



THE EARLY WARNING MONITOR

GLIC Weekly Report

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Top of the Agenda

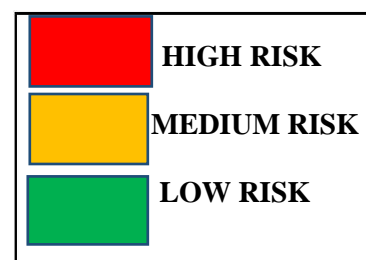
Tension as Tinubu Declares State of Emergency in Rivers

PRESIDENT Bola Tinubu, yesterday, wielded the big stick yesterday to resolve the two-year political crisis ravaging Rivers State by declaring a state of emergency. In a 1003-word nationwide broadcast, the President suspended the governor, Siminalayi Fubara, his deputy, Professor Ngozi Odu, and members of the State House of Assembly for six months. He appointed former Chief of Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Ibokette Ibas, retd, as administrator, and the appointment is subject to the confirmation of the National Assembly. Vanguard exclusively reported, yesterday, that a neutral person could be appointed to administer the state as a solution to the lingering problem. With the development, Rivers has become the sixth state, after Plateau, Ekiti, Borno, Yobe and Adamawa, to witness state of emergency since the return of democratic rule in 1999. Also, Rivers became the third state after Plateau and Ekiti to have their governors, deputies and legislators suspended during the emergency rule. Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states' governors were in the saddle during the emergency rule in the three states. Declaring the state of emergency yesterday, Tinubu said: 'Fellow Nigerians, I feel greatly disturbed at the turn we have come to regarding the political crisis in Rivers State. Like many of you, I have watched with concern the development, with the hope that the parties involved would allow good sense to prevail at the soonest, but all that hope burned out without any solution to the crisis.'

<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2025/03/tension-as-tinubu-declares-state-of-emergency-in-rivers/>

Analysis

On March 18, 2025, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu declared a state of emergency in Rivers State due to a prolonged breakdown of governance and political instability. The state's incapacity to operate efficiently, including the destruction of the State House of Assembly in December 2023 and failure to reconstruct it was cited as some of the reasons for the invocation of the state of emergency. According to the president *"with the crisis persisting, there is no way democratic governance, which we have all fought and worked for over the years, can thrive in a way that will redound to the benefit of the good people of the state."* The declaration is grounded in Section 305 of the 1999 Constitution (as amended), which allows the President to declare a state of emergency under specific conditions, including threats to public safety or governance. Although the proclamation was ratified by the National Assembly, there are controversies surrounding the procedure as commentators argue that the suspension of the democratic institutions in the state for 6 months violates Nigeria's democratic values and establishes a concerning precedent for federal meddling in domestic matters. The state of emergency in Rivers State underscores significant political and governance challenges confronting the state and the country. However, the situation has not escalated into a full-blown crisis, and reconciliation efforts recommended by the National Assembly provide hope for resolution. The success of the state of emergency in Rivers State depends on the effective implementation of reconciliatory measures and the cooperation of all stakeholders.



NIGER EXITS INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF FRENCH-SPEAKING NATIONS

Niger's military government has officially withdrawn from the Organization Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), deepening its break from France, its former colonial power. The move follows the country's suspension from the 88-member group after last July's coup, which ousted President Mohamed Bazoum. The OIF had demanded Bazoum's release and a return to democratic rule—demands Niger's junta has ignored, continuing to detain Bazoum and his wife. Niger now aligns itself with fellow military regimes in Mali and Burkina Faso, as well as Russia, signaling a new geopolitical direction. The decision also reflects Niger's broader anti-colonial stance, symbolized by replacing its French-penned national anthem with one celebrating the nation's struggle for independence.

iAfrica: [Niger Exits International Organization of French-speaking Nations](#) March 18th, 2025.

