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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/Health: Buhari Signs National Health Insurance Bill Into Law

President Muhammadu Buhari has signed the National Health Insurance Authority Bill, 2022 into law. The new legislation repeals the National Health Insurance Scheme Act, 2004. Speaking during the signing of the bill, Buhari said the new law makes provisions for the setup of a trust fund “to ensure the coverage of 83 million poor Nigerians who cannot afford to pay premiums”. The President also said there will be collaborations with state government health insurance schemes to accredit primary and secondary health facilities to ensure the delivery of quality health services. Ayodele Oluwafemi, [The Cable News \(May 18th\)](#) reports.

IMF Says Nigeria Among Emerging Economies to Record Economic Losses, SEC Issues New Regulations on Cryptocurrencies in Nigeria

In its World Economic Outlook report, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has warned that Nigeria and other emerging countries will likely record greater losses due to their less access to vaccines and smaller pandemic-support packages. The IMF also said that the pandemic induced losses for both economic output and employment would be significant in coming years. According to the organization, among the key causes of scarring from the pandemic were the prospective weak labor market recoveries in emerging market economies and the severe disruptions to schooling over the past two years across both advanced and emerging economies. The IMF further warned that policymakers must act promptly to repair the damage from the crisis and prevent decades of diminished economic output from lost human capital. Edidiong Ikpoto, [The Punch News \(May 19th\)](#) reports.

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has released a set of new regulations guiding the issuance, exchange and custody of digital assets in the country. According to SEC, a digital asset means a digital token that represents assets such as debt or equity claim on the issuer. In 2020, the Central Bank of Nigeria directed financial service providers to halt cryptocurrency transactions. But, in its new regulations, SEC said mandates the registration of “the offering and sale of digital tokens that are considered securities”. The new rules could help provide the needed regulatory lucidity for the scope of a digital asset or security. Bunmi Aduloju, [The Cable News \(May 15th\)](#) reports.

APC Adjusts Timetable for Election Primaries, EFCC Arrests Accountant-General of the Federation Over Alleged N 80 Billion Fraud, FG Suspends Accountant-General of the Federation over Suspicious Assets, Lagos State Government Directs Security Operative to Enforce Ban of Commercial Motorcycles, President Buhari and Attorney General of the Federation Sue National Assembly Over Section 84(2) of New Electoral Act

The ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) has reviewed the timetable for its primary elections. According to the reviewed timetable released by the National Public Secretary of the APC, Felix Morka, the party will now hold its special convention to elect its presidential candidate on May 29 and 30. Morka said the schedules of primaries for Governorship, Senate, House of Representatives and the State Houses of Assembly have also been changed. The primaries for the House of Representatives and Governorship will now hold on the same day, May 26, while May 27 was fixed for appeal. May 27 is the new date for primaries for the Senate and State Houses of Assembly while May 28 is the date for the appeal. The presidential primaries of the main opposition party, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), will hold on May 28 and 29 at the Mooshod Abiola Stadium in Abuja, while the ruling party is expected to use the Eagle Square. Bakare Majeed, [The Premium Times News \(May 18th\)](#) reports.

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) on Monday arrested the Accountant-General of the Federation (AGF), Ahmed Idris, over alleged mismanagement of N 80 billion. According to the EFCC, its verified intelligence showed that the AGF illegally deducted the funds through fictitious consultancies and other illegal activities using proxies, family members and close associates. The funds were laundered through real estate investments in Kano and Abuja. Idris was arrested after failing to honor invitations by the EFCC to respond to issues connected to the fraudulent acts. [The Sahara Reporters News \(May 16th\)](#) reports.

The Federal Government has suspended the Accountant-General of the Federation (AGF), Ahmed Idris, following his arrest over money laundering and diversion of public funds allegations on Monday. The Minister of Finance, Zainab Ahmed, informed Idris of his suspension in a letter on Wednesday. The AGF is also barred from visiting his office or contacting any official in his office during his suspension except for disciplinary proceed-

ings that might be initiated against him. The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) captured Idris in Kano on Tuesday. Unnamed sources provided photographs of a sprawling building complex located in Kano allegedly linked to Idris. Ade Adesomoju, [The Premium Times News \(May 18th\)](#) reports.

