF  
THE YEAR









# THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TENANT AND HOMEOWNER INSURANCE

(NC) Choosing the right insurance coverage is crucial when protecting your home and personal belongings. Whether you own a home or rent a property, having adequate insurance ensures you are covered for unexpected events. However, the type of insurance you need differs based on whether you are a homeowner or a tenant.

If you're renting a property, it's essential to understand that your landlord's insurance typically only covers the building and the landlords' assets, not your personal belongings. This means that if your items are stolen, damaged or destroyed due to an incident like a fire, you could be left without coverage. This is where tenant insurance comes in. It covers:

- **Personal belongings:** Tenant insurance can protect your personal belongings, such as furniture, electronics and clothing, from risks like theft, fire or water damage.

- **Liability coverage:** It can provide liability coverage if someone gets injured while on the property you rent. For example, if a guest trips and falls in your apartment, your tenant insurance may help cover legal expenses and medical costs.

Additionally, it covers you that in the event that you accidentally cause damage to the unit in certain ways. For example, if a cooking fire damages the unit, you are responsible for that damage. Your tenant policy will cover any costs owed to your landlord. Cover-

age is also provided for accidental fire, explosion, water damage and smoke damage.

- **Additional living expenses:** If the rental property becomes uninhabitable due to a covered event, tenant insurance may cover the cost of temporary living arrangements, like staying in a hotel.

Homeowner's insurance, on the other hand, is designed to protect not just your personal belongings but also the home's structure. This type of insurance provides a more comprehensive level of coverage tailored to the needs of homeowners, which can cover:

- **Property damage:** Homeowner insurance covers repair or replacement costs for your home if it gets damaged by covered perils such as fire, windstorms or vandalism.

- **Personal liability:** Like tenant insurance, homeowner insurance also includes liability coverage. This may protect you if someone is injured on your property or if you accidentally cause damage to someone else's property.

- **Additional living expenses:** Should your home become uninhabitable due to a covered event, homeowner insurance can cover additional living expenses, such as hotel bills, until your home is repaired.

Take the time to review your insurance coverage and make any necessary adjustments to safeguard where you live as well as your peace of mind.

*Learn more at [belairdirect.com](http://belairdirect.com).*

# INVEST IN YOUR FAVOURITE COMPANIES FOR LESS WITH PARTIAL SHARES



(NC) Are you someone who spends \$5 every morning on a coffee and thinks, "I'm here so often I should own a part of this business!" If you did actually look into it, you might find that the share price for your favourite chain is out of your price range.

With partial shares, such as those from TD Direct Investing, high-priced stocks are no longer out of reach. Every investor now has the opportunity to invest in their favourite companies, no matter the share price.

"Investing should be straightforward and within reach for Canadians," said Scott Ignall, senior vice president, TD Direct Investing and Wealth Delivery. "With partial shares, Canadians can invest in the companies they want, regardless of the share price or how much they have to invest."

## What are partial shares?

Partial shares are fractions of a company's stock or exchange-traded funds (ETFs). This means instead of buying a whole share, you're only buying a part, or a fraction, of a share.

## What are the benefits of partial shares?

Partial shares can make investing in high-priced stocks and ETFs more affordable, without needing deep pockets.

Partial shares open doors for all investors, regardless of how much they have to invest, letting them start investing with as little as \$5. It allows clients to own a small part of a stock or ETF based on the dollar amount they want to invest. With partial shares, you can also engage in real-time trading.

## Do partial shares pay dividends?

Yes. If a stock pays dividends to shareholders, owners of partial shares will receive proportional cash dividend payments as well.

## What else should I know?

Partial shares offer less investment or dividend income than full shares. And, as with any stock or ETF, there's never any guarantee that the investment will be profitable.

No matter what you're investing in, it's important to do your homework first. You can limit your risk by thoroughly researching the costs and potential benefits of a fractional share before deciding to buy it.

# LEARN HOW TO GIVE BACK AND GET BACK



(NC) While you've likely heard the phrase "it's better to give than receive," did you know that it's possible to do both? You can, for example, give to charity and get a big break on your taxes. In fact, Canada has some of the best tax incentives for charitable giving in the world. Here's how you can take advantage of them.

## Donations earn tax deductions

You probably know that if you make a donation to a registered charity, you'll get a receipt for a tax credit in the calendar year you made it. In fact, for donations of more than \$200, you will get back almost half of that in lowered taxes. As a result, your donation only costs you \$100.

## Get double tax savings

If you own any stocks, bonds or other securities that have increased in value since you purchased them, they will be subject to capital gains tax when you sell them. But if you transfer your stock to a registered charity instead, you eliminate the capital gains tax and receive a donation tax credit that helps pay down any income taxes you owe.

## Pledge now, save later

Even if you don't have the disposable income to spare

for a donation this year, there are other ways you can make a meaningful contribution to the charity or charities you support. Each with their own tax benefits:

1. *Include a charity in your will.* Designating a small percentage of your estate to charity could turn into a sizeable donation. Plus, your donation will help lower the taxes your estate will be responsible for.

2. *Use your RRSPs.* Did you know you can name charities as beneficiaries of your RRSP? Doing this could just about offset the taxes that your estate would have to pay on this asset.

Your financial institution will have a simple RRSP beneficiary form for you to fill out where you list all the people and/or registered charities you'd like to receive your leftover funds. Note that in Quebec, you can only name a charity as a beneficiary of your RRSPs through your will.

3. *Donate your life insurance.* You can also choose to donate all or a portion of a life insurance policy to a registered charity. This option lets you multiply your contribution and make a big donation to a cause you support, all while reducing the tax burden your loved ones will face.

*Learn more about making donations through your estate at [willpower.ca](http://willpower.ca).*



ENTERTAINMENT

ELTON JOHN  
LOSES EYESIGHT  
AFTER SEVERE  
INFECTION

By N.Ugoh

British music icon, Sir Elton John, has revealed that he has lost his eyesight after battling severe infection. The musician disclosed this during a recent public appearance at the charity gala performance of The Devil Wears Prada: "The Musical," which took place at the London Dominion Theatre. This revelation by the 77-year-old musician shocked many at the gala performance as he said he did not watch the show due to his failing eyesight. He said: "As some of you may know, I have had issues, and

now I have lost my sight. "I have enjoyed listening to the performance, even though I haven't been able to see it." He thanked his husband, David Furnish, who was present at the event, for supporting him through the hardship. He said: "To my husband, who has been my rock, because I haven't been able to attend many of the pre-views because, as you know, I've lost my vision, so it's difficult for me to see them, but I love to hear them. "And tonight it sounded great! Alright! I appreciate you coming."

TIMAYA REVEALS  
WHY HE IS NOT  
MARRIED

- FORMER MOST  
BEAUTIFUL GIRL IN  
NIGERIA, OMOWUNMI  
AKINNIFESI, TALKS  
ABOUT BEING  
A VIRGIN AT 37

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BBNAIJA'S TACHA REVEALS WHY SHE  
RELOCATED PERMANENTLY TO UK

N.Ugoh

Female housemate of the 2019 Big Brother Naija (BBN) reality TV show, Tacha Akide, has explained why she permanently relocated to the United Kingdom. The BBNaija star gave the explanation when she appeared on the latest episode of Madame Joyce's podcast. She said she has already conquered the Nigerian market and was looking to explore new territory. Tacha Akide stated further that relocating to the United Kingdom does not mean she would not



take up offers in Nigeria, especially if the deal is worthwhile. She said: "With me being in the UK, I am representing Nigeria; I've already conquered the whole of the Nigerian

ing in the Nigerian market, she gave an example of being underpaid for an influential event she participated in, pointing out that the act is common in Nigeria. She said: "With the influencing scene in Naija, it looks so beautiful, but behind the scenes, it's not as beautiful because the money is shit. Imagine someone wanting to pay you six million, which is about 3 thousand dollars for six months, and they want you to influence and post two videos a month. These videos need to be created o!" Besides revealing her goals in the UK and the difficulties of work-

BOBRISKY REPORTEDLY SIGHTED  
IN AMSTERDAM REFUGEE CAMP

By N.Ugoh

Popular writer, Tosin Silverdam, has claimed that the controversial Nigerian cross-dresser Idris Okuneye also known as Bobrisky, has been seen in a refugee camp in Amsterdam, Holland in search of asylum. According to Sil-

verdam, Bobrisky applied for asylum in Holland because of his alleged persecution and cruel treatment in Nigeria. He wrote: "So, I heard mummy of Lagos is currently in asylum refugee camp in Amsterdam, seeking asylum. He/she is not in London. They have not lift the UK ban yet, so he can't enter the UK. "You guys can notice she barely posts lately, infact, no update from him/her. I guess she will tell them he/she is in danger in Nigeria that's why he runs to Amsterdam." "The Netherlands (Amsterdam) grants asylum to people who are in danger, risk, torture or inhuman treatment in their country

of origin". This came days after Bobrisky suggested in a video posted on social media that he might not return to Nigeria after his trip abroad. Also, he paid a special homage to an unidentified godfather in the post and expressed regret he was not able to bear him a child.

