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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.

Content

Covid-19: Shoprite Reveals Plan to Leave Nigeria, Nigeria Struggles With Dwindling Economy

Outrage over Sovereignty Clause in China-Nigeria Loan Agreement

APC to Introduce Data Bank for Members, Urges Ex-Party Members to Return, as Edo Political Crisis Deepens

IOM Provides New Facility for Victims of Human Trafficking, as House of Reps Calls for Collaboration Against Human Trafficking

"Revolution Now" Protests Rock Abuja, Lagos, Others

Buhari Orders Restructuring of Security Architecture and Strategies, Report Reveals Expanding Opportunities for Boko Haram

Covid-19: Shoprite Reveals Plan to Leave Nigeria, Nigeria Struggles With Dwindling Economy

Owing to the negative effects of the coronavirus pandemic, the nation's economy has continued to dwindle. Predictions by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) indicate the diminution of Nigeria's economy by 3.4%. Reacting to the economic downturn, one of the leading retail chain stores, Shoprite, has announced plans to divest in the business saying that "an outright sale of its operation or selling a majority stake in its Nigerian subsidiary is in the offing. Oluwatosin Adeshokan writes in [The African Report \(3rd August\)](#).

Similarly, the International Energy Agency (IEA) has predicted a decline in the global demand for crude oil following travel restrictions. So far, the slump in oil prices has led to a plunge in the collective revenue of major oil and gas companies including Seplat Petroleum Development Company (SEPLAT) and Total Nigeria. Despite the uncertainty of the full economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, some companies remain optimistic that the market will improve. Ruth Olunroubi, [The African Report \(4th August\)](#) details.

On another note, the aviation sector has witnessed dwindling revenues due to travel restrictions, which have further eroded the viability of local airlines. Most flight operators have introduced revival strategies as the federal government has allegedly withdrawn its earlier pledge of N27bn bailout to enhance their financial stability. Recent reports have indicated cuts in jobs and salaries, as well as sale of assets by the operators. Sodiq Oyeleke and Joseph Olaoluwa, [Punch News \(3rd August\)](#), and [Sahara Reporters \(4th August\)](#) detail. However, officials of the Ministry of Aviation have denied knowledge of any bailout for the aviation sector as widely reported in the media. Wole Oyebade, [Guardian News \(3rd August\)](#) explains.

Still on the economy, some analysts have forecast that Nigeria's unemployment rate could further rise to 33.6% (or 33.4 million people) by the end of the year unless urgent steps are taken to address further decline of the economy. In a recent household survey released by the National Bureau of Statistics, it is estimated that over 40% of Nigerian households could be classified as poor, and that the economy could shrink between 4.40% and 8.91%. Tolu Olarewaju explains in [Punch News \(4th August\)](#).

Outrage over Sovereignty Clause in China-Nigeria Loan Agreement

The demand by the Minister of Transportation, Rotimi Amaechi, asking the House of Representatives to suspend the probe of the \$500m loan from China's Export-Import Bank, has caused uproar in the media. The House Committee on Treaties, Protocols, and Agreements, while conducting a probe on loans and agreements between Nigeria and China had made fresh discovery of what it considered as "controversial sovereignty clause" in the agreements. Yemi Ajayi et al report in [This Day News \(3rd August\)](#).

Defending the agreement, Amaechi explained, that Nigeria is not waving its sovereignty but that the "sovereignty clause" cited in the agreement is an assurance that the loan will be repaid. He asked the National Assembly to publish the agreement. Ifereke Inyang, [Daily Post \(1st August\)](#) and Faith Yahaya, [The Nation \(1st August\)](#) detail. Similarly, some groups have demanded that the federal government publishes the terms of all loan agreements or face legal action. Sunday Aborisade, [Punch News \(4th August\)](#) and. Kunle Sanni of [Premium Times \(2nd August\)](#) detail.

Criticising the loan agreement, former Vice President, Atiku Abubakar, has demanded that President Muhammadu Buhari apologizes to Nigerians. Azimazi Momoh Jimoh, [Guardian News \(3rd August\)](#) writes. Reacting to this, the All Progressives Congress (APC) has asked the past Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) led government, to account for the failed \$460m Abuja Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) project, and the \$2bn China loan. [Daily Sun \(4th August\)](#) writes

Meanwhile, the Debt Management Office (DMO) has clarified that China is not the major source of funding for the country. Bassey Udo, [Premium Times \(6th August\)](#) explains. Similarly, the federal government has clarified that the Chinese loan stood at 11.28% of external debt as at March. [Daily Times \(7th August\)](#) details.

APC to Introduce Data Bank for Members, Urges Ex-Party Members to Return, as Edo Political Crisis Deepens

The APC has initiated a common data bank for its members to enhance easy administration, unite members and foster reconciliation in the party.