Analysis

The withdrawal of Niger, Burkina Faso, and Mali from the International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF) is expected considering the current stand-off between the Sahelian states and France, as well as the anti-French sentiment among the member states of the Sahelian Alliance. This move further reflects a significant geopolitical shift in the Sahel region. The OIF which was established to promote the French language and foster cooperation among French-speaking nations, has long been seen as a symbol of France's influence in its former colonies. However, the relationship between France and its former colonies in the Sahel has become increasingly strained due to perceptions of neocolonialism, economic exploitation, and inadequate support in addressing security challenges like terrorism. The Sahelian Alliance, comprising Niger, Burkina Faso, and Mali, has taken a more assertive stance on sovereignty and self-determination. This is evident in their recent decisions to distance themselves from France, including the renaming of streets and monuments that once honored French colonial figures. The three nations have criticized the OIF for undermining their sovereignty through selective sanctions and political interference. For example, Mali was suspended from the OIF following its 2020 military coup, and similar actions were taken against Niger and Burkina Faso after their respective coups. These countries have increasingly turned to alternative partners, such as Russia, for military and economic support, reflecting a realignment of their foreign policies away from traditional Western alliances. The organisation which was founded on 20 March, 1970 provides support to its member states – until this week, numbering 93 – in developing and consolidating policy and carries out international policy and multilateral cooperation activities. This is in accordance with its main mission of promoting the French language and cultural and linguistic diversity. The withdrawal from the OIF is part of a broader effort to reduce French cultural and political influence. This includes promoting local languages and cultures over French. The withdrawal underscores the growing unity among Sahelian Alliance members in challenging external influence.

WEST AFRICA

ECOWAS TEAM LEAVES GUINEA-BISSAU AFTER THREAT OF EXPULSION

A mission from the West African Regional bloc, ECOWAS, has left Guinea-Bissau saying the president had threatened to expel it. The team was sent to the country last month to help it reach a “political consensus” on how to conduct elections this year. It said it had "prepared a draft agreement on a roadmap for elections” and had started presenting it to the stakeholders for their consent. But the team decided to leave early on Saturday morning after President Umaro Sissoco Embaló’s threat. It says it will now present its report to the ECOWAS president, including a proposal for an agreement leading to "inclusive and peaceful elections".

Africa News: [ECOWAS team leaves Guinea-Bissau after threat of expulsion](#) March 20th, 2025.

The trio of AES states, all currently led by coup leaders, have made no secret of their desire to distance themselves from France, their former colonial power. This withdrawal will widen the anti-French sentiments in West Africa with severe socio-cultural consequences

AFRICA

M23 REBELS PUSH FURTHER EAST ATTACKING ANOTHER TOWN IGNORING CALLS FOR CEASEFIRE

Rwanda-backed M23 rebels pushed further into eastern Congo on Wednesday, advancing into the outskirts of Walikale just one day after the presidents of Congo and Rwanda called for an immediate ceasefire. Residents reported hearing gunfire near Walikale's Nyabangi neighborhood. Some locals described the sounds of conflict, while an anonymous military source confirmed that the rebels were engaged in combat with both Congolese soldiers and pro-government militias after launching a surprise attack on an army position just outside the town. Walikale, a town with a population of around 15,000 and located in a mineral-rich region, marks the furthest westward point the M23 rebels have reached during their rapid offensive this year.

Africa News: [M23 rebels push further east attacking another town ignoring calls for ceasefire](#) March 20th, 2025.

ONLY 17% AFRICANS ACCESS TO ORAL HEALTHCARE – WHO

The Acting Regional Director for Africa of the World Health Organization, Dr Chikwe Ihekweazu, said despite advances made in oral health care, the African Region lags behind key oral health indicators. Ihekweazu stated that only 17 per cent of the regional population has access to essential oral healthcare services. He made this known in his message on Thursday to commemorate the 2025 World Oral Health Day. World Oral Health Day is observed annually on 20 March as a vital opportunity to raise awareness and prioritize oral health – an essential component of overall well-being that is often overlooked.

PunchNG: [Only 17% Africans access to oral healthcare – WHO](#) March 20th, 2025.

M23 REBELS ABANDON CONGO PEACE TALKS AFTER EU SANCTIONS

The much-anticipated peace talks between the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Rwanda-backed M23 rebels, slated for Tuesday, March 18, 2025, collapsed after M23 withdrew at the last minute. The M23, part of the Congo River Alliance, cited new EU sanctions against its leaders and Rwandan officials as the reason, accusing the EU of trying to derail the talks. Congo's President Félix Tshisekedi initially resisted direct negotiations with the group. However, he relented after meeting with Angola's president João Lourenço last week. Despite M23's pullout, Congo's delegation will proceed to Luanda, the venue for the talks, as planned. The long-running conflict has intensified this year, with M23 seizing key eastern cities, killing thousands, and displacing hundreds of thousands.

iAfrica: [M23 Rebels Abandon Congo Peace Talks After EU Sanctions](#) March 19th, 2025.

