

Nigeria Press Review

26.6. – 03.7.2020

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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Federal Government Adjusts Covid-19 Restrictions, Reopens Inter-State Travel, Aviation Sector and Schools

The federal government adjusted some of the Covid-19 restrictions by lifting the ban on inter-state travel. Disclosing this during the daily briefing of the Presidential Task Force (PTF) on Covid-19, the PTF chairman, Boss Mustapha said that commuters can travel outside the curfew hours. Mustapha also announced the safe reopening of domestic flights and schools. However, only a 50% passenger capacity will be allowed and only students in promotional examination classes are supposed to resume. Nkechi Onyedika et al report in [Guardian News \(30th June\)](#).

Following the announcement, the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) said it may increase fares over the new passenger capacity guidelines issued by the federal government. [Punch News \(30th June\)](#) explains. Similarly, the federal government said the resumption of flight operations would come with an increase in airfare as the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) already increased customer service charge by 100%. Nike Adebawale, [Premium Times \(29th June\)](#) details. Passengers have begun to lament over the increase in fares by transport companies. [Premium Times \(1st July\)](#) details.

Meanwhile, the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) has kicked against the reopening of schools by the federal government. Frank Ikpefan, [The Nation \(2nd July\)](#) reports.

Covid-19: Federal Government targets 100 Million Nigerians in Its Economic Recovery Plan

On the Economic Sustainability Plan, President Muhammadu Buhari has restated the commitment of his administration to lift 100 million citizens out of poverty. Speaking during a virtual meeting, Buhari said that the plan would be extended to the very poor citizens. [Vanguard News \(1st July\)](#) reports. Meanwhile, the Presidential Economic Advisory Council has warned of emerging problems that may hinder the implementation of the N2.3trn stimulus package if not addressed on time. Muideen Olaniyi, [Daily Trust \(1st July\)](#) writes.

Worried by the economic distortions of the Covid-19 pandemic, Buhari has restated his commitment to stimulate economic growth with the commissioning of the Ajaokuta-Kaduna-Kano Gas

(AKK) pipeline. President Buhari said that the pandemic has pushed countries to adopt crude oil in economic and industrial diversification. Omololu Ogunmade et al report in [This Day News \(1st July\)](#). The project which is set to be completed in 2 years will be funded by the Bank of China and Sinosure, a Chinese export and credit insurance corporation, and jointly executed with their Nigerian counterparts. Okechukwu Nnodim, [Punch News \(30th June\)](#) details.

Minister and NASS Clash Over Recruitment of 774,000 Nigerians for Special Public Works Programme

As part of efforts to reduce the growing rate of unemployment in the country, the federal government, through the National Directorate for Employment (NDE), has inaugurated committees in the 36 states and FCT to take charge of enlisting persons from each Local Government Area (LGA) for the Special Public Works Programme. The inauguration was done by Festus Keyamo, Minister of State for Labour and Employment. Oladeinde Olawoyin [Premium Times \(30th June\)](#) details.

The initiative is to employ 1,000 unskilled persons from each of the 774 LGAs on a short term appointment for a period of three months. However, the Joint Committee on Labour in the Senate and House of Representatives clashed with Keyamo during a meeting in the National Assembly over the selection method used by the Ministry of Labour and Productivity in setting up committees for each state. Azimazi Momoh Jimoh and John Akubo, [Guardian News \(1st July\)](#) detail.

Following the clash, the law makers have threatened to suspend the entire process. Responding to this, Keyamo said that the power of the law makers is limited to investigation and not execution. Johnbosco Agbakwuru, [Vanguard News \(30th June\)](#) reports. Reacting to this, Senator Ifeanyi Ubah, said that Kayamo was ignorant of lawmakers' oversight functions. Samson Atekojo Usman, [Daily Post \(1st July\)](#) explains. Consequently, the National Assembly has suspended the implementation of the process. Emaeh Gabriel writes in [Leadership News \(2nd July\)](#).

Meanwhile, President Buhari has warned officials in public offices against favoritism in influencing persons for government jobs. Friday Olorok, [Punch News \(1st July\)](#) details.

Anxiety Heightens Over Hike in Electricity Tariff as Federal Government Introduces New Tariff Plans

Following the \$750m loan approved by the world bank to enhance Nigeria's electricity sector last week, the federal government has approved the increase in electricity tariffs in the country with effect from 1st of July in order to stimulate economic growth. Some electricity Distribution Companies (DisCos) have begun to inform citizens of the set plans for the tariff hike. Femi Adekoya, [Guardian News \(26th June\)](#) details.

However, citizens are criticizing the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) for being complicit in the increase in price of prepaid meters and tariffs. Demanding the suspension of the tariff, they questioned the increase considering the abysmally poor electricity supply in the country. Gabriel Ewepu of [Vanguard News \(29th June\)](#) and Chikodi Okereocha of [The Nation \(29th June\)](#) report. Following the outcry by citizens, NERC has dissociated itself from the proposed increase which was considered a unilateral decision. However, the DisCos have berated NERC over the attempt to detach itself from the increase in electricity tariff. Ayodeji Adegboyeg, [Premium Times \(28th June\)](#) details.

