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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 Covid-19 and the situation in Nigeria.

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### **Covid-19: Cases Jump by 67% in Two Weeks, Global Fund Faults 19 million USD Procurements**

The Covid-19 infections in the country have risen by 67%. The data provided by the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) also revealed that there was a 390.4% increase in testing, which has led to an increase in the report of positive cases. For more detailed numbers and the the report released by the NCDC, kindly follow the link. Lara Adejoro et al., [The Punch News \(6<sup>th</sup> July\)](#) reports.

An audit of the Covid-19 grants given to the Federal Government of Nigeria through the international financing and partnership organization Global Fund has revealed USD 19.6 million worth of procurements related to the pandemic were awarded to contractors without financial statements and unregistered businesses, among others. This was contained in the Fund's audit report, a copy of which was obtained by Punch Newspapers. In the height of the Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria, the organization released grants to help in curtailing the spread. The Minister of Health, Osagie Ehanire, could not immediately respond to inquiries by The Punch concerning the indicting report. He did not take his calls and has yet to respond to a text message sent to him on the matter as of the time of filing this report. Deborah Tolu Kolawole, [The Punch News \(7<sup>th</sup> July\)](#) writes.

### **Nigeria Food Imports Reach 41% Amidst Local Production, Nigeria Tasks New ECOWAS Leaders on Lingering Issues, FG, EU and Germany Seek Improvement in Electrification Rate, FG Responds to US Republican Senators Over Alleged Persecution of Christians**

Despite the government's efforts to boost local production capacity in recent years, Nigeria spent N 2 trillion importing food in 2021. The value of food products imported last year surged by 41% when compared to the N 1.2 trillion spent in 2020, data from the National Bureau of Statistics' trade report show. The imported food products accounted for 9.44% of the country's total imports for the year. In 2019, the country imported N 959 billion worth of food, accounting for 5.66% of total imports. "The data is evidence that we still did not grow enough food and we are left with no option but to import", African Farmer Mogaji, Chief Executive Officer of X-Ray Consulting Limited, said in a response to this. "Imports are surging despite continuous government support and this is because

of the high insecurity rate in the country", he added. According to Victor Olowe, a professor and an agronomist at the Institute of Food Security, Environmental Resources and Agricultural Research, said the support by the government would not yield any meaningful impact if the issue of insecurity is not addressed and farmers' yield per hectare improved. Josephine Okojie, [The Business Day News \(6<sup>th</sup> July\)](#) reports.

Nigeria has called on the President Sissoco Embaló-led new leadership of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) alongside the newly composed Commission to work harder to resolve lingering issues in the region. Vice President Yemi Osinbajo made the call at the end of the 61st Ordinary Session of ECOWAS held in Accra, Ghana. "President Nana Akufo-Addo did an excellent job in a very challenging period in the history of ECOWAS and many of the challenges remain. So, we expect that the new leadership will take over and work as hard and perhaps much harder to resolve some of the issues. There are even additional challenges today – economic challenges, especially with the Russia-Ukraine crisis, and economic problems," Osinbajo demanded. He also raised the issue of the coups that have taken place in the region. The Vice President, however, added that besides the challenges, the region is witnessing appreciable progress in the ECOWAS common currency policy. Terhemba Daka, [The Guardian News \(5<sup>th</sup> July\)](#) reports.

Nigeria's Ministry of Power, the European Union and the German Government have raised concerns about the rate of electrification in Nigeria, calling for improvement. According to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) the number of Nigerians without access to grid electricity has risen by 5.8% to 90 million at the end of 2021. At the launch of the Nigeria SE4ALL.3.0 version platform that aims at improving electrification planning using the mini-grid supply, the stakeholders noted that data remained key to improving electricity access in the country. The Minister of Power, Abubakar Aliyu, said that the development marked a milestone as it aims to offer more accurate data that would assist Nigerians to develop a more robust business case in its effort to invest in the power sector. Head of Green and Digital Economy at the European Union Delegation to Nigeria and ECOWAS, Inga Stefanowicz, said the new platform would serve as pre-feasibility for private sector investment, and help policy development while monitoring policy targets. Chargé d'affaires of the German Embassy to Nigeria, Martin

Huth, said: "This interactive platform with intuitive web apps will greatly assist the Nigerian Government in improving the regulatory framework for the set targets of electrifying Nigerians and will provide the private sector with the necessary information for the business plans and needed investments." Kingsley Jeremiah, [The Guardian News \(7<sup>th</sup> July\)](#) reports.

The Federal Government condemned the call by five US Republican Senators asking for the redesignation of Nigeria as a country of particular concern because of alleged persecution of Christians. Responding to the allegation in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), the Minister of Information and Culture, Alhaji Lai Mohammed, said the call was based on false premises and a misunderstanding of what was going on in Nigeria. "The country also does not have a policy of violation freedom of religion and it is not true that Nigeria persecutes anybody on account of his or her faith", he said. Mohammed noted that the Constitution of Nigeria guarantees the right of anybody to practice his or her own faith without molestation and the government has always safeguarded that constitutional provision. [The Vanguard News \(4<sup>th</sup> July\)](#) reports.

