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Nigeria Office

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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's Inflation Hits All-Time High, Nigeria Set to Join African Continental Free Trade Area's New Initiative

Nigeria's headline inflation rate for the month of July 2023 increased to an all-time high of 24.08% compared to 22.79% recorded in June 2023, showing an increase of 1.29% points. Similarly, on a year-on-year basis, the headline inflation rate was 4.44% points higher compared to the rate recorded in July 2022, which was 19.64% according to latest figure released by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). The increase in the headline index for July 2023 was attributed to an increase in contributions of some items in the basket of goods and services at the divisional level. Mark Itsibor, [The Leadership News \(August 15th\)](#) reports.

The national working committee on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) has expressed the readiness of the country to join the second phase of the Guided Trade Initiative of the AfCFTA, a solution-oriented approach aiming to facilitate trade between interested state parties by connecting businesses and products for export and import. The committee noted that Nigeria's commitment to AfCFTA is very crucial in boosting the nation's economic growth, noting that the alliance will broaden Nigeria's economic goals and objectives. Nigeria was prepared to join the second phase, to demonstrate and strengthen specific objectives and trade relations, particularly reducing trade barriers, streamlining customs procedures, ensuring infrastructure and promoting value-addition with key industries. [The Punch News \(August 18th\)](#) reports.

President Bola Tinubu Assigns Portfolios to Minister Designates, Federal Government Announces NGN 5 Billion Palliative Per State, ECOWAS Troops Pledge to Deploy Force to Niger if Diplomatic Efforts Fail, Nigerian Clerics Seek Diplomatic Settlement with Niger Coup Leaders, Court Strikes Out Illegal Possession of Firearms Charge Against former CBN Governor

President Bola Tinubu has assigned portfolios to all the 45 minister-designates, whose nominations were recently confirmed by the Senate ahead of their inauguration on Monday. The assignment of appointees to their respective ministries marked a departure from the past when portfolios were given to ministers on the day of their inauguration. Some of the designates and their portfolios include: Nyesom Wike, heading the Federal Capital

Territory (FCT); Wale Edun as the minister of finance and coordinating minister of the economy; Atiku Bagudu as minister of budget and economic planning; Sa'Idu A. Alkali as the minister of interior and Bello Mattawale as minister of defense. Yusuf M. Tuggar, immediate past ambassador to Germany, was appointed as minister of foreign affairs. As it has been the case since the latest return to democracy in 1999, the minister of petroleum resources is reserved for president Tinubu. Nigeria Employers' Consultative Association (NECA) praised the allocation of ministries and identified the positions as largely well suited to the appointees' abilities and experiences. Click [here](#) to see the full list of assignees. [This Day News \(August 17th\)](#) reports.

The federal government (FG) announced NGN 5 billion palliatives to be given to each of the 36 states to cushion the effect of the removal of petrol subsidy. It also set up an ad-hoc committee to engage with the leadership of labor unions. Members of the committee include: Nigerian Governors Forum, Progressive Governors Forum and PDP Governors Forum. The vice president said the committee will liaise with the leadership of labor unions in the country to find a way forward on the emerging issues in the interest of the nation. [Premium Times News \(August 17th\)](#) reports.

Troops of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have pledged readiness to deploy their standby force to restore civil rule in Niger Republic should diplomatic efforts to reverse the coup fail. All member states, except those under military rule and Cape Verde, pledged to participate in the standby force at a meeting this week in Accra, Ghana. ECOWAS commissioner for political affairs Abdel-Fatau Musah was quoted that "if everything else fails, the valiant forces of West Africa (...) are ready to answer to the call of duty. By all means available, constitutional order will be restored in the country." The Nigerien presidential guards have seized power from President Mohamed Bazoum on July 26th, resulting in ECOWAS issuing a one-week ultimatum to the coupists to restore the democratically elected president or otherwise risk sanctions. The military has ignored ECOWAS threats so far but appointed a new prime minister and vowed to resist foreign intervention. [The Punch News \(August 17th\)](#) reports.

