

ZENITHBANK 67.00 8.40% ▲



UBA 44.30 6.40% ▲

WEEKLY BRIEF

Week of 27th – 30th April 2026

PREPARED BY:



Wealthbridge Economic
Advisory

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Key Highlights During the Week

International News

- ❑ **United States:** FOMC dissenters send hawkish signal, Trump Warns US Will Raise Tariffs On EU Cars, Trucks To 25%
- ❑ **UK & Eurozone:** Bank of England kept its base rate unchanged at 3.75%, ECB leaves interest rates unchanged at 2%
- ❑ **China:** China beats growth expectation in Q1 2026; Credit data shows rebound in demand amidst liquidity
- ❑ **Japan:** Bank of Japan keeps policy rate steady while raising inflation forecast on Iran war worries
- ❑ **South Africa:** China Zero-Tariff Policy Gains Backing In Africa As Trade Ties Deepen
- ❑ **Ghana:** Ghana Ends US Aid Talks Over Personal Data Dispute

Local News

- ❑ Nigeria, UAE Deepen Trade Ties with New Customs Cooperation Plan
- ❑ Lagos Targets 2027 Launch for State-Licensed Power Plants Amid Electricity Market Reform
- ❑ PMI falls below 50 as Nigeria records first contraction in 16 months
- ❑ Nigeria's external reserves fall \$731 million in April drawdown
- ❑ FEC approves \$2.99bn for three major rail projects in Lagos, Kano, Kaduna
- ❑ MTN Nigeria to sell 60% of MoMo PSB, YDF to MTN Group
- ❑ Zenith Bank posts N360.9bn Q1 2026 Profit as Revenue hits N1trn

Key Macroeconomic Indices

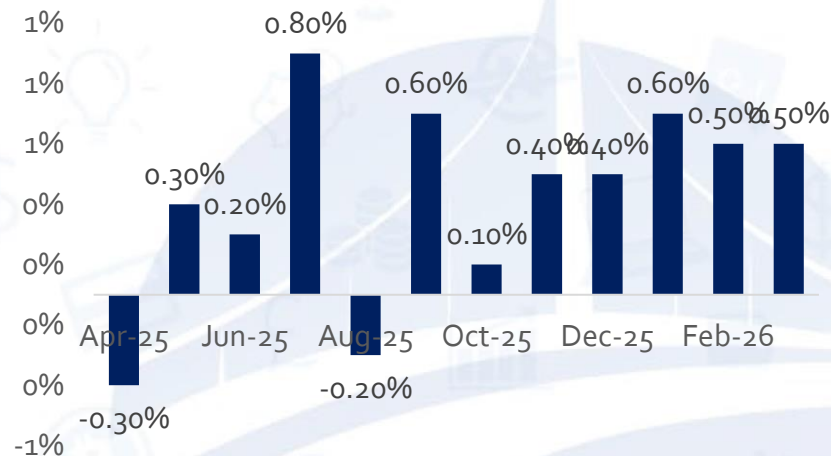
NAFEM (₦/\$)	Monetary Policy Rate	Brent Crude oil price (\$/Barrel)	Inflation Rate	GDP Growth Rate
₦1,374.94/\$1 (30/04/26)	26.50% (Feb 2025)	\$108.17 (1/05/26)	15.38% (Mar 2026)	4.07% (Q4 2025)



The United States

FOMC dissenters send hawkish signal, Trump Warns US Will Raise Tariffs On EU Cars, Trucks To 25%

- ❑ The Federal Reserve held interest rates steady at 3.5%–3.75% at its April 28–29 meeting, but the real headline was the historic 8–4 vote split the most divided outcome since 1992.
- ❑ Three regional presidents (Kashkari, Logan, Hammack) dissented against the statement's "easing bias," arguing that Iran war inflation and rising economic uncertainty made signalling future cuts premature. A fourth dissenter, Governor Miran, pushed for an immediate cut. It was also Jerome Powell's final meeting as Fed Chair. Markets erased all 2026 rate-cut expectations.
- ❑ President Trump announced on May 1 that EU car and truck tariffs will jump from 15% to 25%, citing EU non-compliance with their 2025 bilateral trade deal. The White House will invoke Section 232 (national security authority) after the Supreme Court struck down earlier reciprocal tariffs. Germany faces the heaviest blow. The EU denied any breach and warned of retaliatory measures.