TRUMP'S TRAVEL BAN: 22 AFRICAN NATIONS FACE US RESTRICTIONS

President Donald Trump's administration is set to impose new travel restrictions targeting 43 countries, with 22 African nations on the list. The draft, published by the New York Times, categorizes countries into red, orange, and yellow lists based on the severity of restrictions. Libya, Somalia, and Sudan are placed on the red list. Consequently, they face a complete US travel ban alongside countries like Iran and North Korea. Eritrea, South Sudan, and Sierra Leone fall under the orange list, signifying heightened restrictions on travel to the US instead of a blanket ban. Meanwhile, 16 African nations—including Angola, Cameroon, and Zimbabwe—feature on the yellow list, meaning their citizens will have 60 days to address US concerns or risk stricter measures. Notably, Nigeria and South Africa do not appear on any of the lists.

iAfrica: [Trump's Travel Ban: 22 African Nations Face US Restrictions](#) March 19th, 2025.

KINSHASA CONFIRMS PARTICIPATION IN LUANDA-MEDIATED NEGOTIATIONS WITH M23 REBELS

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has agreed to participate in direct peace talks with the Rwanda-backed M23 rebels in Angola, marking a shift in President Felix Tshisekedi's previous stance against negotiating with the group. The conflict escalated in January when M23 seized Goma and later Bukavu, displacing over 7 million people. Consequently, Angola, which has acted as a mediator in the conflict, organized new talks scheduled for March 19. Both parties have already sent delegations to Luanda, where the talks will hold. Meanwhile, the US is exploring a mining partnership in DRC, with US envoy Rep. Ronny Jackson meeting Tshisekedi to discuss economic and security cooperation. As tensions persist, the talks could be a turning point for peace in eastern Congo.

iAfrica: [Kinshasa Confirms Participation in Luanda-mediated Negotiations with M23 Rebels](#) March 18th, 2025.

RWANDA CUTS DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH BELGIUM, EXPELS DIPLOMATS

Rwanda has severed diplomatic ties with Belgium and given Belgian diplomats 48 hours to leave the country. Kigali's foreign affairs ministry announced the decision on Monday, accusing Belgium of interference. The ministry criticized Brussels for allegedly undermining Kigali before and during the ongoing conflict in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. Belgium recently halted aid and froze trade

agreements with Kigali over Rwanda's alleged support for rebel forces in eastern DRC. Despite growing pressure, President Paul Kagame, in a fiery press conference, vowed to resist what he called Belgium's neo-colonial interference. The move escalates tensions between the two nations, as Rwanda faces growing international scrutiny over its involvement in the DRC's resource-rich provinces.

iAfrica: [Rwanda Cuts Diplomatic Ties with Belgium, Expels Diplomats](#) March 18th, 2025.

EU SABOTAGING DR CONGO PEACE TALKS – REBEL ALLIANCE

The Alliance Fleuve Congo (AFC) rebel coalition which is fighting a brutal war against the Democratic Republic of Congo's government, has blamed the EU for its last-minute decision to pull out of peace talks due to be held in Angola. Brussels has announced sanctions against five senior rebel leaders including its president, Bertrand Bisimwa, for "serious human rights violations and abuses." In response, the AFC coalition, which includes the powerful M23 force, withdrew from the proposed meeting claiming the EU is deliberately attempting to undermine peace efforts in the DR Congo and obstruct "much-anticipated talks."

RT: [EU sabotaging DR Congo peace talks – rebel alliance](#) March 18th, 2025.

SOMALIA'S PRESIDENT NARROWLY ESCAPES ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT, TRAVELS TO FRONTLINES

Somalia's President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud narrowly escaped an assassination attempt on Tuesday after a roadside bomb targeted his convoy near his residence in Mogadishu. The attack occurred as the president was enroute to the airport, preparing to travel to the frontline town of Adan Yabal in the Middle Shabelle region. According to the Somali Ministry of Information, the explosion was "thwarted" but resulted in the deaths of innocent civilians. The president, unharmed, continued his journey to the frontline. The ministry did not provide an immediate death toll, but reports suggest at least 10 fatalities, including seven presidential guards who were part of his convoy. Several others were wounded.

Somali Guardian: [Somalia's president narrowly escapes assassination attempt, travels to frontlines](#) March 18th, 2025.

THE GLOBE

GAZA: ARAB STATES MEET AS RENEWED ISRAELI ATTACKS KILL HUNDREDS

The Palestinian representative to the Arab League on Wednesday called for sanctions against Israel in response to recent Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip that have killed hundreds of people. Israel launched heavy airstrikes across the Gaza Strip early Tuesday that killed more than 430 Palestinians, local health officials said, shattering a ceasefire in place since January as it vowed to force Hamas to release more hostages and relinquish control of the territory. During an Arab League session in Cairo, Palestinian permanent representative Mohannad Aklouk said that specific measures, including economic and political sanctions could be taken to prevent Israel's offenses and expansion plans meant to displace Palestinians.