JAY-Z ACCUSED OF WASTING  
COURT TIME IN RAPE LAWSUIT,  
JUDGE SIDES WITH ACCUSER

By N.Ugoh

Jay-Z has been accused of wasting court resources in his legal battle against a woman who alleges he and Sean "Diddy" Combs raped her when she was 13. The rapper, 55, has vehemently denied the allegations and sought

to have the woman identified. However, a judge has ruled in favor of the accuser, granting her anonymity for the next phase of the proceedings. In a scathing ruling, Judge Analisa Torres criticized Jay-Z's lawyer, Alex Spiro, for filing "combative" motions filled with "inflammatory language." The judge deemed these actions a "waste of judicial resources" and declared that the court would not be "fast-tracked" simply at the lawyer's demand. The woman, referred to as Jane Doe in the lawsuit, accused Jay-Z and Combs of drugging and raping her at an after-party for the 2000 MTV Video

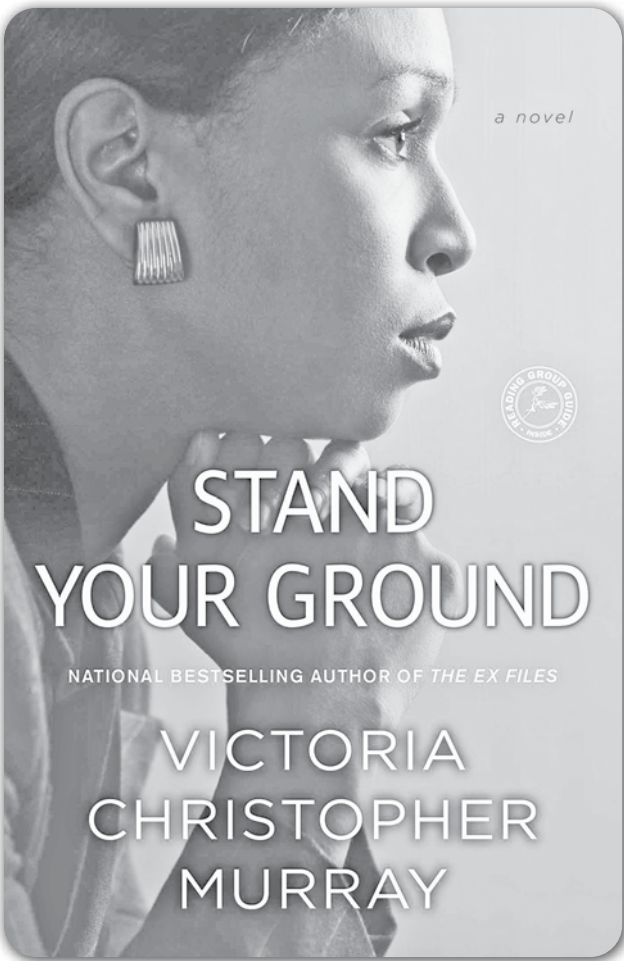
Music Awards. Jay-Z claims the lawsuit is an extortion attempt. This case is part of a larger wave of lawsuits filed against Combs by attorney Tony Buzbee, representing over 100 alleged victims. Combs is currently jailed awaiting trial on sex trafficking and racketeering charges, which he denies.



BOOKS

Embark on a journey through love, resilience, and inspiration with these captivating reads —each story a world of its own, waiting to enrich your heart and imagination.

Stand Your Ground: A Novel



By Victoria Christopher Murray

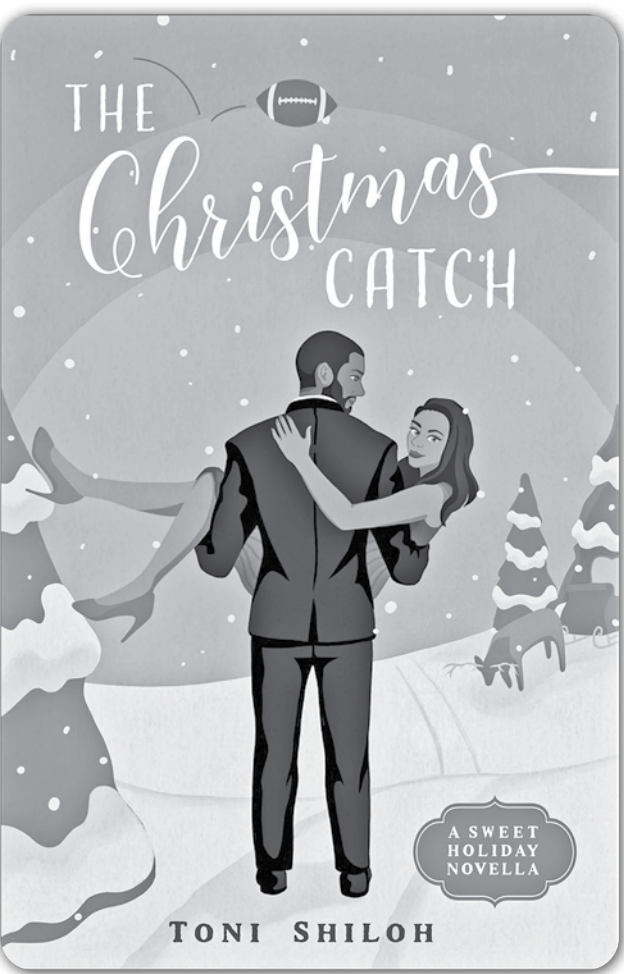
A Black teenager is dead, shot by a white man. Was it self-defense or murder?

Janice Johnson's worst nightmare has come true—her 17-year-old son is gone, and the shooter walks free. Can she trust the system to deliver justice, or should she stand with her husband and the angry protesters demanding action?

Meredith Spencer knows the truth about her husband, the accused shooter. Her secret could change everything, but revealing it might risk her safety and her son's future. Will she find the courage to act before it's too late?

justice can be done?

The Christmas Catch: A Sweet Holiday Novella



By Toni Shiloh

High school sweethearts Jahleel Walker and Bebe Gordon Bay, Georgia, at Christmas. Will they seize a second chance at love, or let life pull them apart again?

After a career-ending injury, NFL star Jahleel returns home to heal, facing old wounds with his father. The last thing he expects is to run into Bebe, who came back to town years ago with her daughter after a divorce.

Their connection reignites during holiday festivities, but Jahleel plans to leave, and Bebe fears getting hurt again. As Christmas magic weaves through their lives, Jahleel must decide: is he home just for the season, or is there a future waiting in Peachwood Bay?

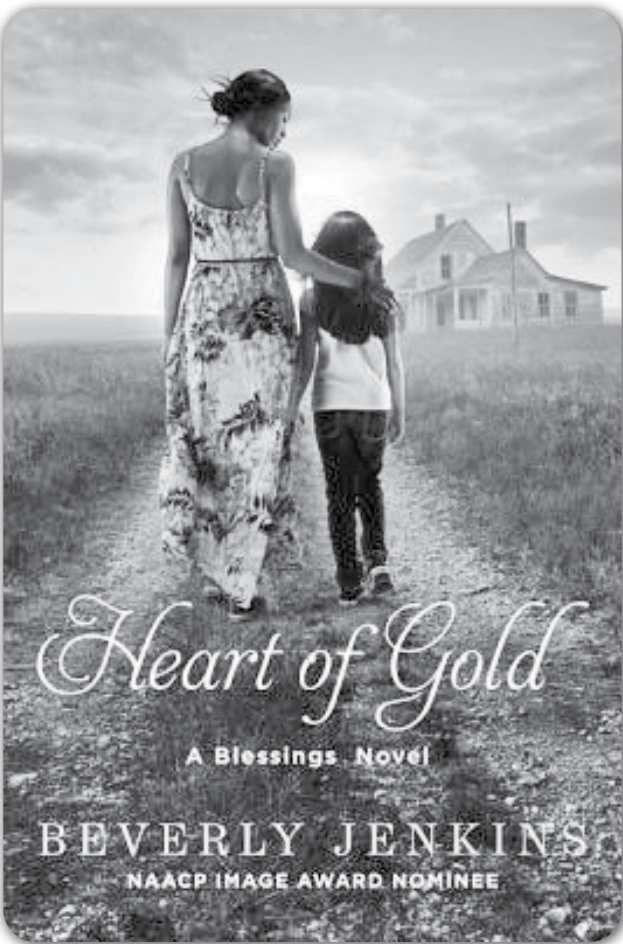
Heart of Gold: A Blessings Novel

By Beverly Jenkins

NAACP nominee and bestselling author Beverly Jenkins brings readers back to the beloved town of Henry Adams, Kansas—a place brimming with family, friendship, and unexpected surprises.

Life in Henry Adams has never been dull, especially since Bernadine Brown bought the town with her divorce settlement. Just as things begin to settle, chaos returns. Cephas Patterson, a recluse fiercely protective of his gold, unexpectedly leaves a saddlebag of it to Zoey after his death. For Zoey, already navigating her parents' trial separation, a falling-out with her best friend, and a runaway companion, Cephas's gift only adds to the upheaval.

To top it off, Berna-



dine's spiteful sister arrives, and tensions with a neighboring town

escalate. Will Henry Adams ever find peace again?

