

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: NARD Calls Off Doctors' Strike, Osinbajo Calls for Swift Implementation of Stimulus Package, Buhari Charges Ministers to Publicize their Achievements

Following the strike by the National Association of Resident Doctors (NARD), the federal government has called for the replacement of striking doctors with members of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), and others. Speaking on this, the Minister of Health, Osagie Enhaire charged all Chief Medical Directors (CMDs) and Managing Directors of federal tertiary hospitals to utilise serving doctors of the NYSC and consultants as the timing of the strike is precarious with the present Coronavirus in the country. Regina Otokpa, [New Telegraph News \(September 10th\)](#) details. However, the federal government has approved the payment of N8.9bn for June 2020 Covid-19 allowance for medical workers in the country. The Minister of Labour and Employment, Chris Ngige said that NARD will consult with its executive council to call off the strike following the memorandum of agreement signed between NARD and the federal government. Meanwhile, NARD has called off the strike. Daily, Soji-Eze Fagbemi, [Tribune News \(September 10th\)](#) and Benjamin Babine, [Daily Sun \(September 11th\)](#) report.

Earlier, Vice-President Yemi Osinbajo has called for speedy implementation of the N2.3trn planned stimulus package. Speaking at the First Year Ministerial Performance Review Retreat, Osinbajo urged ministers and relevant stakeholders to act swiftly on the plan to alleviate the ravaging impact of Covid-19 on the economy. Osinbajo while presenting an overview of the Economic Sustainability Plan (ESP), highlighted some packages for implementation by the federal government that would boost several sectors of the economy, generate employment, and boost productivity. [Premium Times \(September 8th\)](#) details. On the same note, President Muhammadu Buhari has charged the Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning (BNP), Zainab Ahmed, the Governor of Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Godwin Emefiele, and heads of agencies to ensure the speedy release of funds for the swift implementation of the N2.3trn stimulus package. President Buhari also urged his cabinet members to be persistent in speaking about their achievements. He reiterated efforts being made to combat insecurity, fight corruption, and to lift 100 million citizens out of poverty. He further spoke on the policies and projects of the government that have recorded success despite challenges encountered. Adejumo Kabir, [Premium Times \(September 8th\)](#) and Bankole, [Vanguard News \(September 9th\)](#) detail.

President Buhari Okays Removal of Fuel Subsidy, Directs CBN to Stop Forex for Importers of Food and Fertilizer, Citizens Protest against Price Hike

President Buhari has said that the federal government cannot reverse the removal of fuel subsidy as the impact on the economy and the state budget would be devastating. Buhari said that "if the government should resume the business of fixing or subsidizing PMS prices, it would mean a return to the costly subsidy regime with the potential return of fuel queues". Muideen Olaniyi, [All Africa News \(September 7th\)](#) explains. Similarly, as part of the Economic Sustainability Plan (ESP) for job creation through agriculture, Buhari has directed the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), to stop giving foreign currencies to importers of food and fertilizers as a way to encourage local production. Bolaji Ogundele, [The Nation \(September 11th\)](#) writes.

Meanwhile, the hike in electricity tariff and fuel has sparked an outcry in the media as citizens have begun to protest against the government. Adejumo Kabir, [Premium Times \(September 8th\)](#) details. Some groups including the Lagos Chapels the Socialist Party of Nigeria (SPN), National Conscience Party of Nigeria (NCP), Campaign for Workers Democratic Rights (CWDR), and university students under the aegis of the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS), have embarked on the street protests in Lagos, Osun, Oyo, Ogun, and Ondo states to call for a reversal. However, the Nigeria Police has arrested protesters and journalists in Lagos. Adejumo Kabir, [Premium Times \(September 8th\)](#) and Victor Ahuma-Young, [Vanguard News \(September 10th\)](#) explain. On the same note, groups including the Trade Union Congress (TUC), the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), and the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) have criticised the hike, saying it will affect the most vulnerable especially in a time where the country battles its economic challenges. Olalekan Adetayo et al, [Punch News \(September 8th\)](#), [The Nation \(September 9th\)](#), and [Vanguard News \(September 8th\)](#) detail.

APC to Amend Party Constitution, APC and PDP Bicker Over Selection of Party Agents in Edo State, Hoodlums Storm Ondo State House of Assembly

The Youth Representative in the Caretaker/Extra-Ordinary Convention Planning Committee, Ismaeel Ahmed, has revealed plans by the All Progressives Congress (APC), to revise its party's constitution to include a "clause" that would drive elected members and appointed officials to meet with people at grassroots twice yearly ahead of the 2023 election.

Saawua Terzungwe, [All Africa News \(September 8th\)](#) details.

Meanwhile, the APC has accused the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) of allegedly plotting to present the names of agents of some political parties to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) as those of the PDP. The disclosure was made by the Chairman of Edo State APC Media Campaign Council, John Mayaki, who alleged that the list was manipulated by the Edo State government house for some parties like the Allied Peoples Movement (APM), Action Democratic Party (ADP), National Rescue Movement (NRM) and Labour Party (LP). Responding, the Publicity Secretary of the PDP, Chris Nehikhare debunked the allegation, saying "It is one of their (APC) baseless allegations as usual". Ozioruva Aliu, [Vanguard News \(September 7th\)](#), and Adibe Emenyonu, [This Day News \(September 8th\)](#) write.