This was disclosed by a member of the APC National Caretaker Committee, Senator Abba Ali. He further said that the committee is committed to using the reconciliatory process to achieve desired goals. [Vanguard News \(4th August\)](#) details. As part of the APC's reconciliatory moves, the party has asked former members who defected from the party to return. It extended the gesture to former APC members who have joined the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) including former Vice President, Atiku Abubakar, Ex-Senate President, Bukola Saraki, and the Sokoto State Governor, Aminu Tambuwal. The APC restated the efforts by Governor Mai Mala Buni-led caretaker committee to reposition the party and reconcile aggrieved members. Adamu Abuh, [Guardian News \(3rd August\)](#) details.

Meanwhile, the deputy governor of Edo State, Philip Shaibu, has accused the deputy speaker of the State House of Assembly, Yekini Idiaye, of collecting N40m from the former National Chairman of the APC, Adams Oshiomhole, to support the APC candidate in the September 19 governorship election, Osagie Ize-Iyamu. Peter David writes in [Punch News \(5th August\)](#). On another note, the APC has accused the PDP of "criminally converting the Edo State treasury to a political slush fund". Responding to this, the PDP described such allegation as an "unnecessary cry of a drowning party". Chuks Okocha and Adedayo Akinwale detail in [This Day News \(3rd August\)](#).

Writing on the situation of the APC in Edo State ahead elections and at the national level, an article by Tofe Ayeni of [The Africa Report \(5th August\)](#), points to the growing need of the APC to secure victory at all levels. According to the article, "the election for the governorship of Edo State, due on September 19, is a weathervane for Nigeria's politics". In this regard, the article refers to the influence of regional politics in Nigeria's federal system, saying that any serious contender in the 2023 national elections will need to have strongholds across the country.

Meanwhile, armed personnel of the Nigeria Police Force took over the premises of the Edo State House of Assembly. The incident is believed to be connected with speculations that APC members of the House, who are loyal to Oshiomhole, have perfected plans to sit at the Assembly Complex and elect a new Speaker and to impeach Obaseki. The removal of the Speaker, Francis Okiye, though controversial, was eventually carried out and a new Speaker, Victor Edoror was elected as

replacement. Adibe Emenyonu, [Thisday newspaper \(6th August\)](#), Chuks Okocha et al, [This Day News \(7th August\)](#) explain.

IOM Provides New Facility for Victims of Human Trafficking, as House of Reps Calls for Collaboration Against Human Trafficking

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) has opened a new facility in Edo State to provide uninterrupted access to legal services for victims of trafficking in Nigeria. According to a statement released on its website, the facility will provide free, timely, and confidential legal aid to victims without restriction. Joshua Odeyemi, [Daily Trust \(4th August\)](#) explains. Meanwhile, the House of Representatives has called for collaboration from all levels of government, wives of state governors, and other relevant stakeholders to enhance Nigeria's fight against human trafficking. Adedayo Akinwale and Udora Orizu write in [All Africa News \(31st July\)](#). On another note, the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) has said that it has increased the sensitization of citizens on the dangers of human trafficking. Tobi Aworinde, [Punch News \(1st August\)](#).

"Revolution Now" Protests Rock Abuja, Lagos, Others

Some protesters under the aegis of "Revolution Now" have embarked on protests in various locations across the country, demanding good governance, infrastructural development, an end to extra-judicial killings, sack of service chiefs, among others. Following the protest, activists have reported that some of the protesters have been arrested by the police. Ifeoluwa Adeniran and Adejumo Kabir write in [Premium Times \(5th August\)](#). Condemning the arrest, some groups have called for the release of the protesters. Musliudeen Adebayo, [Daily Post \(6th August\)](#), and Ibrahim Hassan Wuyo, [Vanguard News \(5th August\)](#) explain. However, recent reports say that persons arrested were eventually released hours later. Ifeoluwa Adeniran and Adejumo Kabir, [Premium Times \(6th August\)](#) detail further. Meanwhile, security agents have been deployed to some parts of Kano State over planned protests. Richard P. Ngbokai, [Daily Trust \(5th July\)](#) details.

Buhari Orders Restructuring of Security Architecture and Strategies, Report Reveals Expanding Opportunities for Boko Haram

President Muhammadu Buhari has ordered the restructuring of the nation's security architecture and the development of new strategies to arrest the deteriorating insecurity in the country. The National Security Adviser (NSA), Major General Babagana Monguno (Rtd), disclosed this at the end of the meeting of the Security Council. Omololu Ogunmade and Chuks Okocha, [This Day \(5th August\)](#) report. However, President Buhari acknowledged also the efforts of the service chiefs stating that they "are doing their best". Kunle

Sanni of [Premium Times \(4th August\)](#).

An article by Malik Samuel, [Relief Web News \(3rd August\)](#) on the growing insecurity in Nigeria, points to the vulnerability of communities which have been ravaged by insurgents and bandits. According to the article, Boko Haram is extending its reach from North-East Nigeria into the country's North-West, by taking advantage of old and new local conflicts and insecurities. It alluded reasons for the growing insecurity as unresolved clashes over access to land and water between farmer and herder communities which have metamorphosed into violent and deadly conflicts.

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