

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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Tinubu Appoints New NNPC GCEO and Board Amid Major Shake-up, NNPC Raises Petrol Prices Amid Naira-for-Crude Deal Stalemate, Fresh Setback for AfCFTA and ECOWAS Protocol Over Tariff by Sahel States, CBN Denies Introducing NGN 5,000 and NGN 10,000 Banknotes, Trump's Tariff Imposition Poses Threat to US-Nigeria Trade

President Bola Tinubu has appointed engineer Bashir Bayo Ojulari as the new group chief executive officer (GCEO) of the Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC), replacing Mele Kyari who had held that position since 2019. Tinubu also dismissed NNPC board chairman Pius Akinyelure, appointing Ahmadu Musa Kida as his successor. The president dissolved the entire board appointed in November 2023, replacing them with a new 11-member team. The board includes Adedapo Segun as chief financial officer (CFO) and six non-executive directors representing the six Nigerian geopolitical zones. According to presidential spokesman Bayo Onanuga, Tinubu exercised his authority under section 59 (2) of the Petroleum Industry Act, 2021, emphasizing that the restructuring aims to enhance operational efficiency, attract investment, restore investor confidence, boost local content and accelerate gas commercialization. The new NNPC board has been tasked with conducting a strategic portfolio review of NNPC-operated and joint venture assets to maximize value. Details of the statement of the State House on the changes can be found [here](#). Dennis Ezezi, [The Guardian News \(April 2nd\)](#) reports.

The Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC) has increased petrol prices from NGN 880 to NGN 950 per litre in Abuja and from NGN 860 to NGN 925 per litre in Lagos. The price hike follows the Dangote refinery's decision to temporarily halt sales of petroleum products in naira, citing concerns over currency mismatches in crude oil purchases. This decision comes as negotiations for a new naira-for-crude deal remain unresolved after the previous agreement expired in March. NNPC had initially introduced the naira-for-crude arrangement in October 2024 to stabilize supply and reduce import costs. However, the halt of the deal until 2030 has raised concerns over future pricing and fuel availability. Talks between NNPC and the Dangote refinery are ongoing to establish a new agreement. Bunmi Aduloju, [The Cable News \(April 2nd\)](#) reports.

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has dismissed claims that it introduced new NGN 5,000 and

N10,000 banknotes to be rolled out nationwide from May 1 through ATMs and over-the-counter transactions. In a statement on its official X handle, the apex bank labeled the report as fake and urged Nigerians to ignore it stating that "the content is not from CBN", referring to the official website under www.cbn.gov.ng. The CBN's communications department further clarified that only its website or official statements from the department should be considered credible sources. It also stated that there is no deputy governor by the name mentioned in the report and that the bank is investigating the source of the misinformation. The false report had claimed that a CBN deputy governor, Ibrahim Tahir, announced the introduction of higher denominations to reduce cash-handling costs and improve large transactions with advanced security features to prevent counterfeiting. [The Guardian News \(April 3rd\)](#) reports.

Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger have imposed a 0.5% levy on imported goods, further distancing themselves from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and threatening regional trade. Experts warn this move will weaken the already low intra-African trade currently standing at 14% and hinder the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The tariff, effective immediately, aims to fund the Alliance of Sahel States (AES), the three countries' new economic and security bloc. Though Nigeria's trade with these countries is small, the levy may disrupt growing trade patterns. Chief executive officer of the Centre for the Promotion of Private Enterprise (CPPE) Dr. Muda Yusuf notes that informal trade will continue despite the levy, but formal trade will suffer. Chief executive officer of the Centre for the Promotion of Private Enterprise (CPPE) Dr. Madu Obiora further warns of possible counter-tariffs from Nigeria and other ECOWAS states, worsening trade barriers. The levy is seen as the "final nail in the coffin" for ECOWAS trade agreements. With the rise of economic fragmentation and security risks, experts urge diplomatic solutions to prevent further regional instability. Tobi Awodipe, [The Guardian News \(April 1st\)](#) reports.