In developing reports, hoodlums blocked the entrance of the Ondo State House of Assembly (OSHA) in an attempt to prevent 9 suspended lawmakers from entering the building despite a court ruling that revoked the suspension. It is believed that the development is connected to the disagreement between the Governor of Ondo State, Rotimi Akeredolu, and the Deputy Governor, Agboola Ajayi, who are candidates for the coming governorship election under different parties. Josiah Oluwole, [Premium Times \(September 7th\)](#) explains. On another note, the national leader of the APC, Bola Tinubu, has cleared the air regarding the rumored disagreement between him and Akeredolu. Tinubu made the clarification in an interactive session with Ondo State traditional rulers saying that "the state needs the governor to continue his good job so that the people could enjoy more dividends of democracy". [Premium Times \(September 5th\)](#) reports.

Insecurity: Governor Links Nigeria's Growing Insecurity to Poverty, and Unchecked Population, 100 Bandits Killed, 148 Arrested in North-West, DHQ Assures FCT of Safety Following Intelligence Report

The Governor of Delta State, Ifeanyi Okowa, has linked the rising insecurity bedeviling the country to the high rate of poverty, unemployment and the rising population. Okowa stated this during a visit from the Resident Representative of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS), Vladimir Kreck, and the Director-General of the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS), Abubakar Suleiman at the government house in Asaba, Delta State. According to Okowa, to combat insecurity in the country, these factors must be

thoroughly dealt with. Francis Sadhere, [Business Day \(9th September\)](#) explains.

Meanwhile, the Nigerian Army claimed that about 100 bandits were neutralized in the Operation Sahel Sanity at Faskari Local Government Area of Katsina State in the last two months. It added that the operation captured 148 suspected bandits. Disclosing this, the Acting Director, Defence Media Operations, Brig. General Benard Onyeuko, stated that the operation also led to the arrest of 32 bandits' logistics suppliers, 13 cattle rustlers and many others. Olaide Oyelude, [Punch News \(September 5th\)](#) details.

In recent reports, the Northern Patriots (NP), have commended President Muhammadu Buhari and the security chiefs for the improvement of the security situation in the 19 northern states. According to a report by the National Coordinator of the NP, Nuruddeen Dodo, the meetings between President Buhari and the Security Chiefs have contributed immensely to the successes recorded by the troops at the forefront. [Daily Sun \(8th September\)](#) details. However, a popular Islamic Cleric, Sheik Murtala Bello Sokoto, has criticised President Buhari over the government's failure to address insecurity in the country. He stated that President Buhari cannot visit even his home town in Katsina State due to insecurity. [Sahara Reporter \(September 9th\)](#) details.

On another note, the Nigerian Defence Headquarters has assured the FCT of its vigilance following the intelligence report earlier circulated by the Nigerian Customs Service (NCS). In the internal memo signed by the Comptroller of Enforcement NCS, H.A Sabo, there were plots to attack some areas in the country, especially the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The memo also disclosed FCT areas where the terrorists are allegedly camped. Tobias Lengnan Dapam and Lateef Ibrahim, [People's Daily \(September 7th\)](#) explain. However, there are speculations that the shootout between suspected terrorist and the local vigilante group of Tunga Maji Community near Zuba Town, FCT, Abuja may be linked to the intelligence report circulated by the NCS. The Public Relations Officer of the FCT Police Command, Anjugur Manzah, said that an eyewitness disclosed that the gunmen kidnapped about 20 persons and the operation lasted for about an hour. Nasir Ayitogo, [Premium Times \(September 10th\)](#) details. Recent reports reveal that some of the kidnapped victims have been rescued. Ralph Christopher, [Authority News \(September 11th\)](#) details.

P&ID Controversy: UK Court Grants Reprieve for Nigeria, Shasore Accused of Corruption

The Presidency has commended the pronouncement by the Royal Court of Justice Strand, London granting an application of extension to Nigeria in the suit filed by the Process and Industrial Development (P&ID) on the breach of gas supply and processing agreement. Disclosing this, the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Media and Publicity, Garba Shehu, said that “the judgment is right, just and provides a strong prima facie case that the fraudulent gas deal with P&ID and the subsequent judgment debt of \$10bn against Nigeria was a clear attempt to cheat the country of billions of dollars by a company that had not invested one Naira in our country”. [Premium Times \(4th September\)](#) and Tobi Soniyi, [This Day Live \(6th September\)](#) report.

On the same note, the Attorney-General of the Federation, Abubakar Malami, said the ruling of the court was based on new evidence of corruption and fraud in the procurement of the deal. [Premium Times \(4th September\)](#) writes. Malami in a report to President Buhari indicted the former Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Ibrahim Magu, alleging that Magu failed to commence prompt

investigation into the case disregarding the directive from President Buhari. However, the ruling by the Royal Court revealed that the EFCC had indeed conducted a swift investigation which led to the discovery of the evidence that secured a remarkable win for Nigeria in the ongoing case. Nicholas Ibekwe, [Premium Times \(5th September\)](#) details.

In a similar vein, the Judge who presided over the ruling, Justice Ross Cranston, indicted Nigeria's first counsel in the arbitration and former Attorney General of Lagos State, Olasupo Shasore, of alleged bribery and corruption. Cranston questioned Shasore's loyalty to Nigeria and expressed concerns over the legal fees of \$2m Shasore received among others. Responding, Shasore denied the allegation and faulted the federal government's position “as spiteful personal attacks on his professional conduct and reputation”. Alfred Olufemi, [Premium Times \(6th September\)](#) writes.

Meanwhile, Malami has said that Nigeria has not paid the \$200m as earlier ordered by the british court following its appeal. He said that the payment which is due in November has been appealed by the federal government. Alfred Olufemi, [Premium Times \(7th September\)](#) explains.

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