A Divine Romance: A Retelling Novel

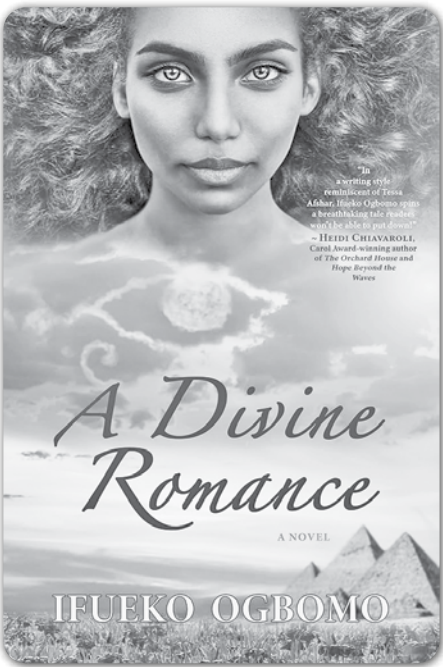
(Inspired by the life of Joseph)

Asenath, revered as a gift from the sun god for her captivating eyes, has spent her life veiled and groomed to marry Egyptian royalty. At just 17, she faces the grim prospect of a loveless future in a royal harem—until Pharaoh's startling decree changes everything. She is to wed Egypt's new vizier, a mysterious foreigner gifted with divine powers.

Her husband, Zaphnath-Paaneah, proves to be both handsome and charismatic—yet unnervingly unorthodox. He worships an invisible god and insists Asenath, the daughter of a high priest, abandon her lifelong beliefs to follow his faith. Trapped

in a fate she dreads even more than her childhood fears, Asenath resolves to escape the arranged union. But the secrets she uncovers plunge her into a labyrinth of intrigue and betrayal, forcing her to question everything she knows about love, men, and the divine. Could their union be the greatest mismatch in Egyptian history—or could a bold plea for a sign from his god transform her destiny and fulfill her deepest dreams?

Blending evocative poetry with meticulous



historical detail, A Divine Romance reimagines a cherished Biblical story. This Own Voices retelling takes readers on an enthralling journey through Ancient Egypt, introducing a vivid and poetic perspective in Christian fiction.

SOURCE: AMAZON.COM  
BOOKS AVAILABLE AT THE TORONTO & MISSISSAUGA PUBLIC LIBRARIES- VISIT CANADIAN LIBRARIES



# YOUTH CORNER

“YOUR CHILDREN NEED YOUR PRESENCE MORE THAN YOUR PRESENTS”. – JESSE JACKSON

MATCHING EXERCISE

E.G. Abscond - flee

Willful	audacity
Unwarranted	to give
Charlatan	a beginner
Daunt	lively
Lurid	practical
Fallacious	overused
Feasible	gruesome
Rancor	to intimidate
Novice	false
Hackneyed	a fraud
Judicious	headstrong
Immutable	bitterness
Kinetic	unchangeable
Bequeath	unjustifiable
Temerity	wise

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATING SOCIAL MEDIA



(NC) Social media can be equal parts fun, informative and frightening. While the various platforms have become part of our daily lives as ways to connect with friends and family, stay on top of current events and be entertained, there are some downsides to using social media. Here are four ways to protect yourself when using these platforms.

USE SECURE PASSWORDS

Be sure to use unique, hard-to-guess passwords for every social media site or app you register with. That way, if one site is hacked, your

other accounts won't be at risk of exposure. Every password should have a mix of uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers and symbols.

You should always use private internet connections to log into your online accounts. If you log in using public Wi-Fi networks, such as those found in the library or a coffee shop, you risk having your information exposed.

PROTECT YOUR PRIVACY

Every social media platform has adjustable privacy settings. These enable you to filter out words or phrases you

find offensive, block comments from specific individuals and report inappropriate content. You can also turn off geolocation features so strangers can't track your location.

Always be careful about how much personal information you post online. Children should be taught not to include the name of their school, the sports teams they play on, or their home address in posts and images. However, adults should also be cautious about oversharing personal details. On countless occasions, crooks have used the information they find on people's social media accounts to

WELCOME TO THE YOUTH PAGE!

Get ready for fun and learning with this month's exciting line-up! We've got savvy social media tips, a vocabulary workout, a general knowledge quiz, and a tasty trivia test on food and the human body. Enjoy the page, and remember to come back for more!

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

We hope you have a wonderful holiday season filled with joy and togetherness. As you gather with loved ones, please remember those less fortunate and the true meaning of Christmas.

HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS 2025!

We look forward to sharing more with you in the new year.

Don't forget to send us your feedback! We love to hear from our readers.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Binary Knowledge Check

1. Is a tiger's top running speed significantly faster than an average human's sprinting speed? True or False	4. Is a shark's sense of smell 10,000 times more sensitive than a human's? True or False	degrees Celsius (212 degrees Fahrenheit) at standard atmospheric pressure? Yes or No
2. Is a cheetah's top speed more than three times faster than an average human's sprinting speed? True or False	5. Is an octopus as intelligent as a human? Yes or No	8. Is the Earth flat? Yes or No
3. Do cats purr only when they are happy? Yes or No	6. Can humans breathe underwater without assistance? Yes or No	9. Are all birds capable of flight? Yes or No
	7. Does water boil at 100	10. Is the sun a star? Yes or No

FOOD & BODY TRIVIA: TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. What colour is Cayenne pepper?	humans have one. What?	7. The yolk of eggs are rich in what mineral?
2. What vitamin is not present in eggs?	5. What process, beginning in your mouth, is completed in your colon?	8.White bread contains no fiber?
3.From which country did the savory tart Quiche Lorraine originate?	6. What vital fluid has no nutritional value whatsoever?	9. Fruit juice is a good source of fiber
4. Cows have four and		10. The initial MSG stand for monosodium glutamate

determine that someone is away on holiday and then track down their home address to break in.

PAUSE BEFORE YOU POST

Before you post anything online, think carefully if the message or image you're sharing is something that you want on your "permanent record." Even on applications claiming posts will disappear shortly after posting, you cannot stop others from taking screenshots of your message and post-

ing it elsewhere.

If a hiring manager finds an image months or years later, would they reconsider giving you a job offer? Would you be embarrassed if a future friend, colleague or potential love interest discovered some old posts where you made inappropriate comments?

Consider this simple mantra before you post: Is this something that I'd want my parents or children to read?

TAKE A BREAK

Perhaps the most important piece of advice

is to take regular breaks from social media. For many, the thrill of getting likes or gaining followers can be addictive. Spending too much time on social media can negatively impact your work or studies. Staring at a screen for too long can also affect your eyesight, sleep patterns and overall health. Before going online, set yourself a limit – say, 30 minutes – and stick to it.

Find more online safety tips and free resources on navigating the digital world at [abc-connectforlearning.ca](#).

ALL ANSWERS FROM THIS PAGE ARE ON PAGE 25



## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

# PAUL AKINJO TAKES THE HELM AS LATHROP’S NEW MAYOR

By Stanley Ugagbe

In a historic moment for Lathrop, Paul Akinjo was officially sworn in as the city’s new mayor during a special ceremony at the Lathrop City Hall Council Chamber. Joined by his fellow elected colleagues, Jennifer Torres-O’Callaghan and Minnie “Cotton” Diallo, Akinjo expressed heartfelt gratitude to voters and supporters who made the victory possible.

Akinjo’s ascension to the mayoral seat marks a new chapter in his remarkable journey. Originally from Nigeria, Akinjo arrived in the United States 30 years ago with just \$200 in his pocket. A pastor at the Redeemed Christian Church of God and a retiree from the Tri-Valley San Joaquin Valley Regional Rail Authority, Akinjo has called Lathrop home

for the past 14 years.

“This is the land of opportunity, and for me, becoming mayor is a way of giving back to a community that has given me so much,” Akinjo said.

The ceremony also served as a moment to bid farewell to outgoing mayor Sonny Dhaliwal, who now assumes his role as District 3 San Joaquin County Supervisor. Dhaliwal, a native of Punjab, India, reflected on his journey from joining Lathrop’s Planning Commission in 2003 to serving 12 years as mayor.

“He has done so much for the City of Lathrop. While he’s leaving this seat, he’ll still be representing us at the county level,” Akinjo said while presenting Dhaliwal with a commemorative plaque for his years of service.

Diallo echoed the sentiment, thanking Dhaliwal for his leadership and dedi-

cation: “You’ve been an effective leader, and we’re grateful you’ll continue advocating for us.”

Akinjo acknowledged the challenges of his mayoral campaign, including moments of negativity and personal attacks. “I ask for forgiveness from those who may have spoken unkindly during the campaign,” he said, emphasizing unity and a shared vision for Lathrop’s future.

Family members and friends traveled from across the Bay Area to witness Akinjo take the oath of office, underscoring the importance of the occasion. “I especially thank everyone who has supported me over the years,” Akinjo said, humbled by the milestone.

With a deep commitment to building on his predecessor’s legacy, Akinjo pledged to continue working to make Lathrop a

desirable and thriving city. “This is about creating opportunities for everyone,” he said.

The ceremony also featured notable guests, including San Joaquin County District Attorney Ron Freitas, Manteca Mayor Gary Singh, State Assemblywoman Rhodesia Ransom, and several other regional leaders.

In addition to Akinjo’s swearing-in, Torres-O’Callaghan was appointed as Lathrop’s new vice mayor, and Diallo began her new term on the City Council. Together, the trio brings a renewed sense of purpose to Lathrop’s leadership team.

Akinjo’s journey from an immigrant with little to his name to the mayor of a growing city underscores the possibilities available in a community that values resilience, service, and opportunity.

