

## 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: NCDC Restates Warning Against Mass Gathering, Meet Target of 2million Tests**

The Director-General of the Nigeria Center for Disease Control, NCDC, Chikwe Ihekweazu, has confirmed, that the Indian variant of the covid-19 pandemic is already in the country and advised citizens to protect themselves by wearing facemask and avoid mass rallies. He warned that citizens have become “complacent” following the reduction of reported cases of infected persons. Ihekweazu said that, “we have started behaving as if there is no pandemic. Religious rallies and political campaigns triggered the resurgence of the virus in India, which has the similar environment like ours. It is the duty of the states to enforce the guidance and also the people too.” Chinedu Eze, [This Day News \(May 17<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

Meanwhile, the NCDC laboratory strategic group, had set itself a target of testing two million people across the country. It said on its official twitter handle, on Monday 17, that it had targeted conducting tests for two million citizens, in three months and have carried out said two million, two thousand and six hundred and fifty-three test in the country. [News Agency of Nigeria \(May 18<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

### **President Buhari Seeks NASS Approval For \$6.1 bn Loan, Calls for Debt Relief for Africa**

In new reports, President Muhammadu Buhari, has sought to borrow six billion dollars from bilateral and multilateral organizations, to fund the deficit in the 2021 budget. Buhari disclosed, that the 2021 budget has a deficit of five trillion naira and that the new borrowing will Part-finance the deficit in the 2021 budget. He explained that the loan would be sourced from the International Capital Market, ICM, through the issuance of Eurobonds and will fund projects from priority sectors of the economy. Bakare Mojeed, [Premium Times \(May 18<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

Meanwhile, President Buhari, at the Financing Summit held at the Grande Palais Ephemere in Paris, France on Tuesday 18, has called on the European countries and the global financing institutions to consider reducing the devastating effect

of Covid-19 pandemic on African countries by restructuring debt portfolios and providing complete debt relief. He added that, many African countries were already experiencing debt distress and the debt service suspension by France and the G-20 was not far reaching enough. president Buhari also called for the release of vaccines to Africa, which had been lacking behind in protecting the majority of its citizens. [News Agency of Agency \(May 19<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

### **INEC Seeks Military Support Over Destruction of Offices; PDP, Governors Support Restructuring, State Police**

The Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, has sought to meet the heads of security agencies, as part of moves to end attacks on its offices in some parts of the country. Twelve offices of the INEC, have been so far burnt by hoodlums. An official of the INEC disclosed that, “after our meeting on Wednesday, we will meet security chiefs to end this ugly development which may affect future elections” the Chief Press Secretary of the INEC, Mr Rotimi Oyekanmi, also warned that the commissions capacity prepare for future elections could be affected by the series of attacks. Olalekan Adetayo et al, [Punch News \(May 18<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

The Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, Governors Forum, on Monday 17, led by the chairman Aminu Tambuwal, has called on President Muhammadu Buhari to begin the process that would lead to the creation of state police. The meeting which held in Ibadan, Oyo state, revealed the position of governor’s forum contained in a communique which agitated for restructuring of the country and support for the ban on open grazing by southern governors. “The meeting agreed that the most viable solution to the herders/farmers clashes in Nigeria is to devolve more powers and functions to the states. Olufemi Olaniyi Theople’s, [Punch News \(May 17<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

### **House Speaker Reveals 9% of Armed Forces Budget Spent on Equipment, Reps Move to Provide Framework for Transition of Power, Ministerial Appointment**

The Speaker of the House of Representatives, Femi Gbajabamila, at a public hearing on the Armed Forces Support Fund, on Monday 17, revealed that appropriation records showed that nine per cent of the total budgetary allocation to the Nigerian Armed Forces is spent on equipment and ninety-one per cent is spent on recurrent overhead, salaries and welfare. He added that, it is grossly incapable of empowering the military to face the security challenges in the country, especially the insurgency in the North-East. A bill that sought to provide injection of additional capital funding for the Armed Forces of Nigeria is been introduced. [News Agency of Nigeria \(May 17<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

Meanwhile, a bill seeking to provide a framework for the transition of power, in the House of Representatives, Tuesday 17, passed for second reading. The bill seeks to create a committee that will oversee the transition of power from an outgoing president and president elect. The bill proposes a 30-day timeline for a president to transmit nominees for ministerial positions to the National Assembly. Kpan Sokpa (PDP, Benue) sponsored the bill and referred to the bill as a legal framework for the procedure of transition of power. Bakare Mojeed, [Premium Times News \(May 18<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

### **Insecurity: Shekau Allegedly Dead, Boko Haram Spreads Across the Country, Military Seeks \$2 billion to Fight Insecurity, President Buhari Moves Against IPOB in the South-East, Violent Incidents Recorded Across the Country**

Recent reports claim that Shekau has died after fights between Boko Haram and ISWAP in the Sambisa Forest. The unconfirmed reports of his dead say that Shekau committed suicide during talks with high ranked ISWAP officers after ISWAP fighters were able to subdue the Boko Haram base defense. Neither Boko Haram nor the State Security Service have confirmed Shekau's death so far. In past years, Shekau was announced dead several times. Humangle, [Premium Times \(May 20<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports. Stephanie Busari and Nimi Princewill, [CNN \(May 21<sup>st</sup>\)](#), report about the reactions to the

alleged death of Shekau by the Nigerian Army among others.

Prior to the report to about the killing of Shekau, reports claimed that the Boko Haram terrorists have spread attacks beyond the North-eastern states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe and have attacked civilian and military targets, killing hundreds of people. State governments across the country have indicated that the terrorists now operate in other states apart from the "troubled" North-east. However, President Muhammadu Buhari, has said that, the Boko Haram terrorists have been degraded and confined to the North-east alone. Nasir Ayitogo, [Premium Times News \(May 17<sup>th</sup>\)](#) reports.

Meanwhile, the Director of Procurement, Nigeria Air Force, NAF, M. A Yakubu, on Monday 17, revealed that the military would require at least an annual budget of two billion dollars to fight terrorism and other causes of insecurity in the country. Yakubu said, manufacturers of military equipment have insisted on full payment before beginning production. He also added that, the cost would include training of personnel to handle the equipment's. Msugh Ityokura, [Guardian News \(May 18<sup>th</sup>\)](#) writes.

On another note, President Muhammadu Buhari, has moved against the Indigenous People of Biafra, IPOB. Troops fighting the Boko Haram Jihadist in Borno state, have being transferred to the South-East, to counter the Eastern Security Network, ESN. The army and police have moved to include combat helicopters, "to conduct massive raids" on the hideouts of "criminals" due to increased casualties on its officers in the South-East. According to John Campbell, in the [Council of Foreign Relations, \(May 19<sup>th</sup>\)](#), President Buhari and his generation, post-independence history, are reacting strongly against any resurgence of Biafran Separatism.

The Nigeria Coalition of Mourns, a Non-Governmental organization in the country, has reported that one thousand, six hundred and three people were killed in violent attacks across the country between January and march 2021. The report titled "violent incidents reports" gathered its research through newspaper reports and family sources. Ler Jonathan, a member of the Nigeria

Mourns Coalition, said the figures are worrying “but not meant to criticize the government.” Adejumo Kabir, [Premium Times \(May 17th\)](#) writes.

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