Meanwhile, the leadership of the National Assembly has put on hold the planned increase in electricity tariff to the first quarter of 2021. Tunde Opanala, [Daily Times News \(30th June\)](#). On the same note, the National Assembly and DisCos have asked the federal government to subsidize electricity consumption. Olalekan Adetayo and Okechukwu Nnodim write in [Punch News \(1st July\)](#).

Controversy Deepens Over Appointment of APC National Caretaker Committee, Party Set for Restructuring

The All Progressive Congress (APC) has dissolved the National Working Committee (NWC) following the recommendation of President Buhari who presided over the virtual National Executive Council (NEC) meeting held last week. As part of plans to resolve the party's leadership crisis, a 13-man National Caretaker Committee (NCC) was inaugurated and sworn in by Abubakar Malami, the Attorney-General of the Federation (AGF), to run the affairs of the party for 6 months and chart

ways forward towards for the progress of the party. [Flashpoint News \(26th June\)](#) reports.

Meanwhile, members of the NWC challenged the new development on grounds that the NEC meeting was illegal and breached the party's constitution. However, the Director General, Progressive Governors Forum (PGF), Salihu Moh Lukman has advised that members who challenge the decision in court should be expelled. Omeiza Ajayi, [Vanguard News \(26th June\)](#) details. Similarly, lawyers have said that the dissolution may have violated the members' right to fair hearing. Cletus Ukong, [Premium Times \(28th June\)](#) details. On a similar note, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) has criticized President Buhari and Malami over the dissolution of the NWC. Gbade Ogunwale, [The Nation \(27th June\)](#) explains. However, Malami has defended swearing in Buni as the chairman of the NCC. [The Cable News \(27th June\)](#) writes.

On the lingering issue of the removal of Adams Oshiomhole as the National Chairman of the APC, the Court of Appeal has dismissed the suit by Oshiomhole challenging his suspension from the party. Sunday Ejike, [Nigerian Tribune \(30th June\)](#) writes. Similarly, a Federal High Court, struck out a suit that accused the Edo state governor, Godwin Obaseki of engaging in certificate forgery. Ikechukwu Nnochiri, [Vanguard News \(29th June\)](#) details. In a bid to resolve the internal crisis within the APC, Buni, has directed members of the party to withdraw all lingering court cases. Romanus Ugwu writes in [Daily Sun \(29th June\)](#). Also, the APC has appointed reconciliation committees in Edo and Ondo states. Romanus Ugwu, [Daily Sun \(1st July\)](#) writes. Meanwhile, the Secretary of the APC Appeal Committee for the Edo State Governorship Primary Election, Dr. Kayode Ajulo has called for the amendment of the party constitution. Andrew Essien details in [Leadership News \(3rd July\)](#).

On developing issues, the Niger state APC has passed vote of no confidence on the party chairman, secretary and treasurer. [Vanguard News \(3rd July\)](#) details.

Buratai Restates Commitment to End Killing as Emir, Ohaneze Raise Alarm over Increased Insecurity

As insecurity worsens across the country, [Sahara Reporters \(1st July\)](#), the Chief of Army Staff, Tukur Yusuf Buratai has restated his commitment to

end the incessant killings in the country. [The Eagle Online \(27th June\)](#) reports. However, the Emir of Daura has raised alarm over the rising security challenges saying that the situation is worse than the civil war, and urged citizens to avoid interfering in security matters. In a similar vein, a pangbo group, Ohanaeze Ndigbo has supported the Emir's position on the insecurity by stressing that Nigeria's security architecture may no longer be able to address the security challenges in the country. Clifford Ndujihe et al, write in [Vanguard News \(30th June\)](#). Similarly, former president, Olusegun Obasanjo called for the restructuring of the nation's security architecture or risk a collapse. Peter Moses, [Daily Trust \(27th June\)](#) explains.

On the other hand, the Nigerians in Diaspora Monitoring Group (NDMG), UK Chapter, has said that the country needs the experience of its Service Chiefs in fighting insurgency in the country. [Leadership News \(1st July\)](#) details. However, the Coalition of Civil Society Against Terrorism and Extremism (CATE) has called on President Buhari to sign an executive order into law that will allow

security agents to arrest and prosecute sponsors and collaborators of terrorist activities in the country. Godwin Tsa, [Daily Sun \(30th June\)](#) explains.

ECOWAS: Disagreement Deepens over Adoption of Eco Currency

The controversy over the adoption of the Eco as a common currency among West African countries has continued to deepen. In a recent article by Ruth Olurounbi [The African Report \(30th June\)](#). She reaffirmed the quote by Andrew S. Nevin, Chief Economist of Nigeria Clients and Markets Leader at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), that "Francophone countries coming together to replace the colonial currency, the CFA Franc with the Eco, may be a major step forward and a positive thing". President Buhari had last week expressed concerns over the replacement of the CFA Franc with the Eco. According to Ruth, the eventual uniformed adoption of the single currency challenges the sovereignty of the Naira.

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