## GOODBYE

# BARBARA TAYLOR BRADFORD, BESTSELLING NOVELIST, DIES AT 91

By Ngozi Ugoh

British journalist Barbara Taylor Bradford, known for her bestselling novel “A Woman of Substance,” has died at the age of 91. Bradford’s novels sold over 90 million

copies worldwide and were translated into 40 languages. She was known for her stories about women fighting for love and power in a man’s world. Bradford was born in Leeds, England, and worked as a journalist before becoming a full-time novelist.

## VIETNAM SUSPENDS CHINESE E-COMMERCE PLATFORM TEMU OVER REGISTRATION ISSUES

By Bunmi Akintilo

Vietnamese authorities have suspended operations of the Chinese online retailer Temu for failing to meet a regulatory deadline to register its business by the end of November. Temu, a subsidiary of Chinese e-commerce giant Pinduoduo, is facing uncertainty about whether it will be permitted to resume activities once registration is completed.

The Ministry of Industry and Trade raised concerns regarding the authenticity of Temu’s ultra-low-priced products and their impact on local manufacturers. In response, Temu announced on Thursday that it is collaborating with the Vietnam E-commerce and Digital Economy Agency, as well as the Ministry of Industry and Trade, to fulfill registration re-

quirements. The company confirmed that it has submitted the necessary documentation.

Temu launched operations in Vietnam in October, attracting customers with aggressive discounts and free shipping. However, the government warned the company that its website and mobile app would be blocked if it failed to comply with the registration deadline, as reported by the official Vietnam News Agency.

The Vietnamese language option has been removed from Temu’s platform. A notification stated that the company is working to align with the required e-commerce regulations.

In addition to its challenges in Vietnam, Temu is under investigation in Europe for allegedly failing to prevent the sale of illegal products on its platform.

# FINLAND FREEZES SIMON EKPA’S ASSETS

By Stanley Ugagbe

Finnish authorities have frozen the assets of Simon Ekpa, a controversial Biafran separatist leader facing accusations of terrorism-related offenses. Ekpa, who has been in detention for several weeks, is also linked to companies whose assets have similarly been seized.

In addition to Ekpa, four of his alleged accomplices remain in custody, with local media confirming that all are under investigation for serious crimes.

According to Yle, a prominent Finnish news outlet, Ekpa is currently held at the high-security Kymäkoski Prison in Vanhamaantie, Akaa. The facility, often described as one of the harshest prisons globally, houses some of Finland’s most dangerous offenders. Built in 1993, it

accommodates up to 113 inmates, including those convicted of violent crimes and awaiting trial for serious charges.

Reports suggest Ekpa will remain behind bars through the holiday season, as Finland’s judicial system does not permit bail in cases of this nature. Senior Detective Superintendent Mikko Laaksonen of Finland’s National Bureau of Investigation confirmed that Ekpa’s detention is part of ongoing legal proceedings.

The Kymäkoski Prison gained international attention when it was featured in the 2023 Netflix series Inside the World’s Toughest Prisons. Hosted by journalist Raphael Rowe, the series showcased the harsh conditions and the lives of inmates, many of whom have committed heinous crimes.

Ekpa, who has styled

himself as the “Prime Minister” of the Biafra Republic Government-in-Exile, was arrested nearly a month ago. Authorities have accused him of using social media platforms to incite violence in Nigeria’s South-East region, targeting civilians and government officials alike.

He faces charges of public incitement to commit acts of terrorism, as well as allegations of funding extremist activities. Finnish investigators claim that his inflammatory rhetoric has fueled unrest in Nigeria, prompting international concern.

Kymäkoski Prison is notorious for its challenging environment. The facility has dealt with cases of inmates smuggling drugs such as Subutex, cocaine, and amphetamines, along with mobile phones. These contraband items pose significant challenges for pris-

on staff, who must navigate the risks of violence and drug-related incidents.

Prison staff have described the psychological toll of managing such volatile inmates. In the Netflix series, some prisoners interviewed, including individuals with histories of severe violence, showed no remorse for their actions.

The case of Simon Ekpa has drawn widespread attention, not only for the severity of the charges but also for the implications of his activities in Nigeria. Finnish officials remain tight-lipped about the progress of the investigation, but the freezing of his assets and detention in one of the world’s most secure prisons underscore the seriousness of the allegations.

For now, Ekpa faces an uncertain future as Finnish authorities continue their probe into the alleged crimes.

# META DONATES \$1M TO TRUMP’S INAUGURATION FUND AMID SHIFTING TECH-POLITICS DYNAMICS

By Bunmi Akintilo

Meta, the tech giant behind Facebook and Instagram, has contributed \$1 million to President-

elect Donald Trump’s 2024 inauguration fund, marking a significant gesture amid its evolving relationship with the former president.

The donation, con-

firmed by a Meta spokesperson on Thursday, follows a private meeting between Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg and Trump at Mar-a-Lago. This development, first reported by

The Wall Street Journal, highlights the increasing interplay between corporate interests and politics in a polarized era.

Stephen Miller, named deputy chief of

staff for Trump’s second term, suggested that Zuckerberg, like other business leaders, is aligning with Trump’s economic agenda. This marks a shift in Meta’s

approach as the company seeks to rebuild its reputation with conservative audiences after contentious years.

Trump was banned from Facebook in the



# BURKINA FASO, MALI, NIGER TO EXIT ECOWAS PERMANENTLY IN 2025

By Bunmi Akintilo

The President of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Alieu Touray, has disclosed that Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger Republic would leave the organization permanently in 2025.

Touray made this disclosure during the 66th ordinary session of ECOWAS Heads of States and Governments in Abuja.

Recall that the military regimes in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger announced their instant withdrawal from the ECOWAS in January, noting that their withdrawal was irre-

versible. Before the withdrawal, the trio were suspended from ECOWAS, with Niger and Mali facing severe sanctions over the unconstitutional change of power in the three countries.

However, Touray revealed that ECOWAS has now set the countries' exit at January 29, 2025 – July 29, 2025.

He added that the timeframe would allow for last mediations and any diplomatic interventions

In a joint statement, the three countries accused ECOWAS of serving the interests of France, their former colonial power and promised to chart a new path for their citizens.

By Stanley Ugagbe

Colorado Springs Mayor Yemi Mobolade is under intense scrutiny following revelations linking him to Derrick Bernard, a man accused of orchestrating a fake hate crime during Mobolade's mayoral campaign.

Bernard, who is Black, allegedly defaced a campaign sign with a racial slur and staged a cross-burning, an incident authorities now describe as a hoax intended to garner sympathy and support for Mobolade's bid for office. Court documents reveal that Bernard communicated with Mobolade about the incident, even

sending a message on the day it occurred, hinting at its intended impact on the election outcome.

Initially, Mobolade denied having any contact with Bernard during two separate interviews with the FBI. However, he later claimed he could not recall the specifics of their interactions. The Department of Justice (DOJ) ultimately chose not to prosecute Mobolade, citing political and racial sensitivities surrounding the case.

In a statement to The Colorado Springs Gazette, Mobolade denied involvement in the incident but stopped short of addressing specific details. "My family and I are victims of a hate crime. I had no

knowledge, warning, or participation in this despicable act," he stated, attributing the allegations to politically motivated misinformation campaigns.

The mayor's response has done little to quell concerns among local leaders. City Councilman Dave Donelson raised questions about the inconsistencies in Mobolade's statements, asking, "Did he lie to the FBI during those interviews?" Similarly, County Commissioner Longinos Gonzalez Jr. has urged the mayor to provide greater transparency.

Former prosecutor George Brauchler added to the criticism in an opinion piece, arguing that lying to federal investigators is a

grave offense. He accused Mobolade of undermining public trust by refusing to give a clear and unequivocal denial of the allegations.

The controversy escalated when reports surfaced of Bernard messaging Mobolade on election night, taking credit for the mayor's victory and later seeking favors as a reward for his actions.

As pressure mounts from both local officials and residents, calls for accountability and clarity from the mayor grow louder. The unfolding scandal threatens to overshadow Mobolade's tenure and raises broader concerns about integrity in public office.

# NETFLIX DEBUNKS RUMOUR OF EXITING NIGERIA

By N.Ugoh

Not long after Nigerians went on a social media, believing that Netflix would be leaving the country, the global streaming platform debunked the news and re-affirmed that the platform was here to stay.

Netflix has in six years played a major role by shaping the future of Nigerian films in the country and the global scene.

The platform has promoted Nigerian films, drawing them closer to a bigger audience while pro-

moting African and Nigerian stories, cultures and traditions.

According to the rumour, the global streaming platform Netflix allegedly revealed that it would discontinue its operations in Nigeria owing to the inflation, decline in subscribers and the weakened naira to US dollar exchange rate.

Meanwhile, the rumour has been debunked by Netflix in a statement which read: "We are not exiting Nigeria. We will continue to invest in Nigerian stories to delight our members."

aftermath of the January 6, 2021, Capitol attack, with his account reinstated in early 2023. During the 2024 campaign, Zuckerberg refrained from endorsing any candidate but has softened his stance on Trump, even commending his leadership earlier this year.

Despite the donation, tensions between Trump and Zuckerberg persist. In July, Trump posted a veiled threat on Truth Social, warning the Meta CEO to "be careful," underscoring lingering animosities over election integrity disputes.

Corporate donations have historically

played a major role in funding presidential inaugurations. Meta's move stands out as Facebook did not donate to Trump's 2017 or Biden's 2021 inaugurations. Google, in contrast, contributed \$285,000 to both events, while Microsoft donated \$500,000 to Biden and Trump, and \$1 million to Barack Obama's second inaugural in 2013.

