

# 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: FG Approves Booster Doses for Enhanced Protection, Reacts to Expiration of Vaccines, Announces Revised International Travel Protocol**

The federal government will begin the administration of the Covid-19 booster dose for eligible Nigerians from December 10, across all states of the federation. The National Primary Health Care Development Agency on Friday 3, noted that the booster doses will only be administered to citizens who have completed the two doses of AstraZeneca, Moderna or Pfizer Bio-N-Tech or one dose of Johnson and Johnson vaccine. Mariam Ileyemi, [Premium Times News \(December 4<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

The Health Minister, Osagie Ehanire, confirmed a report about the expiration of doses of Covid-19 vaccines supplied to Nigeria, blaming the development on the short-shelf lives of the vaccines. He disclosed that the expired vaccines had been withdrawn and will be destroyed by the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control. The Minister, however, did not confirm the number of the expired vaccines or their brand. Chiamaka Okafor, [The Premium Times News \(December 8<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

Meanwhile, the Chairman of the Presidential Steering Committee on Covid-19 and Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Boss Mustapha, announced the federal government's revised international travel protocol amid the emergence of a new variant of the Covid-19 virus named Omicron. In the revised protocol, passengers arriving in Nigeria are required to provide the result of a Covid-19 PCR test done within 48 hours before departure and one PCR test done on day 2 after arrival. This revised protocol came into effect on December 5. [The Channels News \(December 1<sup>st</sup>\)](#) reports.

### **National Electoral Commission Endorses Electoral Bill, AU, Governors, Lawmakers Describe Travel Ban as Stigmatization, Calls for an End to Travel Ban, WhatsApp Launches Campaign to Fight Fake News**

The Premium Times has reported that the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) offered a "general" endorsement of the Electoral Bill

but suggested to President Muhammadu Buhari to consult with political parties and security agencies over the controversial direct primaries. The bill, which repeals the extant Electoral Act 2010 as altered, seeks to make direct primaries the only means for political parties to select their candidates for elections and legalize electronic transmission of results, among other provisions. However, the INEC letter signed by chairman Mahmood Yakubu appeared to suggest to the president to make wider consultations, making an apparent reference to the issue of the primaries which concern political parties. Taiwo-Hassan Adebayo, [The Premium Times \(December 8<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

The African Union (AU) has called for an urgent end to travel restrictions imposed on some of its member states, saying the measures effectively penalize governments for timely data sharing in line with international health regulations. Similarly, governors of the 36 Nigerian states, under the umbrella of the Nigeria Governors' Forum rejected the travel ban imposed on the country by the United Kingdom (UK) and Canada over concerns about the spread of the Omicron variant of the Coronavirus detected in Nigeria. The two chambers of the National Assembly also joined the growing band of bodies condemning the ban and seeking its reversal. The Senate criticized the travel ban as the lawmakers called on their British counterparts to prevail on their government to remove Nigeria from the red list immediately, while the House of Representatives mandated the federal government to urgently engage the UK with a view to reversing the visa ban on Nigerians. Chukwuma Muanya, Azimazi Momoh Jimoh, John Akubo, Nkechi Onyedika-Ugoeze and Msugh Ityokura, [The Guardian News \(December 8<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

#YouSaid, a campaign to educate people on how to verify information they come across before passing it on, was launched by the platform WhatsApp to help reduce the spread of false news in Nigeria. The campaign offers tips for WhatsApp users to spot false news and take responsibility in minimizing its spread by encouraging people to think carefully and check authoritative sources before deciding to share any information with their friends and family. Adeyemi Adepetun, [The Guardian News \(December 10<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

### **Controversy Over Compulsory Workers Vaccination, UK Suspends Visitor Visa Applications, Bans Flight from Nigeria, Cabinet Minister Says Insecurity Makes Nigeria an Undesirable Investment Option, FG to Expedite 2.3 Billion Dollars Electricity Programme**

