

### Nigeria's Dangote refinery turns to fuel imports during maintenance

30 Jan 2026 | News

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EN  
Blendstocks | Gasoil | Gasoline

**Seven gasoline cargoes imported since Nov**

**Diesel/gasoil inbound in January**

**Company says it can cover domestic market**



Nigeria's Dangote Group has begun importing gasoline for the first time as refinery maintenance has curtailed its own production, according to S&P Global ship-tracking data and six traders familiar with the matter.

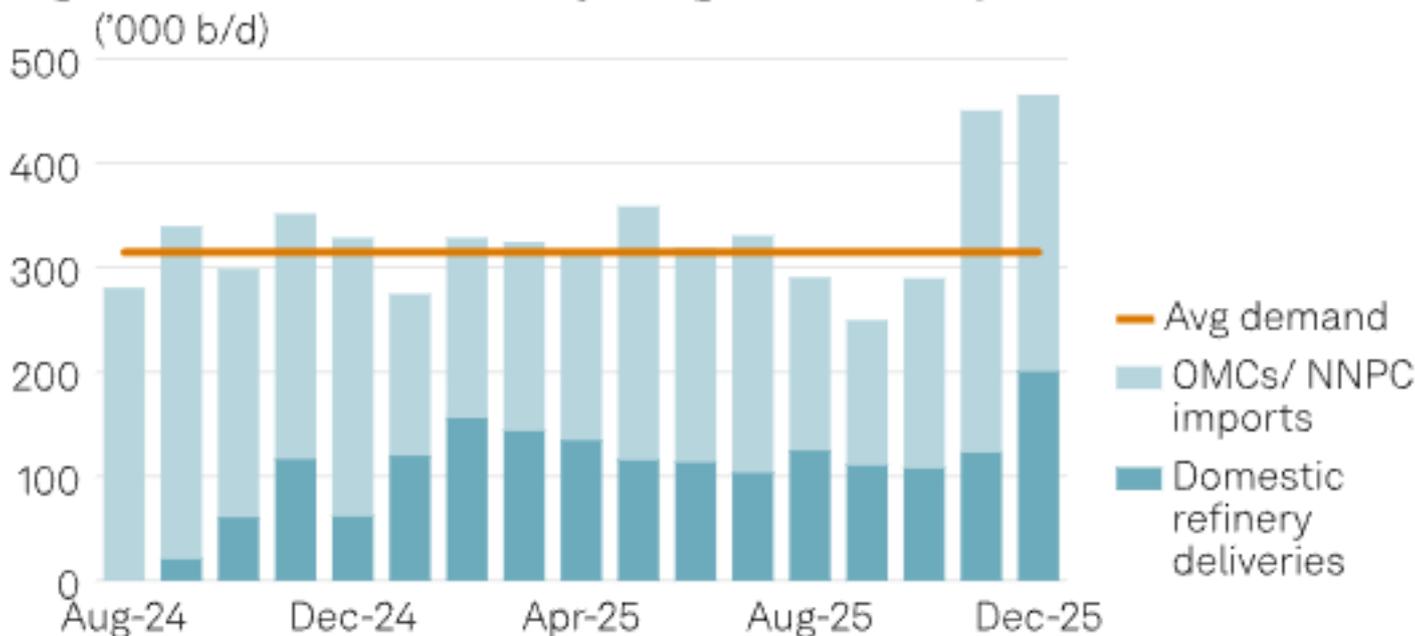
The Dangote refinery, located in Lagos, became Africa's largest when it launched in 2024, and it is now capable of fully supplying Nigeria's fuel needs, the company has said.

However, recent maintenance on the refinery's residue fluid catalytic cracker has caused Dangote to import gasoline feedstock, according to refinery CEO David Bird, and ship-tracking data shows steady deliveries of the motor fuel into the refinery.

"We import and process intermediate feedstocks directly into our downstream conversion and processing units, and we bring in blending components when market opportunities arise," Bird told Platts, part of S&P Global Energy, Jan. 24.

