



WEST AFRICAN DEMOCRACY AND RESILIENCE DIGEST

week 01



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The Abuja School

West African Democracy and Resilience Digest



Concerns about election integrity, discussions about term limits, and threats to civil freedoms are just a few of the democratic governance-related difficulties that many West African nations are facing. Up to 2024, several West African countries, notably Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea, and Niger, saw military takeovers or attempted coups. For the stability of democracy in the area, this trend has been extremely concerning.

To support democracy and address political issues in member states, groups such as ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) have been very active. It is possible that there were elections in some of the West African countries at this time, as these events are usually preceded or followed by elections. International organisations and Countries like United States of America, Russia and France have frequently had an impact on West African democratic processes.

Here is a round up of your bi-weekly Democracy Digest, a quick summary of some important events from West African countries to note today

INTRO

MALI



Opposition Incarcerate Activists arrested in crackdown

The families of opposition politicians in Mali have reported that they have arrested and incarcerated across the country by the ruling junta. With Mali having experienced two coups in the span of 4 years, it is being rocked by political instability and breakdown of the rule of law. This has sprung up new wave of insurgency with Islamic jihadist groups linked to al-Qaida running rampant in the country. As the junta rule over the country with an iron fist, with them suspending all political activities in the country.

The eleven opposition politicians were arrested earlier this month during a meeting in a private residence, the Malian National Human Rights Commission, a government agency, said in a statement, denouncing what it called "arbitrary arrests" and "violations of private homes. The dissidents are held on charges of attacks and conspiracy against the government, opposition to legitimate authority and breach of public order, but they haven't been tried yet, a judicial official said. It is becoming increasingly perilous to express dissatisfaction with the Malian authorities, experts said, with those who dare to speak out risking arrest. Journalists and activists have also disappeared, only to return later, while many media correspondents have left Mali because they were not allowed to work.

NIGERIA



West African Defence Chiefs propose 2.4 billion USD security plan

ECOWAS has agreed to establish a \$2.4 billion fund for a regional counter-terrorism force to address the increasing terrorist threats in the region. This initiative includes rapid reaction units capable of confronting terrorist strongholds (Nairametrics).

Also, Leaders of West African states met in Abuja on the 7th of June, 2024 to discuss regional challenges, including the decision by Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger to leave ECOWAS due to imposed sanctions (Africanews).

Defence chiefs of West Africa on Thursday, June 27 proposed a plan to deploy a 5,000-strong "standby force" to fight the region's worsening security crises, a measure that analysts say might not work due to challenges of funding and division within the regional bloc.

CHAD



Military Arms Depot Explodes Killing Nine

A massive explosion on Tuesday evening near Chad's capital city of N'Djamena killed at least nine and injured 46 others, according to a statement from its foreign minister. Satellite imagery from Maxar Technology shows that 17 structure at the ammo depot were destroyed.

Multiple explosions occurred at the depot destroying all the structure, cause of the explosion remains unclear. With the military arms depot situated near the capital city international airport there were initial fear for the safety of commercial aviation but there were no damages afflicted on the airport to stop operations.

BURKINA FASO



New evidence shows Atrocities committed by army in Burkina Faso

New evidence by News agency FRANCE 24 brings to light the atrocities committed by army personnel's in Burkina Faso on February 25th , 2024. Back in April the NGO "Human Rights Watch" reported a massacre of 223 civilians of which included women and children. New evidence shows another mass killing spree by the army between May 3rd and 10th across several towns and villages in the eastern part of the country.

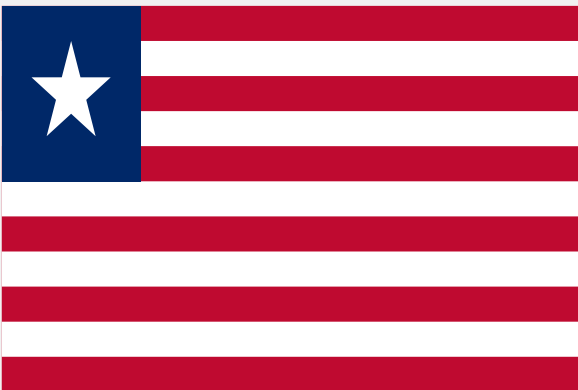
A report published by Human Rights Watch had documented the February 25th massacre with a total body count of at least 223. Video evidence shows piles of corpses of men, women and children with some being mere infants, in the villages of Soro. It is also shown in videos there being mass graves filled up with bodies. The Latest images of the massacre in several locations south of Dori and also in Soro and Nondin were taken by JNIM, a group of Islamic jihadists. With Burkina Faso soldiers also recording videos of their crimes firsthand while



Ghana has reached an agreement with its Eurobond holders on June 24, 2024, to restructure \$13 billion of its debt, a crucial step for the country's economic recovery. This agreement aims to offer significant cash flow and debt stock relief to support Ghana's economic recovery, aligning with the International Monetary Fund-financed program (CitiNews) (Nairametrics). ECOWAS has launched a pilot project in Accra focused on alternative incarceration for individuals with substance use disorders (ECOWAS).



ECOWAS conducted advocacy in Sierra Leone and Liberia for the deployment of the ECOWAS National Biometric Identity Card to improve regional integration and mobility (ECOWAS). Liberia's Vice President Jeremiah Kpan KOUNG visited Sierra Leone to learn from Sierra Leone's advancements in human capital development (Sierra Leone State House Sierra Leone).



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ECOWAS organized a regional workshop in Cotonou, focusing on energy efficiency initiatives and sustainable energy data collection. The workshop started on the 24th of June and is currently ongoing (ECOWAS).

TAS



Intervention for Counterterrorism in West Africa

Following the issues in the region, ranging from democracy to security to development, The Abuja School of Social and Political Thought, in Its June Dialogue Series emphasized the need for a human security approach and highlighted the staggering cost of violence and insecurity, estimated at \$19.1 trillion. The school critiqued the inefficiency of solely relying on kinetic measures and stressed the importance of adapting military tactics to counter asymmetric conflicts like terrorism. TAS advocated for a comprehensive approach to security challenges in West Africa, particularly in the Sahel region. It emphasized the psychological trauma faced by minors who return from kidnappers with babies and the need for comprehensive support for these victims.

WEST AFRICAN DIGEST



Thank you for reading!

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