

## Malema urges African countries to break free from World Bank, IMF “debt trap” loans

Leader of South Africa's Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), Julius Malema, delivered a powerful address at the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) Annual General Conference in Enugu on Sunday, August 24, 2025. He called on African nations to regulate loans from international financial institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), warning that such borrowing risks ensnaring the continent in a cycle of debt. “These loans are a trap that chains Africa's future to foreign powers,” Malema declared, emphasizing the need for oversight to prevent unsustainable debt. He highlighted the EFF's proposed Public Finance Management Amendment Bill in South Africa, which would mandate parliamentary approval and transparency for foreign loans. “This legislation will ensure accountability and protect our people from exploitative financial agreements,” he stated. Malema also championed stronger ties between Nigeria and South Africa, recalling Nigeria's solidarity during South Africa's apartheid era. He urged both nations to lead Africa's industrialization by processing the continent's vast mineral and energy resources locally. “Africa must build its own factories and stop the plunder of our wealth,” he said, advocating for a united, self-reliant continent. Rejecting external dependency, Malema envisioned a borderless Africa with a unified currency, military, and parliament. “A single African currency would rival the dollar,” he asserted, adding, “Our salvation lies not in Washington or Beijing but in Lagos, Johannesburg, Abuja, and Pretoria.” He condemned imperialist exploitation and division, calling for Pan-African unity to harness the continent's potential. “We are not a dark continent but a shining one, rich with diamonds and human talent,” Malema proclaimed. He also stressed the importance of rejecting xenophobia and fostering solidarity to earn global respect. “Africa is a continent of giants, not a begging power,” he concluded, urging transformative action through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

## Obasanjo: Inefficiency is trademark of Buhari, Tinubu administrations

Former President Olusegun Obasanjo has taken a swipe at President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, scoring him low in governance efficiency. Obasanjo said that Tinubu's administration was the only one competing with that of the late President Muhammadu Buhari in terms of inefficiency. The former Nigerian leader made this damning remark in his new book, “Nigeria: Past and Future,” one of two publications he launched in March to mark his 88th birthday. The second book is entitled “Lest

We Forget: Slavery, Slave Trade, Emancipation and Reparation.” In the first chapter, “From the Beginning Till Now: The Missing Key,” Obasanjo reviewed Nigeria's leaderships since independence and concluded that Buhari's administration was the “worst civil administration” in the nation's history. “Only Bola Tinubu's administration seems to be competing with Buhari's for now.” He recalled how Buhari had once described Shehu Shagari's government as corrupt, rudderless, and self-serving, only to return years later as a democratically elected president without addressing the very problems he had identified. “Words are cheap, and what needed to be done was left undone during Buhari's civil administration from 2015 to 2023 – the worst civil administration so far in Nigeria's history. “Maybe those ideas and thoughts were not his; he just read them as written for him. Otherwise, how do you explain the gulf between what he said then and how he governed later?” Obasanjo queried. Reflecting on his lifelong commitment to Nigeria's progress, the former president said all his writings were intended to inspire national development. “I have had the honour of serving this country as a military Head of State and later as President. So, it might be said that I have sat on both sides of the fence. Now, I am getting close to my departure lounge, maybe without picking my boarding pass yet,” he said.

## Nigerian Government hikes passport fees by 100%

The Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) has announced an upward review of Nigerian Standard Passport fees by 100 per cent, effective from September 1, 2025. According to a statement signed by the Service Public Relations Officer, ACI AS Akinlabi, the adjustment was aimed at maintaining the quality and integrity of the Nigerian passport. Under the new rates, applications made in Nigeria would cost N100,000 for a 32-page passport with five-year validity and N200,000 for a 64-page passport with 10-year validity. However, passport fees for Nigerians in the Diaspora remain unchanged at \$150 for the 32-page passport with five-year validity and \$230 for the 64-page passport with 10-year validity. The statement reads, “In a bid to uphold the quality and integrity of the Nigerian Passport, the Nigeria Immigration Service hereby announces an upward review of Nigerian Standard Passport fees, set to take effect on 1st September, 2025. “The review which only affect Passport Application fees made in Nigeria, now set new fee thresholds for 32-page with 5-year validity at N100,000 and 64-page with 10-year validity at N200,000. “Meanwhile, Nigerian Passport Application fees made by Nigerians in the Diaspora remain unchanged at \$150 for 32-page with 5-year validity and \$230 for 64-page with 10-year validity. “The Service reiterates its commitment to balancing quality service delivery with the need to ensure Passport services are accessible to all Nigerians.”

