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Nigeria Office

# Nigeria Press Review

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### Welcome to Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung's Nigeria Weekly Press Review

The weekly press review seeks to explore and keep you informed on selected issues relating to politics, business and economy, insecurity, infrastructure and development, health related issues, new trends and matters bothering on the overall situation in Nigeria.

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### Health: Ministry of Agriculture Issues Alert Over Anthrax Outbreak

A statement issued by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development has confirmed the outbreak of the zoonotic disease anthrax within the West African sub-region, specifically in Northern Ghana bordering Burkina Faso and Togo. As a result of this, it has warned that the consumption of hides (pomo), smoked meat and bush meat poses a serious threat until the situation is brought under control. According to the statement, anthrax spores affect domestic and wild animals. People can get infected when coming in contact with infected animals or contaminated animal products. The signs of anthrax are flu-like symptoms such as cough, fever and muscle aches and if not diagnosed and treated early, it can lead to pneumonia, severe lung problems, difficulty in breathing, shock and death. The ministry informed citizens of the availability of anthrax spore vaccines. The statement urged that farmers should intensify efforts to vaccinate against the disease, particularly those living in the border states of Sokoto, Kebbi, Niger, Kwara, Oyo, Ogun and Lagos because of their proximity to the affected countries. Mariam Ileyemi, [Premium Times News \(June 12<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

### Survey Reveals Over 50% of Nigerian Professionals Considering Migration, Nigeria Formally Accepts Agreement on Fisheries Subsidy, Federal Government Offers Terminal Establishment Licenses, Central Bank of Nigeria Announces Unification of Nigerian Forex Market

A recent survey by Philips Consulting (PCL), a talent management firm, has revealed that about 52% of Nigerian professionals are considering quitting their jobs and relocating abroad within a year. The finance, insurance, professional services, education, healthcare and IT sectors are to be worst hit. According to the study, Nigerian businesses face numerous challenges such as market uncertainty, inflation, digitization acceleration, changes in consumer behavior, increased operational expenses and complexity. Employee retention and brain drain prevention are the most pressing issues. The survey revealed that rising cost of living is impacting employee's finances and productivity, leading to 90% of Nigerians cutting down spending on essential and non-essential items. This has resulted in financial

stress, decreased purchasing power, lower job satisfaction and higher employment mobility and migration rates. The consulting firm observed that 88% of individuals planning to quit their jobs within a year are millennials and Gen Z. This demographic shift could lead to a significant loss of skilled workers which might negatively affect critical industries and the economy. Eniola Daniel, [The Guardian News \(June 13<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

Nigeria deposited its acceptance for the agreement on fisheries subsidies, making it the second African World Trade Organization (WTO) member to do so. The agreement prohibits support for illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, bans support for overfished stocks and ends subsidies for fishing on unregulated high seas. The formal acceptance marks an important step toward entry into force of the agreement, with about one-third of the acceptances needed now in hand. Nigeria is the fifth-largest African fishing nation and is estimated to lose about USD 70 million each year to IUU fishing. The sector accounts for as much as 5% of Nigeria's gross development product and supports the livelihood of about 24 million people. Adamu Mohammed Abdulhamid, Nigeria's ambassador to the WTO, called on other members yet to ratify the agreement to do so as soon as possible to contribute to preservation of global fish stocks. Tobi Awodipe, [The Guardian News \(June 13<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

The federal government through the Nigerian Midstream Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA) offered its first terminal establishment licenses under the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA) to the Nigeria National Petroleum Company (NNPC) and Belemaoil Producing Limited. Chief executive officer of NMDPRA Farouk Ahmad stated that this would add more than four million barrel capacity to Nigeria's export storage. The development is expected to address unemployment, especially in the Niger Delta region as one of the facilities will raise as much as USD 5.85 billion in revenue. Kingsley Jeremiah, [The Guardian News \(June 14<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has announced the unification of all segments of the Nigerian forex market. The apex bank on Wednesday announced the collapse of all windows into the Investors & Exporters (I&E) window. This move is part of the government's efforts to improve liquidity and stability in the market and attract

foreign investors into the Nigerian economy. The CBN also abolished the segmentation of the forex market into different windows. Through the I&E window, the exchange rate would be determined by market forces, whereas applications for medical, school fees, personal travel allowance and business travel allowance as well as small and medium enterprises would continue to be processed through deposit money banks. The CBN also announced reintroducing the “Willing Buyer, Willing Seller” model at the I&E window. Market forces would now be allowed to determine prices in the forex market under this new model. Additionally, all transactions in the forex market will be cleared by a central counter party, adding an extra layer of security and standardization to the trading process. The bank said the operational hours for forex trades would be from 9 am to 4 pm Nigeria time, providing a defined timeframe for market participants to engage in foreign exchange transactions. The decision of the CBN aligns with the commitment made by president Tinubu to unify the various exchange rates prevalent in the Nigerian market. Ayodeji Adegboyega, [Premium Times News \(June 14<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

