



Philippines lifts Manila lockdown as COVID surges

## IS group's menace rebounds in troubled Afghanistan amid concerns

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CONAKRY: People celebrate in the streets with members of Guinea's armed forces after the arrest of Guinea's president, Alpha Conde, in a coup d'etat in Conakry.—AFP

# Guinea coup leaders demand talks

## Guinea awaits future; army seizes power

CONAKRY: The West African state of Guinea awaited word on its future yesterday as a new military junta summoned the outgoing cabinet a day after toppling the president. Elite troops led by Lieutenant-colonel Mamady Doumbouya told outgoing ministers and institutional leaders to gather at 1100 GMT at parliament in the capital Conakry. "Any refusal to attend will be considered a rebellion," they warned.

Impoverished and volatile, the West African state was hit by fresh turmoil on Sunday when special forces arrested 83-year-old President Alpha Conde, declared they were scrapping the constitution, and imposed a curfew. Land borders have been shut, the government dissolved and top governors and other senior administrators have been replaced by the military, the junta said.

Discontent had been growing for months over a flatlining COVID-hit economy and the leadership of Conde, who became Guinea's first democratically elected president in 2010. Five years later, he was re-elected - but in 2020 he sparked fury after ramming through changes to the constitution enabling him to sidestep a two-term limit. Doumbouya appeared on public television on Sunday draped in the national flag, accusing the government of "endemic corruption" and "trampling of citizens' rights".

"We are no longer going to entrust politics to one man, we are going to entrust politics to the people," the coup leader said. "Guinea is beautiful. We don't need to rape Guinea anymore, we just need to make love to her." He promised to launch a "national consultation to open an inclusive and calm transition."

An umbrella group called the FNDC, which led protests against Conde's constitutional changes, said imprisoned members would be freed. A video sent to AFP by the putschists on Sunday showed Conde sitting on a sofa surrounded by troops. Wearing a rumpled shirt and jeans and sitting on a sofa, he refused to answer a question from a soldier about whether he had been mistreated.

### Troubled nation

Guinea's 13 million people are among the poorest in the world even though their country is a treasure trove of minerals from bauxite and iron ore to gold

and diamonds. It has rarely known stability since declaring independence from France in 1958 and bloody repression is entrenched. Conde was accused of following that same path towards authoritarianism in the final years of his rule.

Dozens of people were killed during demonstrations against his bid for a third term and hundreds more were arrested. He was proclaimed president last year after elections that his main challenger Cellou Dalein Diallo and other opposition figures denounced as a sham. The latest turbulence erupted on Sunday morning, when gunfire broke out in the centre of Conakry. For several hours, the situation was unclear, as the government said an attack on the presidential palace had been "repulsed".

There has been no official account of any casualties and there was no report of any major incident during the night. The end of Conde's regime triggered jubilation in some parts of Conakry, especially

in pro-opposition districts. The junta on Sunday said that land and air borders had been closed, but yesterday said that air frontiers had been reopened. Conakry, usually a bustling city, awoke in calm yesterday. Many shops were closed, and the main market of Medina was exceptionally quiet.

### International condemnation

Outside Guinea, international leaders condemned the latest bout of turmoil in West Africa, a region where many countries are struggling with poverty, inequality and jihadist bloodshed. "Violence and any extra-constitutional measures will only erode Guinea's prospects for peace, stability, and prosperity," US State Department spokesperson Ned Price said, urging all parties to abide by the rule of law.

The African Union and the United Nations both called for Conde's release. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), through its acting president, Ghana's leader Nana Akufo-Addo, threatened sanctions if Guinea's constitutional order was not restored. The EU and France, the former colonial power, have both condemned the coup - the latest in a region that has seen recent military takeovers in Mali and Chad.—AFP



### Special forces arrest President Alpha Conde



GOMA: A woman walks in the courtyard of the Kayembe camp for displaced people, near Goma. 4,000 or so households live in a camp for displaced people set up in a schoolyard in Kayembe, 4 km north of Goma.—AFP

## At least 30 dead in DR Congo massacre blamed on jihadists

BUNIA: Rebels shot or hacked to death at least 30 people in a new massacre in northeastern DR Congo, local and UN sources said yesterday. Members of civil society blamed the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), a group linked to the so-called Islamic State, for the attack on Saturday in the province of Ituri.

Dieudonne Malangayi, acting chairman of the chiefdom of Walese Vonkutu, initially said 14 people died but told AFP that more bodies had been discovered in the bush and the toll could rise further. "The civilians who went to look for the bodies of the victims found 16 others in the bush, which makes 30 civilians massacred," he said. A UN source confirmed that at least 30 people had died in the attack. One civilian who helped look for bodies said the victims had mostly been attacked with machetes or shot.

Augustin Muhindo Musavuli, a village elder who took part in the search, said he had seen 17 dead, mostly hacked to death by machete, but also shot dead. Some had their throats slit, others were disembowelled. "We went into the bush with young people, accompanied by soldiers," he told AFP by telephone from Bunia. "We transported the bodies on moto-

bikes... Lots of people died." The ADF, which the United States has deemed a terrorist group, is considered the deadliest of scores of armed militias that roam the mineral-rich eastern DR Congo.

