



WEST AFRICAN DEMOCRACY AND RESILIENCE DIGEST

week 10



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The Abuja School

West African Democracy and Resilience Digest



To support good governance, democracy and sustainable development in West Africa, The Abuja School of social and Political Thought takes a look at the activities in the region...

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

NIGERIA



72 illegal crude oil refining sites were uncovered

At least six people are known to have died in flooding in northern Nigeria on Monday which has left at least 10,000 homeless across 11 communities. Officials in flood-prone Adamawa State are worried by the downpours that have caused latest flooding, because the rainy season is yet to peak. The rains cause rivers such as the Benue to overflow, leading to widespread inundation of communities, farmlands, and infrastructure. "Due to climate change and a lot of other factors, the floods have come earlier than we expected and it caught a lot of our people unawares," said Adamawa State Deputy Governor Kaletapwa Farauta. "Even if we are expecting floods, it is not in August, usually we always put our minds to September," she added. The state government acknowledged on Wednesday that the flood may not have been worse than in previous years, but has urged people in low-lying areas along the Benue River to move to one of eight internal displacement camps set up in collaboration with the National Emergency Management Agency. (<https://shorturl.at/alXrP>)

No fewer than 72 illegal crude oil refining sites were uncovered in the past week, the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited disclosed in a video report. The 72 illegal refineries were reportedly

discovered and destroyed in Rivers, Delta and Abia states. On August 18, a vessel was said to have been arrested by men of Operation Delta Safe with 12 suspects on board in the Southern Ijaw area of Bayelsa State. "The tugboat was caught loaded with stolen Shell Petroleum Development Company flow lines, which shows that not only did the thieves break the pipelines in order to connect their pipes, but they also harvested oil pipelines as well," the NNPC said. (<https://shorturl.at/iStUj>)

Barring any last-minute change in plans, the President of the Nigeria Labour Congress, Joe Ajaero, will today (Thursday) honour the summons by the police over allegations of treason and terrorism financing. Ahead of today's visit to the police headquarters in Abuja, the NLC Central Working Committee, on Wednesday, issued a circular, mobilising the union members and affiliate associations for a march on the police head offices across the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory. The police had, in an invitation last week, asked Ajaero to appear at the Force headquarters on Tuesday, August 20, by 10 am to answer questions on his alleged involvement in terrorism financing, cybercrime, subversion, criminal

NIGERIA



The Central Bank of Nigeria, Announces Treasury Bills Sales, worth N2.2 trillion

conspiracy, and treasonable felony. The invitation came in the wake of a night raid by the police on the NLC national secretariat in Abuja. (<https://shorturl.at/Mpgv1>)

THE main opposition All Progressives Congress, APC, and Governor Godwin Obaseki are daggers drawn over allegations that the governor was planning to rig the September 21 governorship poll using fake security personnel he had sewed uniforms for. Specifically, the APC Campaign Council, in a statement by its Media Consultant, Mr. Kassim Afegbua, accused Governor Obaseki of plotting to use the state security group, Edo State Security Network, ESSN, and producing police and army uniforms to be worn on election day by his agents. However, in a counter, Mr. Crusoe Osagie, Special Adviser, Media Projects to Governor Obaseki, described the allegations as infantile, saying that the APC was afraid of looming defeat and resorted to cooking up lies. How Obaseki plans to rig poll – Afegbua The APC Campaign claimed that there was a meeting in the Edo State Government House on Monday where an offer was allegedly made to some persons who turned it down adding that signs of these plots were already on with the attack on members of the party in Akoko-Edo Local Government Area and Ewohimi after APC's campaigns a few days ago. (<https://shorturl.at/FVMCx>)