**Godswill Akpabio Emerges as Senate President, Tajudeen Abbas Elected Speaker of the House of Representatives, Report Reveals Vote Manipulation During the 2023 Elections, Peter Obi Tenders Over 18,000 Blurred Polling Units Results, National Economic Council Inaugurated, House Committee and Former Minister Clash Over Nigeria Air Bribe Allegation, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission Summons Former Minister and Interrogates Nigeria Air Officials, President Tinubu Approves Suspension of Economic and Financial Crimes Commission Chairman, Federal Government to Begin Disbursing Student Loans**

Godswill Akpabio, a former governor of Akwa Ibom state, has been elected president of the 10<sup>th</sup> Senate. He polled 63 votes to defeat his only challenger Abdulaziz Yari, former governor of Zamfara state, who secured 46 votes. Akpabio was immediately sworn in after he was announced the winner. After taking the oath of allegiance, oath of membership of the Senate and oath of the office of the Senate president, the Clerk of the Senate handed over the instruments of the office to him, including the standing rule and the gavel. The senator representing Kano North, Barau Jibrin, emerged unopposed as the deputy senate

president. Abdulqudus Ogundapo, [Premium Times \(June 13<sup>th</sup>\)](#) and Tope Omogbolagun, [The Punch News \(June 13<sup>th</sup>\)](#) report. Read the biography of the new senate president [here](#).

Tajudeen Abbas has been elected the new speaker of the 10<sup>th</sup> House of Representatives, polling 353 out of 359 votes. Abbas is the anointed candidate of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), representing Zaria federal constituency of Kaduna state. Benjamin Kalu, a representative from Abia state, emerged as deputy speaker of the House. In his inaugural speech to members, Abbas stated that in a few weeks, they would roll out the legislative agenda that would shape the 10<sup>th</sup> House of Representatives. He promised that they would work closely and interdependently with the executive and judiciary to give Nigerians the good governance they deserve. Abbas further stated that the 10<sup>th</sup> House would diversify Nigeria's economy and provide sustainable employment opportunities for the youth. Abdulkareem Mojeed, [Premium Times News \(June 13<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

The National Democratic Institute (NDI) and International Republican Institute's (IRI) joint international election observation mission (IEOM) has released their final report on the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. The report criticized the conduct of the polls, saying “inadequate communication and lack of transparency by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) about their cause and extent created confusion and eroded voters' trust in the process”. It noted that while there were improvements in election administration, advances in results transparency, increased competitiveness in the presidential race, quality engagement of youth and overall optimism generated by the enactment of the Electoral Act 2022, the elections “fell short of citizens' legitimate and reasonable expectations”. The report urges the new government, lawmakers, INEC and political parties to show genuine and renewed dedication to improving electoral and democratic processes. Wale Odunsi, [Daily Post News \(June 13<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

The presidential candidate of the Labour Party (LP), Peter Obi, has tendered 18,088 blurred polling unit's results obtained from the result viewing portal (I-ReV) of the February 25 presidential elections before the presidential election petition court in aid of the joint petition challenging the declaration of Bola Tinubu as the winner of the election. The petitioners tendered these along with reports of data analysis of the

presidential elections, results and I-ReV scores investigation in Rivers and Benue states. In spite of objections from the opposing counsel, the court admitted all the documents tendered in evidence, marked them as exhibits and reserved ruling to the day of judgement in the petition. Sunday Ejike, [Nigerian Tribune News \(June 15<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

President Bola Tinubu on Thursday inaugurated the National Economic Council (NEC) chaired by vice president Kashim Shettima. He warned that there was no time for rhetoric as Nigerians were yearning to see pragmatic reforms that would help them escape poverty. According to Tinubu, the task on ground is about turning around Nigeria's economy from its age-long status of "potential to pragmatic". He vowed that he had kicked off the process with the removal of fuel subsidy and the unification of exchange rates, calling on the 36 state governors to join in the effort for national development. Williams Anuku, [Daily Post News \(June 15<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

The former minister of aviation, Hadi Sirika, has accused the former chairman of the House of Representatives committee of aviation, Nnolim Nnaji, of demanding a 5% stake in the controversial national carrier Nigeria Air. The committee chairman had earlier on declared Nigerian Air as fraudulent. Nnaji described Sirika's allegations as lies, adding that the ex-minister was a drowning man who would hold to anything to survive. He further stated that Sirika "should not deviate from the subject matter. Let him tell Nigerians the truth about the contraption they sold to us as Nigeria Air". Deborah Tolu-Kolawole et al., [The Punch News \(June 12<sup>th</sup>\)](#) report.

