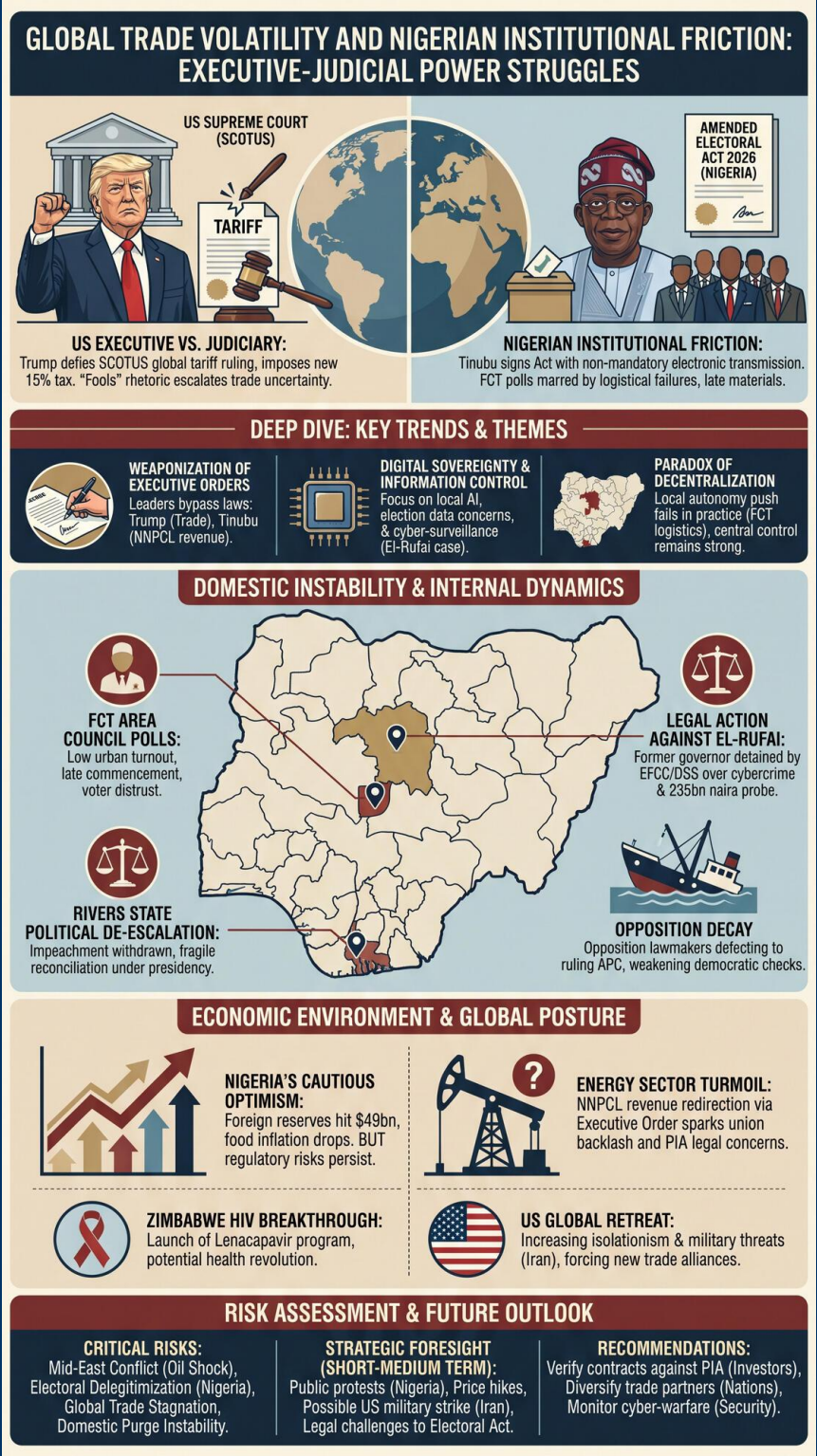


TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

TVCNEWS

FEBRUARY 21, 2026

THE GDELT PROJECT



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GLOBAL TRADE VOLATILITY AND NIGERIAN INSTITUTIONAL FRICTION AMIDST EXECUTIVE- JUDICIAL POWER STRUGGLES

