

## 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: Testing for Covid-19 Dropped Significantly**

Weekly reports released by the Nigerian Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) have shown that testing for Covid-19 continues to drop. With fewer records of testing in most of the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory as of March, 2022 the number of Nigerians tested for the virus across the country dwindled. In April, 2022 this resulted in many states recording just single digit testing. Ifeanyi Casimir, a specialist in Laboratory Science, attributes the low rate of testing for Covid-19 in Nigeria to the framework put in place which prioritizes testing at laboratories owned by the private sector rather than in government-owned laboratories. He argued that owners of private laboratories made billions of Naira from incoming and outgoing international travelers who were compelled by Nigerian authorities to present negative test results for the virus. Theophilus Abbah and Daniel Adaji, [The Daily Trust News \(June 9<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

### **Nigeria Air Secures Transport License Ahead of July Take-off, Nigeria's Oil Revenue Drops to N 945 Billion, Records N 1.2 Trillion Trade Surplus in First Quarter of 2022, Imports from China Rise by 183.91%, Debts Hit USD 3.67 Billion**

The anticipated national carrier Nigeria Air has secured one of the mandatory regulatory Air Transport License (ATL). The license was presented by the Director General of the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA), Musa Nuhu, to the interim management of the airline in Abuja. The approval will run for a period of five years, starting from June 3, 2022. An ATL certification is a document, which states the type of operations a carrier would embark on within and outside Nigeria, ahead of the Air Operator's Certificate (AOC) that is already at the advanced stages. Minister of Aviation Hadi Sirika had hinted that the national carrier would commence operations by July, yet the search for bidders to drive the public-private venture is still ongoing. Wole Oyejede, [The Guardian News \(June 7<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

According to the Central Bank of Nigeria's (CBN) latest monthly economic report for January 2022, despite the steady rise in crude oil price Nigeria's earnings from oil dropped for the fourth consecutive month. A breakdown of the components of oil revenue showed that no revenue accrued from

crude oil and gas exports in January. This is the second straight month the government has earned nothing from such a major income source. According to the data, revenue from petroleum profit tax and royalties, which forms the bulk of oil revenue, declined by 31% to N 247 billion compared to N 360 billion the previous month and was also below the monthly target of N 277 billion. Stakeholders are worried that even as the country's oil blend- Bonny Light, selling as the most expensive Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) blend, Nigeria has not benefitted much in terms of revenue. According to the National Operations Controller of the Independent Petroleum Marketers Association of Nigeria (IP-MAN), Mike Osatuyi, the reason for this lies within the high subsidy. Muiyiwa Lucas, [The Nation News \(June 8<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) says Nigeria recorded a total N 1.2 trillion trade surplus in the first three months of 2022. In its report on foreign trade in goods, the NBS stated that the improvement in Nigeria's merchandise trade was due to increases in crude oil export in the quarter under review which showing an increase of 31.66% compared to the fourth quarter of 2021. A breakdown of the report shows that the majority of imported goods in the first quarter of 2022 originated from China with a value of N 1.51 trillion, followed by the Netherlands with a volume of N 618.72 billion, Belgium (N 563.25 billion), India with N 415.57 billion and the United States (N 337.33). The NBS also noted that most goods were exported to India (N 1.18 trillion), Spain (N 677.69 billion), the Netherlands (N 660.59 billion), Indonesia (N 474.41 billion), and the United States (N 372.73 billion). [The Sun News \(June 8<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

The National Bureau of Statistics has also released data on foreign trade stating that Nigeria's import from China rose by 183.91% from N 530.98 billion in the first quarter of 2018 to N 1.51 trillion in the first quarter 2022. While China is responsible for the bulk of the imports into Nigeria, export to China is negligible according to the data available. According to the Debt Management Office, about USD 3.12 billion of the loans from China are project-tied and include 11 projects such as the Nigerian Railway Corporation's modernization project, Abuja Light Rail project, Four Nigerian airports' terminals expansion project (Abuja, Kano, Lagos, and Port Harcourt) and more. Temitayo Jaiyeola, [The Punch News \(June 8<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

### **National Leader of APC Bola Tinubu Wins APC Presidential Ticket, Starts Consultations with APC Governors in Search for Vice Presidential Candidate, Releases his Manifesto, Peoples Democratic Party Sets Panel to Decide Atiku's Running Mate**

At the All Progressives Congress (APC) presidential primary which was concluded in Abuja on Wednesday, former Lagos State Governor Bola Ahmed Tinubu was declared winner. Tinubu who polled 1.271 votes and thereby more votes than all his opponents combined, defeated 13 others in the race. His closest opponent was former Minister of Transportation Rotimi Amaechi who scored 316 votes. Tinubu, while declaring his intention to run for the presidency of Nigeria in February 2023, said it has always been his lifetime ambition and that he will now challenge the candidates of other parties. His opponents will include Atiku Abubakar of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Peter Obi of the Labour Party and Rabiun Kwankwaso of the New Nigeria Peoples Party. Mojeed Alabi, [The Premium Times News \(June 8<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

