

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: Scares of Fifth Wave as Three Deaths Are Recorded in One week

Latest statistics from the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) show that Nigeria is experiencing a significant surge in Covid-19 infections across the country with more than 3,000 active cases. The NCDC had previously hinted at the possibility of a fifth wave, urging Nigerians to adhere to recommended public health safety measures amidst the rising cases of infections in the country. The data also revealed that the fatality toll now stands at 3,147, with three deaths being reported just this month. While the NCDC didn't state specifically what variant is driving the surge in Nigeria, it revealed in its most recent situation report that testing in the country had decreased by over 50%. Mariam Ileyemi, [The Premium Times News \(July 25th\)](#) reports.

Local Airlines Warn Passengers of Major Flight Disruptions Due to Aviation Fuel Scarcity, FG Approves Lease of Aircraft by Nigeria Air to Commence Operations, IMF Downgrades Nigeria's Growth Projection by 3.4%, Nigeria, Algeria and Niger Discuss Pipeline Passage to Europe, ActionAid Advises Against Government Ban on Miners and Commercial Motorcycles, FG Commences Disbursements of Grants to Vulnerable Nigerians

The Airline Operators of Nigeria (AON) have raised an alarm that there would be major flight disruptions in the aviation sector due to scarcity of Jet-A1, otherwise known as aviation fuel. This is the second time in over two months that the association is announcing possible disruptions of flight operations in the country over the same scarcity of aviation fuel. The Spokesman of AON said that the current scarcity of aviation fuel would lead to cancellations and prolonged delays across all airports in the country. The airline operators pleaded for the understanding of the travelling public, asking them to bear with its members as efforts are currently being made to address the development and restore normal flight operations. Chike Olisah, [Nairametrics \(July 22nd\)](#) reports.

The Federal Executive Council (FEC) has approved for the new national carrier, Nigeria Air, to lease aircrafts to commence operations. The Minister of Aviation, Senator Hadi Sirika, disclosed this at the end of the council meeting presided over by President Muhammadu Buhari. Although he declined

to disclose the commencement date of operations, he restated that the airline would be owned by Nigerians with 51% shares, while the rest will go to foreign partners. Johnbosco Agbakwuru, [The Vanguard News \(July 28th\)](#) reports.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) in its July 2022 World Economic Outlook retained Nigeria's 2022 economic growth projection at 3.4% despite the adverse macroeconomic environment. However, the IMF downgraded the country's 2023 projection to 3.2% from 3.3% initially projected in its April 2022 Outlook, stating that "a tentative recovery in 2021 has been followed by increasingly gloomy developments in 2022." Elizabeth Adegbesan, [The Vanguard News \(July 27th\)](#) reports.

The Algerian Energy Minister Mohamed Arkab hosted his counterparts from Nigeria and Niger, Timipre Sylva and Mahamane Sani, to sign a memorandum of understanding on the Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline (TSGP) that would transport billions of cubic metres of gas from Nigeria in West Africa through Niger and on to Algeria to offer Europe a potential future alternative to Russian supplies. Although the contents of the memorandum of understanding were not disclosed, but the long-dormant project has seen an uptick in interest in recent months as gas prices have surged following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. [Channels News \(July 28th\)](#) reports.

ActionAid Nigeria has warned the Federal Government against their planned ban of commercial motorcycles, popularly known as Okada, as well as mining activities in a bid to stem the rising insecurity across the country, insisting that the decision would further aggravate poverty in the country, ActionAid, while agreeing that placing a ban on the use of motorcycles and mining activities might cut the supply of logistics and source of funds for the purchase of arms to terrorists, said while this is being contemplated in the national interest to combat insecurity, there must be well thought-through alternatives to lessen the effects of the attendant loss of livelihoods on the people that would be affected. Michael Olugbode, [This Day Live News \(July 26th\)](#) reports.

The disbursement of N 20,000 grants to poor Nigerians under the Grants for Vulnerable Groups programme has commenced this week. The Federal Government has announced the programme would be kick-started in the Federal Capital Territory before progressing to the 36 states of the fe-

eration, adding that the initiative was done through the National Social Investment Programme. The Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, Sadiya Farouq, explained that 70% of the total number of beneficiaries would be women. "The specific objectives are to increase access to financial capital required for economic and income-generating activities, promote financial inclusion among unbanked and underserved populations and contribute towards improving their living standard," she stated. Okechukwu Nnodim, [The Punch News \(July 28th\)](#) reports.

INEC Says 11 Million Additional Nigerians Registered to Vote, Senate Passes Bill to Check Proliferation of Weapons, National Assembly Faces Backlash Over Failure to Impeach President Muhammadu Buhari

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has said 11 million Nigerians have been added to the voter register in the ongoing Continuous Voter Registration (CVR). The commission also disclosed that 10,487,972 new registrations were recorded with 3,391,940 registering online and 7,619,179 through physical registration. According to INEC, the gender breakdown of the registrants that have completed their registration comprised 5,453,071 males and 5,558,048 females. The released statistics also indicated that 7,828,570 of the figure belong to the youth while 80,101 are persons with disabilities. Sodiq Omo-laoye, [The Guardian News \(July 26th\)](#) reports.

