



# Aliko Dangote

**Aliko Dangote** (born 10 April 1957) is a Nigerian businessman and industrialist. He is the first man who built a private refinery in Nigeria. The *Bloomberg Billionaires Index* estimated his net worth at \$28 billion in October 2024<sup>[1][2][3]</sup>

## Early life

Dangote was born on 10 April 1957 into a wealthy Hausa Muslim family in Kano, which was then part of British Nigeria.<sup>[4][5][6]</sup> His mother, Mariya Sanusi Dantata, was the daughter of businessman Sanusi Dantata.<sup>[7]</sup> His father, Mohammed Dangote, was a business associate of Dantata.<sup>[8]</sup> Through his mother, he is the great-grandson of Alhassan Dantata, the richest person in West Africa at the time of his death in 1955.<sup>[9]</sup> Dangote's brother, Sani (1959/60–2021), was also a businessman.<sup>[10][11]</sup> Dangote was educated at the Sheikh Ali Kumasi Madrasa, followed by Capital High School in Kano.<sup>[12]</sup> In 1978, he graduated from the Government College, Birnin Kudu.<sup>[13]</sup> He received a bachelor's degree in business studies and administration from Al-Azhar University in Cairo.<sup>[14][12]</sup>

## Business career

The Dangote Group was established as a small trading firm in 1977, the same year Dangote relocated to Lagos to expand the company.<sup>[5]</sup> Dangote received a ₦500,000 loan from his uncle to begin trading in commodities, including bagged cement as well as agricultural goods like rice and sugar.<sup>[15]</sup> In the 1990s, he approached the Central Bank of Nigeria with the idea that it would be less expensive for the bank to allow his transport company to manage their fleet of staff buses, a proposal that was also approved.

### Aliko Dangote

GCON



Dangote in 2014

<b>Born</b>	<div>Aliko Dangote</div> <div>10 April 1957</div> <div>Kano, British Nigeria</div>
<b>Education</b>	<div>Government College, Birnin Kudu</div>
<b>Alma mater</b>	<div>Al-Azhar University</div>
<b>Occupations</b>	<div>Businessman<span> </span>•<span> </span>industrialist</div>
<b>Years active</b>	<div>1977–present</div>
<b>Spouses</b>	<div><div>Zainab Dangote</div><div>(m.<span> </span>1977, divorced)</div><div>Mariya Muhammad Rufai</div><div>(divorced)</div></div>
<b>Children</b>	<div>4, including Halima</div>
<b>Relatives</b>	<div><div>Alhassan Dantata (great-grandfather)</div><div>Sanusi Dantata (grandfather)</div><div>Aminu Dantata (grand-uncle)</div><div>Sani Dangote (brother)</div></div>

Today, the Dangote Group is one of the largest conglomerates in Africa, with international operations in Benin, Ghana, Zambia, and Togo. The Dangote Group has moved from being a trading company to being the largest industrial group in Nigeria, encompassing divisions like Dangote Sugar Refinery, Dangote Cement, and Dangote Flour.<sup>[16]</sup> Dangote Group dominates the sugar market in Nigeria, and its refinery business is the main supplier (70 percent of the market) to the country's soft drink companies, breweries, and confectioners. The company employs more than 11,000 people in West Africa.



Dangote in 2011

In July 2012, Dangote approached the Nigerian Ports Authority to lease an abandoned piece of land at the Apapa Port, which was approved.<sup>[17]</sup> He later built facilities for his sugar company there. It is the largest refinery in Africa and the third largest in the world, producing 800,000 metric tons of sugar annually. The Dangote Group owns salt factories and flour mills and is a major importer of rice, fish, pasta, cement, and fertilizer. The company exports cotton, cashew nuts, cocoa, sesame seeds, and ginger to several countries. Additionally, it has major investments in real estate, banking, transport, textiles, oil, and gas.

In February 2022, Dangote announced the completion of the Peugeot assembling facility in Nigeria following his partnership with Stellantis Group, the parent company of Peugeot, and the Kano and Kaduna state governments. The new automobile company, Dangote Peugeot Automobiles Nigeria Limited (DPAN) factory, which is based in Kaduna, commenced operations with the roll-out of the Peugeot 301, 508, 3008, 5008, and Landtrek.<sup>[18]</sup>

On 22 May 2023 in Lekki, Nigeria, Dangote commissioned the Dangote Refinery. The plant plans to export surplus petrol, turning Africa's biggest oil producer into an export hub for petroleum products. It also plans to export diesel, according to Dangote, who funded the refinery's construction. The refinery is situated on a 6,180-acre (2,500 hectares) site at the Lekki Free Trade Zone, Lekki, Lagos State. It is supplied with crude oil by the largest sub-sea pipeline infrastructure in the world at 1,100 kilometres (680 mi) long.

