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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: Reviving the Economy

The crippling effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Nigerian economy has continued to reverberate as the government is making efforts to gradually re-engineer the economy back to full activity. The attendant lockdown and the subsequent phased ease of restrictions have had devastating effects on both public and private businesses in Nigeria. Several sectors like financial services, oil, aviation, hospitality, manufacturing, education and others were highly impacted by the lockdown as they witnessed little or no patronage. With the Federal Government and the National Assembly working out modalities for restarting the economy, Nigerians are optimistic that the economy will pick up over time. Levinus Nwabughioqu of [Vanguard News \(25th May\)](#) writes.

The drop in the price of crude oil, which is Nigeria's main source of revenue, is however slowing the recovery process. The Nigeria Employers Consultative Assembly (NECA) has urged fiscal and monetary authorities to develop more aggressive and decisive policies to sustain economic recovery in the wake of further reduction in oil prices. A [Daily Times article \(27th May\)](#) by Joy Obakeye details.

In a discussion on sustainable development amidst a global pandemic, leaders held the opinion that the African economy will recover quickly from the devastating impact of the Coronavirus pandemic if there is a meaningful collaboration between governments and the private sector. Bassey Udo, of [Premium Times \(26th May\)](#) reports.

Controversy Over Nigeria's Infectious Diseases Control Bill Continues

The infectious diseases control bill which was sponsored by the Speaker of Nigeria's House of Representatives, Hon. Femi Gbajabamila and two other lawmakers, has generated controversy among many Nigerians who claim that the bill creates more problems than it purports to solve. Opponents to the bill cited sections as giving arbitrary powers to the Director General of Nigeria Centre for Disease Control, limiting the ability of states to intervene, and a violation of the funda-

mental human rights of Nigerians as enshrined in the constitution among others. They described the bill as plagiarized from Singapore's Infectious Disease Act of 1977. A coalition of eleven civil society organizations (CSOs) and other stakeholders called for the rejection of the bill, while seeking a review of provisions that are not in tandem with modern democratic principles. Ifeoluwa Adeniran of [Premium Times \(27th May\)](#) writes.

Reacting to the concerns, the House of Representatives has said that the bill will be subjected to public hearing while acknowledging that the National Health Emergency Bill has been introduced in the Senate. Lending further credence to the issue, the legal practitioner, Sonnie Ekwowusi argues in [This Day \(27th May\)](#) that the infectious diseases bill is unnecessary. Sam Omotoso writes in [This Day \(26th May\)](#) further on the controversial bill.

Enhancing Financial Transparency: Buhari Grants Financial Autonomy to State Legislature and Judiciary

In line with the commitment of the present administration of President Muhammadu Buhari, to strengthen the principle of separation of power and public accountability, the President signed the Executive Order 10 of 2020 which grants the state legislative and judicial arms full financial independence rather than the current practice where state governors decide and determine allocations to the two other arms of state government.

According to a statement from the Office of the Attorney General of the Federation, the action of the President is in compliance with recommendations of the Presidential Implementation Committee set up to address inherent abuses of the Nigerian constitution and to preserve the tenets of democracy that guarantee financial autonomy for all arms of government, Andrew Orolua of [Daily Times \(23rd May\)](#) writes.

However, the issue has generated discordant opinions from lawyers and analysts. While some applaud the action of the President as entrenching the principle of separation of powers, others question the authority of the President in signing such a law. Alex Enumah

of [All Africa \(26th May\)](#) details and [Vanguard Newspaper \(25th May\)](#) reports.

State Police: The Quest for Decentralization

With the rising insecurity across all the geopolitical regions of Nigeria, and the attendant problem of exercise of control over deployment of security personnel to check crime, state governors have jointly moved to set up state and regional level security forces to help address security problems bedeviling the states. The current situation where the heads of security agencies at the federal level have over-riding powers to command and control the officers at state and regional levels, is seen as limiting the effectiveness and efficiency of the agencies due to bureaucratic bottlenecks inherent in the system. In an article by James Eze, governors of the South-east rejected the methodology of community policing prescribed by the Inspector General of Police (IGP), Mohammed Abubakar, [Premium Times \(24th May\)](#). They berated the IGP for breaching the earlier agreement for a template. However, they eventually agreed on a workable template for the implementation of community policing in the region, Benjamin Nworie [This Day \(28th May\)](#).