The Central Bank of Nigeria, CBN, said it would sell Treasury Bills, TBs, worth N2.2 trillion in the fourth quarter of 2024 (Q3'24). This represents a 41 percent quarter-on-quarter (QoQ) decline when compared with N1.56 trillion sold in Q3 '24. CBN disclosed this today in its Nigeria Treasury Bills Issue programme for Q4'24. Treasury Bills are short term (less than one year) debt instruments used by the CBN to borrow money from the public on behalf of the federal government. The CBN also uses TBs to control money supply in the economy. The TB issue programme commences on September 4th, and ends on November 20th, 2024. During the period, the apex bank will issue TBs worth N158.79 billion on 91 days tenor, N109.61 billion on 182 days and N1.94 trillion on 364 days. A breakdown of the programme revealed that in September, the apex bank plans to sell N622.72 billion worth of TBs, comprising N54.53 billion worth of 91 days bills, N41.05 billion worth of 182 days bills and N527.14 billion worth of 364 bills. In October, the apex bank plans to sell N456.57 billion worth of TBs, comprising N41.61 billion worth of 91 days bills, N34.66 billion worth of 182 days bills, and N380.3 billion worth of 364 days bills. In November, the CBN plans to sell N1.12 trillion worth of TBs comprising N62.64 billion worth of 91 days bills, N33.9 billion worth of 182 days bills and N1.03 trillion worth of 384 days bills. (<https://shorturl.at/jrMH7>)

GHANA



Interior Minister denies allegations of plot to rig December elections

Interior Minister denies allegations of plot to rig December elections, The Interior Minister, Henry Quartey, has refuted claims by the Deputy General Secretary of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), Mustapha Gbande, that he intends to rig the general elections in December. Mr Gbande alleged that the Interior Minister held secret meetings with the Deputy Inspector General of Police and the Director of the National Intelligence Bureau to manipulate the electoral process. But according to the Interior Minister, these allegations are "baseless" and "unfortunate," and designed to undermine public confidence in the government. (<https://shorturl.at/Fzhu7>) President Akufo-Addo has directed the Finance Ministry to raise GH¢8 billion relief package to assist farmers grappling with the devastating effects of the ongoing dry spell in the eight regions in Ghana. This, according to Minister for Finance, Dr Mohammed Amin Adam demonstrates government's commitment to addressing the situation and providing necessary support to affected communities. The Minister for Finance disclosed this during a press briefing on Monday, August 26. The relief package will include cash transfers, food supplies, and other essential items for the affected farmers. A technical task force, comprising officials from the victims' families for their release. (<https://shorturl.at/vAXKM>)

Ministries of Finance and Food and Agriculture, will oversee the distribution to ensure fairness and accountability. (<https://shorturl.at/VWWcE>) Peasant Farmers Association is not pleased with the government's recent ban on the export of key grains including maize, rice, and soybean. This concern comes after the Minister for Food and Agriculture, Bryan Acheampong, announced a ban on these grains. According to him, this measure will ensure food security within the country. Mr Acheampong's directive comes in response to the ongoing dry spell that has devastated agricultural production in eight regions. (<https://shorturl.at/5wufX>) Yesterday, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) called on Ghanaian authorities to disclose information about the 2005 massacre of around 60 migrants in The Gambia. On July 22, 2005, Gambian security forces, under the regime of Yahya Jammeh, arrested and executed 44 Ghanaians, nine Nigerians, two Togolese, and nationals from Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal shortly after their boat arrived in The Gambia. Since the massacre, victims' families have condemned the Ghanaian government for its perceived inaction and "casualness" in seeking justice, despite sending a team to investigate the incident soon after it occurred. Although several investigations were launched, their findings remain classified, prompting continued demands from the v

NIGER



Chief of Staff of the Niger Armed Forces, welcomed his Nigerian counterpart

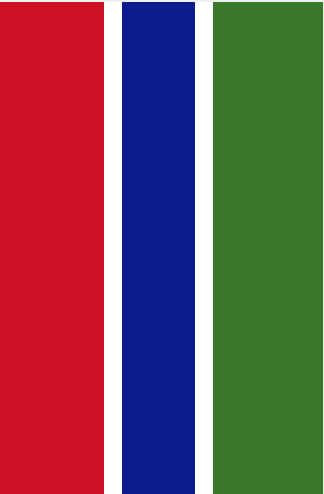
After several days of disruption due to flooding, the reopening of the Niamey-Dosso (RN1) axis marks the end of the fuel shortage that paralyzed the capital. The work carried out in record time has not only restored traffic, but also helped to restart the supply of gas stations, thus relieving users and revitalizing the local economy. The Minister of Transport and Equipment, Colonel-Major Salissou Mahaman Salissou, officially relaunched traffic on Thursday on the Niamey-Dosso (RN1) axis, which has been cut off since last week due to heavy rainfall in the Niamey region. (<http://news.aniamney.com/h/120979.html>)

