



Africa Information & Monitoring Services

Mali: Reporting on Major News Developments 23 March 2022

The following report highlights major news developments in politics, economy, and security in Mali on 22-23 March. A coalition of parties urged the authorities to investigate the death in detention of former Prime Minister Soumeylou Boubeye Maiga. Meanwhile, the international rights group Amnesty International wants the authorities to lift the suspension of two French broadcasters. An economist says Mali's economy is likely to sink in 2022 due to the adverse impact of the ECOWAS sanctions and the war in Ukraine. The report includes background information to add context where needed. On the military front, the Army lost four soldiers and killed 22 terrorists in two separate attacks. The commander of the air force visited a new base in Gao.

POLITICS

Coalition of Parties Wants Investigation in Death of Ex-Prime Minister Maiga

A coalition of parties united in the political platform called "Le Cadre d'Echange" "demanded the opening of an independent investigation to shed light on the circumstances of the death on 21 March of former Prime Minister Soumeylou Boubeye Maiga and to establish responsibilities." The platform believes that the authorities did not listen attentively to the numerous requests for Maiga's medical evacuation abroad when doctors said he was fighting for his life. For Le Cadre, Maiga, who was a member of its politburo, "died as a political prisoner, in very disturbing conditions."¹



Lesoleil.com

Report Says Former Prime Minister Maiga Dies in Detention

Former Prime Minister Maiga died on 21 March in a private medical clinic in Bamako at the age of 66. Maiga, who was serving as prime minister to late resident Ibrahim Boubakar Keita, lost his position after a military coup toppled the government on 18 August 2020; Since then, Maiga had been charged and jailed on embezzlement counts but never had a chance to go on trial. His family tried to have him evacuated abroad as his health condition was declining, but the junta refused.²



Maliweb.net

¹ <https://www.lesoleil.com/2022/03/22/mali-des-partis-reclament-une-enquete-sur-la-mort-de-lex-premier-ministre-maiga-7feba7d2e6f09c634220a08416a1ebd4>

² <https://www.maliweb.net/non-classe/mali-lancien-premier-ministre-malien-soumeylou-boubeye-maiga-decede-a-lage-de-67-ans-2969725.html>

Amnesty International Urges Junta To Lift Suspension of French Broadcasters

Malian authorities decided to suspend French broadcasters Radio France Internationale (RFI) and France 24, for publishing information relating to violations of human rights and international law and deemed false by the government. Reacting to the decision, human rights body Amnesty International's West and Central Africa leg asked the Malian authorities "to respect national and international law by guaranteeing the rights to freedom of information, freedom of expression, and freedom of the press," and to "lift the suspension procedure and cease all forms of pressure exerted on the media and civil society actors in Mali."³

ECONOMY

Expert Sees Mali's Economic Growth Slowing Down in 2022

In a note he published on 13 March from Atlanta, Karim Sylla, an economist, discussed the effects of ECOWAS sanctions and the war in Ukraine on the state budget and the economy of Mali. He said that the financial sanctions are actually the primary thing that prevents the state from functioning properly. Besides, the war in Ukraine will certainly change the economic and social outlook in Mali. The price of oil is rising very sharply; budget forecasts were calling for an average of \$69 per barrel, but the price rose above \$130 per barrel before stabilizing at around \$110, while remaining very unstable. All of these will affect the cost of local commodities while customs revenue is already severely reduced due to the closure of several border posts.⁴

SECURITY

Four Soldiers, 22 Terrorists Killed in Twin Attack

The Army Defense Staff issued a communique to inform that the armed forces were the target of an ambush and attack in the localities of Boni and Tessit respectively. A total of four soldiers were killed in the twin attack and 17 were wounded. During the counteroffensive, the Army killed 22 terrorists, while airstrikes hit "several others." The Army continues with mopping up operations to thoroughly "clean these areas."⁵

Armed Forces Set Up New Air Force Base in Gao

The Chief of Staff of the Air Force, Brigadier General Alou Boi Diarra, on 21 March paid a visit to the new air force region N°3 of Gao. The move aimed to see firsthand the living and working conditions of the personnel, to exchange with them in order to provide appropriate solutions to their problems. General Diarra explained that "due to the width of the territory and the deterioration of infrastructure, the use of airborne equipment is more than essential and necessary for the country."⁶



³ <https://maliactu.net/amnesty-international-la-procedure-de-suspension-de-rfi-et-france-24-doit-etre-levee/>

⁴ <https://maliactu.net/mali-la-croissance-economique-en-2022-est-en-passe-de-devenir-negative/>

⁵ <https://malijet.com/actualite-politique-au-mali/flash-info/267989-attaques-a-boni-et-tessit.html>

⁶ <http://news.abamako.com/h/267978.html>