This donation underscores the complex and evolving relationship between Big Tech and politics, as companies navigate shifting loyalties and public perceptions in a fraught political climate.

# TRUMP WANTS TO TURN CANADA, GREENLAND AND PANAMA CANAL INTO UNITED STATES TERRITORY

By Bunmi Akintilo

United States President-elect, Donald Trump, has once again suggested buying Greenland from Denmark, taking back Panama Canal and making Canada the '51st state of the country.

These calls join the list of allied countries he has started fights with before his swearing in on January 20.

After he named his ambassador to Denmark, Trump wrote: 'For purposes of national security and freedom throughout the World, the United States of America feels that the ownership and control of Greenland is an absolute necessity.'

Also, he recently suggested the US could take control of the Panama Canal if the increasing ship-

ping costs are not tackled between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

He also disclosed that Canada could become the 51st State of the US and referred to Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau as the 'governor' of the 'Great State of Canada'.

Recently, Trump posted that 'Canadians want Canada to become the 51st State' and added an image of himself superimposed on a mountaintop surveying surrounding territory next to the flag of Canada.

Trudeau later suggested that Trump was joking about annexing Canada, but the pair recently met at Trump's Mar-a-Lago club in Florida to talk about Trump's threats to impose a 25% tariff on goods coming from Canada.

Greenland, the world's biggest island, is located between the Atlantic

and Arctic oceans. 80% of it is covered by an ice sheet and is home to a large US military base.

The country gained home rule from Denmark in 1979 and its head of government, Mute Bourup Egede, has suggested that the latest calls by Trump for US control would be as meaningless as those he made in his first term.

Egede said: "Greenland is ours. 'We are not for sale and will never be for sale. We must not lose our years-long fight for freedom.'

In 2019, Trump cancelled a visit to Denmark after his offer to buy Greenland was turned down by Denmark, and ultimately amounted to nothing.

Also, he suggested that the US is getting 'ripped off' at the Panama Canal.

He said: "If the prin-

ciples, both moral and legal, of this magnanimous gesture of giving are not followed, then we will demand that the Panama Canal be returned to the United States of America, in full, quickly and without question."

While responding on video, the President of Panama, Jose Raul Mulino, said "every square metre of the canal belongs to Panama and will continue to."

Trump replied on social media and wrote: 'We'll see about that!' He also posted a photo of the American flag in the canal zone.

'Welcome to the United States Canal!'

Recall that the United States built the canal in the early 1900s but gave its control to Panama on December 31, 1999, under a treaty signed in 1977 by then-President Jimmy Carter.

# TRUMP DOWNPLAYS FORD'S THREAT TO CUT ONTARIO'S ELECTRICITY EXPORTS TO U.S. STATES

By Bunmi Akitilo

United States President-elect Donald Trump has downplayed threats from Ontario to cut electricity exports.

Recently, Ford revealed that Ontario is contemplating cutting electricity exports to Michigan, New York

state and Minnesota if Trump imposes 25 percent tariffs on all Canadian products.

American network CNBC later asked Trump about Ford's comments, and he said it's "fine" if Ontario imposed these restrictions. He argued that the U.S. "is subsidizing Canada."

Meanwhile, Alberta Premier Danielle Smith said her province would not restrict oil and gas exports under any circumstances. She added that she prefers diplomacy over threats.

Ford has however doubled down on the idea of restricting energy exports, calling it a last resort but

olan idea that might be implemented if the U.S. attacks the livelihoods of Canadians.

Ontario Energy Minister Stephen Lecce said the province would rather cooperate with the U.S., but could "end power sale into the U.S. market" once Trump assumes office on January 20.



SPORTS

ADEMOLA LOOKMAN WINS  
AFRICAN FOOTBALLER OF THE  
YEAR, NNADOZIE BAGS WOMEN  
GOALIE OF THE AGAIN



By Tunde Ajibode

Super Eagles and Atalanta forward, Ademola Lookman has emerged African Footballer of The Year. He won the award during the recent CAF Awards gala held which took place in Morocco.

Lookman, the only

African in the Ballon d'Or shortlist for world best player, beat Morocco and PSG's Achraf Hakimi to the award.

Recall that the 27-year-old scored three goals and three assists at the 2023 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) and scored a historic hat-trick in the final of the UEFA Europa League

last season.

He succeeds his national teammate, Victor Osimhen, and becomes the sixth Nigerian player to win this prestigious award.

Meanwhile, Super Falcons goalkeeper Chiamaka Nnadozie emerged Women's Goalkeeper of the Year after her sensational display

for Nigeria and Paris FC.

She was also in the shortlist for the Women's Player of the Year award category but did not win as Zambia's Barbara Banda clinched the award.

Super Falcons won the Women's National Team of the Year award after putting up a great show at the Olympics.

LPGA AND USGA  
SET NEW GENDER  
ELIGIBILITY RULES

By Bunmi Akitilo

NEW YORK (RNS) - The LPGA and USGA have announced new gender eligibility policies for their respective tournaments. Under the new rules, players must be assigned female at birth or have transitioned to female before going through male puberty to compete.

The policies, which take effect in 2025, follow over a year of research and consultation with experts in medicine, science, sport physiology, and gender policy law.

The updated policies will impact transgender female golfers like Hailey Davidson, who narrowly missed qualifying for the U.S. Women's Open this year. Davidson, who began hormone treatments in her early 20s and underwent gender-affirming surgery in 2021, had been competing on the Florida mini-tour NXXT Golf until the circuit announced its own similar policy in March.

"Can't say I didn't see this coming," Davidson wrote on Instagram. "Banned from the Epson and the LPGA. All the si-

lence and people wanting to stay 'neutral' thanks for absolutely nothing. This happened because of all your silence."

The LPGA and USGA maintain that their policies are designed to be inclusive while ensuring fair competition. They argue that the effects of male puberty provide significant competitive advantages in golf.

"Our policy is reflective of an extensive, science-based and inclusive approach," said LPGA Commissioner Mollie Marcoux Samaan, who announced her resignation in January. "The policy represents our continued commitment to ensuring that all feel welcome within our organization, while preserving the fairness and competitive equity of our elite competitions."

The USGA's CEO, Mike Whan, emphasized that the organization focused on competitive fairness in developing its policy, stating, "We tried not to get into politics, or state by state or any of that stuff. We just simply said, 'Where would somebody at least start with competitive fairness as the North Star?'"

MESSI NAMED MAJOR  
LEAGUE SOCCER'S  
MOST VALUABLE  
PLAYER

By Marcel Chukwuka

Lionel Messi has been named Major League Soccer's Most Valuable Player.

The former Barcelona and Paris Saint-Germain forward played a major role in Inter Miami's record-breaking regular season points total.

However, the team was eliminated in the first round of the MLS Cup playoffs in November.

At 37 years, Messi led the league in goal contributions as he registered 20 goals and 16 assists, despite injuries restricting him to only 19 regular-season games and two playoff appearances.

The MVP award is determined by votes from players, club technical staff, and journalists and Messi garnered 38.43% of the votes, surpassing Columbus Crew's Cucho Hernandez, who earned 33.7%. The honor is offi-

FIFA CONFIRMS SAUDI ARABIA  
AS 2034 WORLD CUP HOSTS

By Bunmi Akitilo

World Football governing body, FIFA has announced that Saudi Arabia would host the 2034 men's World Cup.

The president of Asian Football Confederation, Sheikh Salman bin Ibrahim al-Khalifa and the Minister of Sports and Youth in Saudi Arabia, Abdulaziz bin Turki Al Faisal, celebrated the development.

Meanwhile, four of the 15 stadiums identified to hold matches at the 2034 World Cup have so far been built.

FIFA also confirmed that Spain, Portugal and Morocco would be joint hosts for the 2030 tournament.

Three matches in the 2030 tournament will also be played in Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay to commemorate 100 years of the competition.

The hosts for both

tournaments were confirmed during the recent extraordinary FIFA Congress meeting after a vote involving the 211 member nations represented at the meeting over a video link.

Nations cast their votes by 'acclamation' - clapping in front of their cameras via their video links.

While responding to criticism the governing body received over both decisions, FIFA President Gianni Infantino said;

"We are aware of critics and fears and I fully trust our hosts to address all open points."

"We have a transparency that will shape real and lasting change. That is what we expect and what we look forward to - social improvements and positive human rights impacts."

"That is one of the responsibilities of hosting a World Cup, and the world will of course be watching."

cially titled the Landon Donovan MLS MVP and

has previously been won by great players

like U.S. legend Landon Donovan, Ireland's

Robbie Keane, and Spain's David Villa.



# NETFLIX SECURES EXCLUSIVE U.S. BROADCAST RIGHTS FOR 2027 AND 2031 FIFA WOMEN’S WORLD CUP



By Tunde Ajibode

Netflix has officially acquired the U.S. media rights for the 2027 and 2031 FIFA Women’s World Cup, marking a significant milestone for the streaming giant as it expands its presence in the live sports industry. This groundbreaking deal will make Netflix the exclusive broadcaster for the Women’s World Cup in the United States, giving fans unprecedented access to one of the world’s most-watched sporting events. The move signifies a broader trend of streaming platforms entering the live sports market, a space traditionally

dominated by cable and network television.