President of the United States (US) Donald Trump has imposed a new 14% tariff on Nigerian exports, threatening the USD 10 billion annual trade between the United States and Nigeria. This tariff could disrupt key sectors like oil and agriculture, raising prices, weakening the standard of living and reducing demand for Nigerian oil. The national president of the Nigerian-American chamber of commerce, Sheriff Balogun, warned that

this could jeopardize Nigeria's duty-free exports under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) which has been in place since 2000. Trump's move is part of his broader "fair trade" strategy to reduce the US trade deficit and encourage domestic production. Nigeria, a major oil exporter to America, could see a drop in its oil revenues due to reduced demand. While oil exports may yet be exempt from the tariff, agricultural products could suffer. The policy is expected to increase production costs globally, potentially lowering Nigeria's export revenues, especially in crude oil, and affecting its foreign reserves. Despite these concerns, experts suggest that Nigeria could explore new trade partnerships because of the shifting global trade dynamics. The Nigerian government has been urged to focus on strengthening domestic industries to reduce reliance on raw exports and create more jobs. The tariffs are expected to cause major trade disruptions globally. Damilola Aina, [Punch News \(April 4th\)](#) reports.

INEC Dismisses Petition to Recall Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan, Akpoti-Uduaghan Defies Rally Ban and Receives Warm Welcome in Kogi, Rivers Chief of Staff Alleges NGN 5 Billion Bribe Offer for Fubara's Impeachment, Court Restrains Security Agencies from Arresting Fubara's Chief of Staff, Edo Tribunal Dismisses Petition Against APC Governor

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has dismissed the petition to recall senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan from Kogi state for failing to meet constitutional requirements this Thursday. Despite petitioners claiming to have gathered 250,000 signatures, INEC's verification confirmed only 208,132, falling short of the required 237,278 by 29,146. INEC stated that the verified signatures accounted for 43.86% of registered voters, below the 50% +1 threshold mandated by Section 69 (a) of the 1999 Constitution. With the shortfall, INEC announced that no further action would be taken on the recall. Sodiq Omo-laoye, [The Guardian News \(April 3rd\)](#) reports.

Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan received a warm reception from a jubilant crowd in Kogi state during the *sallah* despite a government-imposed ban on rallies and processions. She arrived by helicopter, following restrictions and warnings from the police, as a crowd gathered to welcome her. In her address, Akpoti-Uduaghan responded to the ban, clarifying that she was not holding a rally but

simply visiting her constituents to celebrate *sallah*. She asserted that her actions were within her rights, emphasizing that she was not violating any laws. Her visit follows a series of political developments, including a recall process against her and a senate suspension amid a sexual harassment controversy involving senate president Godswill Akpabio. Akpoti-Uduaghan [addressed](#) the media, explaining her decision to fly a helicopter to her hometown, stating that the state governor Usman Dodo, former governor Yahaya Bello and Akpabio had orchestrated the challenges she faced, framing her situation as political persecution. Okiki Adeduyite, [Punch News \(April 1st\)](#) reports

Edison Ehie, chief of staff to suspended Rivers state governor Siminalayi Fubara, has alleged that he was offered NGN 5 billion to orchestrate the governor's impeachment. Speaking on Channels Television, Ehie claimed the offer was made while he was serving as the majority leader of the Rivers State House of Assembly and the evidence of the bribe was stored on his phone, while copies have been distributed as a safeguard. He denied accusations by former Rivers head of service, George Nwaeke, that he was involved in the October 30, 2023, bombing of the Rivers State House of Assembly. Dismissing the allegations as politically motivated, Ehie stated he had instructed his lawyers to file a criminal suit against Nwaeke. The crisis in Rivers state escalated after Fubara's fallout with his predecessor, Nyesom Wike. On March 18, president Bola Tinubu declared a state of emergency in the state, suspending the governor and his deputy. By March 26, the sole administrator, Ibok-Ete Ibas, suspended all political officeholders, deepening the political turmoil. Makua Ubanagu, [Punch News \(March 31st\)](#) reports.

A Port Harcourt high court has issued a restraining order preventing the Nigerian police, Department of State Services (DSS) and other security agencies from summoning, arresting or taking any action against Edison Ehie, the chief of staff to the suspended governor of Rivers state, Siminalayi Fubara, over the alleged arson at the Rivers State House of Assembly in March 2023. The court prohibited any action against Ehie until the substantive case was resolved. The controversy arose after former head of service George Nwaeke accused Ehie of orchestrating the arson, a claim that both Fubara and Ehie have denied. The case has significant political implications, and the next hearing is scheduled for April 2025. Ignatius Igwe, [Channels News \(April 3rd\)](#) reports.

