

Bola Tinubu

Chief **Bola Ahmed Adekunle Tinubu GCFR** (born 29 March 1952) is a Nigerian politician who is the 16th and current president of Nigeria.^[1] He was the governor of Lagos State from 1999 to 2007; and senator for Lagos West in the Third Republic.

His Excellency

Chief

Bola Tinubu

GCFR



Tinubu in 2011

16th President of Nigeria

Incumbent

Assumed office

29 May 2023

Vice President

Kashim Shettima

Preceded by

Muhammadu Buhari

12th Governor of Lagos State

In office

29 May 1999 – 29 May 2007

Deputy

Kofoworola Bucknor

Femi Pedro

Preceded by

Buba Marwa

Succeeded by

Babatunde Fashola

Senator for Lagos West

In office

5 December 1992 – 17 November 1993

Succeeded by[Wahab Dosunmu](#) (1999)**Personal details****Born**

Bola Ahmed Adekunle Tinubu

29 March 1952

[Lagos, British Nigeria](#)**Political party**[All Progressives Congress](#)

(2013–present)

Other political affiliations[Social Democratic Party](#)

(1992–1993)

[Alliance for Democracy](#)

(1998–2006)

[Action Congress of Nigeria](#)

(2006–2013)

Spouse[Oluremi Tinubu](#) (m. 1987)**Relations**[Wale Tinubu](#) (nephew)**Children**6, including [Folashade](#)**Parent**[Abibatu Mogaji](#) (mother)**Residence**

Aso Villa

Alma mater[Richard J. Daley College](#)[Chicago State University](#) (BS)**Occupation**

Politician · accountant

Awards[List of honours and awards](#)**Website**[State House website](https://statehouse.gov.ng) (<https://statehouse.gov.ng>)

Tinubu spent his early life in [southwestern Nigeria](#) and later moved to the United States where he studied Accounting at [Chicago State University](#). He returned to Nigeria in the early 1990s and was employed by Mobil Nigeria as an accountant, before entering politics as a Lagos West senatorial candidate in 1992 under the banner of the [Social Democratic Party](#). After dictator [Sani Abacha](#)

dissolved the Senate in 1993, Tinubu became an activist campaigning for the return of democracy as a part of the [National Democratic Coalition](#) movement.

In the [first post-transition Lagos State gubernatorial election](#), Tinubu won by a wide margin as a member of the [Alliance for Democracy](#). Four years later, he won re-election to a second term. After leaving office in 2007, he played a key role in the formation of the [All Progressives Congress](#) in 2013. In 2023, he was [elected](#) president of Nigeria.

Background

Tinubu was born in Lagos into the merchant family of [Abibatu Mogaji](#), the [Iyál'ójà](#) of [Lagos](#). He is generally accepted in reliable sources to have been born in 1952;^[2] this year of birth is sometimes disputed by political opponents, who argue that he is much older. Some reliable sources note that his age has not been verified.^{[3][4]}

Education

Tinubu attended St. John's Primary School, Aroloya, Lagos before proceeding to Children Home School in Ibadan.^[5] He completed undergraduate studies in the United States, first at [Richard J. Daley College](#) in Chicago and then at [Chicago State University](#). He graduated in 1979 with a Bachelor of Science [degree](#) in Accounting.^[6]

Professional career

Tinubu worked for the American companies [Arthur Andersen](#), [Deloitte](#) and [GTE Services Corporation](#).^[7] After returning to [Nigeria](#) in 1983, he joined [Mobil Oil](#) Nigeria, and later became a company executive.^[8]

Early political career

Tinubu's political career began in 1991,^[9] when he joined the [Social Democratic Party](#).

Third Republic

In 1992, he was [elected](#) to the [Senate](#), representing the Lagos West constituency in the short-lived Nigerian Third Republic.^[10]

After the results of the [12 June 1993 presidential elections](#) were annulled, Tinubu became a founding member of the pro-democracy [National Democratic Coalition](#), a group which mobilized support for the restoration of democracy and recognition of [Moshood Abiola](#) as winner of the 12 June election.