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

The global landscape is currently defined by an escalating confrontation between executive authority and judicial oversight, most visible in the United States and Nigeria. In the US, President Donald Trump has responded to a Supreme Court ruling striking down global trade tariffs by immediately [imposing a new 10% global tariff](#), later reported to have [increased to 15%](#) within twenty-four hours. This rhetoric, which includes labeling Supreme Court justices as "fools," signals a period of heightened trade uncertainty and a direct challenge to the established boundaries of presidential power over trade policy. Simultaneously, the US administration has signaled a potential [limited military strike on Iran](#) to force concessions on its nuclear program, indicating a shift toward aggressive economic and military statecraft.

In Nigeria, the domestic environment is strained by the implementation of the [Amended Electoral Act 2026](#). While intended

to modernize the process, the removal of mandatory [electronic transmission of results](#) has sparked intense debate over the integrity of future polls. The FCT Area Council elections, conducted during this legislative transition, were marred by [significant logistical failures](#), including late material deployment and missing voter registers, leading to low turnout in urban centers. This institutional friction is compounded by a high-stakes legal battle involving former Kaduna Governor [Nasir El-Rufai](#), who faces charges of cybercrime and corruption, and a fragile political reconciliation in Rivers State overseen by the presidency.

The economic narrative for Nigeria remains one of cautious optimism clashing with regulatory controversy. While macroeconomic indicators show a [reduction in food inflation](#) and a recovery in foreign reserves, the administration faces internal backlash over [Executive Orders](#) that redirect oil revenues from NNPC to the federation account. Labor unions warn that such moves, while aimed at transparency, may bypass the Petroleum Industry Act and [threaten thousands of jobs](#) in the oil and gas service sectors. Overall, the day's reports suggest that both nations are testing the limits of unilateral executive action against established statutory and judicial frameworks.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

US-Global Trade Escalation

- The US Supreme Court ruled 6-3 that [President Trump overstepped his authority](#) in previously imposed global trade tariffs.
- In defiance, the President announced a [new 15% import tax](#), claiming the right to act under 1970s-era economic emergency laws.

- The move has [injected fresh uncertainty](#) into the global landscape, affecting billions in potential tariff refunds.

Nigerian Electoral Reform and FCT Polls

- President Tinubu signed the [amended Electoral Act 2026](#) into law after months of intense debate.
- The Senate reduced the [statutory notice period for elections](#) from 360 to 300 days to avoid a clash with Ramadan in 2027.
- FCT elections experienced [late commencement in several units](#) and reports of voters being [notified of location changes](#) only after polls had theoretically opened.

Rivers State Political De-escalation

- The Rivers State House of Assembly [withdrew the impeachment threat](#) against Governor Fubara following presidential intervention.
- Agreement terms require the governor to [keep all previous agreements](#) entered with the legislature, though analysts question the sustainability of this "spoil of war" distribution.

Legal Action Against Former Governor El-Rufai

- Nasir El-Rufai was [detained by the EFCC and DSS](#) on a three-count charge including cybercrime and corruption.
- The charges involve the alleged [unlawful interception of phone communications](#) belonging to the National Security Advisor, Nuhu Ribadu.
- The state assembly continues to probe the [alleged misappropriation of 235 billion naira](#) during his tenure.

Breakthrough in HIV Prevention

- Zimbabwe became one of the first countries to launch a [national program for Lenacapavir](#), a twice-yearly injectable HIV prevention drug.
- Medical experts cite clinical trials showing [nearly 100% effectiveness](#), potentially revolutionizing global health strategies against the epidemic.

