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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 situation in Nigeria.

Content

Daunting Report on Mass Abortion by Nigerian Army Surfaces, Defence Minister Refutes Reports, Ports Authority Managing Director Raises Concern Over USD 1.5 Billion Lekki Port, FG Says 6.1 Million People have been Displaced from Climate Change in 13 Years, Armed Persons Attack INEC Office in Imo State

Abuja-Kaduna Train Records Low Passenger Traffic Upon Resumption, FAO Report Reveal that 25 Million Nigerians May Face Food Crisis by 2023, Nigerians in Diaspora Sue President Buhari and INEC, Central Bank Limits Cash Withdrawals to NGN 100.000 Weekly, FG Laments Downgrade by Global Rating Agencies

Insecurity: Abuja Residents Lament Renewed Insecurity, ISWAP Fighters Killed Following Allegiance to ISIS Leader

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Since at least 2013, the Nigerian military has conducted a secret, systematic and illegal abortion program in northeast Nigeria, ending at least 10,000 pregnancies among women and girls, a Reuters investigation has found. Witnesses say that resisters were beaten, held at gunpoint or drugged into compliance. The abortions mostly were carried out without the person's consent – and often without their prior knowledge, according to the witness accounts. The women and girls ranged from a few weeks to eight months pregnant, and some were as young as 12 years old, interviews and records showed. This investigation is based on interviews with 33 women and girls who say they underwent abortions while in the custody of the Nigerian Army. Just one said she freely gave consent. Reporters also interviewed five civilian healthcare workers and nine security personnel involved in the program, including soldiers and other government employees. In addition, Reuters reviewed copies of military documents and civilian hospital records describing or tallying thousands of abortion procedures. However, discrediting the investigations, Nigerian officials said that if such abuses existed, it would be impossible to hide them from the multitude of international and local aid groups, including U.N. agencies, engaged in humanitarian efforts in the northeast. [Paul Carsten et al., Reuters News \(December 7th\)](#) reports.

The Chief of Defence Staff, Lucky Irabor, has described the Reuters investigations as false. He gave no indication that the military would investigate the claims in the report. Irabor suggested that Reuters had an ulterior motive for the story, adding that “we are not unaware that there are extra-territorial elements which do not want us to live in peace or move forward”. The Chief of Defence Staff called for the support of the media to create and influence public opinion to support military operations. Chiamaka Okafor, [The Premium Times News \(December 8th\)](#) reports.

The Managing Director of the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello-Koko, raised the alarm over neglect of hinterland connectivity for the USD 1.5 billion Lekki Deep Seaport even as operators predict traffic chaos along the Lekki axis.

He stated that the Lekki port had no rail evacuation, causing immense traffic and. According to Bello-Koko, there was no doubt that the operationalization of Lekki Port would be a game changer not only for NPAs' operations but Nigerian economy at large, adding that it was, therefore, essential that necessary logistics infrastructure be put in place to optimize the benefits and guarantee positive impacts. Steve Agbota, [The Sun News \(December 8th\)](#) reports.

The Federal Government (FG) has said that over six million people have been displaced in Nigeria by climate events and disasters between 2008 and 2021. This was disclosed through the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons at the National Migration Dialogue in Abuja on Thursday. Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, Hajia Sadiya Umar-Farouq, said the FG had shown significant commitment towards managing climate change by spending 9% of the gross domestic product on projects directly addressing climate change. The Chief of Mission of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Laurent De Boeck, advocated community-led solutions, including nature-based solutions that could support the adaptation of communities to climate change, with a view to proffering practical solutions and interventions that should be considered including for future revision of the National Migration Policy. Joshua Odeyeni, [The Daily Trust News \(December 9th\)](#) reports.

The Chairman of the Information and Voter Education Committee of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Festus Okoye, has confirmed the attack by armed persons on an INEC office in Imo State, making it the seventh attack on the commission's facilities within the last four months. The attack in Oru West occurred three days after another INEC office was attacked in the Orlu Local Government Area of the same Imo State. Okoye expressed concern about the systematic attack on the commission's facilities across the country as it prepares to conduct the 2023 general elections. The attacks on INEC facilities around the South-east and the South-south regions, as well as on security agencies, have been attributed to the outlawed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). However, INEC Chairman Mahmood Yakubu emphasized that the recent attacks on its facilities will not stop the conduct of the 2023 general elections. Dimeji Kayode-Adededeji and Chinagorom Ugwu, [The Premium Times News \(December 5th\)](#) report.