US PPI M-o-M (Apr 2025 – Mar 2026)
Source: Bureau of Labour Statistics, WealthBridge Research

What to Expect

- ❑ Incoming Fed Chair Kevin Warsh may face immediate pressure to align with hawkish committee members.

S&P 500 gained over 10% in April

- ❑ Despite a noisy month with confusing war headlines from the Middle East and a surprisingly tough Federal Reserve meeting stock markets mostly ignored the noise and finished higher. Bigger, more established companies did better than smaller ones.
- ❑ Energy stocks were the winners, pushed up by rising oil prices. Cheaper, stable "value" stocks beat faster-growing "growth" stocks.
- ❑ The headline number: the S&P 500 gained over 10% in April alone — its best single month since November 2020. That is a very strong performance, especially given all the uncertainty in the background

Drivers

Rising oil prices lifted energy stocks, making the energy sector the top performer for the month

Indices' Performance

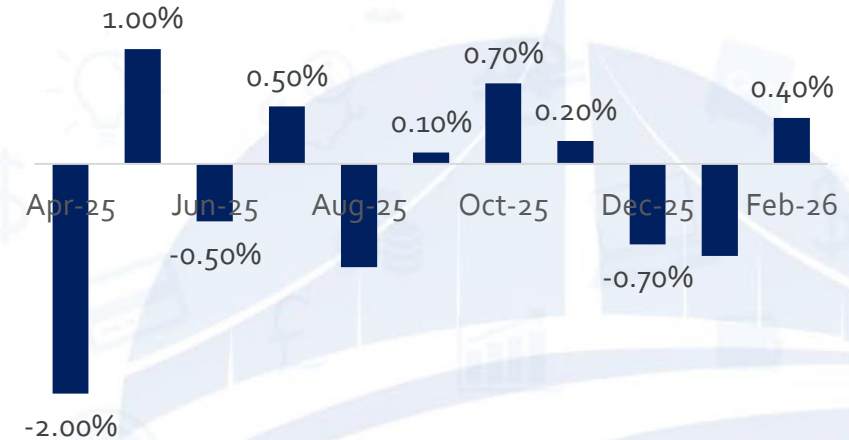
S&P 500	7,230.12	0.91% ▲
Nasdaq Composite	25,114.44	1.12% ▲
Dow Jones Industrial average	49,499.27	0.55% ▲



UK & Eurozone

Bank of England kept its base rate unchanged at 3.75%, ECB leaves interest rates unchanged at 2%

- ❑ The Bank of England voted 8–1 to hold its base rate at 3.75%, pausing what had been an expected rate-cutting cycle. The key reason: the Iran war has pushed energy prices sharply higher, lifting UK inflation to 3.3% well above the 2% target and forcing the Bank into a wait-and-see stance. One member voted for an immediate hike to 4%. Governor Andrew Bailey warned a rate increase cannot be ruled out if the energy shock persists.
- ❑ The European Central Bank unanimously held rates at 2% but openly discussed a possible hike, with markets now pricing in increases as early as June. ECB President Christine Lagarde said the hold was due to "insufficient information," not confidence. Eurozone inflation hit 3% in April above target driven by soaring oil prices from the Iran war, while economic growth nearly stalled at just 0.1% in Q1 2026.
- ❑ Iran war oil price surge, inflation jumping to 3%, near-zero economic growth, uncertainty over duration of the energy shock.