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

Leadership Dynamics & Governance

- Nigeria's presidency is characterized as [very rigid and authoritarian](#), with the center controlling the majority of resources and security apparatuses.
- The intervention by President Tinubu in Rivers State [is praised by some for preventing turmoil](#) but criticized by others for being a one-sided agreement.

Legal Warfare & Regulatory Risk

- The US Supreme Court ruling on tariffs highlight a [crisis of executive vs. judicial boundaries](#), as Trump signals he will bypass the court's intent using alternative statutes.
- The Nigerian [Supreme Court has ruled](#) that subsidiary regulations (like INEC's guidelines) cannot supersede principal laws, making electronic transmission of results optional unless explicitly stated in the Electoral Act.

Energy & Critical Minerals

- A new Executive Order requires oil proceeds to be [paid directly into the federation account](#), challenging NNPC's previous retention of funds.

- NNPC's reported [write-off of 1.4 billion dollars](#) in remittances is framed as a "clean slate" maneuver by the presidency to sanitize the corporation's books.

Diplomacy & Statecraft

- The US is utilizing [threats of military strikes](#) and increased naval presence in the Middle East as primary diplomatic leverage against Iran.
- Prime Minister of Canada warned that global actors are [acting increasingly alone](#), leading to a "bully" dynamic in international trade relations.

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

The Weaponization of the Executive Order

A recurring theme is the use of executive orders to bypass legislative or judicial resistance. In the US, the President is [invoking economic emergency status](#) to reinstate tariffs struck down by the court. In Nigeria, the President is using executive orders to [restructure NNPC revenue flows](#), despite labor unions arguing this circumvents the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA). This reflects a global trend where executive branches increasingly view statutory laws as "bottlenecks" and use orders to signal direct responsiveness to their base, often at the cost of long-term regulatory stability.

Digital Sovereignty and Information Control

Nigeria's focus on [Tech Revolution Africa 2.0](#) emphasizes building AI from "internal knowledge and data" rather than external models like GPT. This trend toward "local data" for AI aligns with the government's pursuit of a [mandatory electronic](#)

[transmission system](#) for elections—a technology that is simultaneously desired for its transparency and feared for its vulnerabilities. The arrest of El-Rufai for [unlawful phone interception](#) further highlights the state's growing sensitivity to the misuse of surveillance and cyber tools by elite actors.

The Paradox of Decentralization

While there is a push for local government autonomy in Nigeria, the FCT elections demonstrated that [local logistics are failing](#) even under federal capital supervision. Analysts note that while Nigerians are "fixated on the national," the [state and local governments](#) often fail to provide basic infrastructure (roads, water, electricity), despite receiving significant revenue disbursements.

INTERNAL DYNAMICS & DOMESTIC INSTABILITY

Nigeria: Institutional Distrust and Voter Apathy

- Voter turnout in urban FCT areas is [described as very low](#), attributed to lack of sensitization and deep-seated distrust in INEC.
- The [logistical failures in the FCT polls](#)—specifically the inability to find names on registers and late openings—are cited as direct causes for waning citizen enthusiasm.
- Elite infighting is evidenced by the [nomadic flight of opposition lawmakers](#) to the ruling APC, which analysts describe as a "greedy" depletion of the opposition camp that weakens democratic checks.

United States: Polarization and Judicial Defiance

- The President's rhetoric against the [conservative-majority Supreme Court](#) suggests that even ideological alignment is no longer a guarantee of institutional harmony.
- Business leaders are reportedly [experiencing "fresh uncertainty"](#) as the executive ignores judicial rulings that were intended to provide financial relief.

EXTERNAL DYNAMICS & GLOBAL POSTURE

Nigeria as an Emerging Economic Anchor

- Nigeria is increasingly framed as the [fastest brain ecosystem](#) and a primary target for international tech and infrastructure investment.
- Ondo State is [showcasing a deep-sea port project](#) and the "largest bitumen deposit in Africa" to attract global capital, attempting to move from a consumer to a creator role in the global market.