Since May, the provinces of North Kivu and Ituri have been under a state of siege, with the army and police replacing civilian authorities as they fight armed groups. Malangayi complained that the army took no action despite being alerted on Friday to rebel movements in the area. "ADF rebels entered in the morning (on Saturday) and operated all day," he said. He accused them of looting homes and shops, and killing mostly farmers.

### Feared group

The ADF first emerged as a rebel movement in neighboring Uganda in 1996, but is today presented as the Islamic State's Central Africa Province. It has been accused of killing thousands of civilians since 2013. The bodies from Saturday's attack were transported to hospital morgues in the area, said Malangayi. David Beyza Katabuka, head of the local Red Cross, said he could not send a team to bury the bodies. "We fear for our security and we don't have enough equipment to do the work," he said.

In addition to ADF, Ituri suffers from inter-communal violence that left tens of thousands of people dead from 1999 to 2003. A European peacekeeping force intervened in 2003, under French command, but after several years of calm, violence resumed in 2017. In late May, more than 50 people were killed in the region in a single day in an attack on two villages.—AFP

## Who's left of the Gaddafi clan and where are they?

TRIPOLI: Libyan strongman Muammar Gaddafi was ousted and killed in the 2011 uprising, but several of his family members survived. Nearly a decade on from the dictator's gruesome slaying, what has happened to them? On Sunday, Gaddafi's third son, Saadi, was released from a prison in Tripoli, three years after he was acquitted over the murder of a football coach while still accused of shooting protesters during the revolution.

Three of the eccentric ruler's other seven sons died in the uprising, including Mutassim, who was killed by rebels in the dictator's home town of Sirte on October 20, 2011, the same day as his father. Another son, Seif Al-Arab, perished in a NATO air raid in April 2011, and his brother Khamis died in combat four months later, at the height of the revolt.

But other members of the Gaddafi clan survived, including his wife Safiya, his eldest son Mohammed - from his first marriage - and his daughter Aisha, who are known to be living in exile. In July, the dictator's erstwhile heir apparent, Seif Al-Islam Gaddafi, who is wanted for crimes against humanity by the International Criminal Court (ICC), emerged from years in the shadows. He told the New York Times he was planning a political comeback, and did not rule out running in general elections expected in December.

### The family

After the fall of Tripoli to rebels in August 2011, Safiya, Mohammed and Aisha escaped to neighboring Algeria. They were later granted refuge in the Gulf sultanate of Oman on condition they do not carry out political activities, the country's then foreign minister Mohammed Abdelaziz told AFP in 2013. Aisha, a lawyer by profession and a former UN goodwill ambassador, had been part of an international defense team for Saddam Hussein after the Iraqi leader was ousted in the 2003 US-led invasion.

High-rolling son Hannibal also sought refuge in Algeria after the uprising, before trying to sneak

into Lebanon to join his wife, Lebanese model Aline Skaf. But Lebanese authorities arrested and charged him in 2015 with withholding information about prominent Muslim Shiite cleric Mussa Sadr, who went missing in 1978 during a visit to Libya. Hannibal and his wife had sparked a diplomatic incident with Switzerland in 2008 when they were arrested in a luxury Geneva hotel for assaulting two former domestic employees.

Playboy son Saadi Gaddafi - once a professional footballer in Italy - fled to Niger after the uprising, but was later extradited to Libya, where he was wanted for the 2005 killing of Libyan football coach Bashir Al-Rayani and repression during the revolt. In April 2018, the court of appeal acquitted him of Rayani's murder, and he was freed from jail on Sunday, according to a justice ministry source and another source at the prosecutor's office. Several media reports on Sunday suggested Gaddafi had already taken a flight to Turkey.

### Heir apparent

Seif al-Islam, whose name means "sword of Islam", was captured by a Libyan militia from Zintan in November 2011, days after his father was killed. In June 2014 he appeared via video from Zintan, western Libya, during his trial by a Tripoli court. In 2015, he was sentenced in absentia to death for crimes committed during the revolt. The armed group which captured him announced in 2017 that he had been released.

But he remained out of the public eye until the New York Times interviewed him in Zintan in July 2021, when he said he was no longer a prisoner and was planning a political return. "The men who used to be my guards are now my friends," he said, deploring Libya's descent into chaos in the decade since his father's overthrow and killing.

### Clan and tribe

During his glory days, Muammar Gaddafi considered himself the "Leader of the Revolution" and declared Libya a "Jamahiriya", or "state of the masses" run by local committees. Thousands of his supporters, including from his own Kadhadfa tribe, fled Libya during and after the regime's fall, with many settling in Egypt and Tunisia. The clan also included members of Gaddafi's revolutionary guard - a paramilitary force tasked with protecting the regime against its detractors - who were not necessarily blood relatives.—AFP