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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: Nigeria's GDP Declines by 6.10% in Q2 2020 as Minister Reveals Looming Recession, Export Earnings Drop

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) has announced a decline in Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 6.10% (year-on-year) in real terms in Q2 2020. The NBS disclosed this in its second quarter (Q2) GDP report, released on Monday. Bamidele Samuel Adesoji, [Nairametrics \(24th August\)](#) explains. According to the NBS, the recent GDP figure marks an end to the 3-year trend of low but positive real growth rates recorded since the 2016/2017 recession. It further stated that the performance recorded in Q2 2020 represents a drop of 8.22% points when compared to Q2 2019 (2.12%), and 7.97% points decline when compared to Q1 2020 (1.87%). It attributed the significant decline to the negative impacts of the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and crash in oil prices.

Reacting to the recent figures released by the NBS, the Minister of State for Budget and National Planning, Prince Clem Ikanade Agba, has said that Nigeria may experience another negative growth in the third quarter of the year 2020. Agba disclosed this while "declaring open a capacity building workshop organised by Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS), for the heads of the inter-ministerial Technical Working Groups (TWG), constituted towards the development of the Med-Term National Development Plans (2021 – 2025 & 2026 – 2030). Matthew Ogune, [Guardian News \(25th August\)](#) details.

Ruth Olunrobi writes in [The African Report \(26th August\)](#) that the devastating effect of the Coronavirus has continued to take its toll on the economy of several nations which has led to a fall in Nigeria's export earnings, that has dropped by nearly \$2bn in one month. According to data released by the Central Bank of Nigeria, "the export of crude oil fell by 20% and 14% to \$9.48bn compared with \$11.84bn sold in the 4th quarter of 2019" and cash crops for export to foreign countries increased by 0.9% from \$2.14bn in the 4th quarter of 2019". In another article by Ruth Olunrobi [The African Report \(27th August\)](#) provides further analysis of the expected recession that might become the worst Nigeria has to face in four decades.

Buhari Ends Estimated Electricity Billing and Orders Nationwide Metering, NASEC Seeks Budget Increase for NASS

President Muhammadu Buhari has ordered a nationwide mass metering for residents following the cessation of the estimated billing consumption by electricity Distribution Companies (Dis-Cos). Also, President Buhari has approved a waiver of the import levy on meters, to enable availability and cost reduction. Disclosing this, the Chairman of the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC), James Momoh, in a statement said that the order is in response to the outcry from citizens. [Premium Times \(27th August\)](#) reports. President Buhari also approved the implementation of the proposed cost-reflective electricity tariff for the Nigerian Electricity Supply Industry (NESI). However vulnerable residential areas will not be affected. Taiwo Adebulu, [The Cable News \(26th August\)](#) and Chike Olisah of [Nairametrics \(27th August\)](#) write.

Meanwhile, the Executive Chairman of the National Assembly Service Commission (NASC), Ahmed Amshi, has asked the federal government to increase the National Assembly's annual budget despite the backlash from the public over the amount allocated to the National Assembly. Amshi stated that the N125bn allocated to NASS would not be enough to fund the legislative arm and urged that the budget be increased for proper functioning and stability. Queen Esther Iroanusi, [Premium Times \(26th August\)](#) reports.

Analysts Express Worry over China – Nigeria Deals, Senate Panel Probes NTA – Star Times Agreement over Alleged Multi-Billion Naira Fraud

Controversies have continued over the loan deals between China and Nigeria as more analysts have expressed deep concern and discontent on the implications of the loans for Nigeria's future. In an article by Adagbo Onoja, [The Diplomat \(August 25\)](#), the current backlash in Nigeria draws mainly on the anger over the participation of China's Huawei in 5G networks and claims of uniquely Chinese racial practices against Nigerians; and the image of "China in Africa" more broadly. Onoja alluded to several letters to the editor of the Diplomat, which refer to the deals as "Nigeria's Abusive Marriage with China and Slave Agreements" for which Nigeria needs to liberate itself from, referring to China as a predatory,

amoral intruder. Onoja further analyses the growing discontent about China and the insistence of the US to make China abide by the rules of fair play saying that “China is actually a master at self-promotion, particularly in painting itself as Africa’s hero”.