The Retreat of Multilateralism

- The US posture under Trump is increasingly isolationist and transactional, characterized by [sanctions and tariffs](#) used as primary tools of statecraft.
- This has forced countries like Nigeria to [think "outside the box"](#) to find new trade partners as the US market becomes more volatile and "bully"-oriented.

THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

Nigeria's economic landscape is showing strong macroeconomic improvements, such as

[foreign reserves reaching 49 billion dollars](#) with targets of 52 billion, yet this is contrasted by significant regulatory friction in the energy sector.

Key Economic Vectors

- **Inflation:** Food inflation [dropped to 8.89% in January](#), the lowest in 10 years, though core inflation remains higher.
- **Energy Sector Remittance:** NNPC only remits [below 2% of oil revenues](#) to the federation account despite statutory claims of 30% retention.
- **Debt Sustainability:** Nigerian states [paid down 42% of total debts](#) in 2024, with some like Kebbi and Jigawa paying down 92%.
- **Capital Markets:** Pan-African payment company Nairagram completed a [10 billion naira commercial paper issuance](#), which was fully subscribed in 48 hours.
- **Currency:** The naira is projected to stabilize [around 1,000 to 1,100 per dollar](#) as reforms take hold.

LEADERSHIP CHANGES

The current political climate in Nigeria is witnessing the systematic dismantling of previous power structures, while the US sees a president increasingly at odds with his own judicial appointees.

- **Nasir El-Rufai:** The former Kaduna governor is the primary "loser" of the day, [spending nights in custody](#) as multiple security agencies file charges, signaling a significant fall from grace and a potential purge of "disruptor" elements.

- **Governor Fubara (Rivers State):** Gains [temporary stability](#) through presidential intervention, but remains constrained by a legislature loyal to his predecessor, Nyesom Wike.
- **Joash Amopitan:** The new [INEC Chairman](#) faces a critical test, with his reputation currently tied to the mixed results and logistical failures of the FCT elections.
- **Olamiday AI:** TVC introduced [new AI anchors](#), signaling a shift in news delivery and potential labor shifts in the media sector.

EDITORIAL POSTURE & STORY HIERARCHY

The lead stories are heavily centered on **executive-judicial conflict** (Trump vs SCOTUS, Tinubu vs Electoral Act concerns) and **high-profile law enforcement** (El-Rufai arrest). The network maintains a nationalistic but skeptical tone regarding the FCT elections, openly highlighting logistical failures. **Buried stories** include the humanitarian aspect of health tourism dropping by 90% and the specific details of the Iran strike, which are treated as "secondary" to domestic political drama. **Conspicuous Omissions:** There is almost no coverage of the specific response from the US Supreme Court justices or a detailed legal defense for El-Rufai from his representatives, leaving the narrative heavily tilted toward state action.

GEOPOLITICAL FRAMING

The day's reporting frames the international environment as increasingly transactional and prone to unilateral actions by major powers, forcing middle powers like Nigeria into defensive "self-sustaining" postures.

COUNTRIES

- **United States:** Portrayed as a "strong country economically" but internally unstable due to [judicial and executive clashes](#). Framed as a potentially "unreliable" partner because "people already see disadvantages" in its shifting trade rules.
- **Algeria:** Used as a [comparative benchmark](#) for Nigeria, framed as a smaller, less diverse economy that "cannot compare to Nigeria" in complexity or market potential.
- **China:** Framed as a [mechanized, self-sufficient exporter](#) that nonetheless depends on the US market, reflecting a "head-to-head" trade rivalry.

LEADERS

- **Donald Trump:** Characterized as a ["fighter" who "does not back down"](#) and views trade as a tool of raw power. Framed as competent in business but potentially inept at adhering to constitutional checks.
- **President Tinubu:** Framed as a ["listening president"](#) who uses his "final seal" to guide democracy, though critics view his executive orders as a way to "set aside the law."

