



May 2023
Nigeria Office

Nigeria Press Review

12.05. – 19.05.2023

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.

Content

Inflation Surges to 22.22% in April, Federal Government Incurs NGN 36.8 Trillion Deficit in 8 Years Under President Buhari, Nigeria Needs USD 12 Billion to Clean Up Oil Spills in Bayelsa State, United States to Impose Visa Restrictions On Nigerians Undermining the Democratic Process

INEC Oppose Live Broadcast of Election Tribunal Proceedings by Opposition, National Association of Resident Doctors Announce Five-Day Warning Strike, Federal Government Rejects Bill to Halt Doctors' Migration, Federal Executive Council Unveils 37 New Universities, Federal Government Approves Development of Platform for Birth, Death Registrations Ministry of Aviation Changes Name in New Policy, Federal Government Ends Evacuation of Nigerians Trapped in Sudan, Federal Road Safety Corps Say Over 40,000 People Die Annually in Road Accidents, US Secretary of State Tasks Tinubu On Inclusive Leadership

Insecurity: 85 Killed in Plateau Herders-Farmers Clash, Gunmen Abduct 15 People in Federal Capital Territory, US Convoy attacked in Anambra State, Troops Uncover ISWAP Underground Armory in Borno State

Inflation Surges to 22.22% in April, Federal Government Incurs NGN 36.8 Trillion Deficit in 8 Years Under President Buhari, Nigeria Needs USD 12 Billion to Clean Up Oil Spills in Bayelsa State, United States to Impose Visa Restrictions On Nigerians Undermining the Democratic Process

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) consumer price index report released a 0.18% increase from April's inflation figure to 22.22%. The highest increases were recorded in prices of gas, air transport, liquid fuel, vehicle spare parts, fuels and lubricants for personal transport equipment, medical services and road transport. The continued surge in inflation means the measures by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) have yet to yield results. With the ongoing increasing inflation, Nigeria will continue to pay more for goods, leading to a drop in purchasing power by Nigerians. Ogaga Ariemu, [Daily Post News \(May 18th\)](#) reports.

The federal government (FG) has incurred a deficit spending of NGN 36.8 trillion in eight years under President Muhammadu Buhari. Analysis of data from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) on FG finances from 2015 to 2022 revealed that 77% of the deficit spending occurred in the last four years (2019-2022). The data showed that total revenue for the eight years stood at NGN 32.05 trillion, while total expenditure during the period valued at NGN 68.8 trillion. The deficit spending jumped by 60% in the last four years (2019-2022). The World Bank in a report stated: "The fiscal position deteriorated. In addition, low non-oil revenues and high-interest payments compounded fiscal pressures." Similarly, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) highlighted the need for bold fiscal reforms to create needed policy space, put public debt on sound footing and reduce vulnerabilities. Babajide Komolafe, and Elizabeth Adegbesan, [Vanguard News \(May 17th\)](#) report.

Nigeria needs USD 12 billion to clean up decades-old oil spills in southern Bayelsa state over a period of 12 years. Oil majors in Nigeria have long faced legal challenges over Niger Delta spills which they mostly blame on sabotage and vandalism of pipelines and illegal refining. The Bayelsa state Oil and Environmental Commission said in a report, that it started an investigation in 2019 on the impact of spills and looked at the evidence from forensic scientists, blood samples from people in affected areas and company data. The investigation discovered that toxic pollutants from spills and gas flaring were many times higher than the safe

limits in samples of soil, water, air and the blood of residents. The commission adopted a United Nations model used to calculate the clean-up cost of spills in Niger Delta's Ogoniland more than a decade ago and found that "the clean-up will cost USD 12 billion over 12 years". A spokesperson for Shell Nigeria could not comment. An Eni spokesperson said the oil spills were due to theft and unlawful exports and sabotage, but the company undertook to remedy all spills. Macdonald Dzirutwe, [Reuters News \(May 16th\)](#) reports.

The United States (US) government has said it had taken steps to impose visa restrictions on specific individuals in Nigeria for undermining the democratic process during the 2023 elections cycle. This was made known in a statement by the Secretary of State Anthony Blinken. While noting that "the United States is committed to supporting and advancing democracy in Nigeria and around the world", Blinken added that the visa restrictions were specific to certain individuals and not directed at the Nigerian people or the government of Nigeria as a whole. The US government disclosed that the decision to impose visa restrictions reflects the continued commitment of the United States to support Nigerian aspirations to strengthen democracy and the rule of law. Damilola Olufemi, [The Punch News \(May 15th\)](#) reports.