### **President Buhari Inaugurates Seven New Ministers, Reshuffles Old Cabinet, Senate President Says Kuje Prison Break is an Indication of Security Failure, Federal High Court Disqualifies PDP Governorship Candidate in Delta State**

President Muhammadu Buhari has assigned portfolios to seven newly appointed ministers, charging them to serve the nation diligently. He also announced the reassignment of offices, saying the redeployment was to reinvigorate some sectors where the government needed to achieve better results. Addressing a virtual Federal Executive Council (FEC) meeting, the President restated that his administration was strengthening efforts as it winds down on its second term. The President urged the new cabinet members to consult widely on driving key programmes of the current administration. Terhemba Daka and Adaku Onyenucheya, [The Guardian News \(7<sup>th</sup> July\)](#) reports.

President of the Senate, Ahmad Lawan, has said that Tuesday's attack on the Kuje Medium Security Custodial Centre by terrorists speaks volumes about the failure of the country's security architecture. Lawan stated this on Thursday when he led a delegation of the leadership of the Senate to as-

sess the level of damage on the correctional facility by insurgents. He faulted the Nigerian Correctional Service for not providing Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras at the Kuje correctional facility and others across the country. According to the Senate President, an attack like this could only have been possible with the collaboration of insiders within the nation's correctional system. Speaking after an assessment of the facility, Lawan said: "The attack on this correctional facility is symptomatic of the failure of security failure. The attack is only a culmination of the failure." Bode Gbadebo, [The Leadership News \(7<sup>th</sup> July\)](#) reports.

The Federal High Court in Abuja on Thursday disqualified the governorship candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Delta State, Sherrif Oborewori, from entering the 2023 elections. The judge, Taiwo Taiwo, ruled that Oborewori was not eligible to contest the 2023 governorship election because he supplied false information to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to back his nomination as his party's candidate. Taiwo's judgement was on a suit filed by David Edebie, a former Commissioner of Finance in the former Governor James Ibori administration, alleging inconsistencies in the names on the academic certificates submitted by Oborewori to INEC. He had failed to provide contrary evidence to contradict the claims in the suit. Justice Taiwo, however, held that it was premature to declare Edebie as the candidate of the party since no according nomination has been officially made to INEC. He also did not declare a fresh primary election to be conducted, saying he did not want to preempt the decision of the party. [The Premium Times News \(7<sup>th</sup> July\)](#) reports.

### **Bomb Attack hits Kuje Custodial Centre, ISWAP Claims Responsibility for Attack, President Buhari States Disappointment in Nigeria's Intelligence System, Death Toll at Niger Mining Sites Reaches 48**

The Kuje Custodial Centre located in Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory came under attack late Tuesday night apparently to free jailed criminals, despite an earlier warning by the country's intelligence service. A prison source told Premium Times that the State Security Service had warned of an impending attack on Kuje prison but could not describe the level of measures put in place to forestall the attack. According to the source, the attackers used three bombs and forcibly gained

control of four entry and exit points. FCT communities just outside the city center have increasingly become prone to violent crimes, including abductions believed to be carried out by terrorists, often called bandits, operating in the Northwest and parts of the Northcentral, including the federal capital. In neighboring Niger State, according to the state government, Boko Haram terrorists are controlling communities while Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) has claimed attacks in Kogi State, another neighboring state. Taiwo-Hassan Adebayo, [The Premium Times \(6<sup>th</sup> July\)](#) reports.

The Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) has claimed responsibility for the attack on the Kuje Custodial Centre where authorities say one security personnel was shot dead while three others were critically injured. In a twitter video in Arabic shared by the group, inmates were seen fleeing the facility amidst chants of "Allahu Akbar" by the terrorist believed to have carried out the attack to set free their members held within the center. Meanwhile, the Nigeria Correctional Service (NCoS) has said that a member of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) drafted to the center was shot dead by the attackers. A total

of 879 inmates escaped the facility during the attack. Out of this number, 443 were said to be on the run. Tina Abeku, [The Guardian News \(7<sup>th</sup> July\)](#) reports.

President Muhammadu Buhari has expressed disappointment in Nigeria's intelligence following the attacks on Kuje prison by suspected Boko-Haram terrorists, questioning the competence of Nigeria's security operatives. The President raised questions about the ease at which the operation of non-state actors scaled through. He called for a comprehensive report on the development. "I am disappointed with the intelligence system" the president said. Samson Adenekan, [The Premium Times News \(6<sup>th</sup> July\)](#) reports.

So far, 48 persons have been confirmed dead following an attack by bandits on a mining site at Ajata-Aboki community in Shiroro Local Council of Niger State. A witness told newsmen that the bandits attacked the site in broad daylight. According to a breakdown of the casualty figures, 34 soldiers, eight mobile policemen and six civilians were confirmed dead. Bala Yahaya and Isa Abdulsalami Ahovi, [The Guardian News \(4<sup>th</sup> July\)](#) reports.

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