The Edo state governorship election petition tribunal in Abuja has dismissed the petition filed by Action Alliance (AA) and Adekunle Omoaje challenging the election of governor Monday Okpebholo of the All Progressives Congress (APC). The tribunal ruled that the petition, which alleged corrupt practices and non-compliance with the Electoral Act, 2022, lacked merit and that Omoaje had no legal standing as he did not contest the election. INEC had declared Okpebholo the winner of the September 2024 governorship election with 291,667 votes, defeating Asue Ighodalo of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) who polled 247,655 votes. The tribunal further stated that AA's claims regarding its governorship nomination process had no basis under the Electoral Act and dismissed the petition in its entirety. Deborah Musa, [Punch News \(April 2nd\)](#) reports.

Insecurity: Tinubu Extends Tenure of NIS Comptroller-General Kemi Nandap, Nigerian States Allocate NGN 214 Billion for Arms and Security Measures Amid Rising Violence, 16 Hunters Mobbed and Killed in Edo State

President Bola Tinubu has approved the extension of the tenure of Kemi Nandap as comptroller-general of the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) until December 31, 2026. Nandap, who began her career with the NIS in 1989, was appointed Comptroller-General on March 1, 2024, with an initial tenure set to end in August 2025. A statement highlighted her achievements in modernizing immigration processes, enhancing border management and strengthening national security. President Tinubu commended her leadership and urged her to continue aligning the NIS's strategic goals with his administration's Renewed Hope agenda. He reaffirmed the government's commitment to supporting the NIS in safeguarding Nigeria's borders and promoting safe and legal migration. Johnbosco Agbakwuru, [Vanguard News \(March 31st\)](#) reports.

Thirty-five Nigerian states have allocated NGN 214 billion in their 2025 budgets for security measures, including the purchase of arms and support for local security outfits. Despite this, at least 3,190 people have been killed and 2,819 abducted in the first quarter of 2025, highlighting ongoing security

challenges. Recent violent incidents include the abduction of nine surveyors in Ondo state, the killing of three civil protection guards in Benue state and a communal clash in Nasarawa state that left seven people dead. In Edo state, 16 hunters were brutally murdered (see below), sparking fears of reprisal attacks. Data from the Nigeria Security Tracker (NST) reveals that over 367 individuals have been killed between 2019 and 2025 during Christmas, Sallah and other religious celebrations. President Bola Tinubu has emphasized the need for community-based security solutions, urging local governments to play a more proactive role. Despite significant budget allocations, questions remain over the effectiveness of these investments in reducing insecurity. Solomon Odeniyi and Damilola Aina, [Punch News \(April 2nd\)](#) report.

Sixteen hunters traveling through Edo state were brutally lynched and burned alive in the village of Uromi on March 30 by an irate mob. The victims, originally from Kano state, were reportedly stopped by local vigilantes who suspected them of being kidnappers upon discovering their guns in their possession. The mob gathered and carried out the extrajudicial killings before authorities could intervene. Survivors of the attack recounted their harrowing escape, while the victims' hometown of Torankawa remains in mourning. President Bola Tinubu condemned the attack, ordering a full-scale investigation and a manhunt for the perpetrators. The Edo state police command confirmed the arrest of 14 suspects, with additional security deployments made to prevent retaliatory violence. The Northern Governors Forum, Amnesty International and other stakeholders have also denounced the killings, urging the government to address the rising trend of mob justice and unlawful vigilante activities. The killings have heightened ethnic tensions and raised concerns over mob justice, vigilante power and the failure of security agencies to maintain order. Deputy Senate president Barau Jibrin has vowed to sponsor a motion to address the issue. Meanwhile, there are fears of reprisal attacks, as some northern groups have called for justice for the victims. In [response](#) to the tragic killings, the Police Service Commission (PSC) has replaced Betty Otimenyin as the commissioner of police for Edo state. Usman Bello et al., [Daily Trust News \(March 29th\)](#) report.



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