Following his win as the APC presidential candidate, the spokesman for the Tinubu Campaign, Bayo Onanuga, said the APC presidential candidate Bola Tinubu would meet the APC governors to pick his running mate for the 2023 presidential elections. According to him, Tinubu prefers a collective responsibility over doing it on his own. "The party leaders will look at the chances and decide how they will balance a Muslim from the South, maybe with somebody that comes from North-East, North-Central or from North-West. That is how it is done. I cannot circumvent the party," Onanuga said. [The Punch News \(June 9<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

According to a statement signed by the spokesman for the Tinubu Campaign, Bayo Onanuga, APC presidential candidate Bola Tinubu has promised that his team will lead the country to a new era of economic prosperity, peace, security and political stability. Tinubu revealed his manifesto for the transformation of the country and in the document promised "a nation transformed into greatness, the pride of Africa, a role model for all black people worldwide, and respected among all other countries, if elected president in 2023". He promised to improve security by decentralizing the police. On the economy, the APC candidate pledged to build an economy that will make the nation's gross development product grow quicker annually for the next four years, creating hundreds of thousands of new jobs simultaneously.

Tinubu promised to launch a new National Industrial Policy focused on special intervention to rein-vigorate specific strategic industries. Gabriel Dike, [The Punch News \(June 9<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) spokesman, Debo Ologunagba, confirmed the setting up of a committee comprising governors, the PDP National Working Committee and the Board of Trustees members as well as former governors with the mandate of picking Abubakar Atiku's vice-presidential candidate. It was gathered that the Rivers State Governor, Nyesom Wike, and his Delta State counterpart, Ifeanyi Okowa, had intensified lobbying PDP stakeholders. Meanwhile, a PDP chieftain, Chief Bode George, has said the running mate would be an individual that could assist the party to garner votes. He said: "Definitely, it (running mate) must come from the South; South-West, South-East and South-South. They will be looking for the best man that will be able to assist the party; who will have character, respect for the rule of law and be fair to Nigerians." Adelani Adepegba et al., [The Punch News \(June 10<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

### **Insecurity: Police Release Report on Ondo Church Attack, FG Names ISWAP as Perpetrators Behind Attack, UN Condemns Killings**

On Sunday 6, terrorists attacked the St. Francis Catholic Church in Owo, Ondo State, believed to be killing over 50 people. The Ondo State Police Command has now given insight into how this was conducted. The Police Public Relations Officer, Funmilayo Odunlami, said the attack was initiated by the gunmen at about 11:30 am while the church service was ongoing. "Preliminary investigation revealed that the assailants (...) started shooting from outside the church while others numbering about four shots directly into the church," he explained. Witnesses had also reported that the gunmen threw explosives into the church and started shooting as the worshippers. The Catholic Diocese of Ondo clarified that no priest was kidnapped in the incident. The police, were, however, silent on the number of mortality and the injured, saying it had deployed the Anti-Bomb Squad of the police to the area to provide further security, urging residents to be calm. Josiah Oluwole, [The Premium Times News \(June 5<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

The Federal Government has identified the Islamic State West African Province (ISWAP) as being responsible for the attack at St. Francis Catholic Church in Owo, Ondo State. Briefing newsmen at

the end of the National Security Council meeting, Minister of Interior Rauf Aregbesola said security agencies were already on the trail of the culprits. Aregbesola, joined by the Inspector General of Police, dispelled insinuations of ethnic-religious connection in the attack, affirming that the group's activity had nothing to do with Islam. He also said there was no ethnic agenda in the attack, urging Nigerians to unite and defeat terrorism in the country. The Council expressed concern about killings in the name of blasphemy and directed security agencies to go after the terrorists. Seye Oluvide et al., [The Guardian News \(June 10<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports. Secretary-General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres, has condemned Sunday's terrorist at-

tack on the Catholic Church in Ondo State. Guterres who reacted to the massacre in a statement by his spokesperson, called on the Nigerian government to bring the perpetrators to justice. Guterres extended his condolences to the families of the victims, wished speedy recovery to the injured and expressed his sympathies and solidarity with the government and people of Nigeria. The Secretary-General's comments came as a team from the World Health Organisation (WHO), led by the Country Representative and Head of Mission to Nigeria, Walter Mulombo, visited Ondo State Governor Oluwarotimi Akeredolu yesterday in Akure to commiserate with him over the incident. [This Day News \(June 8<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

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