Exile and return

Following the [seizure of power](#) as [military head of state](#) of General [Sani Abacha](#),^[11] he went into exile in 1994 and returned to the country in 1998 after the death of the military dictator, which ushered in the transition to the [Fourth Nigerian Republic](#).^[12]

In the run-up to the 1999 elections, Bola Tinubu was a protégé of [Alliance for Democracy](#) (AD) leaders [Abraham Adesanya](#) and [Ayo Adebajo](#).^[13] He went on to win the AD primaries for the Lagos State governorship elections in defeating [Funsho Williams](#) and [Wahab Dosunmu](#), a former Minister of Works and Housing.^[14] In January 1999, he stood for the position of [Governor of Lagos State](#) on the AD ticket and was elected governor.^[15]

Governor of Lagos State (1999–2007)

During his 8 years in government, Tinibu initiated new road construction, required to meet the needs of the fast-growing population of the state.^[16]

Tinubu, alongside a new deputy governor, [Femi Pedro](#), won re-election into office as governor in April 2003. All other states in the South West fell to the [People's Democratic Party](#) in those elections.^[17] He was involved in a struggle with the [Olusegun Obasanjo](#)-controlled [federal government](#) over whether Lagos State had the right to create new Local Council Development Areas (LCDAs) to meet the needs of its large population. The controversy led to the federal government seizing funds meant for local councils in the state.^[18] During the latter part of his term in office, he was engaged in continuous clashes with [PDP](#) powers such as [Adeseye Ogunlewe](#), a former [Lagos State](#) senator who had become minister of works, and [Bode George](#), the [southwest](#) chairman of the PDP.^[19]

In 2006, Tinubu attempted to persuade the then-vice president of Nigeria [Atiku Abubakar](#) to become the head of his party, the Action Congress (AC). Abubakar who was a member of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), had recently fallen out with President [Olusegun Obasanjo](#) over Abubakar's ambition to succeed Obasanjo as president. Tinubu offered Abubakar the chance to switch parties and join the AC, offering him the his party's presidential candidacy, with the condition that he, Tinubu, would be Atiku Abubakar's [running mate](#). Atiku declined the proposition and,

having switched to the AC, chose a running mate from [the South East](#), Senator Ben Obi. Although Atiku ran for office on Tinubu's platform in the election, the PDP still won, in a [landslide](#).^[20]

Relations between Tinubu and deputy governor [Femi Pedro](#) became increasingly tense after Pedro declared his intention to run for the gubernatorial elections. Pedro competed to become the AC candidate for governor in the 2007 elections, but withdrew his name on the eve of the party nomination. He defected to the Labour Party while still keeping his position as deputy governor.^[21] Tinubu's tenure as Lagos State Governor ended on 29 May 2007, when his successor [Babatunde Fashola](#) of the [Action Congress](#) took office.^{[22][23]}

Pre-presidency (2007–2023)

2007 general election

In 2009, following the landslide victory of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in the [April 2007 elections](#), Tinubu became involved in negotiations to bring together the fragmented opposition parties into a "mega-party" capable of challenging the then ruling PDP.^[24] In March 2009, there were reports that a plot had been identified to assassinate Tinubu.^[25] In February 2013, Tinubu was among several politicians who created a "mega opposition" party with the merger of Nigeria's three biggest opposition parties – the [Action Congress of Nigeria](#) (ACN), the [Congress for Progressive Change](#) (CPC), the [All Nigeria Peoples Party](#) (ANPP), a faction of the [All Progressives Grand Alliance](#) (APGA) and the new PDP (nPDP), a faction of the then ruling People's Democratic Party^[26] – into the [All Progressives Congress](#) (APC).^[27]