Barely hours after the agreement, President Muhammadu Buhari has approved the reorganization of the Police Force Criminal Investigations Department (FCID). The new arrangement separates the Force Intelligence Bureau (FIB) from the FCID, as a department to be headed by a Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police. The President also approved the creation of five new zonal commands of the Nigeria Police Force, thereby increasing the Commands to 17 across the country. Kingsley Omonobi of [Vanguard News \(28th May\)](#) reports. In a similar vein, Mr. Bola Longe, Nasarawa State Commissioner of Police, has inaugurated an eleven-member state community policing committee with a view to effectively tackle crime and criminality in the state. [Independent Nigeria \(28th May\)](#) details.

Curbing Insurgency and Terrorism: Nigerian Military Intensifies Attack on Boko Haram, ISWAP and Bandits

In continuation of its onslaught on the strongholds of Boko Haram, ISWAP and bandits in North-East and North-West parts of Nigeria, the Nigerian military has intensified its attack on the terrorists in order to decimate their bases, logistics and ability to regroup. In the states of the North-East, terrorists and insurgents have wreaked havoc on lives and property, while in the North West, armed bandits have continuously carried out acts of kidnapping, arson and killings. The joint forces of the Nigerian Army, Air Force, Police and other security agencies, (including Civilian Joint Task Force) have intensified attacks on the criminals and have recorded some level of success, though the insurgents have remained defiant. In a report, Molly Kilete in [The Sun \(23rd May\)](#) writes that the Nigerian military killed several insurgents and destroyed several of their hideouts and equipment.

Corroborating the story on counter insurgency, the head of Defence Media Operations, Major General John Eneche gave details and number of insurgents killed so far, and restated the determination of the Nigerian military to sustain the fight. Maureen Onochie of [Daily Trust \(24th May\)](#) reports.

Similarly, the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lt-Gen. Tukur Buratai gave further details of successes achieved so far in the recent operations on the counter insurgency fight. See more details in [Global Sentinel News \(25th May\)](#). However, citizens still live in fear of Boko Haram and ISWAP terrorists.

The Nigerian military has deployed more troops and equipment in the special operation approved by President Muhammadu Buhari to flush out bandits and kidnappers in the North-West. Onuminya Innocent, in [This Day News \(27th May\)](#) reports. In support of the counter insurgency fight, the Nigerian Chapter of the Africa Union, Economic, Social and Cultural Council, AU-ECOSOCC, has called on all Africans to be united against all forms of violence and insecurity in the continent. [The Nigerian Pilot \(27th May\)](#).

Amnesty International Berates Nigerian Army and Boko Haram Over Child Abuses

Amnesty International has urgently asked the Nigerian Government to address its wanton neglect in protecting children in the North-East from abuse. The report titled "We Dry our Tears" outlined cases of injustice including detention, torture, and other crimes against humanity being perpetrated by the Nigerian Army against defenseless children. It also accused the government of not taking precaution to protect persons caught in the cross-fire in the fight against terrorism and insurgency in the North-East. The report also berated Boko Haram for carrying out various degrees of assault against children. According to the report, children who were escaping the theatres of war have been captured or recruited by the sect. They were being tortured, unlawfully detained and abused by the group ([Amnesty International 27th May](#)).

Other sources include [New York Times \(27th May\)](#), [Online Nigeria \(27th May\)](#), [International Centre for Investigative Reporting \(27th May\)](#),

[The Guardian \(27th May\)](#), and a press release by [Premium Times \(27th May\)](#) details.

African Union Celebrates African Liberation Day 2020: Another Call for an African Way

In commemoration of the 57th year celebration of African Liberation Day, which was set by the African Union (AU) for 25th May of every year to mark the liberation of Africa from colonialism, the chairperson of African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, has advocated for an urgent need for Africa to develop new forms of resilience. In an article published on [Premium Times \(25th May\)](#), with the theme "silencing the guns", Mahamat said that "in a world in which multilateralism is sorely tested, Africa must stop expecting solutions from others. Africa should no longer be satisfied with this role of a never-ending reservoir for some, and dumping ground for others." He went on to propose ways in which Africa can overcome the challenges of the ravaging COVID-19 and other challenges including insecurity and infrastructural deficit, among others.

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