

# 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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### Health Crises Worsens as Resident Doctors Embark on Strike Amid Covid-19 Pandemic

In keeping with its earlier warning to the federal government to embark on strike if issues of welfare of medical personnel were not addressed within 14 days, the National Association of Resident Doctors (NARD) commenced strike action on Monday this week. Afolabi Sotunde, [Reuters \(15<sup>th</sup> June\)](#) details. The Minister for Health, Osagie Ehanire expressed concerns over the strike and the repercussion on the health situation in the country especially with the ravaging Covid-19 pandemic. Nike Adebowale of [Premium Times \(15<sup>th</sup> June\)](#) explains.

As part of efforts by the federal government to resolve the dispute, its officials have met with the leaders of NARD to discuss their demands and the way forward, although the meeting ended in a dead-lock. However, the government has threatened to sack doctors who do not return to work, [Eagle Online \(17<sup>th</sup> June\)](#) and [Vanguard News \(17<sup>th</sup> June\)](#) details. Nigerians have appealed to both the government and the doctors to immediately resolve the issue considering the huge negative impact the strike action will have on efforts to contain the Covid-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, NARD exempted doctors who are directly involved in treating Covid-19 patients from the strike in order to avoid worsening the effect of the pandemic. [Nigerian Tribune \(15<sup>th</sup> June\)](#). See details of reactions in, Don Silas, [Daily Post News \(15<sup>th</sup> June\)](#), and Kehinde Akintola of [Nigerian Tribune \(15<sup>th</sup> June\)](#).

At the global level, some foreign media have reacted to the strike and the impact it will have on the management of the Covid-19 crisis and the nation's economic development at large. Will Brown, [The Telegraph \(16<sup>th</sup> June\)](#), Peter Mwai and Christopher Giles, [BBC News \(17<sup>th</sup> June\)](#) write.

### Federal Government Develops Sustainability Plan for Post Covid-19 Pandemic

As part of plans to cushion the negative effect of the Covid-19 Pandemic, the federal government has embarked on a sustainability plan towards revamping the country's economy which has been badly distorted by the Coronavirus pandemic, a report by [Nairametrics \(16<sup>th</sup> June\)](#) explains. The federal government and the House of Representatives had last week revised the national budget and gave room for additions and

adjustments aimed at reviving the economy. The plan according to the government will bring the country back on the path of feasibility and development. Following the budget revision, the sustainability measures would refocus the economy to more relevant areas that will drive growth. Deji Elumoye and Udora Orizu, explain in [This Day News \(14<sup>th</sup> June\)](#). However, there is a disparity in the figures being presented by the House of Representatives and the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) on Nigeria's daily oil production. Fred Itua, [Daily Sun News \(18<sup>th</sup> June\)](#) details.

On the recent approval of external loans by the legislature which were included in the revised national budget, development economists have expressed concerns that "generations yet unborn may become slaves with mortgaged future, as a result of the Federal Government's insatiable appetite for loans acquisition, especially the Chinese variant", Kelvin Ebiri et al report in [Guardian News \(14<sup>th</sup> June\)](#). However, the Debt Management Office (DMO) has put Nigeria's total loan from China at \$3.121 billion as at the end of March this year. Emma Ujah writes in [Vanguard News \(19<sup>th</sup> June\)](#).

The full impact of the economic situation is yet to be seen as forecast by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) says "the world is in a recession and Nigeria's economy will shrink by at least 3.4%, although, local experts predict this recession will hit even harder", Oluwatosin Adeshokan of the [African Report \(16<sup>th</sup> June\)](#) writes. On a similar note, Nigeria recorded an increase in inflation by 12.40 per cent in May, John Ofikhenua reports in [The Nation News \(16<sup>th</sup> June\)](#). The rising cost of living worries low income consumers, Merit Ibe writes in [Daily Sun News \(18<sup>th</sup> June\)](#).

### Oshiomhole's Removal Tears APC Leadership Apart, Obaseki's Disqualification Deepens APC Crisis

The rift between the present governor of Edo state, Godwin Obaseki and the suspended All Progressives Congress (APC) national chairman, Adams Oshiomhole has thrown the party into leadership crisis at both national and state level following the party's disqualification of Obaseki from contesting for a second term, Samson Adenekan in [Premium Times \(12<sup>th</sup> June\)](#), and the Appeal Court sacking of Oshiomhole as party national chairman, [Premium Times \(16<sup>th</sup> June\)](#).

Meanwhile, an FCT high court reaffirmed an earlier order permitting Victor Giadom to act as the acting national chairman of the APC. [The Cable News \(18<sup>th</sup> June\)](#) explains. The action of the court followed claims by different factions in the APC announcing different persons as APC's acting chairman. Leo Sobechi et al, write in [Guardian News \(18<sup>th</sup> June\)](#). It will be recalled that Giadom in an earlier statement announcing himself as the rightful occupant of the seat had nullified Obaseki's disqualification from the party primaries in Edo. Jide Orintunsin, [The Nation \(18<sup>th</sup> June\)](#).