## NBA declares Legal War on Police over Car registration and Tinted Glass License

**A**t its quarterly National Executive Council (NEC) meeting held last month in Enugu, the NBA, led by its President, Mazi Afam Osigwe, SAN, took a hard stance against the controversial Central Motor Registry (NPF-CMR), a programme that compels motorists to re-register their vehicles online at what it called “exorbitant and unjustifiable charges.” The NEC resolved that the initiative is nothing but a cash-grab by the Police, which it reminded “is not a revenue-making organization.” In the same vein, the NEC denounced the Police's enforcement of tinted glass licenses, describing the practice as unlawful and oppressive. Osigwe announced that the NBA Litigation Committee has been instructed to head to court in the coming days to stop both schemes. The NBA-NEC also turned its attention to widespread abuses of human rights. It condemned the dehumanization of Ibom Air passenger, Comfort Emmason, praising the NBA President for his swift and proactive response to the incident. It equally lambasted the Anambra State Vigilante group, Agunchemba, for the brutal assault on NYSC member, Jennifer Edoho, and vowed to pursue justice for her through the NBA's Section on Public Interest and Development Law (SPIDEL). The NEC further expressed outrage at the Department of State Services (DSS) for its practice of inviting Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) designates to its offices for questioning, branding the move as “arbitrary, wrong and ultra vires.” The NBA-NEC also reappointed Trustees whose tenure is expiring at the end of the month to another term in office, while also approved the appointment of Peter Ape, SAN, to replace the late Yunus Ustaz Usman, SAN, who died on September 11, 2024.

## SULTAN lambasts Nigeria Judicial System: The Poor Suffer while the rich work free

**T**he Sultan of Sokoto, Muhammadu Sa'ad Abubakar, has voiced serious concern that Nigeria's justice system is tilting in favour of the wealthy while leaving the poor to suffer, speaking in Enugu at the Annual General Conference of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), the Sultan warned that corruption and inequality are weakening the courts. “Justice is increasingly becoming a purchasable commodity, and the poor are becoming victims, while the rich commit all manner of crime and walk the streets scot-free,” he said. He cautioned that such imbalance

fuels anger, mistrust, and potential violence, stressing that once public confidence in the judiciary collapses, people may resort to self-help. The Sultan urged lawyers to place truth and fairness above personal or financial interest. “It is only when the legal profession leads by example that the public can trust the system again,” he added. Analysts note that a justice system skewed towards the rich not only encourages crime but also discourages investment and weakens democracy. Civil society groups have also repeatedly reported that Nigerian prisons remain overcrowded, largely filled with people awaiting trial who cannot afford legal aid or bail. The Sultan's warning echoes long-standing concerns about corruption and inequality in the justice sector and adds weight to calls for urgent reforms, including transparent court processes, expanded access to legal assistance, and stronger oversight of judicial practices.

## NLC to FG: Publish List of Beneficiaries of N330bn Cash Transfer to Poor Nigerians

Concerned about what it considered as “opaque approach” and secrecy adopted in the alleged disbursement of N330 billion by the Federal Government under the cash transfer programme for poor Nigerians, the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) has demanded that for the sake of accountability, Nigerians deserve proof of the payments. This was as the NLC specifically challenged the Federal Government to publish the names of the beneficiaries of the N330 billion to prove that Nigerians benefitted from the programme. Acting National Secretary of the NLC, Comrade Benson Upah, who stated the position of the Organised Labour in Abuja on Friday, September 19, 2025, insisted that the Federal Government needed to come clean on the alleged disbursements which seem to be known to only officials of government while Nigerians are left in the dark. The NLC particularly questioned the transparency of the initiative that is being managed by the National Social Safety-net Coordinating Office (NASSCO), stressing that the people deserved to know the criteria used in determining the beneficiaries and the list, bank details of those that were paid. The NLC General Secretary emphasized that government claims of lifting millions of Nigerians out of poverty must be backed by verifiable evidence, stressing that for the sake of accountability, Nigerians surely deserve proof of the disbursements of the humongous funds from the public purse. “The government owe Nigerians more explanations and the need to come clean on matters like these against the backdrop of the sufferings being experienced as a result of the policies of the government,” Upah said.

