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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 Restates Commitment for Economic Recovery as Poverty Deepens, Nigerians Grapple with Economic Balance

As economic recession looms, the Minister of State for Budget and National Planning, Prince Clem Ikanade Agba, has reassured Nigerians that the Federal Government is laying a solid foundation for sustainable economic recovery to lift Nigerians out of poverty in the next decade through the Medium-Term National Development Plans (MTNDPs 2021-2025 and 2026-2030) and the Long-Term Perspective Plan, otherwise known as Agenda 2050. [Daily Sun \(14th June\)](#) further details.

This is coming against the backdrop of a report by Femi Adegoya, [Guardian News \(13th July\)](#) which explained that 95.7 million Nigerians are at risk of poverty by 2022. The report pointed to the Covid-19 lockdown that affected the economic life of the nation as many Nigerians struggle to find a balance between dipping incomes and rising inflation manifest in exorbitant prices of goods amid a weak currency. The report further pointed to the increase in Value Added Tax (VAT) rate of 7.5 per cent, from an earlier figure of 5 per cent amidst the falling revenue which has tripled the number of dependents in many homes.

Similarly, a report by Ruth Olurounbi of [The African Report \(13th July\)](#), citing the National Bureau of Statistics' (NBS) Nigeria Living Standards Survey published earlier this month, said that "more than 37% of households report being exposed to an increase in prices of major food products, while nearly 12% of households report reducing their food consumption in order to manage the impact of the shocks".

Reps, Atiku, Others Fault Federal Government's Decision to Suspend 2020 WASSCE

Following last week's announcement by the Federal Minister of Education, Adamu Adamu, suspending the participation of the country in the forthcoming West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE), the House of Representatives has criticized the decision, urging President Buhari to rescind the directive and reopen schools. Friday Olorok et al, write in [Punch News \(15th July\)](#). On the same note, the national president of National Association of Proprietors of Private Schools (NAPPS), Yomi Otubela, has pleaded with the Federal Ministry of Education to reverse the decision by adopting alternative methods for

the examination. Funmi Ogundare, [This Day \(15th July\)](#) details. Similarly, the former Vice President, Atiku Abubakar, supported the position of NAPPS stating that the decision by the federal government was a "wrong one". Alfred Olufemi, [Premium Times \(10th July\)](#) reports.

Meanwhile, it appears that the decision to suspend WASSCE may apply to public schools only as the Minister of State for Education, Chukwue-meka Nwajiuba, said that the federal government "cannot decide for state and private schools on whether or not to participate in the 2020 WASSCE". Abbas Jimoh, [All Africa News \(14th July\)](#) details. In a similar vein, the South-West states have agreed to partake in the examination in compliance with Covid-19 rules. Rotimi Ojomoyela et al, [Vanguard News \(17th July\)](#) detail. However, the federal government has reaffirmed its decision in a meeting with parents that the country will not partake in the 2020 WASSCE. Azeekat Adedigba, [Premium Times \(15th July\)](#) details. An article by Iyabo Lawal of [Guardian News \(16th July\)](#) further explains the conundrum faced by the federal government on reopening schools for the WASSCE

NDDC Controversy: Minister and Ex-Managing Director Disagree over Alleged Misappropriation of Funds as NASS Scales-up Investigations

The controversy over misappropriation of funds between the Minister of Niger Delta Affairs, Godswill Akpabio, and the former Managing Director of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), Joy Nunieh, has deepened. Nunieh was removed from office by President Buhari in February 2019, following Buhari's order for an audit of the NDDC 2019 account. Nunieh alleged that Akpabio forced her to swear to an oath of secrecy not to expose alleged fraud within the NDDC. She also accused Akpabio of sexual harassment. Nasir Ayitogo, [Premium Times \(11th July\)](#) Responding to the allegations, Akpabio described the allegations as "corruption fighting back from those resisting the wind of change". Adetutu Folasade-Koyi, and Tony John of [Daily Sun \(15th July\)](#) detail. Reacting to this, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has asked Akpabio to step down following the allegations. [Sahara Reporters \(13th July\)](#) details. However, Akpabio restated his commitment to reposition the NDDC despite the challenges. Olalekan Adetayo, [Punch News \(15th July\)](#) explains.

Meanwhile, the Senate has expanded its ongoing investigations into the NDDC's account report following disparities and fresh discovery of missing N143bn. Azimazi Momoh Jimoh of [Guardian News \(15th July\)](#) writes. Similarly, the House of Representatives has uncovered funds up to N81.5bn spent by the Interim Management Committee (IMC) of the NDDC without due process. Yemi Itodo, [Daily Post \(15th July\)](#) reports. At the hearing conducted by the House Committee on NDDC, the IMC walked out on the committee members following allegations of corruption the IMC raised against the chairman of the committee, Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo, who presided over the hearing. Nasir Ayitogo details in [Premium Times \(16th July\)](#). Reacting to the revelations arising from the NDDC probe, the Chairman of the Presidential Advisory Committee Against Corruption (PACAC), Itse Sagay, called on President Buhari to sack the IMC. [This Day News \(15th July\)](#) details. However, President Buhari has ordered a swift investigation into the NDDC. Lawrence Olaoye, [New Telegraph \(17th July\)](#) explains.