Meanwhile, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) is considering granting waivers to accommodate Obaseki to run under the party's ticket for the primaries, and has postponed the earlier scheduled date for the primaries in Edo State to make room for Obaseki to join. John Alechenu reports in [Punch News \(19<sup>th</sup> June\)](#).

As controversies arising from Obaseki's disqualification continue to deepen, citizens have called for caution to avoid throwing the state into chaos. Elder statesman and prominent leader of the South-South, Edwin Clark, described the decision by the APC to disqualify Obaseki as "horrendous". Friday Olorok, [Punch News \(16<sup>th</sup> June\)](#) writes.

### **Insecurity Rises as Reports Indicate Genocide in Nigeria**

The abject neglect of rural communities and the presence of ungoverned spaces in parts of northern Nigeria have been adduced as some of the reasons for the gradual decimation of rural areas in the North. In a recent story by Isa Sanusi, [Premium Times \(15<sup>th</sup> June\)](#), he said "murderers have tested the waters and now know that they can attack any rural community and get away with it, or even probably get amnesty when they are ultimately caught".

With the reports of mass killing in Borno State and Katsina State last week, and the recent reports of the continued escalating violence and murders in Nigeria ([DW News \(16<sup>th</sup> June\)](#)) still in our minds, the UK All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for International Freedom of Religion or Belief released its new report on atrocities committed by Fulani militia in Nigeria. The report entitled "Unfolding Genocide?" points to the fact that Nigeria is becoming a genocidal nation, Ewelina U. Ochab, [Forbes News \(15<sup>th</sup> June\)](#) and Rowan

Williams, [Independent News \(15<sup>th</sup> June\)](#) for details.

Worried by the increasing killings in Katsina State, residents in the state embarked on protests to condemn the nonchalant attitude of the government, and demanded the resignation of the state governor, Aminu Bello Masari and President Muhammadu Buhari. Nwafor Sunday of [Vanguard News \(16<sup>th</sup> June\)](#) reports. Leading the protest, the Coalition of Northern Groups (CNG), a civil society organization, gave the federal government an ultimatum to sack all the service chiefs and end the killings in the region. Nwafor Sunday et al write in [All African News \(16<sup>th</sup> June\)](#). Reacting to the protest, the federal government has arrested the leader of the CNG, Nastura Sharif and others for causing civil unrest in the state. Olalekan Adebayo, [Punch News \(17<sup>th</sup> June\)](#), and Abdulraheem Aodu of [Blueprint News \(17<sup>th</sup> June\)](#) write. The Friday Musings with Ayo Olukotun, [Punch News \(19<sup>th</sup> June\)](#) examines the killings in Katsina State against the backdrop of the protests.

Meanwhile, President Buhari has dispatched the National Security Adviser (NSA), and other Intelligence chiefs to Katsina State as part of plans to address the increasing insecurity. Jude Johnson reports in [Global Sentinel \(18<sup>th</sup> June\)](#). The Minister of Defence also convened a meeting with the ministers of Police Affairs, Interior and Information to find solutions to end insurgency and banditry in the country. Molly Kilete, [Daily Sun \(18<sup>th</sup> June\)](#) writes. Bulama Bukarti, a sub-Saharan Africa analyst at the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, analyses ISWAP's change towards a new deadlier approach in Nigeria, [Council on Foreign Relations \(June 19<sup>th</sup>\)](#).

### **INTERPOL and Nigeria Step up Cybercrime Investigations**

In a bid to tackle the increasing rate of cybercrime in Nigeria, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and Nigeria's intelligence agencies have stepped up the tracking and apprehension of citizens who indulge in cybercrimes including wire fraud, relationship scams, and money laundering among others. Recently, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) declared 6 Nigerians wanted for wire fraud. Eniola Akinkuotu, [Punch News \(18<sup>th</sup> June\)](#).

In a similar vein, INTERPOL recently arrested a Nigerian social media celebrity Ramon Abbas also

known as Hushpuppi in Dubai over an alleged fraud of \$35m Covid-19 funds meant for American citizens. Fikayo Olowolagba writes in [Daily Post News \(13<sup>th</sup> June\)](#). However, Nigeria's intelligence agencies and their counterparts in United Arab Emirates and the US have been at logger heads over the extradition of Hushpuppi. Samuel

Ogundipe, [Premium Times \(13<sup>th</sup> June\)](#) reports. With the growing rate of unemployment in Nigeria, there are possibilities that cybercrimes could increase drastically despite efforts being made by security agencies to stem the tide. A report by Fadeyi Elizabeth, [The Nation \(18<sup>th</sup> June\)](#) explains.

### Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e. V.

Dr. Vladimir Kreck, Resident Representative  
Vera Ali, Project Assistant / Editor Press Review

Nigeria Office

[www.kas.de/nigeria](http://www.kas.de/nigeria)

[www.facebook.com/kas.nigeria](https://www.facebook.com/kas.nigeria)

[vladimir.kreck@kas.de](mailto:vladimir.kreck@kas.de) / [vera.ali@kas.de](mailto:vera.ali@kas.de)



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