Eurozone Industrial Production M-o-M (Apr 2025 – Feb 2026)
Source: EUROSTAT, WealthBridge Research

What to Expect

- ❑ A rate hike to 4% is increasingly possible if the Iran war energy shock persists and inflation climbs further above 3.3%

European Stocks Closed the Week Mixed

- ❑ The pan-European STOXX Europe 600 Index ended the week broadly flat, nudging up 0.10% in local currency terms. The corporate earnings season continued, with signs of positive earnings momentum. However, the ongoing stalled negotiations between Iran and the U.S., ongoing closure of the Strait of Hormuz and a higher oil price kept sentiment in check.
- ❑ Among major stock indexes, Germany's DAX added 0.68%, and Italy's FTSE MIB rose 1.24%. France's CAC 40 Index declined 0.53%. The UK's FTSE 100 Index was little changed, down 0.04%. Most European markets, with the exception of the London Stock Exchange, were closed for International Workers' Day on Friday.

Drivers

- ❑ Energy costs staying elevated hurt business outlook and consumer spending expectations
- ❑ positive momentum provided some support but was not strong enough to overcome geopolitical headwinds

Indices' Performance

FTSE 100	10,363.93	0.15 % ▼
DAX index	24,292.38	0.68 % ▲
CAC 40	8,114.84	0.53 % ▼
FTSE MIB	48,246.12	1.24 % ▲

Asia



Moody's outlook upgrade highlights macro resilience

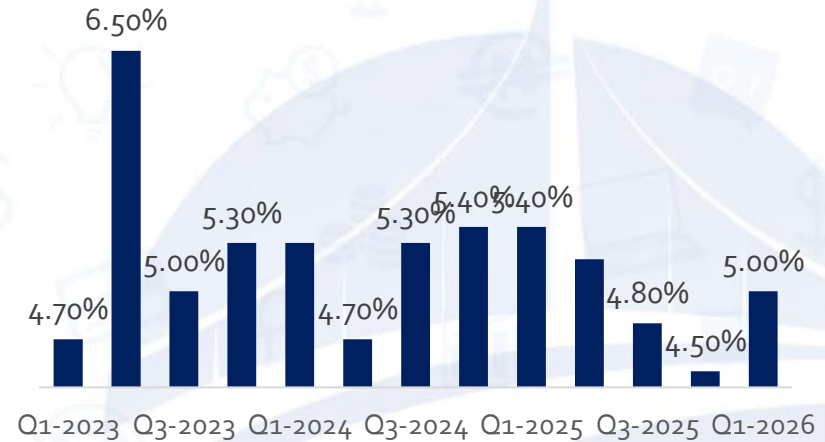
- Rating agency Moody's revised China's credit outlook to "stable" from "negative" while affirming its A1 rating, citing resilience in growth and fiscal capacity despite domestic and external headwinds.
- Although it expects the government's debt burden to increase, the agency believes downside risks are contained as low interest rates and high domestic savings will help limit debt-servicing costs. It also highlighted that China's large and diversified economy, coupled with increased competitiveness in higher value-added sectors, will offset pressures from an aging population. China's Finance Ministry welcomed the agency's decision and pledged to pursue economic restructuring and strengthen fiscal sustainability.
- This decision highlights a belief in the ability of Chinese authorities to manage structural economic pressures through 2026 and 2027

What to expect

- We expect continued government spending on social welfare and pension reform to offset demographic pressures

Bank of Japan keeps policy rate steady while raising inflation forecast on Iran war worries

- The Bank of Japan held its key policy rate steady at 0.75% at its April 27–28 meeting, but the tone was unmistakably hawkish. The vote was split 6–3, with three board members pushing for an immediate hike to 1% — signaling growing internal pressure toward policy normalisation.
- The BoJ faces a classic dilemma: the Middle East conflict is simultaneously pushing inflation higher while slowing economic growth. Governor Kazuo Ueda acknowledged that confidence in the economic outlook has fallen sharply, but stressed the bank may look past supply-driven inflation rather than react aggressively.
- Ueda was clear however — if economic and price projections hold, rate hikes will continue. The normalization path remains intact, uncertainty notwithstanding.