Islamic scholar and chairman of the largest Salafi movement in Nigeria Bala Lau has disclosed that the leaders of the coup in Niger Republic refused

to meet with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) delegation because they alleged ECOWAS did not hear them out before issuing an ultimatum addressed at them. Bala Lau had led a delegation of Islamic clerics to Niamey, the capital of Niger, to seek diplomatic resolution of the tensions, following a meeting of the clerics with the ECOWAS chair, president Bola Tinubu, asking to be allowed to intervene in seeking a resolution of the conflict. Lau told the coup leader that the visit to Niger was to engage in constructive dialogue to encourage him and other military leaders behind the coup to tow the path of peace instead of war to resolve the crisis. The delegation claimed it was well received by the coup leaders and both parties had fruitful discussions. Chiamaka Okafor, [Premium Times News \(August 13th\)](#) reports.

The Federal High Court struck out the illegal possession of firearms charge filed by the federal government (FG) against suspended Central Bank of Nigeria Governor Goodwin Emefiele. This was done following an application by the director of public prosecutions in the ministry of Justice to withdraw the charge. The defendant's counsel had argued that the prosecution could not withdraw the charge unless the FG obeyed the court's order, granting Emefiele a NGN 20 million bail. The presiding judge in his ruling blamed the government for its disobedience, stating that the conduct of the prosecution showed that it did not respect the rule of law. He further stated that the charge was struck out for lack of diligent prosecution. The absence of a co-defendant to Emefiele has stalled their arraignment for an alleged NGN 6.9 billion fraud. Yetunde Ayobami Ojo and Ameh Ochojila, [The Guardian News \(August 18th\)](#) report.

Insecurity: Nigerian Army Lose 26 Members While Rescue Helicopter Crashes, Ethnic Clash Leaves 82 Dead, Terrorists Abduct 19 in Katsina State

At least 26 members of the Nigerian security army were killed and eight wounded in an ambush by

gunmen in Niger state. This was confirmed by two military officers who pleaded anonymity. One of the soldiers stated that while the army had inflicted heavy losses on the attackers, they had lost communication with an air force helicopter that had been dispatched to evacuate the casualties, with 11 of the dead and 7 of the injured aboard. It was later discovered that the helicopter had crashed. A Nigerian air force spokesman confirmed that its Mi-171 helicopter crashed on Monday while on a "casualty evacuation mission" after initially having departed for Kaduna. [The Guardian News \(August 14th\)](#) reports.

Seven Boko Haram fighters were reportedly executed by their leader in Borno state. This followed the leakage of a story that the seven had attempted to surrender to the Nigerian army but failed. After killing them, an ethnic crisis broke out among the four tribes of the insurgents: Hausa, Fulani, Kanuri and Buduma. Some members of the Baduma tribe accused the commander of high-handedness. Sources said that a meeting of all the commanders, irrespective of their tribe, was summoned. It was agreed that fighters were free to leave to their chosen locations. There was however resistance from the commander of the Baduma tribe who insisted that they had come to investigate the killing of his brethren. In the heat of argument, he was shot and killed by one of the fighters. Exchange of fire broke out among them which left 82 insurgents dead. A security source in the area confirmed that most of the dead fighters were known faces of Boko Haram insurgents that fled from Niger Republic and other parts of the Sahel region. Hamisu Kabir Matazu, [Daily Trust News \(August 17th\)](#) reports.

In a Sunday night attack in Katsina state, 19 people were reportedly abducted by unknown terrorists. A source said the attackers were careful not to fire any shots so as not draw the attention of security agents stationed in nearby communities. When contacted, police spokesperson in Katsina state Abubakar Sadik asked for some time to verify the information. Mohammed Babangida, [Premium Times News \(August 15th\)](#) reports.



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