

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: Nigeria Reopens International Airports, Relaxes Restrictions in the Country

Following the announcement by the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) to resume international flights from September 5, the Presidential Task Force (PTF) on Covid-19 had issued guidelines for passengers coming into the country. Speaking on this, the Coordinator of the PTF, Sani Aliyu, said that passengers coming into the country have to undergo a Covid-19 test within 72 hours or not more than 7 days before departure, after arrival self-quarantine for another 7 days and undergo a Covid-19 test after quarantine again. Nkechi Onyedika Ugoeze, [Guardian News \(1st September\)](#) report. On September 3, the guidelines were revised. According to the new guidelines, incoming passenger must test negative for Covid-19 at least 96 hours before departure, the 7 days self-quarantine obligation and a second Covid-19 test after arrival remain. A list with airline allowed to enter Nigeria has been also issued. Among those banned are Air France, Lufthansa, and KLM. The Minister of Aviation, Hadi Sirika, explained that Nigeria has applied the principle of reciprocity. Since visitors from Nigeria are not allowed to enter the EU, flight operators from the EU were banned from entering the country. Juliana Taiwo-Obalonye of [Vanguard News \(3rd September\)](#) reports.

Moreover, the PTF has announced new relaxing amendments to the federal government's Covid-19 restrictions. PTF Chairman, Boss Mustapha, disclosed that night-time curfew has been set for 12am to 4am. Amusement parks, cinemas, and recreation centers can re-open, but have to operate at half-capacity. Bars and Nightclubs are to be remained closed. He expects a full re-opening of the economy by the end of December. Chioma Obinna and Omeiza Ajayi, [Vanguard News \(4th September\)](#) detail. On the same note, Mustapha has cautioned states against the hasty reopening of schools. He said that as much as it is ideal to reopen schools, it is wise to avoid the experiences of countries like Germany, the USA, UK, and France which had confirmed cases after reopening schools. Kayode Oyero, [Punch News \(31st August\)](#). In the same vein, the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), has kicked against the reopening of schools. ASUU Coordinator for Bauchi zone, Lawan Abubakar, stated this at a press briefing and called for the provision of adequate facilities to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus in schools. Pwanagba Agbabus, [Authority News \(1st September\)](#) reports.

Buhari Resumes Payment of Fuel Subsidy, External Reserve and Foreign Trade Decline, Axens Secures Project Deal with BUA Group

President Muhammadu Buhari has resumed payment of fuel subsidy following the N5.35bn loss recorded by the Nigerian National Petroleum Cooperation (NNPC) as under-recovery in June 2020. The Group Managing Director of the NNPC, Malam Mele Kyari, had declared earlier this year: "zero subsidies forever". However, the NNPC spokesman Kennie Obateru said there has been an under-recovery in June 2020. Oladehinde Oladepo, [Business Day \(2nd September\)](#) and Micheal Eboh, [Vanguard News \(30th August\)](#) write. Meanwhile, reports had put the petrol pump price falsely at close to N155 per litre. However, the pump price of petrol has been increased to N151.56 per litre, and petrol sellers have begun selling at N162 per litre. Chike Olisah, [Nairametrics \(2nd September\)](#) and Femi Adekoya et al [Guardian News \(3rd September\)](#) write. The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), has condemned the price hike, describing it as "wicked and callous". Responding to that, the All Progressives Congress (APC) blamed the PDP for "foisting a corruption-tainted fuel subsidy regime in the country". [Authority News \(3rd September\)](#) details.

On another note, president Buhari has expressed dissatisfaction with the rise in food prices. He assured citizens of the federal government's commitment towards addressing the declining economy. [Premium Times \(2nd September\)](#) details. With the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) phasing out at the end of 2020, the Minister of State for Budget and National Planning, Prince Clem Agba, has revealed that President Buhari will unveil new Midterm National Development Plans for 2021 to 2025 and 2026 to 2030 in December. Okechukwu Nnodim, [Punch News \(4th September\)](#) reports.

Meanwhile, Nigeria's total foreign trade and external reserves have declined further. In a report by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), the total foreign trade (import and export) dropped by 27.46% in the second quarter of 2020 compared to the 2019 record. Samuel Onyekanmi, [Nairametrics \(2nd September\)](#) details. Also George Iyatse reveals in [The Guardian \(3rd September\)](#), that the fall in the external reserve which currently stands at \$36.6bn (N13.9trn) is below the required threshold provided by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Act of 2007.

In new reports, France's largest hydrocarbons group Axens has signed a new project deal with the Nigerian BUA group to build a refinery with a capacity to produce 200,000 barrels per day (bpd) from 2024. The project will run alongside the refinery project by the Dangote Group with the capacity to produce 600,000 bpd upon resumption in 2021. Nicholas Norbook, [The African Report \(1st September\)](#) details.