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has summoned former minister of aviation Hadi Sirika to appear before the commission regarding the controversial launch of Nigeria Air. It was gathered that some officials of the national carrier including the acting managing director Dapo Olumide had been invited for questioning. Confirming the development, the spokesperson for EFCC said that Sirika had been invited by them over an ongoing investigation. The controversy surrounding the Nigeria Air launch intensified after reports indicated that an Ethiopian Airlines aircraft, painted in Nigeria Air livery, was used for the inauguration. Although the former minister is yet to honor the invitation, investigations are still ongoing. Funmi Fabunmi and Sanusi Abiodun, [The Punch News \(June 16<sup>th</sup>\)](#) report.

President Bola Tinubu approved the indefinite suspension of the chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Abdulrasheed Bawa, to allow for "proper investigation into his conduct while in office". Immediately after the suspension, the Department of State Services (DSS) invited him for interrogation. Spokesman of DSS Peter Afunanya confirmed Bawa's presence. "This follows weighty allegations of abuse of office levelled against him," a statement said. However, none of the allegations were mentioned in the statement. The most recent allegation of infractions against Bawa was from former governor Bello Matawalle of Zamfara state who accused him of demanding a USD 2 million bribe, an allegation Bawa denied and instead accused Matawalle of brazen looting of Zamfara state treasury. Some civil society organizations have decried the suspension, stating that the action impacts on the stability of the commission to deliver on its mandate. Abbas Jimoh, [Daily Trust News \(June 15<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

Following the decision to disburse student loans, the federal government (FG) has set up an inter-ministerial committee made up of representatives of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), Vice Chancellors Forum of Nigerian Universities, rectors of polytechnics, provosts of colleges of education, ministries of education, finance, among others, to finetune the Student Loan Act. The committee is set to meet in the upcoming week to work together to ensure that disbursement of the student loan begins in September 2023 for the 2023/2024 academic session. The permanent secretary, federal ministry of education, Andrew Adejo, disclosed this information at a press conference. He stated that public institutions were not at liberty to introduce tuition fees because of the introduction of the loan scheme as they do not possess financial autonomy. Adejo also stated that the loan recovery would not begin until the beneficiary has been employed. The fund shall consist of education bonds, education endowment fund schemes, one percent of all taxes, levels and duties accruing to the federal government from the Federal Inland Revenue Service, Nigerian Immigration Service and others. Reacting to this, the president of the Parent Teacher Association Haruna Danjuma lauded the efforts of the government while opposing the move of public institutions to increase fees. Grace Edema, [The Punch News \(June 15<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

### **Insecurity: Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps Seeks Citizens' Support in Tackling Insecurity, Air Force Maintains that Only Terrorists Were Killed in Nasarawa State Air Strike, 106 Die in Boat Accident in Kwara State**

Commandant General of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Ahmed Abubakar Audi, has appealed to Nigerians to join in the fight against insecurity in order to sustain the nation's democratic ideals. He said it was imperative for citizens to support president Bola Tinubu's administration by embracing his policies and programs for a better Nigeria. Audi called on government at all levels to give maximum support to security agencies to function effectively in crime fighting as well as prevention. Omeiza Ajayi, [Vanguard News \(June 12<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

A boat that had conveyed about 250 people returning from a wedding, capsized in Kwara state. The state police command said that 144 people have been rescued, while putting the death toll at 106 people. Mallam Abubakar Yelwa, managing

director of the Development Commission, blamed the high rate of deaths in the accident for the non-use of life jackets by the passengers in the boat. Yelwa urged the State House of Assembly to pass a law making it mandatory for people to use life jackets while traveling on water and restrict water travel by night. Tunde Oyekola, [The Punch News \(June 14<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

Reacting to a report by Human Rights Watch, the Nigerian air force maintained that the military airstrike conducted on January 24, in Nasarawa state targeted and killed only terrorists and not innocent civilians and herders as claimed. The air strike was carried out after intelligence and surveillance conducted in the general area revealed the presence of a large number of terrorists with motorbikes and a truck believed to be carrying logistics. The terrorists said to be in their hundreds were planning to carry out a massive attack on the area. The Nigerian air force asked from everyone claiming otherwise to provide evidence. Molly Kilete, [The Sun News \(June 16<sup>th</sup>\)](#) report.

### **Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e. V.**

Marija Peran, Resident Representative  
Lukas Laible, Deputy Resident Representative  
Kenechukwu Nlem, Project Assistant  
Adams Adamu, Project Assistant

Nigeria Office

[www.kas.de/nigeria](http://www.kas.de/nigeria)

[www.facebook.com/kas.nigeria](https://www.facebook.com/kas.nigeria)

[Marija.Peran@kas.de](mailto:Marija.Peran@kas.de) / [Lukas.Laible@kas.de](mailto:Lukas.Laible@kas.de)



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