Meanwhile, the Nigerian Senate has disclosed an alleged fraud in the joint venture operations between the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) and a Chinese Satellite Pay TV, StarTimes, running into multi-billion naira. The Senate Joint Committee on Finance and National Planning made the disclosure when it examined the NTA’s expenditure for 2021 with the details of the 2021-2023 MTEF & FSP documents, saying that the deal between the two companies was not captured in the documents submitted to it by the Director-General of NTA, Mallam Mohammed Yakubu. John Akubo, [Guardian News \(21 August\)](#), writes. The suspicion of fraud was heightened when the Chairman of the Senate Joint Committee, Solomon Olamilekan, questioned why NTA was obstructing StarTimes from being registered with the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC). Responding to the query, Yakubu refuted the Senate’s allegation, emphasizing that NTA had no reason to shield StarTimes from being registered considering the subsisting Joint Venture Agreement (JVA) between the two companies. The Senate panel queried why the JVA was not officially documented and asked the NTA to come back with records of its revenue and debt profile since the inception of the JVA. [Premium Times \(26th August\)](#), details.

APC Commences Screening of Candidates for Legislative Bye-Elections, Edo State Crisis Deepens

Following the recent announcement by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), on legislative Bye-Elections slated for October 31, the All Progressives Congress (APC) has scheduled August 26 and 27 for the screening of candidates for the election in Bayelsa, Cross River, Imo, Lagos, Plateau, Borno, Zamfara and Kogi states. The election is to fill vacant legislative seats in states and National Assembly. Samson Adenekan, [All African News \(25th August\)](#) reports.

Meanwhile, the APC has criticized the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) of having nothing to show saying that “incumbent governments run for re-election on their achievements and records

in office, but Governor Godwin Obaseki has only excuses, deceit and blackmail to offer Edo people.”Ozioruva Aliu, [Vanguard News \(26th August\)](#) explains. Similarly, the deputy governorship candidate of the PDP and current Deputy Governor of Edo State, Phillip Shaibu has accused the former national chairman of the APC, Adams Oshioh mole of plotting to undermine the forthcoming Edo State gubernatorial election. Martins Ifijeh and Adibe Emeyonu of [This Day News \(26th August\)](#) write. On another note, the APC has alleged that the relationship between the Governor of Rivers State, Nyesom Wike, and Justice Taiwo Taiwo may interfere with the suits of perjury among others filed against the candidate of the APC, Osagie Ize-Iyamu, in the September 19 governorship election of Edo State. [Sahara Reporters \(25th August\)](#) details.

Insecurity: Amnesty International Reveals Rising Insecurity, Boko-Haram Kills 75 in One Night, 410 Terrorist Surrender, IPOB and Police Clash

Amnesty International has expressed concern over the rising insecurity in the country which has led to flagrant destruction of lives and property as well as displacement of communities. According to a recent report by Amnesty International, “more than 1,100 people have been killed in rural areas across several states of northern Nigeria amid an alarming escalation in attacks and abductions during the first half of the year”. Amnesty International further said that the reoccurring attacks by bandits have instilled palpable fear in the people as revealed in recent surveys carried out on residents in, Katsina, Niger, Plateau, Sokoto, Taraba, and Zamfara states. [Aljazeera News \(24th August\)](#) explains. Amnesty International attributed the worsening situation to government failure to combat insecurity and called for intervention by the federal government in addressing the situation. [Premium Times \(24th August\)](#) details.

John Campbell explains in the [Council of Foreign Relations \(25th August\)](#) that the influence of the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) is expanding as they continue to extend their reach in the West African region with attacks in Niger and new alliances with their counterparts. Even though it is difficult to distinguish between attacks by Darul Salem, ISWAP and Boko-Haram.

Meanwhile, the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Army, Senator Ali Ndume, has revealed an attack by the Boko Haram in Gwoza Town of Borno State, that left 75 persons dead. Disclosing this at an event in Maiduguri, Ndume said that the community is not only faced with insecurity but also hunger and hardship. Adulkareem Haruna of [Premium Times \(27th August\)](#) writes.

On another note, 410 members of the Darul Salam Terrorist Group have surrendered in Nasarawa State following an operation by the Nigerian military in a bomb-making factory belonging to the terrorist group. Disclosing this in a statement, Major General John Enenche said that among the surrendered terrorists were women

and children. [The Authority News \(28th August\)](#) details.

In a developing story, a face-off between the Nigeria Police and members of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), has left many dead and others thrown into panic. Anayo Okoli reports an eye witness account in [Vanguard News \(23rd August\)](#). Trouble started when an IPOB member resisted arrest by security agents during an IPOB meeting. Speaking on this, Peter Afunanya a spokesperson of the State Security Services (SSS), said that 2 officers of the SSS died in the cross-fire. Reacting to the clash, Emma Powerful of the IPOB said that 21 of its members were killed in the clash and 47 have been arrested. James Eze, [Premium Times \(23rd August\)](#).

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