**WHAT THIS MEANS FOR SOCCER FANS**  
As part of the agreement, Netflix will stream live matches, exclusive behind-the-scenes content, player interviews, and highlights from the tournaments. Subscribers can expect high-quality coverage that combines Netflix’s signature storytelling with the excitement of global soccer. The 2027 Women’s World Cup, hosted by [host country TBD], is anticipated to draw millions of viewers as the popularity of women’s soccer continues to surge. The 2031 tournament will build

on that momentum, solidifying the Women’s World Cup as a cornerstone of international sports. **NETFLIX’S GROWING SPORTS PORTFOLIO**  
Netflix’s acquisition of the Women’s World Cup rights signals its commitment to diversifying its content offerings. While the platform has traditionally focused on scripted series, documentaries, and films, it has recently shown an interest in sports content, such as its popular sports docu-series like The Last Dance and Break Point. This deal places Netflix in direct competition with other streaming platforms

like Amazon Prime Video and Apple TV+, both of which have also been investing heavily in live sports. The Rising Popularity of Women’s Soccer  
The FIFA Women’s World Cup has seen exponential growth in recent years, both in viewership and sponsorship. The 2023 tournament set records for attendance and TV ratings, demonstrating the increasing global appeal of women’s soccer. Netflix’s involvement is expected to further elevate the sport’s profile in the U.S., attracting new audiences and providing a platform for players to shine on the world stage.

# 17-YEAR-OLD NIGERIAN-ELIGIBLE DEFENDER PENS PROFESSIONAL DEAL WITH CHELSEA

By Marcel Chukwuka

Teenage English sensation, Olutayo Peter Subuloye, has signed his first professional contract with Chelsea, the two-time UEFA Champions League winners. The Eastbourne-born defender recently turned 17 and was given the contract by Chelsea as a birthday present after joining from Brighton and Hove Albion U-12 a few years ago. Subuloye began his career as a midfielder but transitioned to central defense as he matured. He has been a standout performer for the Chelsea U-18 squad, known for his leadership and abil-

ity to play out from the back. He has represented England at the U-18 level but is also eligible to play for Nigeria. Chelsea is high on the young defender, expecting him to play a significant role in their future defensive plans. The versatile player is comfortable in various positions and adapts well to intense situations. Subuloye was instrumental in Chelsea’s U-16 Premier League campaign, captaining the side to the national final, and was also a key member of the U-17 side that won the League Cup before being promoted to the U-18 squad.

**WHAT’S NEXT FOR NETFLIX?**  
This strategic move could pave the way for Netflix to pursue additional live sports rights in the future. As competition among streaming services intensifies, live sports are becoming

ing a key differentiator in attracting and retaining subscribers. Soccer fans and Netflix subscribers alike can look forward to an immersive and innovative viewing experience for the 2027 and 2031 FIFA Women’s World Cup tournaments.

# SIASIA URGES EGUAVOEN TO STEP DOWN AS SUPER EAGLES COACH

By Tunde Ajibode

Lagos, Nigeria - Former Super Eagles head coach Samson Siasia has called on Augustine Eguavoen to relinquish his role as the interim manager of the Nigerian national team.

Siasia, who re-

cently served a FIFA coaching ban due to match-fixing allegations, believes Eguavoen cannot effectively hold both the interim coaching position and the role of Technical Director simultaneously. “He cannot hold two positions at the same time. He should actually decide on

which one to hold and leave the other,” Siasia stated. The former coach also expressed his preference for a local coach over a foreign one, emphasizing the wealth of talent available within Nigeria. “We don’t want any foreign coach here because they are not coming to do anything.

We have enough good materials at home that we should not be talking about hiring a foreign coach,” he added. Siasia suggested that the Nigerian Football Federation (NFF) wait and observe the team’s performance before making a decision on Eguavoen’s future. “For Austin Eguavoen’s

future with the Super Eagles, I will suggest that we wait a while to see how the team will be. It is a very young team,” he noted. Eguavoen took over the Super Eagles interim coaching role in September following the dismissal of Finidi George due to poor results in the 2026 FIFA

World Cup qualifiers. He led the team to qualification for the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations with a strong performance. The Super Eagles are not scheduled to play any matches until March 2024, and the NFF has yet to announce any plans for appointing a permanent head coach.



## RELIGION

## Where is your Nathanael?

By Pastor Amos Dada PhD,  
P. Eng.

"Philip went to look for Nathanael and told him, 'We have found the very person Moses and the prophets wrote about! His name is Jesus, the son of Joseph from Nazareth.'" 46 "Nazareth!" exclaimed Nathanael. "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" "Come and see for yourself," Philip replied." John 1:45-46

Philip went to look for Nathanael. Interesting!

No doubt the book of John is regarded as the book of love. John the disciple who was "the son of thunder" encountered love and that changed his life and apparently his approach to life which he demonstrated in all his writings; you cannot encounter God and remain the same. Just reading Chapter one of St John's gospel you cannot deny being wrapped in the love of God. It is the story of how people encounter God and what they did after encountering God. Call it the chapter of Divine Encounter! Read the following;

"Andrew, Simon

Peter's brother, was one of these men who heard what John said and then followed Jesus. 41 Andrew went to find his brother, Simon, and told him, 'We have found the Messiah' (which means 'Christ'). 42 Then Andrew brought Simon to meet Jesus....43 The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, 'Come, follow me....45 Philip went to look for Nathanael and told him....,' John 1:40-45.

Can you see a trend? Once they are called it is like "The Spirit enters them and they are out to call the next person available!"

That is the pattern. The moment they bring them to the Master, they allow the Master to take over!

What the Holy Spirit is asking today is have YOU broken the chain? Where is your Nathaneal, since you were brought to Christ how many have you brought to him?

Since someone led you to that church/ fellowship how many have you brought there?

someone helped you to stabilize in business how many have you helped to stabilize



Pastor Amos Dada

in business, someone helped your ministry to grow how many have you helped their ministry to grow, someone prayed for you how many have you prayed for? You cannot deny that someone has helped you in life. There is no such thing as 'I am a self-made man' No, someone helped you at a point in life, who have you help? Are you River Nile flowing with living organisms or the Dead Sea?

I remember getting admission to High school Christ Apostolic Church Grammar School Efon Alaye and getting my first cousin to that school. Today he is more active than me in that school Alumni. I remember I was told in Manchester many years ago of the Skilled Worker programme of Canada I immediately called one of the elders

of our church who was schooling in Sheffield, now he has a thriving family in Canada today to the glory of God.

This year in April under the platform of International Gathering of Eagles, we went to Dubai to look for Nathaniel. In October we were in New Zealand, Hong Kong and Philippines looking for Nathaniel. In November we were in Democratic Republic of Congo. As I write this piece today at Oke- Iyanu praying mountain in Igede- Ekiti I am looking for Nathaniel in Nigeria!

Nathanael means 'God has given' or 'Gift of God.' Philip means 'friend' or 'lover'(philos)of horses (hippos). Put together Philip loves Nathanael the gift of God! The bible says – Philip went to look for Nathaneal, take note of the phrase 'went to look' that is a precise and deliberate action. It means he went in search. It means sacrificing his time for a friend, someone he loves. Philip was bearing his name from day one of his conversion and you see his growth in ministry before and after the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Notice he

was later ordained as a Deacon, Acts Chapter 6 but operated as an Evangelist and how the Holy Spirit used him mightily in Samaria and for the conversion of the Ethiopian Eunuch. Acts 8. You see when you show faithfulness in little, I guarantee you God will commit your greater things. It all starts with getting your encounter and launching out to look for your Nathaneal- The salvation process is about realizing that you are in a supply chain business – You cannot afford to terminate the chain. Looking for Nathaneal involves commitment, focus, determination, sacrifice, ingenuity, talent, creativity and prayers. Paul put it this way-

"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" 1 Cor 9:16. There is a necessity to look for

Nathanael.

There is a compulsion. Looking for Nathanael demands love and compassion for your neighbour. Nathanael speaks about the next generation, the future. Nathaneal represents

the next level. Getting Nathanael represent ensuring your succession. Nathaneal is that your neighbour that despises Nazareth, that thinks nothing good can come out of Nazareth. Nathaneal is that man that does not want to give his life to Christ, the man who hates going to church because he doesn't know what he's missing! Nathanael is that man that is sincerely wrong about Christ but on hearing the voice of Jesus, a little prophetic word from the master, will totally surrender his life to Jesus. The Bible says "Then Nathanael exclaimed, 'Rabbi, you are the Son of God—the King of Israel!'"

In conclusion, your Nathaneal is that next soul you need to win to Christ. May you locate your Nathaneal today and may your Nathaneal encounter Jesus for genuine and permanent transformation! Don't stop looking for Nathanael there is one close to you . This Christmas is not just about eating turkey and chicken make it about seeking for a soul to win for Jesus.

Shalom !

## Kenyan Churches Reject Politician's Donations, Citing Corruption Concerns

By N.Ugoh

NAIROBI, Kenya - In a significant break from tradition, two prominent Kenyan churches have rejected substantial donations from President William Ruto, citing concerns about political influence and the government's involvement in corruption. This move has sparked a national debate about the role of the church in society and its relationship with the state.

The first instance occurred on November 18th when Catholic Archbishop Philip Subira Anyolo of Nai-

robi ordered the city's Sts. Joachim and Ann Church to return a 5 million Kenyan shillings (\$40,000) donation from the president. This decision was met with both praise and criticism, reflecting the deeply divided public opinion on the matter.