China GDP Annual Growth Rate (Q1 2023 – Q1 2026)

Source: National Bureau of Statistics, WealthBridge Research

Shanghai Composite	4,112.16	0.79% ▲
Hang Seng Index	25,776.53	1.03% ▼
Nikkei 225 index	59,513.12	2.73% ▼

Outlook

- price rises are coming from external energy shocks, not domestic demand, giving the BoJ reason to look past them rather than react aggressively



China's zero-tariff push wins backing from South Africa



- ❑ Beginning May 1, 2026, China has granted zero-tariff access to goods from 53 African nations that maintain diplomatic relations with Beijing — a landmark shift in China-Africa trade relations.
- ❑ South Africa and Kenya are among the most enthusiastic responders. South Africa's Trade Minister Parks Tau called it "a fantastic opportunity," pledging to take full advantage immediately. Officials highlighted that small and medium-sized enterprises stand to benefit most, particularly in agriculture — with citrus, wine, and aloe-based products expected to see the strongest export growth into the Chinese market.
- ❑ Acting Trade Director Amukelani Kubayi described the policy as "a major milestone," opening fresh avenues for local traders and cutting costs significantly for SMEs. Entrepreneur Manelisa Bane added that zero-rated goods would generate meaningful savings and deepen technology collaboration between African businesses and China.
- ❑ The move is widely seen as China strengthening its economic and diplomatic footprint across the African continent

Ghana Ends US Aid Talks Over Personal Data Dispute



- ❑ Ghana walked away from a \$109 million, five-year health aid deal with the United States after Washington demanded access to Ghanaian citizens' personal data as a condition of the agreement.
- ❑ Negotiations, which began in November 2025 and involved senior Ghanaian health officials, broke down when the U.S. team turned increasingly "hostile" and piled pressure on Ghana to accept the data-sharing terms. Ghana flatly refused. "The deal is dead," a government source confirmed.
- ❑ The collapsed talks come as the Trump administration dismantled USAID and began renegotiating new bilateral health aid frameworks across Africa under its "America First Global Health Strategy." The proposed funding would have covered HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, and other infectious diseases.
- ❑ Ghana is not alone — Zimbabwe raised similar data concerns, and a Kenyan court temporarily suspended a related agreement following a consumer protection lawsuit.
- ❑ The episode signals a growing African pushback against data sovereignty conditions attached to foreign aid.

DOMESTIC ECONOMY AND MARKETS HIGHLIGHTS



Snapshot of Key Macroeconomic Indicators

Indicators	Current	Previous	
Inflation rate	15.38% (Mar 2026)	15.06% (Feb 2026)	▲ 32 bps
MPR	26.50% (Feb 2025)	27.00% (Nov 2025)	▼ 50 bps
Quarterly GDP Growth Rate	4.07% (Q4 2025 y/y)	3.98% (Q3 2025 y/y)	▲ 226bps
Yearly GDP Growth Rate	3.90% (FY 2024; y/y)	3.40% (FY 2024; y/y)	▲ 147 bps
GDP (Nominal)	₦122.81 Trn (Q3 2025)	₦113.59 Trn (Q3 2025)	▲ 8.12%
Brent Crude oil price	\$108.17 (01/05/26)	\$105.33 (24/04/26)	▲ 2.70%
Exchange rate (NAFEM W-O-W% , ₦/\$)	₦1,375.98/\$1 (30/04/26)	₦1,356.89/\$1 (24/04/26)	▼ 0.98%
Parallel Market FX Rate (IMTO) (₦/\$)	₦1,405/\$1 (1/05/25)	₦1,427/\$1 (24/04/25)	▼ 1.54%
P2P (₦/\$)	₦1,395/\$1 (17/04/26)	₦1,400/\$1 (10/04/26)	▼ 0.36%
External Reserve	\$48.367 billion (29/04/26)	\$48.437 billion (24/04/26)	▼ 0.14%



Key Fiscal and Monetary News

Nigeria, UAE Deepen Trade Ties with New Customs Cooperation Plan



- ❑ Nigeria's Comptroller-General of Customs, Bashir Adewale Adeniyi, met with UAE Embassy officials in Abuja on April 29, 2026, reaffirming both nations' commitment to deepening trade and customs collaboration.
- ❑ UAE Ambassador Salem Saeed congratulated Adeniyi on his election as Chairman of the World Customs Organization — describing it as a milestone for Nigeria and Africa. He highlighted that non-oil trade between both countries grew significantly between 2023 and 2025, calling Nigeria one of the UAE's most productive partnerships.
- ❑ A Memorandum of Understanding has been forwarded to strengthen customs cooperation, with focus on trade facilitation and administrative efficiency. Adeniyi stressed that the engagement opens a new phase in bilateral relations, with particular emphasis on simplifying trade processes for small and medium-sized enterprises and building stronger institutional ties between both customs authorities.