General Moussa Salaou Barmou, Chief of Staff of the Niger Armed Forces, welcomed his Nigerian counterpart, General Christopher Musa, to Niamey on Wednesday, August 28, 2024. This is the first meeting between the two senior military officials in over a year, marking a potential turning point in relations between the two neighboring countries. This visit comes after a period of diplomatic tensions between Niger and Nigeria. The meeting could indicate a willingness by both nations to re-establish dialogue and explore ways to ease bilateral relations. The two generals discussed several crucial topics, including regional security cooperation and the fight against cross-border threats. This meeting could

also pave the way for new initiatives to strengthen military and diplomatic ties between Niger and Nigeria. (<https://shorturl.at/Qa7mw>)

In Niger, the suspension of the granting of mining rights, in effect since January 22, 2024, was lifted by the government on Tuesday, August 27, 2024. The Minister of Mines, Ousmane Abarchi, communicated this decision in a memo, specifying that applicants for mining rights must now update their files in accordance with the order of August 8, 2024, which amends the 2022 mining law. Indeed, the new legal provisions aim to strengthen national sovereignty over natural resources, including an upward revision of rights, taxes, and royalties, the promotion of national operators, as well as the application of the principles of "collector-payer" and "polluter-payer". The initial suspension, decided in January 2024, had not been publicly explained by the authorities. However, at that time, a memo from the Ministry of Mines had requested an inventory of the rights already granted. The lifting of this measure comes as two major mining permits, belonging to international companies, have been revoked. In June, the operating permit for the Imouraren uranium mine, held by the French company Orano, was withdrawn, followed in July by the revocation of the permit of the Canadian company GoviEx for the Madaouela site. (<https://shorturl.at/Hs3FP>)

GAMBIA



Michael Sang Correa, an alleged member of a Gambian death squad, is scheduled to stand trial for torture

Michael Sang Correa, an alleged member of a Gambian death squad, is scheduled to stand trial for torture starting on September 16, in Denver, Colorado, the United States, Trial International has announced. This marks the first time a non-US citizen will stand trial in a US federal court for torture committed abroad. Mr Correa is charged with six counts of torture and one count of conspiracy to commit torture. He is allegedly a former member of the Junglers, a notorious death squad in The Gambia operating under former President Yahya Jammeh. The indictment alleges that following an attempted coup against Jammeh's regime in March 2006, Mr Correa and other Junglers tortured suspected participants in the coup, including beating and suffocating them with plastic bags, and subjecting them to electric shocks. The US government filed the charges under the Extraterritorial Torture Act, a criminal law which allows it to prosecute individuals found within the United States for acts of torture committed abroad. This case has drawn significant attention from human rights advocates and legal experts, as it is the first trial of a non-US citizen since the Torture Act was passed in 1994, and only the third trial under the Act. (<https://shorturl.at/kGuKz>)

Babucarr Jobe, the Permanent Secretary (PS) of the Ministry of Finance, has stated that current events at the Mandinari depot indicate mismanagement of fuel importation. He made this statement Monday 26 August 2024 in response to allegations of tax evasion and bribery, which are currently under investigation by the Joint Committee on Public Enterprise Committee (PEC) and the Finance and Public Accounts Committee (FPAC), at the National Assembly, where he appeared before the committees to clarify the allegations. In response to what mechanisms are in place in terms of traders dropping in products, PS Jobe said: "What I understand of what is going on is that I know the depot is a bonded warehouse; so you can have traders dropping their products. Plus maybe the positive aspect of it is; you will have product all year round, especially since you have an Oil Marketing Company (OMC) that can't be able to import. So, you can have a product there, but the only time that you will have access to the product is if you pay for it. "So no international trader would come and drop his product at the depot; they needed someone to buy it and don't have the luxury of leaving their products idle in a place waiting for a customer or an OMC to come and buy it. That would be a misnomer." Mr Jobe explained that no trader would bring their products or pick up a ship to transport thousands of metric tonnes and come to the depot to unload without an OMC requesting the need for products. (<https://shorturl.at/SXXfK>)