Less than a week later, the Anglican Church followed suit, declining a similar 5 million shilling contribution offered to Crispinus Anglican Church in Bungoma. This move further solidified the growing resistance from religious institutions against what they perceive as undue political interference.

Historically, Kenyan churches have received significant financial support from the government, with such donations often considered a form of goodwill and partnership. However, the recent rejections signal a shift in this longstanding relationship, driven by increasing concerns about the government's involvement in corruption scandals and its erosion of public trust.

"I think returning the money is good. It is a way of making a statement and teaching the people the right way of giving," stated Rev. Emily Onyango, assistant bishop of Bondo, in

an interview with RNS. "We cannot accept money tainted by corruption and then turn around and use it for religious purposes. It would be a betrayal of our faith and our values."

The denominations, which traditionally rely on these funds for a wide range of activities, including church development, mission work, and humanitarian initiatives, acknowledged the financial impact of these rejections. Rev. Peter Kinyanjui, a minister of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, expressed concerns about the government's motives, emphasizing the

need for transparency and accountability.

"When someone gives 5 million and announces it in church when there are about 700 people who have slept hungry, then why is he giving it?" 1 Kinyanjui questioned in his December 8th sermon at Mwiki Presbyterian Church. "Is this genuine charity or a political ploy? We would rather do without it. If he had brought maize flour, we could cook it."

The rejections have sparked a national conversation about the role of the church in society and its relationship with the state. Some argue that the churches have

a moral obligation to reject donations from a government tainted by corruption, while others contend that such donations are crucial for providing essential services to the community.

Regardless of the differing viewpoints, the rejections by these prominent churches have sent a clear message to the Kenyan government that religious institutions will no longer tolerate political interference and corruption. This move is likely to have a significant impact on the future of church-state relations in Kenya and could inspire other religious institutions to follow suit.



# Nigerians Shine in Forbes' 2024

continued from p(1)



Wemimo Abbey

the reporting of rental payments to credit bureaus.

Forbes revealed that Esusu's services are now available in over 20,000 properties across the U.S., positively impacting approximately 1.8 million users. In early 2022, Esusu secured \$130 million in funding, achieving a \$1 billion valuation.

Born and raised in Lagos, Nigeria, Abbey's journey to success is rooted in resilience. His mother reportedly sold her wedding ring to support his travel and education in the United States. Before launching Esusu, Abbey honed his skills as a mergers and acquisitions consultant at PwC and co-founded a nonprofit and a data analytics startup.

## Tope Awotona: Transforming Scheduling Solutions



Tope Awotona

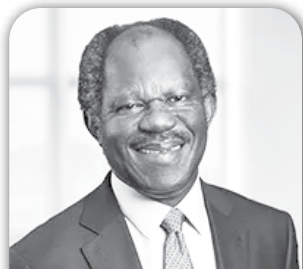
initially studying computer science at the University of Georgia, he later switched to business and management information. After working

At 32, Wemimo Abbey stands out as the Co-Founder and Co-CEO of Esusu, a fin-tech firm based in New York. Esusu empowers renters by enabling them to improve their credit scores through

as a tech sales executive and enduring multiple failed startup ventures, Awotona invested his retirement savings in 2013 to establish Calendly, driven by frustration with the complexities of scheduling meetings.

His perseverance paid off when he secured \$350 million in funding in 2021 to expand the business. Today, Awotona boasts a net worth of \$1.4 billion.

## Adebayo Ogunlesi: A Giant in Infrastructure Investment



Adebayo Ogunlesi

\$12.5 billion in cash and shares, with Ogunlesi retaining his position as Chairman and CEO. With degrees from Oxford, Harvard Law School, and Harvard Business School, Ogunlesi's illustrious career includes clerking for Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall and serving as an attorney at Cravath, Swaine & Moore. Before co-founding GIP in 2006, he spent over two decades as an investment banker at Credit Suisse. His estimated net worth stands at \$1.7 billion.

## Other Notable Names

The Forbes list also features renowned personalities like Dr. Dre, LeBron James, Michael Jordan, Beyoncé, Jay-Z, and Gary Linnen, showcasing a diverse array of talent and influence.

These Nigerian trailblazers exemplify excellence and determination, marking their indelible impact on the global stage.

At 70, Adebayo Ogunlesi is the Chairman and Co-Founder of Global Infrastructure Partners (GIP), a private equity firm headquartered in New York.

In a significant development this October, GIP was acquired by BlackRock for

## ALL YOUR ANSWER FROM - PAGE 19

### MATCHING EXERCISE

Willful	headstrong
Unwarranted	unjustifiable
Charlatan	a fraud
Daunt	to intimidate
Lurid	gruesome
Fallacious	false
Feasible	practical
Rancor	bitterness
Novice	a beginner
Hackneyed	overused
Judicious	wise
Immutable	unchangeable
Kinetic	lively
Bequeath	to give
Temerity	audacity

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### BINARY KNOWLEDGE CHECK

1: True	6: No
2: True	7: Yes
3: No	8: No
4: True	9: No
5: No	10: Yes

## TASTY TRIVIA

1. Red
2. Vitamin C
3. France
4. Stomach
5. Digestion
6. Water
7. Iron
8. False
9. False, juicing removes much of the roughage
10. True

PG. 5 ANSWER  
RICKETS IS CAUSED BY A LACK OF WHAT VITAMIN?  
- VIT. D

## MISSISSAUGA MOURNS CONTINUED FROM - PAGE 7

T. L. Kennedy Secondary School, the Central Board Office and the Field Office.

He became the vice principal at Streetsville Secondary School before assuming his current role as the principal of The Woodlands School.

Charity organization, Sakeenah Canada said besides his work as a high school principal in the Peel District School Board, he taught English, special education, science and English as a second language while also serving as a guidance counsellor.

Sakeenah Canada wrote: "As a passionate advocate for equity and inclusion, Omar worked tirelessly to remove barriers to students' success."

The organization added that Zia also chaired the Muslim Employees Association of Peel, served on the Muslim Educators Network of Ontario, and was a source of inspiration for many as a khatib and speaker, including at Sakeenah's Anti-Human Trafficking webinar in October.

Sakeenah Canada added: "His dedication and desire to set our community and our children up for success was always evident, he will be missed by many."

Ehsaan Ansari, an Imam, stated that Zia was a remarkable leader in the Muslim community in Canada.

He wrote: "In every interaction I had with him, he displayed the utmost kindness and consistently encouraged the spreading of goodness within the community."

The Peel District School Board said Zia was a founding member of the Muslim Educators Network of Ontario who co-founded the board's Muslim Employees Association of Peel and served as president of the association for many years.

The advocacy and vision of Zia for Muslim students led to the establishment of the Affirming Muslim Student Identity and Dismantling Islamophobia Strategy for the Peel District School Board, the first of its kind in North America.

The board said: "He was steadfast in his commitment to anti-oppression and anti-racism, dedicating himself to dismantling structures of inequity and advocating for justice."

"His groundbreaking work focused on disrupting and dismantling Islamophobia, racism, and colonial practices that hinder student success, leaving an enduring legacy in equity and inclusion."

The board added that Zia was "much more than an educator, a principal, a mentor, and a community leader—he was a guiding light for all who knew him."

The board said. "His students remember him as a fair and kind mentor who upheld high standards, always recognizing their successes and offering unwavering support when redirection was needed."

"Principal Zia will be deeply missed by many in so many ways,. He truly is irreplaceable."

## A HOLE IN MY HEART CONTINUED FROM - PAGE 9

them lying in there blood began to mess up her head and she wept. Lizzy looked at the big wall clock on the wall, it struck 4:00pm. She lay on the long sittee hugging herself as if she was cold.

As she lay on that sittee, she began to nurse the idea of running away.

"But to where?" She asked aloud.

She does not know anywhere. In her parents house, it was from the house to school or church and except when she goes to the market. The only time she goes on a long journey was with her parents when they travelled to Delta State for Christmas or other occasions.

"I can't go anywhere with this pregnancy. I am almost due for delivery" She said aloud again. "I don't know anything to go to"

She thought of her aunties and uncles, they are all in Delta and Edo states. She sniffed back the tears that threatened to drop and dismissed the thought of running away.

"I will just bear everything. When I deliver, I will still go and beg my father" She told herself.

By 6pm, Abike drove into the compound very angry. Lizzy was already up shaking out of fear.

"Why were they fighting?" Abike asked menacingly pointing her fingers at her.

"Tolu was raping me when Tunde walked in" She said.

"Raping you again!" She asked laughing.

"I don't believe you. How come he is always raping you enh. Anyway, my sons are in critical conditions. Pray nothing happens to them otherwise, I will put you in a mortal and pound you" She threatened before marching to her room.

Abike took the items she would need at the hospital before heading back to the hospital.

The moment she drove out of the compound, Lizzy brought out her bag. She brought all her clothes and put them on the bed then selected four gowns which she returned to the bag. Abike had bought them for her because her own clothes could no longer fit her. She raised the mattress up and took out the three thousand naira Tunde gave her. She threw few personal items into the bag and zipped the bag.

Lizzy was running away to anywhere. She was not going to wait for Abike to meet her at home.

The gateman was surprised to see her carrying a bag.

"To where?" He asked surprised.

