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Nigeria Office

## 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.

#### Content

Covid-19: Two Years After Pandemic Research Institute Shuts Down

New Regulations Set for Replacement of Subscriber Identity Module (SIM), GSM Operators to Plan 40% Tariff Hike, Nigeria and Morocco Plan World's Longest Offshore Gas Pipeline, EU-Nigeria Trade Rises by 25.8 Per cent, Nigeria's Economic Stability Threatened by Russian Oil Ban, New Visa Category Exempts Nigerian Graduates From Nigerian Universities

All Progressives Congress (APC) in Akwa Ibom State is Conflict-ridden, Attorney-General Receives Backlash for Distributing Billion Naira Vehicles to APC Supporters, President Buhari Salutes United Nation Leaders for Partnering in Fight Against Terrorism

Insecurity: Death toll in Building Collapse Rises to 10

### **Covid-19: Two Years After Pandemic Research Institute Shuts Down**

The Nigerian Institute of Medical Research (NIMR) says it has suspended the operation of its free drive-through testing center for coronavirus. Director-General of the NIMR, Babatunde Salako, explained that the action was taken because Nigerians were no longer turning up for the Covid-19 test. Salako disclosed that while the institute had conducted sample testing of well over 46.000 individuals in the last two years, NIMR was losing money in its bid to sustain the free initiative. "We folded up the free drive/walk-through centre because only a few people were coming to request Covid-19 testing. More so, we are also running out of funds to maintain free," he said. The development is coming two days after the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control recorded 13 fresh infections in Lagos, Kaduna and Rivers State after Monday's Eid celebration. Adebayo Folorunsho-Francis, [The Punch News \(May 5<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

### **New Regulations Set for Replacement of Subscriber Identity Module (SIM), GSM Operators to Plan 40% Tariff Hike, Nigeria and Morocco Plan World's Longest Offshore Gas Pipeline, EU-Nigeria Trade Rises by 25.8 Per cent, Nigeria's Economic Stability Threatened by Russian Oil Ban, New Visa Category Exempts Nigerian Graduates From Nigerian Universities**

The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) has released new Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) replacement rules for individuals, corporate organizations and IoT/machine to machine. The NCC released a new comprehensive document bearing the guidelines and stated at the same time that the use of NIN is mandatory for all SIM replacement. Foreigners, who are lawfully residing in Nigeria for two years or longer and thus fall under the category of registrable persons, shall require a NIN for SIM replacement while foreigners validly transiting through Nigeria or who are employed in or reside in Nigeria for less than 24 months are exempted from the mandatory use of NIN requirement. Adegemi Adepetun, [The Guardian News \(May 4<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

Telecommunication companies are proposing a 40% increase in the cost of calls, SMS and data to the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) as a result of the rising cost of running a business in the nation. This was revealed by the Association

of Licensed Telecommunication Operators of Nigeria to the NCC in an open letter. According to them, the telecommunication industry has been financially impacted following the nation's economic recession in 2020 and the effect of the ongoing Ukraine/Russia crisis. To them, this has resulted in an increase in energy costs, increasing their operating expenses by 35%. Temitayo Jayeola, [The Premium Times News \(May 4<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

The Federal Government and Morocco are planning to build the world's longest offshore pipeline and second-longest pipeline in the world to carry gas from Nigeria to Morocco, running across 11 West African countries. The partnership between the Nigerian National Petroleum Company and the Moroccan National Office of Hydrocarbons and Mines was originally signed by the two countries in June 2018. Media aide to President Muhammadu Buhari, Tolu Ogunlesi, said, that "when completed, the over 7.000 km long gas pipeline will link Nigeria with Morocco and extend to Europe." Meanwhile, the Minister of State for Petroleum, Timipre Sylva, has announced that the Nigeria-Morocco gas pipeline may not be completed under the Buhari regime. Henry Falaye, [The Punch News \(May 3<sup>rd</sup>\)](#) reports.

The trade volume between the European Union (EU) and Nigeria has increased by 25.8%, peaking at € 28.7 billion in 2021. The EU's imports from Nigeria stood at € 17.5 billion while its exports were valued at € 11.2 billion, with the trade balance at € 6.4 billion in favor of Nigeria. The Head of the European Union Delegation to Nigeria and the Economic Community of West African States, Samuela Isopi, disclosed this at a press briefing ahead of Europe Day 2022 coming up on May 9. She said the EU would continue to pursue with increased vigor its bilateral engagement and friendship with Nigeria to deliver better and more results in their partnership. Ambassador Isopi affirmed that the EU is working with its member states, the European Investment Bank and other EU development finance institutions in the implementation of the agreed priorities as one Team Europe. Reeling out the gains of the Union's bilateral relations with Nigeria, she stated, "the EU remains Nigeria's biggest trading partner, first investor, top donor of humanitarian and development aid and the biggest diplomatic network". Adelani Adepegba, [The Punch News \(May 6<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