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On Monday, the Nigeria Railway Corporation (NRC) recorded low passenger traffic at the resumed Abuja-Kaduna train operations despite the deployment of armed policemen to forestall any uncertainty. The NRC had previously suspended train service along the Abuja-Kaduna route after Boko Haram terrorists attacked a moving passenger train in Kaduna on March 28, 2022. At the ticketing points, the newly introduced National Identification Number (NIN) and phone number were demanded from interested passengers before the issuance of tickets. At the same time, the NRC management has increased the fare. A close monitor at the Idu and Kubwa stations showed that the usually bustling train stations were deserted. Kasim Sumaina, [This Day Live News \(December 6th\)](#) reports.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has estimated that 25.3 million Nigerians are in danger of experiencing a food crisis between June and August 2023 unless urgent steps are taken to increase and sustain livelihood and food assistance. The FAO October 2022 Food and Nutrition Analysis further indicated that about 17 million people, including internally displaced persons and returnees in 25 states and the Federal Capital Territory, were in a "crisis or worse level" through October 2022. Oluwatobi Aworinde, [The Channels News \(December 6th\)](#) reports.

Nigerians in the United Kingdom and various parts of the world have sued President Muhammadu Buhari and the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) at a Federal High Court in Abuja seeking enforcement of their fundamental rights to vote in the 2023 general elections. They canvassed that unless they were allowed to vote in the upcoming elections and subsequent ones, their fundamental rights as enshrined in the 1999 Constitution would be grossly violated. Furthermore, they asked the court to stop Buhari and INEC from further proceeding with the 2023 electioneering process until INEC'S voter register and bio-database were updated to accommodate them as registered voters. Fadehan Oyeyemi, [The Daily Post News \(December 6th\)](#) reports.

The Central Bank of Nigeria has put a limit on cash withdrawals made by individuals and organizations from January 9, 2023. In a memo signed by the Director of Banking Supervision, Haruna Mustafa, the apex bank directed all banks and other financial institutions to ensure that over-the-counter cash withdrawals by individuals and corporate entities do not exceed NGN 100.000 and NGN 500.000 per week, respectively. Furthermore, withdrawals above these limits shall attract processing fees of 5% for individuals and 10% for organizations. In addition, third-party cheques above NGN 50.000 shall not be eligible for payment over the counter, while extant limits of NGN 10.000.000 on clearing cheques still subsist. The bank also said the maximum cash withdrawal per week via ATM should be NGN 100.000, subject to a maximum of NGN 20.000 cash withdrawal per day. The new policy will also require valid means of identification, among other steps, as a requirement for cash withdrawals. Ayodeji Adegboyega, [The Premium Times News \(December 6th\)](#) reports.

The Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Zainab Ahmed, has lamented the impact of the recent downgrade of Nigeria by global credit rating agencies, saying the ratings were posing some difficulties for the country in terms of the cost of funds at the international market. The Minister's remarks were coming on the same day the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) disclosed that Nigeria's total merchandise trade decreased by about NGN 1.24 trillion to NGN 11.60 trillion in the third quarter of 2022 compared to NGN 12.84 trillion in the preceding quarter. In November, rating agencies Moody's and Fitch Ratings downgraded Nigeria. Ndubuisi Francis and James Emejo, [This Day Live News \(December 7th\)](#) reports.

Insecurity: Abuja Residents Lament Renewed Insecurity, ISWAP Fighters Killed Following Allegiance to ISIS Leader

Residents of Abuja in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) are worried over the resurgence of insecurity triggered by the abduction of a National Youth Service Corps member and seven others in the Kubwa area of the FCT. The corps member was reported kidnapped in her father's home, while others went missing after the attack. The gunmen attacked and shot two males. The Commissioner of Police, Babaji Sunday, indicated that an aggressive manhunt on the perpetrators resulted in the rescue of three victims and the recovery of firearms

and ammunition. Pita Sunday, [The Guardian News \(December 8th\)](#) reports.

Members of the Islamic State of the West African Province (ISWAP) have been eliminated by troops of Operation Hadin Kai, in the Damboa area of Borno State. The terrorists had launched a failed attack some hours after pledging their allegiance to the new ISIS "caliph", Abu al-Hussein al-Husseini

al-Qurashi. It was gathered that unspecified numbers of the terrorists had previously attacked Wajiroko town in two phantom mine resistant ambush protection vehicles and six Hilux trucks mounted with anti-aircraft guns. Several firearms and ammunition were recovered from the terrorists, included NATO ammunition, an intelligence Officer revealed. Maina Maina, [The Daily Post News \(December 2nd\)](#) reports.

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e. V.

Marija Peran, Resident Representative
Adams Adamu, Project Assistant

Nigeria Office

www.kas.de/nigeria

www.facebook.com/kas.nigeria

marija.peran@kas.de / adamu.adams@kas.de



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