NASS: Outrage as Senate Set to Pass Social Media Bill, House Speaker Embarks on Mediation Trip to Ghana

The plans by the Senate to pass the Social Media Bill when plenary sitting resumes on September 5 has been criticized by the citizens and civil society groups who are opposed to the bill. They fear the bill if passed and signed by the president "will not only constrain citizens' right to freedom of expression, but also assault and shrink the limitlessness of our civic spaces". John Owen Nwachukwu, [Daily Post \(2nd September\)](#) and [Sahara Reporters \(28th August\)](#) explain. However, the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Media and Public Affairs, Senator Ajibola Basiru has debunked the report saying that the necessary legislative work is yet to be completed. Deji Olumoye, [This Day News \(30th August\)](#) writes.

Meanwhile, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Femi Gbajabamila, has secured permit from President Muhammadu Buhari to go to Ghana on mediation talks with the Parliament of Ghana in order to resolve the closure of Nigerian businesses by Ghanaian authorities. Jonathan Nda-Isaiah, [Leadership News \(2nd September\)](#) explains.

CAMA Controversy: CAN Writes Buhari, Seeks Suspension of Companies and Allied Matters Act

The Companies and Allied Matters Act (CAMA) 2020 which was signed by President Buhari 3 weeks ago has sparked outrage in the media as the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and other religious institutions have rejected it, alleging that the federal government is targeting religious institutions and trying to control them. The new act directs religious bodies and charity organizations in the country to be regulated by the Registrar-General of Corporate Affairs Commis-

sion (CAC) and a supervising minister. Responding, the Special Assistant to the President on Niger Delta Affairs and former National Assembly Presidential Liaison Officer, Senator Ita Enang, at a meeting with CAN, refuted the allegation. Friday Olorok, [Punch News \(1st September\)](#) details. On the same note, Vice President Yemi Osinbajo has said that the concerns by religious institutions can be amended through a written proposal to the National Assembly as there are options for follow up of the process. Yusuf Akinpelu reports in [Premium Times \(28th August\)](#). However, CAN has written to President Buhari demanding the suspension of the Act as it is capable of undermining the faith of stakeholders in the country. Friday Olorok, [Punch News \(2nd September\)](#) writes.

Buhari Condemns Dispute Among APC Members, APC Elites Speak on Zoning for 2023 Presidency, Saraki demands free and fair elections in Edo and Ondo

President Muhammadu Buhari has condemned the dispute among members of the All Progressives Congress (APC) stressing that the dispute is "often embroiled in bitterness and unnecessary squabbles". Buhari stated this at the inauguration of the tripartite consultative committee of the executive, legislature and leadership of the APC, saying that the disputes have cost the APC governorship and legislative seats. Tosin Omosowon, [The Nation News \(2nd September\)](#) reports. The APC Deputy National Publicity Secretary, Yekini Nabena, had commended Buhari for setting up the committee to move the party forward. Omeize Ajayi, [Vanguard News \(31st August\)](#) reports.

Meanwhile, the Senate Chief Whip, Senator Orji Uzor Kalu has reiterated that zoning in the APC is not a constitutional matter as eligibility for 2023 presidency is open to all. [Premium Times \(31st August\)](#) explains. On the same note, the Governor of Imo State, Hope Uzodinma, has said that the emergence of a presidential candidate will not be based on tribe as the country still operates under a democratic rule. [Premium Times \(1st September\)](#) details.

On the coming elections in Edo and Ondo states, an article by the former Senate President, Bukola Saraki, in [The African Report \(31st August\)](#) has stressed the need for cooperation of citizens,

government and leaders in defending democracy. He likened the political actions of leaders in Mali to that of leaders in Edo State as volatile and capable of undermining the elections. He urged President Buhari to demonstrate its commitment to democracy by ensuring free and fair elections in Edo and Ondo states. Meanwhile, the Inspector General of Police, Mohammed Adamu, has assured citizens that the Nigeria Police would observe neutrality and professionalism while maintaining law and order in the course of the elections. Adelani Adepegba, [Punch News \(1st September\)](#) reports.

Insecurity: Reps Reveal Plan to Address Insecurity as AA Concerned over Terrorists Attacks and Internal Displacement

The House of Representatives has disclosed its 2021 plan to combat insecurity in the country. The spokesman of the House, Hon. Benjamin Kalu said that the lawmakers are working to ensure success in the fight against insecurity by

providing funds and manpower among others. He referred to the speedy passage of the Armed Forces Support Fund Bill sponsored by the Chairman, House Committee on Defence, Babajimi Benson as a step that will strengthen the security sector. Tony Akowe, [The Nation \(30th August\)](#) details.

Meanwhile, a report by Olarewaju Kola of [Anadolu Agency \(29th August\)](#) refers to the economic activities of Boko Haram enabling the group to sustain terror. Community leaders complain about unchecked fish and farming businesses that are run by Boko Haram. They also report about economic interests of the military along the shore of the Lake Chad and that these interests prevent the Nigerian military from ending the conflict. In other reports, the Shehu of Borno, Abubakar El-Kanemi, has condemned targeted attacks on traditional rulers by Boko Haram, which have led to the death of 13 district heads. Abdul Seye [Daily Post \(1st September\)](#) reports.

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