SENEGAL



Senegal suspends mining to protect Faleme rivers

Senegal has suspended all mining activity for nearly three years on its side of the southeastern Faleme river in a decree aimed at protecting the environment and supporting local communities threatened by an artisanal gold mining boom. Mining-related dredging and chemical discharges have helped pollute the Faleme, which flows from the uplands in Guinea, down a large section of Senegal's border with Mali, and into the Senegal river. Mining will be suspended on all Senegalese territory up to 500 metres (546.81 yards) from the river's left bank and remain in place until June 30, 2027, according to the decree published on Tuesday. A survey found the number of illegal mining sites along the Senegalese and Malian sides of the Faleme has risen to over 800 from 600 in 2021, the Senegalese Press Agency said on Monday. The Faleme, which was once home to a wide range of fish and mammals including hippos and served a vital role for local agriculture, is in urgent need of restoration, according to a 2024 paper published in the Journal of Water Resource and Protection. (<https://shorturl.at/Xq0lU>)

The African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Development Bank Group's (www.AfDB.org)

African Leaders for Nutrition (ALN) initiative, in collaboration with the government of Senegal, have

launched a series of regional consultations that aim to transform nutrition policy and financing and end

malnutrition across Africa. The inaugural two-day consultation for the West Africa region, held in Dakar,

Senegal, marks the beginning of an ambitious journey to develop Africa's first-ever Multisectoral Nutrition Policy Framework (MNPF) and an investment target for combating malnutrition. The consultation concluded having successfully gathered the data needed to develop MNPF and investment

targets, while also building consensus on interventions to reduce stunting, wasting, anaemia, and overweight among women, children, and adolescents.

SIERRA LEONE



Sierra Leone's democracy has been hijacked for personal and political gain:

Democracy, as defined by

Abraham Lincoln, is "a government of the people, by the people, and for the people." This simple yet profound definition captures the essence of democracy a system of governance where the power resides with the people, who collectively decide their leaders and the direction of their nation. Nowhere

in this framework is there mention of political parties. In Sierra Leone today, the notion of democracy has been hijacked by those who claim to be its champions. Our political landscape is dominated by two

major parties the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) and the All People's Congress (APC). These entities,

which should be beacons of hope and progress, have instead become synonymous with the very antithesis of democratic values. What we see now is not a government of the people, but a government

of the powerful, by the heartless, and for the benefit of the few. (<https://shorturl.at/dVcV4>)

BADEA invests \$65 million to improve Sierra Leone's educational infrastructure, President Julius Maada

Bio has commissioned work to expand access to education in the south of Sierra Leone, with the construction of 34 new school building blocks at the Kenema Government Secondary School, marking a

significant step in Sierra Leone's ongoing education reform. The project is funded as part of an initiative

by the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) and other agencies, with a total investment of \$65 million aimed at enhancing the country's educational infrastructure. At the groundbreaking ceremony, President Bio expressed deep gratitude to BADEA and its funding partners,

highlighting the importance of their trust and confidence in his administration. This \$65 million project

for the construction, rehabilitation, refurbishment, and equipment of schools and technical colleges is a

testament to our commitment to education and the international community's belief in our vision," he stated. (<https://shorturl.at/mZcCQ>)

IVORY COAST



Ivory Coast increases support for cocoa exporters

Ivory Coast increases support for cocoa exporters, say sources: ABIDJAN, Aug 23 (Reuters) - Ivory Coast's government will increase its support for small local cocoa exporters to help them more than double their annual purchasing volumes, two government sources said on Friday. Ivorian exporters, which have been struggling to secure financing from local banks due to financial difficulties, have to compete with financially secure international players. Ivory Coast, the world's top cocoa grower, produced on average 2.2 million tons of beans over the past three years with big multinationals accounting for around 80% of purchases and exports. At the start of the new cocoa season in October, the government will grant small exporters subsidies of 10 billion CFA francs (\$16.75 million) per year over the next four years to help them increase the purchasing volumes to 500,000 metric tons. The government used to grant around 3 billion CFA francs per year. This amount allowed exporters and cooperatives buying and exporting cocoa beans to reach between 150,000 and 200,000 tons per season. (<https://shorturl.at/guYuw>)

Former Ivory Coast manager Sven-Goran Eriksson passes away: Tributes are pouring in for Swedish football manager and former Ivory Coast coach, Sven-Goran Eriksson, who died at the age of 76 on Monday after a battle with pancreatic cancer. The charismatic Swede joined the Elephants in 2010, leading them into the World Cup where they finished third in a tough group. He left the team shortly after the competition. During his career, Eriksson led a number of high-profile teams to major trophies, became the first foreign manager of the England's men's football team in 2001. (<https://shorturl.at/v9UX6>)