## ActionAid says 15m children still out of school in Nigeria

Country Director, ActionAid Nigeria, Andrew Mamedu, said that despite efforts by various stakeholders to tackle the “out-of-school-children” pandemic, at least 15 million children are still out of school in Nigeria. Mamedu said the out-of-school figure and other statistics showed that the crisis in the education sector was not due to lack of effort, but “weak governance, underfunding, and systemic gaps.” The ActionAid Country Director made this known at the National Policy Forum on the Institutionalization and Implementation of Home-Grown School Feeding Programme for Sustainable Economic Growth and Financial Inclusion at the State House Banquet Hall, Presidential Villa, Abuja, held. He said the gathering was not just another event, but a defining moment in the journey to secure the future of millions of Nigerian children, “strengthen our communities, and advance inclusive national development. It also aligns with ActionAid Nigeria's 10-year Country Strategy Paper, which commits to lifting at least 5 million people out of poverty by 2034.” Mamedu explained that institutionalizing school feeding is a critical pathway to achieving the ActionAid's 10 years' strategy across Nigeria, adding that “too many children still go to school hungry.” “According to the World Bank's Human Capital Index, Nigeria scores just 0.36—meaning a child born here today will achieve only 36% of their productive potential if nothing changes.

“Between 2018 and 2022, enrolment in basic education increased from 35 million to 40 million. Yet the number of out-of-school children grew from 9.1 million in 2000 to 14.6 million in 2020. Today, of the 60 million Nigerian children aged 5–14, more than 45 million cannot read a simple text at age 10, with 15 million completely out of school,” he said. He noted that the figures showed that the crisis was not due to lack of effort, but weak governance, underfunding, and systemic gaps. “This is the reason ActionAid Nigeria has always believed in and supported the Federal Government's vision for the Home-Grown School Feeding Programme as a proven pathway to address these gaps,” Mamedu stated. He said ActionAid partnership with the federal and state governments had translated into action and through a MacArthur Foundation-funded project, “we worked with partners to strengthen accountability and transparency in 400 schools in Kaduna State. We empowered communities to monitor school feeding, built the capacity of stakeholders at state and local levels, and supported advocacy that led to major reforms.” According to him, the Home-Grown School Feeding Programme was more than a nutrition intervention. “It is an education strategy that keeps children in school and helps them learn better. An economic strategy that stimulates local farming and food markets. A social protection strategy

that reduces hunger and inequality. A human capital development strategy with guaranteed returns on investment. And, ultimately, a nation-building strategy for inclusion, stability, and sustainable development,” he stated.

## Conflicts: 23, 659 people missing in Nigeria – ICRC Says

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), has said that about 23,659 people are missing from across Nigeria. The ICRC specifically noted that in spite of efforts to get the missing people back to their families after separation which were forced mostly by armed conflicts and other forms of violence, a large number are still missing or have disappeared without any trace. Mr Benson Lee, the ICRC Protection of Family Link Officer, who stated these on August 30, 2025, in Yola, the Adamawa State capital, in a message during this year's International Day of the Disappeared, emphasized that cases of missing persons are particularly rampant in Borno State, where insurgency has been most severe. He further said that 67 per cent of the number of missing persons in Nigeria occurred in Borno State, adding that about 59 percent of the missing persons were minors at the time of disappearance. Lee also said that the organization has been behind retracing of several missing persons and reuniting them with their families, and urged all parties of conflict to make every effort to prevent people from going missing. The ICRC official appealed for empathy for families of missing people, stressing that families of missing persons need to feel that they are not alone and their loved ones are not forgotten.

## UNICEF: 420,000 Nigerian Children at risk of dying from malnutrition in 2025

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has raised alarm that 420,000 Nigerian children could die this year from severe acute malnutrition if urgent action is not taken. UNICEF Nigeria Country Representative, Wafaa Elfadil Saeed Abdelatef, issued the warning on Thursday during a visit to the agency's Maiduguri Field Office. According to her, Nigeria currently has 15 million malnourished children under five, with 3.5 million at risk of severe acute malnutrition. “Of these, 420,000 could die in 2025 alone if nothing changes. Forty percent of under-fives are stunted—children who may never reach their full potential if we do not act now,” she said.