NON-STATE & CORPORATE ACTORS

- **NNPCL:** Portrayed as a ["big for nothing entity"](#) and "behemoth" that has historically avoided audits and failed to remit revenues, requiring a "sanitizing" write-off from the presidency.
- **Yaga Africa:** Framed as a [credible observer](#) whose reports of late poll commencement provide a vital ground-truth counter to official government optimism.

INFORMATION WARFARE ENVIRONMENT

The meta-narrative of the day centers on **shaping the perception of election integrity**. In Nigeria, there is a push to normalize the [lack of mandatory electronic transmission](#) as a "step ahead" rather than a retreat, while the opposition is framed as "unstrategic" for losing members to the APC. In the US, the President's labeling of justices as "fools" serves as **narrative seeding** to delegitimize any future judicial blocks to his trade policies. There is also a **psy-op element** to the El-Rufai case, where the release of information regarding his alleged surveillance of the NSA [serves to justify his detention](#) to an intellectual public that might otherwise view it as a political vendetta.

HYPOTHESES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

- **Trade War Escalation:** Given the US President's refusal to accept the 6-3 SCOTUS ruling, a prolonged legal battle over the [Emergency Economic Powers Act](#) is likely, leading to secondary sanctions on countries that do not comply with US tariff regimes.
- **Nigerian One-Party Tilt:** The continued ["romantic flight" of opposition members](#) to the APC suggests that Nigeria is moving toward a dominant one-party system ahead of 2027, which may face a legitimacy crisis if election logistics do not improve.
- **Energy Sector Turmoil:** The clash between [Executive Orders and the PIA](#) will likely lead to a legal showdown in Nigeria's Supreme Court, potentially causing a freeze in foreign direct investment in the oil sector until regulatory clarity is restored.

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks):

- Public protests or labor strikes in Nigeria following the [warnings from oil and gas unions](#) regarding potential job losses.
- Immediate price hikes in global markets as businesses adjust to the [new 15% US tariff](#).

Medium Term (1-6 Months):

- A possible "limited strike" or [military action in the Gulf](#) as the US 10-day ultimatum regarding Iran expires.
- Legal challenges to the [Amended Electoral Act](#) as opposition groups seek to re-institute mandatory electronic transmission before state elections.

Long Term (1-5 Years):

- Nigeria may achieve [single-digit inflation](#) if tax and currency reforms continue, but only if "coordination between agencies" improves to support inclusive growth.
- Zimbabwe's Lenacapavir program could see [HIV transmission rates fall significantly](#), providing a model for the entire sub-Saharan region.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The most critical risks identified center on institutional failure and regional military escalation.

- **Conflict Escalation in the Middle East:** Triggers: Expiry of US 10-day nuclear deal ultimatum; Likelihood: Moderate-High; Impact: Severe global oil price shock and supply chain disruption; Mitigations: Diplomatic backchannels from EU or China [to curb military action](#).

- **Electoral Delegitimization in Nigeria:** Triggers: Repeated logistical failures in state polls similar to FCT; Likelihood: High; Impact: Widespread civil unrest and loss of government mandate; Mitigations: Legislative inclusion of [mandatory electronic transmission](#) guidelines in the principal law.
- **Global Trade Stagnation:** Triggers: US executive defiance of court rulings on tariffs; Likelihood: High; Impact: Reduced global GDP growth and retaliatory tariffs from China/Canada; Mitigations: New [regional trade deals](#) that bypass the US market.
- **Domestic Purge Instability:** Triggers: Aggressive prosecution of popular regional leaders like El-Rufai; Likelihood: Moderate; Impact: Partisan/ethnic polarization and localized rioting; Mitigations: Transparent, [non-politicized prosecution](#) based on evidence.
- **Energy Sector Revenue Collapse:** Triggers: Legal paralysis over NNPC remittance rules; Likelihood: Moderate; Impact: Nigerian state governments becoming unable to pay salaries due to zero remittances; Mitigations: Harmonization of [Executive Orders with the Petroleum Industry Act](#).