Lagos Targets 2027 Launch for State-Licensed Power Plants Amid Electricity Market Reform



- ❑ Lagos State is on the verge of a landmark moment in Nigeria's power sector, with the first state-licensed Independent Power Producers (IPPs) expected to begin commercial operations between 2026 and early 2027 — marking the country's first real-world outcome of its decentralised electricity reform agenda.
- ❑ Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu announced the development at the BusinessDay Energy Conference 2026, noting that Lagos completed its transition from federal to state-level electricity regulation in 2025, becoming the first state to fully control its own power market under the Electricity Act 2023 and the Lagos State Electricity Law 2024.
- ❑ In a significant step, Lagos has signed Power Purchase Agreements with three IPPs: Mainland Power Limited, Fenchurch Power Limited in partnership with Aggregate Utilities Limited, and Viathan Engineering Limited targeting an additional 200MW to 400MW of generation capacity. Projects are strategically focused on industrial clusters and critical infrastructure.
- ❑ The Governor was direct: "The question is no longer whether states have the authority. It is whether they have the will to act." Lagos appears ready to answer that question — and potentially redefine Nigeria's entire power sector trajectory in the process.



Key Economic News

PMI falls below 50 as Nigeria records first contraction in 16 months



- ❑ Inventory levels also weakened, with the stock of raw materials index at 48.7, pointing to reduced purchasing activity by firms. However, supplier delivery time stood at 50.9, suggesting slightly improved supply chain efficiency despite the broader slowdown.
- ❑ Out of the 36 subsectors surveyed, 19 recorded contraction, one remained unchanged, and only 16 posted expansion. Primary metals recorded the steepest decline, while forestry emerged as the fastest-growing subsector during the month.
- ❑ The report also linked the moderation in business conditions to external pressures, including heightened geopolitical tensions, particularly in the Middle East, which may have disrupted supply chains and business confidence. During the period surveyed, the industry sector recorded a PMI of 49.5 points, indicating contraction in manufacturing and production-related activities.
- ❑ The report noted that the Industry Sector PMI at 49.5 points reflects a mild contraction, with underlying data showing that new orders and employment declined to 49.5 and 48.7 points, respectively. Output, however, stood at 50.2 points, suggesting that production held up despite weaker demand.

Nigeria's external reserves fall \$731 million in April drawdown



- ❑ Reserve movements show the sharpest decline occurred in the early part of the month, before moderating in the latter half of April. Reserves dropped from \$49.18 billion to \$48.81 billion between April 1 and April 10, reflecting stronger outflows. Between April 13 and April 17, reserves eased further from \$48.72 billion to \$48.62 billion, suggesting a slower pace of decline. From April 20 to April 23, reserves slipped marginally from \$48.54 billion to \$48.45 billion, indicating relative moderation in outflows.
- ❑ The early-month drawdown may have reflected stronger foreign exchange interventions and settlement of external obligations, while the later slowdown could point to reduced intervention intensity or some improvement in inflow support.
- ❑ The April decline follows reserve pressure recorded in March, reinforcing concerns over sustained external liquidity management.
- ❑ The country also met external debt obligations and settled international financial commitments falling due in early April



Key Market News

MTN Nigeria to sell 60% of MoMo PSB, YDF to MTN Group



- ❑ MTN Nigeria is selling a 60% stake in its two fintech subsidiaries — MoMo Payment Service Bank (MoMo PSB) and Y'ello Digital Financial Services (YDFS) to its South African parent, MTN Group, in a deal valued at ₦95.5 billion, implying a total capital injection of ₦152.06 billion.
- ❑ MTN Nigeria openly described the transaction as a restructuring move to reduce its exposure to loss-making fintech operations. MTN Nigeria retains a 40% stake in both companies.
- ❑ The deal runs in two phases. First, MTN Group Fintech acquires the 60% stake. Second, a new holding company Fintech HoldCo will be created, owned 60% by MTN Group Fintech and 40% by MTN Nigeria, ultimately consolidating both fintech businesses under one structure, subject to Central Bank of Nigeria approval