The Senate has passed a bill to establish the National Commission for the Coordination and Control of the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons. The passage of the National Commission Against the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (Establishment) Bill, 2022, followed the consideration of a report by the Committee on National Security and Intelligence. The bill is a consolidation of three bills. Chairman of the Committee, Senator Ibrahim Gobir, said the three bills seek to provide for the establishment of a government body that will be charged with combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Nigeria. According to him, the functions of the body shall be in line with Article 24 of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Convention on the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons which came into force in 2009. [Sahara Reporters \(July 26th\)](#) reports.

The National Assembly has come under criticism for refusing to start the process of impeaching President Muhammadu Buhari over the deteriorating security situation in the country and fears of a terrorist attack around the capital Abuja. The Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) also criticized Buhari for his alleged leadership failure in securing lives and property and for jetting out of the country despite attacks and fears of more terrorist attacks. In a statement by its National Coordinator, Comrade Emmanuel Onwubiko, HURIWA has therefore asked the President to supply arms and ammunition to adult Nigerians without any criminal records to combat the terrorist and defend the sovereignty of Nigeria. John Owen Nwachukwu, [The Daily Post News \(July 27th\)](#) reports.

Insecurity: Terrorists Attack Military Checkpoint in Abuja, Failed Attempt on Nigeria Law School and Ambush President Buhari's Guards Brigade Troops, National Security Adviser Says Citizens Are Resulting to "self-help" in the face of Insecurity, Reports Indicate 4.7% Rise in Violent Attacks, Terrorists of the Abuja-Kaduna Attack Releases Video Indicating Plans to Attack on President Buhari, El-Rufai and other Prominent Nigerian

This Friday morning Boko Haram terrorists have stormed an Army checkpoint at Zuma Rock on the axis of Madalla and Suleija along the Abuja-Kaduna highway at the border between the Federal Capital Territory and Niger State, taking soldiers by surprise and opening fire from different angles. An unknown number of soldiers were said to have been killed by the terrorists. Following the retreat of the terrorists, more troops and equipment from the Army base in Zuma Barracks were deployed for reinforcement to the scene. While retreating, the insurgents who were said to be in several motorbikes, reportedly attacked some villages and shops in Madalla. Kingsley Omonobi, [The Vanguard News \(July 29th\)](#) reports.

This comes days after the Presidential Guards Brigade, an elite arm of the Nigerian Army responsible for protecting the President of Nigeria, was in a gun duel with terrorists on Monday in the capital Abuja. Three of the highly-trained officers suffered serious injuries as they were ambushed by the insurgents. Details on the extent of the injuries suffered are still under confirmation. A signal confirmed that the troops were on a routine patrol

along the Kubwa–Bwari road. “The ambush happening within the general area of Bwari shows that the terrorists are actually within the location and possibly preparing to carry out their plans to attack the law school in Bwari as earlier reported”, it reads. Wale Odunsi, [The Daily Post News \(July 25th\)](#) reports.

The National Security Council said it would implement new strategies to address the fast-spreading insecurity and terrorist attacks nationwide as Nigerians were growing “tired” of the menace and are now turning to self-help. The National Security Adviser, Major General Babagana Monguno (retd), who spoke alongside the Inspector General of Police, Usman Baba, said the President is well aware of the dire security challenges the country finds itself in at the moment. However, he said the solution will not come from a single strategy. He also revealed that Council will soon conclude its special investigation on the July 5 Kuje Correctional Center attack that saw the release of over 600 terrorists and would punish those who, by neglect of duty, allowed the terrorists to get away. Stephen Angbulu, [The Punch News \(July 28th\)](#) reports.

According to a report by Beacon Consulting, a security risk management and intelligence consulting company, Nigeria’s security has deteriorated notably in the last six months. Despite assurances of safety from the Federal Government and efforts of security forces, no fewer than 6.698 persons were killed in violent attacks across the country

during that period. The report also showed that more citizens were kidnapped in 2022 compared to 2021 and saw an increase in kidnappings of 24.3%. Also, there were 2.357 cases of violent attacks, representing a 47.5% increase compared to last year. The North witnessed more than 86% of the total fatalities and abductions, while 13.3% was recorded in the South. Godsgift Onyedinefu, [The Business Day News \(July 29th\)](#) reports.

Terrorists suspected to be members of the Ansaru group who kidnapped the passengers of the Kaduna-Abuja train in March have vowed to abduct President Muhammadu Buhari and Governor of Kaduna State, Mallam Nasiru El-Rufai, if their demands were not met soon. In a new video released by the group on Sunday morning and trending on social media platforms, terrorists were shown flogging the remaining male passengers of the train while the female passengers were asked to line in front of the male passengers after they were flogged. The near three minutes long video saw a bearded passenger who was asked to speak on their behalf, saying the terrorists told them that they did not plan to keep them as hostage for more than a week, if the Federal Government reacted accordingly. Also speaking in the video, one of the terrorists boasted that they would kidnap President Buhari, the Kaduna State Governor El-Rufai and other prominent Nigerians, saying they are going to destabilize the country soon if their demands are not being met. Muhammad Sabiu, [The Tribune News \(July 24th\)](#) reports.

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