The federal government has announced that civil servants will not be allowed into their offices from December 1 unless they can prove they have been vaccinated against Covid-19 or show a negative test for the disease. The announcement has been described as uncivil and unacceptable by many. Some civil servants in the capital, Abuja, say they have been stopped 2-3 times from entering into their work place since and would not mind staying at home if it continues. However, the Association of Senior Civil Servants of Nigeria has requested that the government gives them until march next year to enable most workers get fully vaccinated. Rédaction Africanews and Michael Dibie, [Africa News \(December 5<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

The United Kingdom (UK) has banned flights from Nigeria with effect from Monday, 6. According to a statement by the United Kingdom health secretary, Sajid Javid, only residents and citizens of the UK and Ireland travelling from Nigeria would be allowed entry into the region but will be obliged to isolate in a managed quarantine facility for 10 days. Abdullateef Aliyu, [Daily Trust News \(December 4<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

Only hours after adding Nigeria to its travel red list, the British High Commission said it will pause making decisions on visitor visa applications from all red list countries, including Nigeria. To help protect the public health from Covid-19, visas or entry permits from red list countries will only be issued where there are compelling and compassionate circumstances. Kazeem Biriowo, [The Tribune News \(December 6<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

The Minister of Trade and Investment, Niyi Adebayo, says prevailing insecurity affected Nigeria's ranking on the top 10 preferred investment destinations in Africa. According to him, the federal government is making stringent efforts to resolve the security problems so that Nigeria will return to the position of being one of the preferred destinations for investment. Bunmi Aduloju, [The Cable News \(December 9<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

The Minister of Power, Abubakar Aliyu, has disclosed that the Nigeria-Siemens electricity programme captured in the Presidential Power Initiative would be fast-tracked to deliver about 7,000 MW of electricity before the end of 2022. He said the country's current 4,500 MW of electricity would move to 25,000 MW before 2025 while stressing that the government would not opt out of electricity subsidy in a manner that would hurt the masses. Kingsley Jeremiah, [The Guardian News \(December 10<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

### **Insecurity: President Buhari Commissions Locally Made Naval Ship, Armed Forces Trains 62 Military Personnel for Peacekeeping Mission in Mali, ECOWAS Body Alleges 18 Billion Naira Laundering by ISWAP Through Nigeria's Financial System, NFIU Refutes Claims by Report**

President Muhammadu Buhari commissioned a seaward defence boat locally made in Nigeria and built by engineers of the Nigerian Navy, the NNS Oji, several ships, boats, and a helicopter. He noted that the country was in a critical period faced with a serious decline in revenue and several security challenges, adding that new inductions to the naval fleet would boost their capability in securing Nigeria's maritime domain. Jesutomi Akomolafe, [The Guardian News \(December 9<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

The Armed Forces of Nigeria (AFN) has trained 62 medical military personnel to be deployed for peacekeeping in Mali. Abdulsalam Ibrahim, Chief Training Officer, said the troops were qualified to be deployed in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali and that this was in line with the commitment of the AFN in deploying quality peacekeepers as part of its contributions to the quest for global peace and security. [The Punch News \(December 4<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

Meanwhile, the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA), established by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), says the Boko Haram splinter group Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) has moved 18bn Naira (USD 36m) annually through the Nigerian financial system generated from trading and taxing communities in the Lake Chad region. The group noted that the government lacked adequate insight into Boko Haram

and ISWAP international linkages and abuse of the formal financial and commercial sectors. GIABA disclosed this in its 2021 Mutual Evaluation Report where it also noted that Nigeria lacked an explicit policy to confiscate proceeds of crime or property of equivalent value, including terrorism financing. Adelani Adepegba, [The Punch News \(December 5<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

Reacting to the GIABA statements, the Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU) has refuted the re-

port by the ECOWAS body alleging that ISWAP laundered 18bn Naira through Nigeria's formal financial system. NFIU described the report as "totally outdated and based on a 2019 country evaluation report which is literally stale and irrelevant today". The financial intelligence unit said the ECOWAS body allegedly released its report to justify putting Nigeria's financial system under an enhanced review process alongside other countries in the Sahel. Kunle Sanni, [The Premium Times News \(December 6<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

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