Zenith Bank posts N360.9bn Q1 2026 Profit as Revenue hits N1trn



- ❑ Zenith Bank opened 2026 on a strong footing, recording a pre-tax profit of ₦360.92 billion in Q1 2026 — a 2.87% year-on-year increase while gross revenue crossed the ₦1 trillion mark, rising 6.14% to ₦1.01 trillion.
- ❑ Net interest income grew 7.24% to ₦634.08 billion, supported by declining funding costs. Fee and commission income surged 44.53% to ₦81.05 billion, reflecting strong digital banking adoption. Loans and advances grew 13.25% to ₦11.38 trillion, while customer deposits rose 7.87% to ₦24.47 trillion.
- ❑ On the stock market, Zenith Bank shares have rallied 108% year-to-date, with a market capitalization of approximately ₦5.28 trillion making it Nigeria's most valuable banking stock for the 16th consecutive year per The Banker magazine rankings.
- ❑ The bank also inaugurated an operational office in Côte d'Ivoire, marking its strategic expansion into Francophone Africa.



Equities Market

The Nigerian Equities Market Ended The Week Bullish

- Market Capitalisation: **₦155.99 trn** (▲ 7.33% W-o-W)
- All Share Index: **242,277.81** (▲ 7.33% W-o-W)
- Year-to-Date: **55.69%** (▲ 733 bps W-o-W)
- Total Turnover (Trades): **4.842 bn** (▲ 27.25% W-o-W)
- Value of Trades: **₦287.75bn** (▲ 34.30% W-o-W)

Fixed Income Market

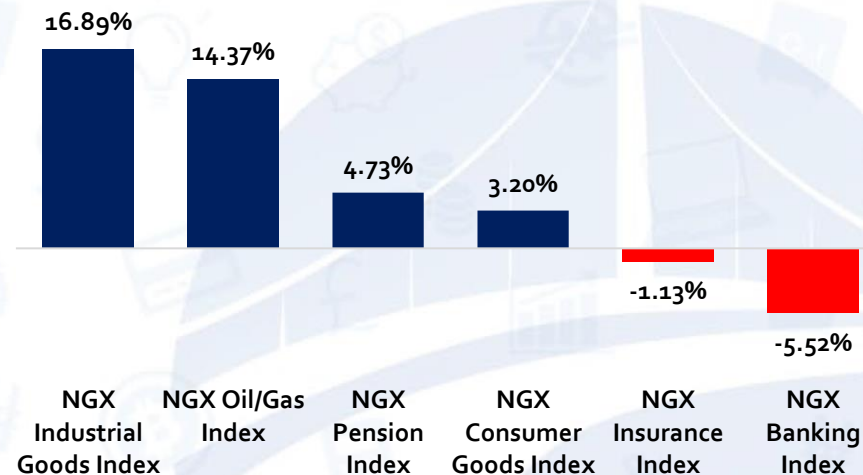
FGN Bond Market

The local bond market opened on a quiet yet bearish note, as participants remained reluctant to take positions in on-the-run securities despite the DMO's recent undersubscription stance. Selling pressure later emerged in the mid-segment of the curve, with the Jun 32s maturity quoted at 16.80%/16.60%, while the Jan 35s traded around the 16.70% level. The average benchmark yield edged up by 1bp day-on-day to close at 15.76%.

Money Markets

The Treasury Bills market opened on a calm note, with limited activity largely concentrated at the long end of the curve. The 22 Apr bill was quoted at 16.10%/16.00%, broadly unchanged from the previous session. The average benchmark yield remained unchanged day-on-day, closing at 17.46%.

Sectoral Performances



Top Gainers & Decliners