The Lagos State Government has directed security operatives to enforce a ban on commercial motorcycles, popularly known as Okada. Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu gave the directive on Wednesday during a meeting with the State Commissioner of Police, Area Commanders and Divisional Police Officers at the State House. Sanwo-Olu explained the State Government took the decision in line with the state's Transport Sector Reform Law, 2018 to immediately address the chaos and menace created by the operations of commercial motorcyclists in the listed areas. He urged the police to enforce the order without compromise. [News Agency of Nigeria \(May 18th\)](#) reports.

In a suit filed on April 29, President Muhammadu Buhari and the Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami, have filed a suit at the Supreme Court, seeking an interpretation of Section 84(12) of the Electoral Amendment Act, 2022. The National Assembly is listed as the sole defendant. The controversial clause has been a subject of intense litigation and political debate in Nigeria since the President signed the amended Electoral Act, 2022 into law in February this year. Shortly after signing it into law, Buhari had urged the parliament to delete the controversial clause in the Electoral Act but the National Assembly declined the president's request. In the suit, the plaintiffs are seeking an order of the Supreme Court to withdraw the disputed section, which they argue is inconsistent with the Nigerian constitution. Ameh Ejekwonyilo, [The Premium Times News \(May 15th\)](#) reports.

Insecurity: Multinational Joint Task Force Kill 300 Boko Haram, ISWAP Terrorists in Lake Chad, NSCDC Inaugurates Female Special Squad, FG Cautions Facebook for Accommodating Platform to IPOB Separatists Group, Northern Governors Condemn Killing of Student Killed in Sokoto State

Kamarudeen Adegoke, Chief of Military Public Information, revealed on Saturday that the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) has eliminated 300 Boko Haram/Islamic State of the West African

Province (ISWAP) fighters in Lake Chad. Force Commander Gen. Abdul Khalifa spoke at a meeting with all Commanders of the MNJTF. Khalifa said an increasing use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) by the insurgents was noted and necessary measures taken. "About four IED making factories were destroyed in the course of the operations so far", the General said. Wale Odunsi, [The Daily Post News \(May 14th\)](#) reports.

The Osun state Command of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) on Friday inaugurated a 38-unit female squad to combat insecurity. The female squad, which exist in all state commands, is targeted at boosting the fight against insecurity across the country. NSCDC Commandant General Ahmed Audi, represented by Fasilu Adeyinka, said the invasion of school environments in some parts of the country had become rampant, which necessitated the establishment of the squad because it was using feminine and mother care approaches in the provision of security services to schools. [News Agency of Nigeria \(May 13th\)](#) reports.

The Minister of Information and Culture, Lai Mohammed, has cautioned Facebook and other social media platforms operating in Nigeria to suspend the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) from inciting violence and ethnic hatred in Nigeria using their platforms. The Minister made the demand in Abuja on Tuesday at a meeting with a Facebook team where he indicated that IPOB had been proscribed and classified as a terrorist organization. According to him, Facebook had no justification for yielding its platform to the organization to further its campaign of hate and destabilization of the country. Mohammed said the Federal Government would be monitoring Facebook and other platforms closely in the days ahead to ensure compliance with the demand. Soni Daniel, [The Vanguard News \(May 17th\)](#) reports.

The Northern Governors' Forum (NGF) has condemned the killing of Deborah Samuel Yakubu, a student killed in Sokoto State on Thursday following an allegation that she had blasphemed the Prophet of Islam. Chairman of the NGF and Governor of Plateau State, Simon Lalong, in a statement expressed the Governor's concern about the development which was clearly an extrajudicial measure of addressing perceived infractions. The victim was stoned to death and her body burnt by a mob of Muslim students after she made a post they deemed insulted Prophet Muhammad. The NGF, while commiserating with the family of the

victim, urged security agencies to thoroughly investigate the matter and ensure that the law takes its full course on anyone found wanted or culpable in the circumstance. A 24-hour curfew, announced by Sokoto State Governor Aminu Waziri Tambuwal

to curtail the violent protest sparked by a procession along major streets, has been met with normalcy which gradually returned to the city ravaged by violent protests at the weekend. Habeeb Hazeem et al., [The Guardian News \(May 16th\)](#) reports.

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