

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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Slight GDP-Growth in Second Quarter of 2024, 31.8 Million Nigerians Affected by Food Insecurity, Ethiopian Airlines Announces End of Partnership with Nigeria on National Carrier, US Donates 10,000 Doses of Mpox Vaccine to Nigeria

Nigeria's real gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 0.21% to 3.19% in the second quarter of 2024 from 2.98% in the first quarter. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) the performance of the GDP was driven mainly by the services sector, which recorded a growth of 3.79% and contributed 58.76% to the aggregate GDP. One a year-on-year basis, the agriculture sector grew by 1.41% and the industry sector by 3.53%. In the second quarter of 2024, the oil sector grew by 10.15%, while the non-oil sector growth was 2.8% during this period. The oil sector contributed 5.7% to the total real GDP in quarter 2, up from the figure recorded in the corresponding period of 2023 and down from the preceding quarter, where it contributed 5.34% and 6.38% respectively. Elizabeth Adegbesan, [The Vanguard News \(August 26th\)](#) reports.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) said that over 31.8 million Nigerians were suffering from acute food insecurity, worsened by malnutrition among women and children across the country. The organisation disclosed this in its 2024 Cadre Harmonise report, published in collaboration with other development partners including GIZ. The report pointed out that the surge in food commodity prices occasioned by the removal of fuel subsidy, as well as security challenges, had further placed millions of Nigerians in a precarious situation. During their joint review meeting on the implementation of the food systems in Nigeria, the stakeholders advocated a multi-sectoral approach of collaboration to tackle food insecurity. They stressed that the civil society organisations and the private sector must play a role to complement nutrition efforts. Ndubuisi Francis and James Emejo, [This Day Live \(August 28th\)](#) report.

Mesfin Tasew, the group chief executive officer (GCEO) of Ethiopian Airlines, says plans to establish a national carrier in collaboration with the Nigerian government and institutional investors, have ended. In May 2023, Hadi Sirika, former aviation minister, unveiled Nigeria Air, the country's national carrier. However, the launch was trailed by widespread controversy. Prior to its launch, domestic aviation firms, under the aegis of Airline Operators of Nigeria (AON), had opposed the

floating of the airline over uncertainties in its ownership structure. A conflict that began soon after Ethiopian Airlines was announced as the preferred bidder for Nigeria Air. Consequently, a federal high court in Lagos restrained the government from floating the airline. On August 31, 2023, Festus Keyamo, minister of aviation, announced the suspension of the national carrier project. Tasew said the deal had ended because Nigerian operators did not welcome it. The GCEO further said Ethiopian Airlines is exploring plans to expand to other African countries where it has already partnered with operators such as Togo, Malawi, and Zambia. Busola Aro, [The Cable News \(August 28th\)](#) reports.

The United States government has donated 10,000 doses of the mpox vaccine to Nigeria to support efforts in responding to the current outbreak. The donation was made through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and was received by the National Primary Healthcare Development Agency (NPHCDA). Speaking while making the donation in Abuja, Richard Mills, USAID ambassador in Nigeria, encouraged the federal government to continue to mobilise domestic resources to secure more vaccines to combat mpox. Mpox is prevented through vaccination. Individuals 18 years of age and older are determined to be at high risk for mpox infection and highly recommended to take the vaccine. The vaccine is a two-dose primary series for use in persons who have never received smallpox vaccine and a single booster for individuals previously vaccinated with a smallpox vaccine. Jesupemi Are, [The Cable News \(August 27th\)](#) reports.

Tinubu Appoints New Director Generals of Intelligence Agencies, Federal Government Announces 50% Electricity Subsidy for Public Hospitals, No Timeline Yet for Implementation of Oronsaye Report, Ondo Shifts Local Government Elections to January 18, 2025, President Departs for State Visit in China

President Bola Tinubu has approved the appointment of new directors general of the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) and the Department of State Services (SSS). Adeola Ajayi is the new director general of the DSS, while Mohammed Mohammed of the NIA. Adeola Ajayi rose through the ranks to attain his current post of assistant director general of the service. He had, at various times, served as state director in Bauchi, Enugu, Bayelsa, Rivers and Kogi. Mohammed Mohammed had

served in various roles, culminating in his promotion to the rank of director and his subsequent appointment as the head of the Nigerian mission to Libya. President Tinubu expects that the new security chiefs will work assiduously to reposition the two intelligence agencies for better results and charges them to bring their experience to bear in tackling the security challenges bedeviling the country through enhanced collaboration with sister agencies and in surgical alignment with the Office of the National Security Adviser. [Premium Times \(August 26th\)](#) reports.