"I need to rush to the hospital. I am in labour" She lied.

"Ooh!, Can you go yourself?. Should I call madam?" He asked worried.

"No!, No!, There is no need for that. I can go to the hospital myself. I will be with madam shortly"

"Ok!, You will deliver safely oo" He prayed.

"Amen!"

He opened the gate for Lizzy to go out. She stopped the first bikeman she saw as she rushed out of the compound.

*Inspired by the Holy Spirit  
Written by Franca Uwuiagiren*



# 5 TIPS FOR HOSTING A STRESS-FREE HOLIDAY



(NC) It's the most wonderful time of the year, but hosting large gatherings can sometimes make it a stressful time too. To add more cheer and less fear this season, here are five tips to take the stress out of hosting family and friends.

### PREP AHEAD

Take care of as much organizing and preparation as possible before the day of the event. If you're having a sit-down meal, set the table a day or two ahead. Print personalized place card settings using your home printer to add a classy touch.

Don't worry about cleaning too much in advance – your guests are not coming to see if you've dusted the furniture thoroughly. Focus on the areas that attendees will use the most – including the bathroom. After the party is the time to do a deep clean.

### EXERCISE MINDFUL MENU PREPARATION

If you're serving food, you want to ensure the food is fresh and that you're considerate of dietary needs to prevent any illnesses. When sending out the invitations, include a request to be notified of any allergies or other dietary

restrictions.

Use ice packs and warming trays to keep cold things cold and hot things hot. Anything perishable should not be left at room temperature for more than two hours.

### OUTSOURCE THE EATS

Hosting is a lot of work (and can be costly), so don't feel obligated to prepare an entire multi-course meal from scratch. Consider serving heat-and-eat frozen appetizers, ordering takeout or even hiring a caterer to take care of everything. Another option to help feel less overwhelmed is to host a pot-

luck. Remember to share any food restrictions you learned with your caterer or guests.

### DELEGATE AS MUCH AS YOU CAN

Beyond bringing items for a potluck, don't be shy about asking guests to help out with other party planning. Ask your musician friend to create a curated playlist, get your designer cousin to help out with decorations and designate someone to be the party's paparazzi who will be responsible for capturing candid memories.

### SHARE HAPPY, TANGIBLE MEMORIES

Make the event truly memorable by creating an onsite photo station for your guests. With a printer like the new HP Envy 6100 series, you can print professional-quality images at home through an easy-to-use app. Guests can connect through Wi-Fi and send photos from their phones directly to print in the moment creating lasting takeaways to cherish long after your hosting duties are completed.

*Find more solutions to help with your party needs at [hp.ca](http://hp.ca).*

# 4 WAYS ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IS HELPING CANADIANS MANAGE THEIR FINANCES



(NC) While you may not always think of using artificial intelligence (AI) to help manage your finances, you may already be benefiting from the insights and support AI-driven financial apps and tools can provide.

According to RBC, here are four ways AI is quietly working behind the scenes to help Canadians make the most of their money.

### 1. AUTOMATED SAVINGS:

For those of us who find it hard to save, AI can help by finding those extra dollars you didn't think you had and putting them aside for you automatically. It does this by predicting how much money you will need to spend based on your transactions and then determining how much you could save.

### 2. BUDGETING:

Creating and sticking to a budget isn't always easy. With new AI tools, you can take the math out of budgeting and get a calculated

budget recommendation based on your unique spending habits. These tools can also provide the nudges and updates you need to stay on track.

### 3. PERSONALIZED INSIGHTS:

Who couldn't use a bit of help managing their money? Financial tools that leverage AI can provide personalized insights based on your spending and savings habits to help you stay more connected to your money and make more informed financial decisions.

### 4. CASH-FLOW FORECASTING:

Managing your cash flow is a cornerstone of healthy personal finances. AI can help by forecasting future cash-flow needs, providing helpful reminders for when bills need to be paid and flagging how upcoming payments may impact your cash flow.

Learn more about how AI-driven tools can help you manage your money at [rbc.com/nomi](http://rbc.com/nomi).

# THE TOP AI-POWERED TECH TRENDS IN 2025

(NC) As we look ahead to 2025, artificial intelligence (AI) continues to revolutionize our lives. From enhancing our daily routines to transforming entire industries, AI's impact is undeniable.

These five innovations are set to shape our future, offering unprecedented convenience, efficiency and personalization.

### AI-POWERED COMPUTING

AI-powered computing, such as Intel-powered laptops – or AI PC – is at the forefront of technological advance-

ment. But what, exactly, is an AI PC? They're computers that have AI built into their processors – also known as the brain of the computer – which optimizes performance, enhances security and provides a more personalized experience as they learn from your usage patterns. For consumers, this means faster, smarter and more secure computing tailored to your individual needs.

Smart home automation

Smart home automation has been around for a while, but AI is taking it to the next level. Imagine a home that

not only follows your commands, but also anticipates your needs. Enhanced smart home systems can learn your daily routines and adjust settings accordingly, from lighting and temperature to security and entertainment, making your home smarter and more responsive than ever before.

### HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The health-care industry is seeing significant transformation. AI-driven health and wellness applications can monitor vital signs, predict potential health issues, and even provide

personalized fitness and nutrition plans. Wearable devices equipped with this technology can offer real-time health insights, helping individuals make informed decisions about their well-being.

### FINANCIAL SERVICES

AI is also making waves in the financial sector, offering smarter and more secure ways to manage money. From AI-driven investment platforms that provide personalized financial advice to fraud detection systems that protect against cyber threats, AI can analyze vast amounts of data to iden-

tify trends and make more informed financial decisions.

### ENHANCED EDUCATION

In education, enhanced learning tools provide personalized learning experiences that adapt to each student's strengths and weaknesses. This technology

can offer real-time feedback, helping students improve their skills more effectively. Additionally, AI can assist educators by automating administrative tasks and providing insights into student performance, allowing for more focused and effective teaching.

Learn more at [intel.com/aipc](http://intel.com/aipc).



# VISIONARY WOMAN

## MEET LOLA ADEYEMI: THE SOUPER WOMAN BEHIND IT'S SOUPER



**By N.Ugoh**

**In 2018, Lola Adeyemi embarked on a journey that would change the culinary landscape in Canada.** Driven by a deep connection to her African heritage, a passion for authentic flavors, and the multicultural tapestry of her adopted home, she founded It's Souper, an Afro-Fusion gourmet soup and sauce line. Adeyemi's mission was clear: to craft high-quality, flavor-packed recipes that cater to the diverse tastes of today's global community.

**For Adeyemi, entrepreneurship wasn't always on the horizon.** Arriving in Canada as an international student, her initial focus was on climbing the corporate ladder. After graduating, she secured a work permit and built an impressive career, eventually becoming a Senior Consultant with the City of Toronto. Yet, beneath her professional success, she felt a growing pull toward creating something uniquely her own. The call was undeniable, and Adeyemi took the leap into entrepreneurship, answering a passion that could no longer be ignored.

### Breaking Barriers as an Entrepreneur

As a first-generation immigrant, Adeyemi faced significant hurdles, particularly when it came to financing her dream. "Taking my savings to start my business was a huge risk," she recalls. "No matter how careful you are, mistakes hap-

pen, and they cost money." To navigate this challenge, she became proactive in seeking grants, securing two that made a critical difference—one of which enabled her to revamp her packaging. Even with financial support, the journey remains a balancing act, requiring determination and resourcefulness.

Another challenge was access. In an industry where connections often open doors, Adeyemi found her network limited by her immigrant status. Unlike her Canadian-born counterparts, she didn't have established ties to key players in the industry. Her solution? Relentless networking. "I've pushed myself to not be shy, connect with people on LinkedIn, and share my story and struggles. It's helped me build meaningful connections," she says.

### Words of Wisdom for Her Younger Self

Reflecting on her journey, Adeyemi offers a heartfelt message to her younger self: "Just keep going. The struggles will come, but you'll overcome them, and you'll inspire others along the way." She remembers the uncertainty of dropping out of medical school and the fear of disappointing those around her. Today, the impact of her brand proves how far she's come. "Hearing from other African immigrants about how inspiring it is to see an African brand on shelves—it's something I would never trade."

### Encouraging Women to Lead in Manufacturing

Adeyemi is a firm advocate for women stepping into manufacturing, a sector she believes is ripe for innovation. "Women are often the decision-makers when it comes to household purchases. We understand what's needed and where the gaps are," she explains. "If you see a gap in the market, don't wait—create that solution. Even if you lack resources, pitch your idea, find funding, and make it happen."

Through It's Souper, Lola Adeyemi exemplifies the power of determination, resilience, and a willingness to take risks. Her story is not only about sharing bold, authentic flavors but also about inspiring others to embrace their passions and make their mark on the world.

### About Us

Founded by Lola Adeyemi in 2018, It's Souper is an Afro-Fusion Gourmet Soup and Sauce line inspired by the fusion of cultures that exists in Canada, a yearning for authentic flavors from Africa, and a desire to share it with her community.

Our mission is to craft delicious recipes made with high-quality ingredients and exotic flavors that meet the demands of today's diverse world—thereby inspiring a newfound love for food.

You can purchase our products online at [its-souper.com](https://its-souper.com) or in-person at one of our retail partners. To find a store near you, visit our Find a Location page on our website.





**Merry Christmas**  
AND HAPPY NEW YEAR



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