

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 the overall situation in Nigeria.

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Nigeria Labour Congress Says Cash Circulation Low, KPMG Has Warned of a 40% Rise in Unemployment Rate Amid Economic Shutdown, Association of Nigeria Oil Marketers Maintain Nigeria Records Lowest Petrol Price in West Africa at 254 Naira Per Liter

The Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) has warned that its ultimatum to the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to provide sufficient cash within two weeks or risk the picketing of its offices was still standing. NLC vice-president Adewale Adeyanju disclosed that the congress was monitoring the cash supply to the commercial banks by the CBN, noting that the current cash flow was less than 100% as expected. He, however, admitted that the situation was better than what was obtained in the past few weeks. Providing an update on Monday, Adeyanju disclosed that the NLC would meet to review the ultimatum issued to the CBN to decide on the way forward. Okechukwu Nnodim and Anozie Egoe, [The Punch News \(April 5th\)](#) reports.

Unemployment is expected to continue to be a major challenge in 2023 due to limited investment by the private sector, low industrialization and slower than required economic growth and, consequently, the inability of the economy to absorb the four to five million new entrants into the Nigerian job market every year, international accounting organization KPMG predicts in its Global Economic Outlook report. Nigeria's unemployment rate will rise further to 40.6% in 2023, the report indicated. In addition, KPMG said that key non-oil sectors such as manufacturing, trade, accommodation, food services and transportation would be negatively affected by the Naira redesign policy introduced by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), further slowing down overall gross domestic product (GDP) growth in 2023. KPMG further projected that the incoming administration would face a deeply rooted challenging environment characterized by fragile and slow economic growth and challenges in the foreign exchange market. Kingsley Okoh, [The Leadership News \(April 6th\)](#) reports.

Nigeria has recorded the lowest pump price of premium motor spirit (PMS), i.e. petrol, among twelve West African countries. According to the latest weekly industry data sheet released by the Major Oil Marketers Association of Nigeria (MOMAN), Nigeria was at the bottom of the ladder with a petrol pump price of NGN 264 per liter. In arriving at the petrol pump prices, MOMAN said all USD per liter prices are sourced from the platform Globalpetrolprices.com, while it used the Naira

per liter price using the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) rate of NGN 460 per USD 1. Senegal topped the petrol pump ladder with a cost of NGN 752,56 per liter, followed closely by Mali with a price of NGN 658,26 per liter. The third and second cheapest prices were recorded in Benin at NGN 494,04 per liter and Liberia at NGN 486,68 per liter. Adewale Sanyaolu, [The Sun News \(April 6th\)](#) reports.

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The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) will, on April 15, conclude the 2023 General elections with supplementary elections in 2.660 polling units across 185 local government areas (LGAs) of 24 states. The supplementary elections conclude the governorship, state houses of assembly, senatorial and house of representative's elections in constituencies where they were suspended due to several reasons, including violence and situations where the margin of the vote between the winner and the first runner-up is less than the cancelled votes. INEC had conducted the presidential and national assembly elections on 25 February 25, and the governorship and state houses of assembly polls on March 18. Qosim Sulaiman, [The Premium Times News \(April 1st\)](#) reports.

The minority caucuses in the House of Representatives have commenced the process of alliance to present a unified front ahead of the inauguration of the 10th assembly in June. The ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) has won 159 seats out of the 325 seats declared by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). Meanwhile, the combined strength of the opposition is 163 seats, with the PDP having 102 seats. The Labour Party (LP) and New Nigeria People's Party (NNPP) have 34 and 18 seats, respectively; All Progressives Grand

Alliance (APGA) has four seats, Action Democratic Party (ADC) and Social Democratic Party (SDP) two each, and Young Progressives Party (YPP) has one seat. Speaking on the alliance, George Ozodinobi, a lawmaker-elect from Anambra state, said the LP is committed to a partnership as long as the process aligns with its values. The moderator of the meeting, Dachung Bagos (PDP, Plateau state), informed the lawmakers that the combined strength of the opposition was more than the ruling party. He noted a need for unity to achieve a collective interest. Bakare Majeed, [The Premium Times News \(April 5th\)](#) reports.

Minister of information and culture Lai Mohammed, while in the United States for official engagements with international media organizations, had said the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) took a decision to suspend the uploading of the presidential election results on its online platform IReV, after INEC suspected that the platform was susceptible to hacking. "INEC, suspecting cyberattack, withheld the uploading of the results in order to preserve the integrity of the data", the minister was quoted as saying by the government-owned News Agency of Nigeria (NAN). According to him, because INEC suspected a cyberattack, it took deliberate action to withhold the uploading of the results. The statement was, however, contradictory to what INEC told Nigerians a day after the election, maintaining the delay in uploading the presidential results was due to "technical hitches" and not because of sabotage. When confronted with the contradictory statement, Lai Mohammed blamed the media, specifically Premium Times, for "irresponsible and reckless" reporting. He, however, failed to explain the reason for the contradiction. [Premium Times News \(April 5th\)](#) reports.

The Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) has called for the live broadcasts of court hearings on election petitions across the country, particularly the presidential election cases. The NBA said live broadcasts of the election petition courts and tribunals "will allow citizens to follow the proceedings, have better knowledge of the facts and an understanding of the reasoning behind decisions of the courts in those matters". The association condemned the violence and voter intimidation during the recent elections in Lagos. It demanded "the arrest and prosecution of identified electoral offenders". Ameh Ejekwonyilo, [The Premium Times News \(March 30th\)](#) reports.

The Federal Government on Tuesday said the Labour Party presidential candidate, Peter Obi, and his running mate, Datti Baba-Ahmed, risked being prosecuted for treason over some of their utterances on the February 25 presidential election. On Tuesday, the minister of information and culture, Lai Mohammed, who gave the warning in Washington, United States (US), said Obi and Baba-Ahmed's statements amounted to insurrection. He added that Obi and his running mate were inciting people to violence over the poll's outcome. While urging Nigerians to remain law-abiding, Obi stated, "I'm on record, as always, advocating peace and issue-based campaign, not a campaign based on ethnicity or religion". Obi described Mohammed's trip to the US and the statement as reckless. Julius Abure, the national chairman of the Labour Party, said he was disappointed with the minister's utterances. According to him, the federal government's warning, which should have been directed at the ruling party and their spokespersons, was done in bad taste. Leke Baiyewu et al, [The Punch News \(April 5th\)](#) reports.

A few days after a leaked audio where he described the 2023 presidential election as a "religious war", Labour Party presidential candidate, Peter Obi, has denied the treason allegation levelled against him by the federal government. On Tuesday, he took to Twitter to comment on the issue while addressing allegations of treason made by the minister of information and culture, Lai Mohammed. He said he had observed deliberate moves to de-market him by various persons, including Nigerian government officials. He also noted, "I have never discussed or encouraged anyone to undermine the Nigerian state; I have never sponsored or preached any action against the Nigerian state. However, those initiating these actions have increasingly used their official positions and agents to make false allegations against me." Obi and Atiku Abubakar of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) are challenging the outcome of the February 25 presidential elections won by Bola Tinubu of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC). They have filed petitions at the election petition tribunal, each seeking to be declared the winner. Ibrahim Adeyemi, [The Premium Times News \(April 4th\)](#) reports.

Presidential candidate Peter Obi and the presidential campaign council of the Labour Party (LP) have described as "faked and doctored" the leaked audio of the conversation between Obi and the foun-

der of Living Faith Church, David Oyedepo. In the audio, Obi was heard asking Oyedepo to help spread his campaign message to Christians in the south-west and parts of north-central. While repeatedly addressing the cleric as “daddy”, the LP standard-bearer told Oyedepo that the just concluded presidential election was a “religious war.” Meanwhile, Kenneth Okonkwo, LP presidential campaign council (PCC) spokesperson, and Valentine Obienyem, a spokesperson for Obi, on Sunday confirmed the authenticity of the audio. Still, it gave a different interpretation of the conversation. Obi has denied playing politics of religion and ethnicity and asked his critics to provide evidence. Abdulkareem Mojeed, [The Premium Times News \(April 6th\)](#) reports.

The minister of water resources, Suleiman Adamu, has urged the international community to fully support Nigeria’s quest to save Lake Chad from extinction and revive its potential. Adamu, who was in New York to attend the just-concluded United Nations water conference, made the call in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN). The minister said the shrinking of the lake had impacted negatively on the source of livelihoods of the people living in the area, adding that more than 40 million people were affected. Adamu said that all the fishing, farming, irrigation and grazing opportunities were lost. The lack of opportunities had caused poverty in that area, giving room for a breeding ground for Boko Haram. [The Premium Times News \(April 2nd\)](#) reports.

Insecurity: Nigeria’s Communication Commission Chief Purports High Level Electronic Combat Readiness to Fight Insecurity, Army Warns Against Plans to Truncate Democracy

The Executive Vice Chairman of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Prof. Umar Danbatta, has said the fight against insecurity, external aggression and other threats to national peace needs a high level of electronic combat readiness. When officers cadet of the Nigerian Defence Academy (NDA) visited NCC headquarters in Abuja, Danbatta noted that communications are strategic to electronic combat readiness. According to him, modern warfare is not won by physical combat anymore, but in the command and control centres. Danbatta observed cyber-attacks as a trending threat and appealed to the military to assist the country in preventing the dangers posed by cybercriminals. Nkechi Onyedika-Ugoeze, [The Guardian News \(April 4th\)](#) reports.

The Nigerian Army has warned against any threats to democracy and national sovereignty as the country prepares to hand over government on May 29. The warning comes after the Department of State Services (DSS) said it had identified some key players in a plot for an interim government designed to stop the inauguration of Bola Tinubu as president. The chief of army staff, Lt.-Gen. Faruk Yahaya, said it would resist any attempt by any violent group. Godsgift Onyedinefu, [The Business Day News \(April 4th\)](#) reports.

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