In May 2024, Aliko Dangote reaffirmed his ambitions regarding the re-appropriation of energy resources in Africa: “My dream is to use raw materials from Africa, refine them and sell them on our own market.”<sup>[19]</sup>

## Wealth

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Dangote became Nigeria's first billionaire in 2007.<sup>[20]</sup> Dangote reportedly added \$9.2 billion to his personal wealth in 2013, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, making him the 30th-richest person in the world at the time, and the richest person in Africa.<sup>[21]</sup> In 2015, the HSBC leaks revealed that Dangote was a HSBC client and that he had assets in a tax haven in the British Virgin Islands.<sup>[22][23]</sup>

Together with his brother, Sayyu Dantata, Dagnote is linked to shell companies residing in tax havens by the Panama Papers, Paradise Papers<sup>[24]</sup> and the Pandora Papers.<sup>[25]</sup>

In April 2024, Dangote was the wealthiest person in Africa, with an estimated net worth of US\$13.9 billion.<sup>[26][2]</sup> By the end of August, his wealth was estimated by *Bloomberg* at \$US13.4 billion,<sup>[1]</sup> and the title was relinquished to Johann Rupert as Africa's richest person.<sup>[27]</sup>

## Political activity

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Dangote had a prominent role in the financing of President Olusegun Obasanjo's re-election bid in 2003, to which he gave over N200 million (US\$2 million). He contributed N50 million (US\$500 thousand) to the National Mosque under the aegis of "Friends of Obasanjo and Atiku". Dangote also contributed N200 million to the Presidential Library. These highly controversial gifts to members of the ruling PDP party have generated significant concerns despite highly publicized anti-corruption drives during Obasanjo's second term.<sup>[28]</sup>

In 2011, Dangote was appointed by President Goodluck Jonathan to serve as a member of his economic management team.<sup>[29]</sup> In 2017, rumors circulated that Dangote was considering a run for President of Nigeria in the 2019 election. Dangote declined to run and asserted that he does not intend to run for elected office.<sup>[30][31]</sup> Instead, Dangote went on to serve on a special advisory committee for Muhammadu Buhari's reelection campaign.<sup>[32]</sup>

## Other activities

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### Philanthropy

Dangote has worked alongside the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation on public health issues.<sup>[33]</sup> In August 2014, he donated ₦150 million (\$750,000) to assist the Nigerian government's efforts to stop the spread of Ebola.<sup>[34][35]</sup> In May 2016, he pledged \$10 million to support Nigerians affected by the Boko Haram insurgency.<sup>[36]</sup> In March 2020, he donated ₦200 million (\$500,000) towards the fight against the spread of COVID-19 in Nigeria.<sup>[37]</sup>

### Football

In 2019, Dangote and Femi Otedola promised to give the Nigerian national football team \$75,000 for every goal scored in the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON).<sup>[38]</sup> Dangote is an avid fan of English football team Arsenal FC and has shown interest in buying the club.<sup>[39]</sup> In 2020, he made a donation to Nigeria's sport ministry to help renovate the country's national sports stadium in Abuja.<sup>[40]</sup>

## Personal life

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Dangote lives in Lagos.<sup>[41]</sup> He owns two private jets and reportedly works 12 hours every day from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. and runs 10 miles on a treadmill almost every day.<sup>[20]</sup>

Dangote married Zainab Dangote in 1977, but they divorced at an unknown date. He was later married to Mariya Muhammad Rufai until their divorce, though the dates of the wedding and divorce are unknown. He has three daughters named Halima, Mariya, and Fatimah, and an adopted son named

Abdulrahman.<sup>[42]</sup> Halima followed him into the business world and is currently his company's executive director of commercial operations.<sup>[43]</sup>

## Awards and memberships

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### Awards and recognition

- Dangote was awarded Nigeria's second-highest honor, the Grand Commander of the Order of the Niger (GCON) by the former president, Goodluck Jonathan.<sup>[44]</sup>
- Dangote was named as the Forbes Africa Person of the Year 2014.<sup>[45]</sup>
- For six consecutive years, 2013,<sup>[46]</sup> 2014,<sup>[47]</sup> 2015,<sup>[48]</sup> 2016,<sup>[49]</sup> 2017,<sup>[50]</sup> and 2018<sup>[51]</sup> *Forbes* listed him as the "Most Powerful Man in Africa".
- In 2014, he was listed CNBC's "Top 25 Businessmen in the World" who changed and shaped the century.<sup>[52][53]</sup>
- In April 2014, *Time* magazine listed him among its 100 most influential people in the world.<sup>[54][55][56]</sup>
- In October 2015, Dangote was listed among "50 Most Influential Individuals in the World" by *Bloomberg Markets*.<sup>[57][58]</sup>
- He won "The Guardian Man of the Year 2015".<sup>[59]</sup>
- He won the "2016 African Business Leader Award", organized by the Africa-America Institute (AAI).<sup>[60][61]</sup>
- Dangote was cited as one of the top 100 most influential Africans by *New African* magazine in 2015,<sup>[62]</sup> 2017,<sup>[63]</sup> 2018<sup>[64]</sup> and 2019.<sup>[65]</sup>

### Memberships

Dangote sits on the board of the Corporate Council on Africa and is a member of the steering committee of the United Nations Secretary-General's Global Education First Initiative,<sup>[66][67]</sup> the Clinton Global Initiative and the International Business Council of the World Economic Forum. He was named co-chair of the US-Africa Business Center, in September 2016, by the US Chamber of Commerce.<sup>[68][69][70][71]</sup> In April 2017, he joined the board of directors of the Clinton Health Access Initiative.<sup>[72]</sup> He is also on the board of One Campaign.<sup>[73][74][75]</sup> Dangote was appointed the founding Chairman of the Nigeria End Malaria Council by President Buhari in August 2022.<sup>[76]</sup> He is also a member of the Global End Malaria Council, along with other leaders including Bill Gates, Ray Chambers, and former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.<sup>[77]</sup>

## See also

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- Dantata family
- List of Nigerians
- List of Hausa people
- List of Black billionaires

- List of Africans by net worth

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