

JULY 12, 2020

FAKE NEWS NEWS LETTER

FOR THE WEEK ENDING

#StopFakeNews

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FAKE NEWS NEWSLETTER

FOR JULY 6 TO JULY 12, 2020

The past week has seen a trend of false claims across Nigeria, shifting from major issues around the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic to the political space.

The Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) has continued to sustain in efforts in countering the disinformation across social media space and at the community level.

The false claims countered this past week include:

DID 50 NIGERIAN LAWMAKERS TEST POSITIVE FOR COVID-19?

A report widely shared and published on several blogs on Tuesday, July 17, 2020, claimed that over 50 lawmakers at the National Assembly allegedly tested positive for Coronavirus.

The report claimed the development was responsible for the adjournment of plenary by the leadership of the House of Representatives on Tuesday as most of the affected lawmakers were seriously ill and some isolated.

This claim was published by these news sites, including [Newsflash](#), [Opera News](#) and many others.

However, investigation on the claim showed that it is unproven that 50 Nigerian lawmakers tested positive to deadly virus disease.

The Chairman, Senate Committee on Media and Public Affairs, Ajibola Basiru, in response, questioned the validity of the claim.

In an inquiry sent to Basiru by CDD fact-checks, the lawmaker responded: "Fake news" through a text message.

Also, the spokesperson to the House of Representative, Benjamin Kalu, said the claim was false.

A statement released by the lower chamber, which was sent to our fact-checker when contacted read in part:

"We wish to state that there has not been any panic at the National Assembly as alleged in the publication and that to the best of our knowledge, it is untrue that 50 lawmakers tested positive to Covid-19."

Further checks with the Assistant Epidemiologist of the Federal Capital Territory, Dr Nwachukwu, showed that the claim is unproven.

Dr Nwachukwu told CDD fact-checkers that she is not aware of such an incident.

"I am not aware of such," Dr Nwachukwu said

The claim remains unproven. Both Chambers of the National Assembly have debunked the report that 50 lawmakers have tested positive to COVID-19.

Read the full report [here](#).

CDD Fact Check
Did 50 Nigerian Lawmakers Test Positive for COVID-19?

FACT
The claim remains unproven. Both Chambers of the National Assembly have debunked the report that 50 lawmakers have tested positive to COVID-19.

CDD, therefore, urges members of the public to always verify all information before disseminating them.

You can also forward suspicious messages for verification at +2349062910568 or contact us on twitter: @CDDWestAfrica.

Verdict: UNPROVEN
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ARE N-AGRO APPLICANTS SCHEDULED TO TAKE 15-MINUTES E-TEST VIA EMAIL LINK?

On Thursday, July 9, 2020, fact-checkers at the Centre for Democracy and Development spotted a WhatsApp broadcast informing applicants for the N-Power Agro of an upcoming 15 minutes e-test.

According to the message, a link to the test has been sent via email to all successful candidates who applied for the programme.

The message also encouraged all applicants who registered for the N-Power Agro to check their emails for details and link.

However, checks by fact-checkers at the CDD revealed that the purported claim is false. Checks on N-Power platforms and websites by the Centre also showed that at no point was such directive or announcement made by the Federal Government.

Also, a short statement released on July 7, 2020, by the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management on the N-Power social media platforms proved that the message did not emanate from the FG.

The message said: *Disregard any information that did not originate from our verified channels. Any information making rounds about an assessment schedule should not be considered FAKE NEWS*”.

Read the full report [here](#).

CDD Fact Check
Are N-agro Applicants Scheduled to Take 15mins E-Test Via an Email Link?

FACT
The claim that there is a scheduled e-test for N-Power Agro applicants is false.

According to the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management, the general public should disregard such rumour and only consider information from its verified channels.

CDD, therefore, urges members of the public to always verify all information before disseminating them.

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Verdict: False
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NAFDAC DID NOT APPROVE HERBAL DRUG FOR COVID-19 PREVENTION, TREATMENT

On July 11 2020, several news [blogs](#) in Nigeria reported a claim that the National Agency for Food, Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) had approved a PAX herbal drug as an immune booster against Coronavirus (SARS-COV-2).

The various reports claimed that the Director of the Pax Herbal Clinic and Research Laboratories, Reverend Father Anslem Adodo, announced the approval of the drug for the treatment of symptoms associated with COVID-19.

This claim also published by [the Guardian Nigeria](#), trended on social media platforms and WhatsApp.

Checks by CDD fact-checkers show that NAFDAC did not approve PAX herbal drug as an immune booster against the SARS-COV-2. The immune booster was approved as 'safe for use' in Nigeria.

NAFDAC in a disclaimer issued by Professor Moji Adeyeye, Director-General of the Agency, said the Pax Herbal claim is wrong and inaccurate.

Professor Adeyeye, however, said Pax Herbal applied to NAFDAC for the listing of Pax Herbal Cugzin capsule 290mg "safe to use" as an immune booster – not for use against COVID-19.

Read the full report [here](#).



CDD, therefore, urges members of the public to always verify all information before disseminating them.

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#StopFakeNews #StopDisinformation



Centre for Democracy & Development

Centre pour la démocratie et le développement

The Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) was established in the United Kingdom in 1997 as an independent, not-for-profit, research training, advocacy and capacity building organisation

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