The imports mark a shift for a company whose founder, Aliko Dangote, has consistently lobbied for tougher import controls to support domestic refining, accusing Nigeria of "[importing poverty](#)" with [cheap foreign supplies](#).

# Nigeria continues to rely on gasoline imports



Note: Converted from liters/day in original report.

Source: NMDPRA state of the downstream sector fact sheet Oct 2025

## First imports

Tanker tracking data from S&P Global [Commodities at Sea](#) shows growing volumes of foreign gasoline arriving at the plant for the first time in its history. Clearocean Marigold became the first of seven medium-range tankers to offload gasoline at Dangote’s private terminal on Oct. 14, which would collectively deposit 2.2 million barrels of gasoline and 300,000 barrels of blendstock between October 2025 and Jan. 24, CAS data showed.

More than half of the gasoline and blendstock detected by CAS came from the UK’s port of Immingham, while a quarter came from France, and the remainder arrived from Togo, the nearest transshipment hub, the data shows.

Six West African oil market traders, who requested anonymity, confirmed that Dangote was importing gasoline and said the company had purchased additional supplies from the offshore Lome market in Togo. CAS does not pick up shipments under 5,000 deadweight tons, meaning that any cargo loaded onto smaller vessels off Lome before sailing into Nigeria is not reflected in the data.

Additionally, Dangote is reported to have fixed a 120,000-metric ton gasoil delivery from an international trading company on Jan. 22, two of the trade sources said.

“The arb on gasoil is wide open, and the country is short of product,” one said. “There is a lot offshore Lome he’s buying.”

A Dangote Group spokesperson did not respond to specific shipments identified by CAS, referring Platts to comments from Bird, the company’s CEO.

## Dangote output

Bird estimates that the Dangote refinery currently produces 45 million-50 million liters/day of gasoline, he told Platts on Jan. 24, roughly in line with [national demand](#). However, data from Nigeria’s downstream regulator shows actual deliveries to the market have averaged 32 million l/d.

When the downstream regulator’s figures were released Jan. 15, the Dangote spokesperson linked the gap between production and sales to competition from a [“reckless import armada.”](#)

[Repeated RFCC maintenance](#) impacted the company’s gasoline output through 2025, and the unit was taken offline again for over a month in early December, Devakumar Edwin, vice president of Dangote Oil & Gas, [told Platts Dec. 8](#).

Without the RFCC, the refinery can still produce gasoline from its reformer, albeit in lower volumes. Other products, including diesel and jet fuel, should be unaffected, although a turnaround on the plant’s [crude distillation unit](#) will briefly suspend all production in January, Edwin had said.

From February 2025, Bird [previously projected](#) that gasoline output will hit 57 million l/d, after the target completion date for the refinery's latest RFCC turnaround.

## Import politics

Dangote's imports also come at a time when Nigeria's fuel market remains highly politicized, as more oil marketing companies have [faced restrictions](#) and regulators have [floated tariffs](#).

"Importers still supplied around 60% of Nigeria's gasoline in 2025, so the regulator's tightening of import permits since October 2025 can be viewed in the context of efforts to support domestic refining," said Onajite Otokpen, an Africa fuels and refining analyst at S&P Global Energy CERA.

Before Dangote's startup, Nigeria relied on almost [350,000 b/d of imported gasoline](#), which the government spent billions of dollars a year subsidizing until 2023. However, the refinery launch prompted the [Nigerian National Petroleum Company](#) to end its foreign fuel purchases, and the downstream regulator has recently restricted the number of oil marketing companies [licensed to import oil products](#).

As a result, traders have kept a close watch on Dangote amid uncertainty over future import competitiveness.

After weeks of offering trucked gasoline at a discount to offshore Lome, Dangote hiked its prices by 14% to "sustainable levels" of Naira 799/ liter (58 cents/ liter) on Jan. 26, according to a customer briefing seen by Platts.

Platts assessed gasoline FOB West Africa at \$725.5/mt on Jan 29, up 14% on the week and its highest since December 2025.

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