Nigeria may face fresh hurdles as the geo-political tension in Europe recently escalated with moves

to officially ban Russian crude oil. Following the continued attack on Ukraine, the European Commission proposed a full ban on the product. The proposed ban, which has sent oil prices rising by over 4% to about USD 108 per barrel, means higher cost of petroleum products for Nigeria as well as an increase in subsidy spending. As Europe is considering its ban, India as the world's third-largest oil importer and Nigeria's largest crude oil buyer is, according to media house Bloomberg, negotiating discounts for the Russian oil, asking for below USD 70 per barrel to compensate for logistics, financing and sanctions troubles. Although the development according to stakeholders may eventually become blessings in disguise to a country like Nigeria, which is already wooing European investors to gas infrastructure development in Nigeria, the immediate implication has been projected to worsen rising inflation in Nigeria. Kingsley Jeremiah, [The Guardian News \(May 5<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

The United Kingdom (UK) is set to commence issuance of a new visa that allows Nigerian holders of bachelor degrees, masters and doctorates to travel to the country and work in fields such as science, technology, innovation and entrepreneurship. The visa allows applicants to relocate to the UK without a prior job offer or sponsorship when certain requirements are being met. The new visa policy, which is expected to take off on May 30, requires prospective applicants to have graduated from one of the top 50 schools featured in a renowned world university ranking. On the expiration of the visa, the holders can switch to "permits under the skilled worker, start up and innovator, exceptional talent or scale up the route" for continued stay in the UK. Checks by Daily Trust, however, revealed that no Nigerian university features among the top 50 universities in the latest reports of the three global university rankings recognized by the UK Government. Afeez Hanafi, [The Daily Trust News \(May 6<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

### **All Progressives Congress (APC) in Akwa Ibom State is Conflict-ridden, Attorney-General Receives Backlash for Distributing Billion Naira Vehicles to APC Supporters, President Buhari Salutes United Nation Leaders for Partnering in Fight Against Terrorism**

The leadership crisis within the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Akwa Ibom State has deepened, with the party now having two headquarters in the state. The headquarters of the APC in Uyo is at Ikot

Ekpene Road. However, a faction loyal to the Minister of Niger Delta Affairs, Godswill Akpabio, recently opened new headquarter office elsewhere in the city. To scare away potential troublemakers, the entrance of the new office was manned by officers inside a pickup truck most of the time. Internal power play resulted in one APC member presenting forged documents to a court in order to secure the judgement against his opponent. Meanwhile, the former APC National Secretary, John James Akpanudoedehe, has gone to the Abuja Court of Appeal to challenge said ruling of the lower court. Saviour Imukudo, [The Premium Times News \(May 4<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami, has been openly criticized for distributing over 50 exotic cars to ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) members ahead of the party's governorship primary in Kebbi State. On Saturday, Malami allegedly gave out 30 Mercedes Benz GLK, 20 Toyota Prado and other exotic vehicles to party executives and delegates. However, the distribution has triggered negative reactions, with many wondering where Malami got the money to purchase all these vehicles. The move has drawn criticism to President Muhammadu Buhari who rode to power on the promise to put an end to corruption. "In a sane country all these political jobbers ought to be in money laundering suspect list. APC government have manifested their looting prowess in this coming elections," a Facebook user commented. [The Sahara Reporters \(May 2<sup>nd</sup>\)](#) reports.

During his visit of United Nations (UN) Secretary General Antonio Guterres at the Presidential Villa on Wednesday, President Muhammadu Buhari said Nigeria remains grateful to the UN and some world leaders on their steadfast partnership in fighting terrorism in the country. Buhari showed concern that the spotlight on Russia and Ukraine could have easily distracted the world from other pertinent global challenges like terrorism but at the same time noted that the ongoing visit of Guterres clearly showed that "the world has not forgotten us". According to the President, terrorism remains a threat to global peace, security and progress, with many already killed, while millions have been displaced by the insurgents over many years. After visiting a camp for internally displaced people in Maiduguri, Guterres said the UN had called for an additional USD 351 million as part of the overall USD 1.1 billion for the humanitarian response plan for Nigeria. [The Premium Times News \(May 5<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

### **Insecurity: Death toll in Building Collapse Rises to 10**

The death toll from the collapse of a mainly residential three-storey building in Lagos has risen to 10, including a young boy, officials disclosed on Tuesday. The building collapsed late Sunday. The Lagos State Fire and Rescue Service confirmed the new toll, saying that the survivors sustained “vary-

ing degrees of injury”. President Muhammadu Buhari on Monday called for stepped-up construction standards. “The frequency of building collapses in the country has become increasingly embarrassing; the relevant state authorities must work closely with professional bodies to put a halt to these unfortunate but preventable incidents”, he said. News Agency of Nigeria, [The Guardian News \(May 3<sup>rd</sup>\)](#) reports.

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

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