APC Crisis Heightens, Relevance of the NWC Questioned

The relevance of the National Working Committee (NWC) of the All Progressives Congress (APC) recommended by President Buhari to resolve all internal crisis of the party may be questioned following the continued crisis rocking the party. Notably, the dissolution of the factions within the party by President Buhari may have created new setbacks. Godwin Tsa, [Daily Sun \(12th July\)](#) and Anietie Akpan, [Guardian News \(14th July\)](#) detail. The crisis within the party has continued to escalate. Sunday Aborisade, [Punch News \(16th July\)](#) writes. Meanwhile, a Chieftain of the APC, Goddie Akpama, has said that the dissolution of the factions is a solution towards ending the crisis. Jide Orintunsin, [The Nation \(15th July\)](#) explains.

In an article by Tofe Ayeni in [The African Report \(13th July\)](#), he opined that having a deep understanding of the root cause of the issues may be a right step towards resolving the lingering problems rocking the party. Similarly, the controversy over the adoption of an indirect primary has continued to rage as 11 governorship aspirants in Ondo state have rejected the proposal. [Premium Times \(10th July\)](#) reports. Supporting the position of the aspirants, some APC youths have also kicked against the adoption of indirect primary. Yinka Adeniran, [The Nation \(14th July\)](#) writes.

Meanwhile, the chairman of the National Campaign Council on Communications and Publicity for the Edo governorship election, Patrick Obahiagbon, has accused the state governor, Godwin Obaseki, of hounding members of the APC serving in elected offices over their refusal to join him in the PDP. [Daily Sun \(16th July\)](#) details further.

Insecurity: 40 Soldiers Killed in 10 Days as 356 Soldiers Quit the Nigerian Army over Low Morale

As the negative effect of the security situation in the country continues to worsen, experts have called for an increased supply of equipment and manpower in order to stem the tide, [The Cable News \(14th July\)](#) writes. Recent reports also show that the Nigerian army is affected by a rise in the death of soldiers caught in the cross fire of the war against insurgency. It further stated that not less than 40 soldiers have been killed in attacks by insurgents in the last ten days. Olugbenga Adanikin, [International Centre for Investigative Reporting \(15th July\)](#) details. However, security forces have continued to record feats in the fight against insurgency. The Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) has reported the successes it achieved against insurgency regardless of the challenges confronting member countries. A report by John Campbell, [Council On Foreign Relations \(16th July\)](#), examines the successes, setbacks and highlights of the recommendations put forward last week by an analysis of the [International Crisis Group \(ICG\)](#) regarding the effectiveness of the MNJTF.

Meanwhile, 356 soldiers are formally exiting the Nigerian Army over low morale which they attributed to poor leadership, claiming that "the army has been broken, demoralized and polarized more than ever before under the present leadership". An officer said their exit "is an indication of the rot in the system". Apart from the 356 who are leaving, 24 others are exiting because they want "to take traditional titles", making a total of 380 soldiers. The chief of Army staff has approved the voluntary disengagement of all 380 soldiers. Taiwo Hassan Adebayo reports in [Premium Times \(11th July\)](#).

In an earlier report debunking the exit of the soldiers, the Nigerian Army claims that it has suspended the voluntary retirement of soldiers. Rasheed Sobowale, [Vanguard News \(13th July\)](#) de-

tails. In a swift reaction, the House of Representatives has resolved to probe the alleged mass resignation of soldiers. Chinedu Asadu of [The Cable News \(14th July\)](#) details.

Meanwhile, the Nigerian Army has announced the appointments of new General Officers Commanding (GOCs) and heads of its various units and military training institutions across the country. The appointments are intended to revive the system for effectiveness and efficiency. Molly Kilete [Daily Sun \(14th July\)](#) explains.

Community Policing: Governors Restate Commitment for Smooth Take-off, Inaugurate Advisory Committees

The rising intensity of attacks by bandits is becoming alarming and taking new dimensions of criminality, a situation which has continued to traumatize vulnerable citizens. In an article by John Campbell, [Council on Foreign Relations \(14th July\)](#), is noted that, “the Nigerian security forces would need to collaborate and be on edge in tackling the crisis”. Campbell further stresses that the Nigerian army has been on the forefront, but it may seem that new strategies have to be adopted as the duty may not fall on one single agency alone. Campbell refers to the initiative taken by state governors in the South-West to adopt the concept of local security as a step towards establishing a regional police force, which he says is meant to support, and not replace the national police.

In a similar vein, more state governors have continued to intensify efforts towards the smooth take-off of community policing schemes at various levels in their states. Governors including that of Enugu, Ekiti and Kaduna States have committed to strengthening structures to ensure the success of the programme.

Speaking at the inauguration of the State Community Policing Advisory Committee (SCPAC), the governor of Enugu State, Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi, disclosed that his administration has rejigged and re-tooled the state security architecture to bring it up to speed with emerging dimensions of insecurity and criminality through institutionalized collaboration among its Neighbourhood Watch groups, Forest Guards and security agencies, especially the Nigeria Police. [This Day News \(11th July\)](#) details.

On the same note, the governor of Ekiti state, Kayode Fayemi, has described the creation of additional zonal commands of the Nigeria Police, including Zone 17 comprising Ondo and Ekiti States, as a strategic move that would strengthen community policing in the country. Priscilla Ediare writes in [Daily Sun \(14th July\)](#). Similarly, the Kaduna State Commissioner of Police, Umar Muri, has said that community policing, if well-structured and effectively implemented, will strengthen the synergy between Police and the community thereby providing solution to the security challenges facing the communities. Abdulraheem Aodu, [Blueprint News \(14th July\)](#) details.

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