All Progressives Congress

In 2014, Tinubu supported former [military head of state General Muhammadu Buhari](#), leader of the CPC faction of the APC – who commanded widespread following in Northern Nigeria, and had previously contested in the [2003](#), [2007](#) and [2011](#) presidential elections as the CPC presidential candidate.^[28] Tinubu initially wanted to become Buhari's vice presidential candidate but later conceded for [Yemi Osibanjo](#), his ally and former commissioner of justice.^[29] In 2015, Buhari rode the APC to victory, ending the 16-year rule of the PDP, and marking the first time an incumbent Nigerian president lost to an opposition candidate.^[30]

Tinubu went on to play an important role in the Buhari administration, supporting government policies and holding onto the internal party reins, in lieu of his long-held rumored presidential aspiration.^[31] In 2019, he supported Buhari's re-election campaign defeating the PDP candidate [Atiku Abubakar](#). In 2020, following an internal party crisis which led to the removal of Tinubu ally

and party chairman [Adams Oshiomole](#), it is believed the move was to scuttle Tinubu's presidential prospects ahead of 2023.^[32]

2023 presidential election

On 10 January 2022, Tinubu made his formal announcement of candidacy for president.^{[33][34][35]}

On 8 June 2022, Tinubu won the party convention vote of the ruling APC, scoring 1,271, to defeat Vice President [Yemi Osinbajo](#) and Rotimi Amaechi who scored 235 and 316 respectively.^[36]

On 1 March 2023, [INEC](#) declared Tinubu winner of the [2023 presidential election](#).^[37] He was declared [president-elect](#) after he polled 8,794,726 votes to defeat his opponents.^[38] His runner-up Atiku Abubakar of the opposition People's Democratic Party (PDP) polled 6,984,520 votes. Labour Party's Peter Obi had 6,101,533 votes to come third.^[39]

Presidency (2023–present)

Tinubu constitutionally began his presidency on 29 May 2023. He was sworn in as President of Nigeria by the [Chief Justice of Nigeria Olukayode Ariwoola](#) at 10:41 AM ([WAT](#)) at an [inauguration ceremony](#) held in [Eagle Square in Abuja](#).^[40] His government having cleared the legal hurdles of the opposition following the [March election](#) is generally accepted unopposed and has international legitimacy.^[41] Several heads of state and government attended the swearing-in ceremony.^[42] Tinubu was conferred with the highest national honour of the [Grand Commander of the Order of the Federal Republic](#) by his predecessor [Muhammadu Buhari](#), and his Vice President [Kashim Shettima](#) with the second highest honor of the [Grand Commander of the Order of the Niger](#) on 25 May 2023.^[43]

Ideology and public image

Views

Tinubu has throughout his political career espoused a comprehensive political and economic platform. Tinubu's ideal of [progressivism](#) include the values of [egalitarianism](#), [social justice](#), [liberty](#), and the recognition of [fundamental rights](#). He views the state as a positive advocate for the [public welfare](#) and its intervention in Nigerian society as necessary to ensure equality, justice, and social harmony.^[44] This ideal is not so far removed from his activism of democracy during the [military dictatorship in Nigeria](#).^[45] His presidency is deftly expected to be a politico-ideological departure from [Buharism](#), albeit, most international economists are yet to ascertain the nature of this

departure in economic terms.^{[46][47]} The World Bank and IMF have pointed out the poignancy of the moment for the incoming government to establish macro-structural adjustments on the scale of the late 1980s reform to re-herald the Nigerian economy amidst a global slowdown.^[48]