The federal government has approved a 50% subsidy on electricity tariffs for public hospitals nationwide. The minister of state for health and social welfare, Dr. Tunji Alausa, disclosed this while commissioning a hospital project in Kaduna. While fielding questions on pressing health system issues from newsmen shortly after the commissioning, the minister also said the warning strike by doctors was complicating issues for the release of the kidnapped doctor from the Eye Centre Kaduna. Further, Alausa assured that despite the poor structure inherited, president Tinubu is engaging state governments to expand projects on Health Science Universities to sustain the rise of health sciences enrolment from 24,000 annually to 100,000. Nonye Ekwenugo, [Leadership News \(August 30th\)](#) reports.

Femi Gbajabiamila, the chief of staff to president Bola Tinubu, has stated that there is no specific timeline yet for the implementation of the Steve Oronsaye report. Gbajabiamila addressed concerns that the report's progress had stalled. He emphasised that the federal government is actively working on the necessary preparations to ensure a smooth implementation of the policy when the time comes. He further explained that the complexity of the process requires careful planning, adding that a committee has been established to review the report and finalise the details. While he could not provide an exact timeline, Gbajabiamila said that the implementation would begin "soon." Sandra Nwaokolo, [Nigerian Tribune \(August 28th\)](#) reports.

The Ondo State Independent Electoral Commission (ODIEC) again shifted the local government election to January 18, 2025. The election, which was to be conducted on December 16, 2023, was postponed to February 17, later postponed to July 13, and finally postponed indefinitely before the announcement of the new date. According to the commission, the election was rescheduled due to

non-compliance of political parties with the electoral guidelines and processes. The chairman of the committee said that the distribution of non-sensitive materials to the 18 local governments would take place from January 6, 2025, to January 10, 2025. [Vanguard News \(August 30th\)](#) reports.

President Tinubu departed Nigeria for a state visit to China. During the visit, the President will meet with president Xi Jinping and hold meetings with Chinese business leaders on the sidelines of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation. The discussions are expected to focus on enhancing cooperation between Nigeria and China. The meetings aim to attract Chinese investments that could significantly boost Nigeria's economic development, a spokesperson said. Terhemba Dak, [The Guardian \(August 29th\)](#) reports.

Insecurity: Niger Republic Reaffirms Commitment to MNJTF, Concerns as Mass Abduction Ransom to Kidnappers in One Year

Niger has reaffirmed its commitment to re-engage in the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF). This decision was announced following a high-level meeting between Nigeria's chief of defence staff and Niger's chief of staff of the armed forces in Niamey. Recall that Niger had previously announced its withdrawal from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) due to concerns over perceived interference in its internal affairs. However, the country has now pledged to actively participate once again in the MNJTF, a coalition force established to combat security threats in the Lake Chad region. The meeting, which aimed to strengthen the bilateral relationship between Nigeria and Niger, focused on deepening security cooperation between the two nations. Both military leaders stated the need for continued and expanded cooperation, including joint military operations, intelligence sharing, and tactical coordination. Chris Johnson, [Daily Post News \(August 29th\)](#) reports.

Despite promises to end terrorism and general insecurity by president Bola Tinubu, banditry and kidnapping for ransom have continued to thrive. In the past couple of years, there has been a surge in kidnapping for ransom across the country, particularly in the north-west. Last week, 20 medical students from the University of Maiduguri and the University of Jos were abducted in Benue state. Amongst others, the major mass abductions in the

last few months: On March 7, 2024, a criminal gang kidnapped 287 pupils at a government secondary school in Kuriga, Kaduna. Days after the Kuriga abduction, gunmen stormed Kajuru, abducting 87 persons. On March 9, 2024, gunmen abducted 15 children from a school in Sokoto. In January 2024, gunmen abducted five pupils, three teachers, and a driver from Apostolic Faith School in Ekiti. In September 2023, bandits stormed the Federal University of Gusau and abducted 24 students and staff from the university. Abdul Babajida, [Daily Post News \(August 28th\)](#) reports.

SB Morgen (SBM) Intelligence, a geopolitical research firm, says kidnappers demanded over NGN 10.9 billion from victims and their families between June 2023 and July 2024. Out of the total amount of NGN 10.9 billion demanded as ransom, only N1 billion was received. About 7,568 people were abducted in 1,130 incidents across the country in that same period. Giving state analysis, the research firm said of the 1,130 reported kidnapping cases, Zamfara, Kaduna and Katsina had the highest numbers of incidents and victims. Busola Aro, [The Cable News \(August 29th\)](#) reports.

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