GAPS & BLIND SPOTS

- **Iranian Response:** The broadcast details US strike considerations but fails to report on [Iran's counter-posture](#) or the likelihood of immediate retaliatory asymmetric attacks.

- **Opposition Defense:** While the opposition is criticized for being "opportunistic," there is a [lack of coverage](#) regarding the specific legal or political reasons they cite for defecting to the APC.
- **Voter Suppression Subtext:** The late [polling location changes via SMS](#) in the FCT are framed as logistical "congestion" fixes, but no investigation is done into whether these messages disproportionately affected opposition-leaning wards.
- **Lenacapavir Accessibility:** While the drug is 100% effective, the broadcast [does not detail the cost](#) per dose or how Zimbabwe will fund the national rollout without international aid.
- **El-Rufai Evidence:** The cybercrime charges are described, but the [specific technological methods](#) he supposedly used to intercept calls remain vague and unverified by independent tech experts.

CONTRARIAN NARRATIVE SCENARIOS

The Managed Collapse Scenario

The "sanitization" of NNPC and the write-off of [1.4 billion dollars](#) may not be a transparency move but a desperate cover for an imminent fiscal collapse. By zeroing the books, the presidency might be preparing for a full privatization that benefits current elite "fat belly characters" rather than the public, using an Executive Order to bypass the rigorous oversight of the PIA.

The Staged Opposition Decay

The "nomantic flight" of opposition members to the APC [may be a coordinated move](#) to create the illusion of a national consensus. This allows the ruling party to pass controversial legislation (like the Electoral Act

amendments) while claiming it is "harmonized" with the house, when in reality it is a managed elimination of democratic choice.

Black Swan Event: The Judicial Strike

If Trump continues to call justices "fools" and ignores their rulings, the US Supreme Court might take the unprecedented step of **staying all executive functions** related to trade and defense, leading to a constitutional standstill that freezes the US government's ability to act in the 10-day window regarding Iran.

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For Statecraft/Public Sector:

- **Security:** Intelligence agencies should prioritize monitoring [inter-elite cyber-warfare](#) within Nigeria to prevent the weaponization of surveillance tools against national security actors.
- **Economic:** Nigerian subnationals must transition from "feeding bottle" center reliance to [regional infrastructure projects](#) (like the Southwest rail system) to mitigate national-level revenue volatility.
- **Diplomatic:** Developing nations should [diversify trade partnerships](#) immediately to hedge against US trade unilateralism and judicial-executive instability.

For Private Sector/Investors:

- **Regulatory Compliance:** Investors in Nigeria's oil sector should [verify all contracts against the PIA](#) rather than relying on Executive Orders, which face high risk of being struck down by courts.

- **Capital Allocation:** The [100% subscription of commercial papers](#) suggests strong domestic liquidity; investors should look for opportunities in local financial infrastructure and tech creators.
- **Safety Standards:** Industrialists must [prioritize energy efficiency](#) and off-grid solar solutions as energy subsidies remain "a problem" despite government efforts to manage the market.

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

The legislative agenda has been dominated by efforts to align election timing with religious cycles and to centralize control over oil revenues through executive action.

BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED:

- **Amended Electoral Act 2026:** [Signed into law](#); reduces election notice period to 300 days and removes mandatory electronic result transmission.
- **Petroleum Industry Act (PIA) Re-interpretation:** Challenged by [Executive Orders](#) regarding the 30% revenue retention for frontier exploration vs. direct remittance to the federation account.
- **Tenancy Regulation Proposal:** Debated as a potential [government intervention](#) to control rent hikes, though lawyers warn it may infringe on private contract rights.

HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS:

- **NNPC Audit Hearing:** Revealed [ten years of unaudited accounts](#) and a 1.4 billion dollar presidency-approved write-off.
- **Rivers State Impeachment Withdrawal:** A [formal notice](#) filed to withdraw all pending cases before the courts as part of a peace agreement.

- **Investment Summit (Ondo State):** Scheduled for [Monday the 23rd](#) to showcase coastline and bitumen assets.

KEY STORIES

- **US Supreme Court Overrules Tariffs:** A [6-3 decision](#) found the President exceeded his powers; Trump responds by calling them "fools" and threatening new taxes.
- **El-Rufai Detainment:** Former Kaduna Governor [Nasir El-Rufai](#) in custody over a 235 billion naira probe and cybercrime charges involving NSA Ribadu.
- **Nigeria Electoral Reform Signed:** President signs [amended 2026 Act](#), modifying election notices to avoid a clash with Ramadan.
- **Zimbabwe Lenacapavir Launch:** National program started for [injectable HIV prevention](#) with nearly 100% efficacy rates.
- **FCT Area Council Elections:** Logistics failures across [62 wards](#), featuring 65 candidates and 17 parties with notably low urban turnout.
- **Iran Strike Consideration:** US President weighs [limited military action](#) to pressure nuclear negotiations within a 10-day window.
- **Rivers State Peace Accord:** Withdrawal of [impeachment notice](#) against Governor Fubara after Tinubu's intervention.
- **Ondo Investment Summit:** State promotes [largest bitumen deposit](#) and deep-sea port to global investors.
- **Nigeria Macroeconomic Outlook:** Inflation [dropping to 15.1%](#) and reserves hitting 49 billion dollars despite oil revenue disputes.
- **Tech Revolution Africa 2.0:** Lagos summit [focuses on AI and open source](#) to drive the digital economy.
- **NNPCL Revenue Controversy:** Executive Order [mandating 100% remittance](#) of oil proceeds to federation account, conflicting with PIA norms.
- **Labor Union Threats:** TUC warns [6,000 direct and tens of thousands of indirect jobs](#) at risk if oil revenue flows are disrupted.
- **Tenancy Law Debate:** Discussions on whether the government should [regulate private property](#) to protect vulnerable tenants from 100% rent hikes.
- **Kaduna State Compensations:** Distribution of [2.85 billion naira](#) to 189 households affected by the Rigasa road project.
- **Navy Drug Seizure:** Interception of [500kg of cannabis sativa](#) in Lagos by Nigerian Navy ship Vacroft.
- **Human Parts Arrest:** Suspect [Garuba Amino apprehended](#) in Osogbo for possession of a human leg concealed in plastic bottles.
- **Winter Fishing Festival:** Report on [winter fishing in China](#) where a "headfish" signifies good luck for the new year.
- **Amala Culture in Abuja:** Delicacy gaining [wide acceptance](#) across tribes and even among the international diaspora.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Today's Media Trends is a public interest experiment in applying deep thematic trend analysis to television news coverage from around the world to explore how responsibly applied advanced AI can help journalists and scholars better understand the overarching

trends, themes and patterns of our global world.

No data is used to train or tune any AI model.

Each morning, in collaboration with the Internet Archive's TV News Archive, we apply Google's Gemini 3 to deeply examine yesterday's coverage from each television news channel to tease out the overarching themes and trends of its news coverage into a richly annotated thematic analysis. Each high-level insight is connected back to the original broadcast, allowing journalists and scholars to understand the dominate themes and trends and instantly click out to the underlying sources for details.

By helping journalists and scholars see the broader trends and patterns of global news coverage, this analysis helps them identify

relevant stories and coverage they might not otherwise have encountered and uncover connections, emphases and narrative shifts that enable more comprehensive reporting and deeper, evidence-based research.

This report is entirely machine generated using Gemini 3 and may include errors and omissions. Please verify all findings. No data is used to train or tune any AI model.

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