The Lion of Bourdillon

Tinubu has been widely perceived as the "Godfather of Lagos".^[49] His role in pulling the strings of the mega city-state was exposed in *The Lion of Bourdillon*, a 2015 documentary film highlighting Tinubu's political and financial grip on the city-state. Tinubu filed a ₦150 billion libel suit against the producers, [Africa Independent Television](#) (AIT).^[50] The documentary ceased airing on 6 March 2015. He has attempted to strongarm the political process, including in December 2009, when it was reported that Fashola and Tinubu had fallen out over the issue of Fashola's re-election as Governor of Lagos in 2011, with Tinubu preferring the commissioner for environment, [Muiz Banire](#).^[51] A similar conflict took place in 2015 over Fashola's successor, [Akinwunmi Ambode](#), pitting Fashola against Tinubu, who threw his full weight behind Ambode.^[52] Ambode succeeded Fashola, was ousted by Tinubu and replaced by incumbent [Babajide Sanwo-Olu](#).^{[53][54]}

Allegations of corruption

In 1993, his assets were frozen by the United States government as a result of a court case asserting that the American government had "probable cause" to believe Tinubu's American bank accounts held the proceeds of [heroin](#) dealing. He settled with the U.S. government and forfeited about \$460,000 later that year. Court documents and later reporting on the case suggested he worked in league with two [Chicago](#) heroin dealers.^{[55][56][57]}

In April 2007, after the general elections, but before the governor-elect Babatunde Fashola had taken office, the Federal Government brought Tinubu before the Code of Conduct Bureau for trial over the alleged illegal operation of 16 separate foreign accounts.^[58]

In January 2009, the [Economic and Financial Crimes Commission](#) cleared Tinubu and governors [James Ibori](#) of [Delta State](#) and [Obong Victor Attah](#) of [Akwa Ibom State](#) of charges of conspiracy, money laundering, abuse of office and official corruption in relation to a sale of Vmobile network shares in 2004.^[59] In September 2009, there were reports that the British [Metropolitan Police](#) were investigating a transaction in which the [Lagos State government](#) made an investment in Econet (now [Airtel](#)). Tinubu said the transaction was straightforward and profitable to the state, with no intermediaries involved.^[60] The Federal Government rejected a request by Britain to release evidence

needed for further investigation and prosecution of the three Nigerian ex-governors in a London court.^[61]

During the 2019 election, a [bullion van](#) was seen entering Tinubu's residence on Bourdillion Road in [Ikoyi](#), which caused him to later exclaim: "I keep money anywhere I want."^[62]

Personal life

Tinubu married [Oluremi Tinubu](#), who is a former senator representing the [Lagos Central senatorial district](#), in 1987. They have 3 children, Zainab Abisola Tinubu, Habibat Tinubu and Olayinka Tinubu.^{[63][64]} He fathered 3 children from previous relationships, Kazeem Olajide Tinubu (12 October 1974 – 31 October 2017), [Folashade Tinubu](#) (born 17 June 1976) and Oluwaseyi Tinubu (born 13 October 1985), whose mother is rumoured to be the former [air hostess](#) and prophetess Bunmi Oshonike.^{[65][66]}

Tinubu's mother, [Abibatu Mogaji](#), died on 15 June 2013 at the age of 96.^[67] On 31 October 2017, his son, Jide Tinubu, died in London.^[68] Tinubu is a [Muslim](#).^[69]

Honours and decorations

National honours

-  [Nigeria:](#)
 -  Grand Commander of the [Order of the Federal Republic \(GCFR\)](#) (25 May 2023)

Traditional titles

Tinubu holds two traditional [chieftaincies](#); he is the "**Asiwaju**" of Lagos and the "**Jagaba**" of the [Borgu Emirate](#) in [Niger State](#).^[69]

See also

- [Timeline of Lagos, 2000s](#)

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| Party political offices | | |
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| New political party | AD nominee for Governor of Lagos State 1999, 2003 | Succeeded by Hakeem Akinola Gbabiamila |
| Preceded by Muhammadu Buhari | APC nominee for President of Nigeria 2023 | Most recent |
| Political offices | | |
| Preceded by Buba Marwa | Governor of Lagos State 1999–2007 | Succeeded by Babatunde Fashola |
| Preceded by Muhammadu Buhari | President of Nigeria 2023–present | Incumbent |