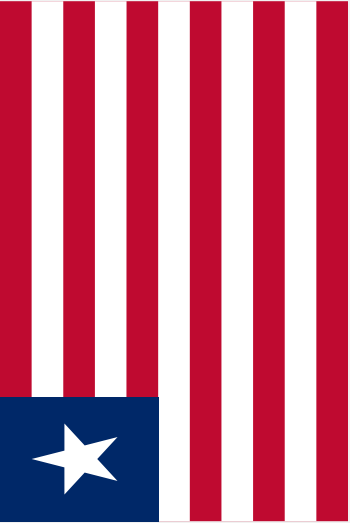
MALI



Denmark Shuts Down Embassies In Mali, Burkina Faso

Denmark Shuts Down Embassies In Mali, Burkina Faso: Denmark will close its embassies in Mali and Burkina Faso after a series of military coups over the past few years, the Danish foreign ministry said on Monday, as it formally launched a new strategy for its cooperation with the African continent. Ruled by a military junta since 2020, Mali has been battling ethnic Tuareg rebels in its north alongside Russia's Wagner mercenary group after it cut military cooperation ties with Western powers including European Union countries. Since then, relations between Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso and Western powers have deteriorated as the three turn to Russia for support. Frustrations over authorities' failure to restore security have contributed to coups in Mali and Burkina Faso, which the Danish foreign ministry said had created very limited room for maneuver in the Sahel region. (<https://shorturl.at/ZcaMZ>)

LIBERIA



In what could be termed as a notable move toward promoting transparency and accountability in public service, Nathaniel F. McGill, former Minister of State for Presidential Affairs and current Senator of Margibi County, announced on social media that he has instructed his lawyers to withdraw a Writ of Prohibition filed before the Chambers Justice of the Supreme Court. This legal maneuver had previously sought to halt an investigation by the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC) after being accused of impropriety regarding a supplementary payroll scandal over the inclusion of 728 names outside the framework of the Civil Service Agency (CSA). McGill's decision to retract the writ paves the way for the LACC to continue its investigation into his activities during his tenure as minister without any legal obstacles. He emphasized that this step aligns with his commitment to ensuring that both past and present government officials are held accountable for their actions in office. (<https://shorturl.at/0QrWT>)

The Liberia Internet Governance Forum (LIGF) 2024 is poised to convene on August 29 at the Conference Hall of the Monrovia YMCA. The forum, themed "Fostering Digital Collaboration: Strengthening Multistakeholder Partnerships for Internet Governance," will bring together key stakeholders from various sectors to address the pressing issues surrounding Internet governance in Liberia. This year's event will feature a panel discussion on "Bridging the Digital Divide: Connectivity Issues," aimed at exploring the challenges and opportunities in achieving equitable internet access across Liberia. The discussion will focus on the role of media in shaping policy and public opinion on connectivity issues, identifying the major barriers to digital access, and proposing actionable solutions to bridge the digital divide. The LIGF 2024 promises to be a significant platform for dialogue, bringing together government

officials, private sector leaders, civil society, and international partners. The forum will focus on strengthening multistakeholder partnerships, ensuring that all Liberians, particularly those in marginalized and underserved communities, can benefit from the digital transformation. The forum is expected to be a crucial step towards developing inclusive internet policies that support Liberia's continued growth in the digital age. (<https://shorturl.at/5oRZX>)

The Registrar General of the Cooperative Development Agency (CDA), Lwopu Kandakai, has inducted the newly elected Board of Directors of the Harbel Credit Union (HARCU), calling for transparency and accountability in the unions' activities to better the lives of the members. Inducting the Board members recently in Harbel, Firestone, Mrs. Kandakai said transparency and accountability should always be the hallmark of the leaders if they are to make an impact. "As newly elected officials of this noble union, let's always be reminded that transparency and accountability should always be the hallmark of our leaders," she said. She stated that without transparency and accountability the standard of living of most of the credit union members will not be improved. Kandakai mentioned that her institution is working with credit unions and cooperatives within the country to make sure that their activities can impact the Liberian economy. She said the idea of credit unions dates as far back as 1864, introduced to offer an opportunity for members to get flexible loans so that they can undertake meaningful projects. The CDA registrar general cautioned leaders of credit unions to strive to serve their members in the best possible ways, stating that their decisions should not always be about money, but to create an opportunity where members can prosper. (<https://shorturl.at/IEggA>)

WEST AFRICAN DIGEST



Thank you for reading!

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