INEC Oppose Live Broadcast of Election Tribunal Proceedings by Opposition, National Association of Resident Doctors Announce Five-Day Warning Strike, Federal Government Rejects Bill to Halt Doctors' Migration, Federal Executive Council Unveils 37 New Universities, Federal Government Approves Development of Platform for Birth and Death Registrations, Ministry of Aviation Changes Name in New Policy, Federal Government Ends Evacuation of Nigerians Trapped in Sudan, Federal Road Safety Corps Say Over 40,000 People Die Annually in Road Accidents, US Secretary of State Tasks Tinubu On Inclusive Leadership

On Thursday, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), president-elect Bola Tinubu and his party, the All Progressives Congress (APC), opposed a call for the live broadcast of the proceedings of the presidential election petition court. The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and its presidential candidate Atiku Abubakar, who are jointly challenging Tinubu's victory at the poll, had called on the court to allow live broadcast of its proceedings. Arguing the application on Thursday,

the petitioners' legal team urged the court to allow the live broadcast of proceedings because of the national importance of the case. But objecting to the application, INEC countered that media coverage of court proceedings was controlled across the world, adding that allowing media houses to transmit proceedings live would defeat the solemn atmosphere of the court. Similarly objecting to the application, the president-elect's counsel urged the court to dismiss the application with the cost awarded against the applicant. The five-member panel subsequently reserved a ruling on the application but did not fix a particular date for the verdict. [Premium Times News \(May 18th\)](#) reports.

Nigerian doctors under the umbrella of the National Association of Resident Doctors (NARD) have embarked on a five-day warning strike on Wednesday after the federal government failed to meet their demands. The effects of the strike are already visible as it has disrupted health services across public tertiary hospitals in Nigeria. The doctors, among other issues, are demanding the immediate payment of the 2023 medical residency training fund, tangible steps on the review of the consolidated medical salary structure and payment of all salary arrears owed to its members from 2015. The president of the association, Emeke Innocent, said the decision was reached at the NARD's extraordinary national executive council meeting on Monday. According to the president, the warning strike would commence at 8am on Wednesday, May 17 and end at 8am Monday, May 22. Nike Adebowale Tamba, [Premium Times News \(May 19th\)](#) reports.

Minister of labor and employment Chris Ngige described a bill seeking to restrict the migration of Nigerian doctors currently being considered by the National Assembly as "unworkable". The bill aims to mandate any Nigeria-trained medical or dental practitioner to practice in Nigeria for a minimum of five years before being granted a full license. According to Ngige, the bill negates extant labor laws. Stephen Angbulu, [The Punch News \(May 16th\)](#) report.

The Federal Executive Council (FEC) meeting, presided over by vice president Yemi Osinbajo, has approved the licensing of 37 new universities in the country. Minister of education Adamu Adamu revealed that the development leads to 72 universities licensed in total by the Muhammadu Buhari administration since 2015. Fielding questions on the practicality of other universities against the backdrop of the funding challenges of the existing

universities, Adamu explained that these were all private with enough funds to run them; they should thus be allowed the opportunity to exist. He revealed that one of them was an online university, the first of its kind. Williams Anuku, [Daily Post News \(May 13th\)](#) reports.

The federal government (FG) has approved the development of an electronic civil registration and vital statistics system (eCRVS), a platform that will effectively keep electronic records of birth and death registrations. This is contained in a statement issued by Ifeanyi Nwoko, acting head of media and publicity of the Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission (ICRC). The commission said the concessionaire would inject NGN 5.3 billion private sector funds while the National Population Commission (NPC) would be the project grantor. The commission further explained that the license was given following the issuance of a full business case compliance certificate by ICRC. Nsikak Nseyen, [Daily Post News \(May 18th\)](#) reports.

The federal government (FG) has further approved the change of name of the Federal Ministry of Aviation to the Ministry of Aviation and Aerospace. The approval was given at the of the Federal Executive Council (FEC) meeting. Minister of aviation Hadi Sirika, who briefed the media after the meeting, claimed changing the name became necessary to position Nigeria with contemporary developments in aviation and aerospace. The minister noted that Nigeria's civil aviation policy was last reviewed in 2013, explaining that the present administration waited for president Muhammadu Buhari to consent to the new act to enable the ministry to draft policies from the law. The FEC also approved that the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport in Abuja and the Malam Aminu Kano International Airport in Kano be concessioned. Cyril Okonkwo, [The Voice Of Nigeria News \(May 18th\)](#) reports.

The federal government (FG) announced it had ended the evacuation of Nigerians trapped in war-Sudan, noting that the last batch of returnees arrived in Nigeria last Saturday. The FG stated that it was organizing a program to gather other Nigerians who might want to return home after the end of its evacuation exercise in Sudan. The government further highlighted that no Nigerian life was lost during the evacuation exercise. Okechukwu Nnodim, [The Punch News \(May 15th\)](#) reports.

The Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) has disclosed that over 40,000 people die annually from

road traffic crashes in Nigeria. The Corps Marshal, Dauda Biu, disclosed this during activities marking the 7th United Nations (UN) Global Road Safety Week. According to him, there is no more significant threat to people aged 5 to 29 years than road traffic crashes, as one in every four deaths occurs among pedestrians and cyclists. Biu further explained the UN had developed a global decade of action for road safety from 2021 to 2030 with an ambitious target to reduce road traffic deaths and injuries by 50% until 2030. [Premium Times News \(May 16th\)](#) reports.

The United States Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, has tasked the president-elect, Bola Tinubu, with inclusive leadership representing all Nigerians. Blinken, in a telephone conversation with Tinubu, also emphasized his continued commitment to further strengthening the US-Nigeria relationship with the incoming administration. A statement issued by the US Department of State Spokesperson noted, that the US-Nigeria partnership was built on shared interests and strong people-to-people ties and that those links should continue to strengthen under Tinubu's tenure. Both further discussed the importance of inclusive leadership that represents all Nigerians, continued comprehensive security cooperation and reforms to support economic growth. The president-elect urged the US to factor in Nigeria's important place in Africa and provide needed assistance in the areas of security and economical investment for the nation to lead the way and be a shining example to the rest of the continent. Adedayo Akinwale, [This Day Live News \(May 17th\)](#) reports.

Insecurity: 85 Killed in Plateau Herders-Farmers Clash, Gunmen Abduct 15 People in Federal Capital Territory, US Convoy attacked in Anambra State, Troops Uncover ISWAP Underground Armory in Borno State

According to reports on Thursday, at least 85 people have been killed in an attack in Mangu, Plateau state, as part of the ongoing clashes between herders and farmers, leading furthermore to the displacement of more than 3,000 people. The cause of the recent attack is unclear but it is very typical for the ongoing retaliation attacks between herders and farmers to escalate into raids on villages by heavily armed gangs. In addition, the area has a history of ethnic and religious tensions. Ac-

ording to the local government council chairman, all 85 bodies have been recovered so far. A community leader confirmed the same number of deaths. [The Punch News \(May 18th\)](#) reports.

No fewer than 15 persons, including a Federal Capital Territory (FCT) administration staff member, were abducted by gunmen in the Kuje Area Council, FCT. The gunmen stormed the estate at about 11:30 pm on Sunday, shot sporadically and abducted persons returning home from work. The chairman of the Residents Association, Taiwo Aderibigbe, disclosed the development to journalists in Abuja. The FCT Police has not responded to press inquiries. Abiodun Sanusi, [The Punch News \(May 16th\)](#) reports.

The United States (US) has condemned the attack on a convoy of US consulate workers in Anambra state by yet to be identified gunmen on Tuesday. At least four members of the convoy were killed. The attacked convoy reportedly had nine Nigerian nationals: five employees of the US mission to Nigeria and four members of the Nigeria Police Force. They were traveling in advance of a planned visit by the US Mission personnel to a US-funded flood response project in Anambra state. Responding, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, said the US was working with Nigerian law enforcement to bring those responsible to justice. President Buhari expressed sadness over the attack and commiserated with the families of those killed in the incident. Gift Habib and Stephen Angbulu, [The Punch News \(May 18th\)](#) report.

Troops of the 21 Armoured Brigade, have recovered a large cache of arms and ammunition from the Islamic State of the West African Province (ISWAP) insurgents in Borno State. The troops discovered the massive armory with arms and ammunition when they invaded the Ukuba camp, as part of the ongoing counter terrorist operation. According to a source, the recovery came after the troops raided the same camp and recovered six anti-aircraft guns, four AK-47 rifles, several IEDs-making materials, a cache of magazines and a vehicle mounted with an anti-aircraft gun. The operation (Desert-Lake-Mountain II) in the axis of the Sambisa-Timbuktu Triangle and the shores of Lake Chad, is making steady inroads as ground and backed air support continues to sustain pressures on the terrorists, killing scores of them while many others were forced to flee. Kingsley Omonobi, [Vanguard News \(May 15th\)](#) reports.



Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e. V.

Marija Peran, Resident Representative
Lukas Laible, Deputy Resident Representative
Adams Adamu, Project Assistant

Nigeria Office

www.kas.de/nigeria

www.facebook.com/kas.nigeria

marija.peran@kas.de / adamu.adams@kas.de



The text of this publication is published under a Creative Commons license: "Creative Commons Attribution- Share Alike 4.0 international" (CC BY-SA 4.0), <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/legalcode>