Africa News: [Gaza: Arab states meet as renewed Israeli attacks kill hundreds](#) March 20th, 2025.

OVER 40 MISSING AFTER MIGRANT SHIPWRECK IN MEDITERRANEAN SEA

The Italian Coast Guard recovered six bodies and was searching for up to 40 migrants after a rubber dinghy that departed from Tunisia sank in the central Mediterranean, the U.N. refugee agency said Wednesday. Another 10 people, including four women, were rescued Tuesday and brought to Italy's southernmost island of Lampedusa. The Red Cross said they were in good condition and were receiving psychological care. Aircraft from the European border agency Frontex, the Italian coast guard and others were assisting in the search, due to difficult sea conditions, the coast guard said.

Africa News: Over 40 missing after migrant shipwreck in Mediterranean Sea March 20th, 2025.

FRANCE TO DEPLOY NUCLEAR-ARMED PLANES TO GERMAN BORDER

France will upgrade one of its main air bases along its border with Germany to host Rafale fighter planes armed with nuclear cruise missiles, President Emmanuel Macron said on Tuesday. The Luxeuil-Saint-Sauveur base in eastern France hosted nuclear weapons until 2011, when the planes were relocated to a different site. The Luxeuil air base is about to be upgraded in an unprecedented way and regain its full role in France's nuclear deterrent," Macron said. "By 2035, Luxeuil will be the first base to host the next version of the Rafale and its hypersonic nuclear missiles," the president announced. He added that the garrison will double in size to nearly 2,000 military and civilian personnel to accommodate two Rafale squadrons. The government will spend €1.5 billion (\$1.64 billion) to modernize the base and speed up Rafale orders.

RT: France to deploy nuclear-armed planes to German border March 20th, 2025.

UKRAINE IMMEDIATELY BROKE PUTIN-TRUMP DEAL ON ENERGY TARGETS – MOSCOW

The Ukrainian military attacked an oil transfer facility in Russia's Krasnodar Region that services an international pipeline operation. US President Donald Trump spoke with Russian President Vladimir Putin on the phone for more than two hours on Tuesday, with the two leaders announcing progress on the path towards a truce in the Ukraine conflict. Moscow agreed to suspend attacks against Ukrainian infrastructure for 30 days, with Ukraine's Vladimir Zelensky publicly endorsing the partial ceasefire. The recent attack by Ukraine demonstrates a lack of reciprocity from Kiev on the deescalation initiative. Russian officials "are taking a good look at the Kiev regime" to determine whether it is truly supporting Trump and Putin in seeking peace, he added.

RT: Ukraine immediately broke Putin-Trump deal on energy targets – Moscow March 18th, 2025.

ORESHNIK, LANCET, GERAN: RUSSIA'S CUTTING-EDGE WEAPONS SHAPING ITS UKRAINE CONFLICT STRATEGY

Since the start of the military operation in Ukraine three years ago, the Russian Armed Forces have undergone a genuine revolution in military technology. The Russian military has received numerous innovative weapons systems and technological advancements, actively employing them in combat. Let's explore some of the most notable weapon systems introduced and deployed throughout the conflict. The cutting-edge weapons deployed so far by Russia include the Lancet drones, FPV drones, Bombs equipped

with Unified Glide and Correction kits (UMPK), Geran drones and Oreshnik, drones. This shows that Russia will be relying a lot on drones in its future battles.

RT: [Oreshnik, Lancet, Geran: Russia's cutting-edge weapons shaping its Ukraine conflict strategy](#) March 20th, 2025.

ISRAEL RESUMES AIRSTRIKES IN GAZA

Israel has resumed airstrikes in Gaza following the collapse of talks with Hamas over the release of the remaining hostages and the implementation of the ceasefire. In a statement in the early hours of Tuesday, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said they were “conducting extensive strikes on terror targets belonging to the Hamas terrorist organization in the Gaza Strip.” Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s office said that the strikes are a response to “Hamas’s repeated refusal to release our hostages, as well as its rejection of all of the proposals it has received from US Presidential Envoy Steve Witkoff and from the mediators.” “Israel will, from now on, act against Hamas with increasing military strength,” the prime minister’s office said.

RT: [Israel resumes airstrikes in Gaza](#) March 18th, 2025.

MOSCOW ACCUSES LONDON OF ‘PIRACY’

Russia has accused the United Kingdom of engaging in modern-day piracy following former British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak’s call to seize the Russian assets that were frozen in the West as part of Ukraine-related sanctions. In a social media post on Sunday, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova likened Sunak’s position to historical acts of piracy. “This is one of the English traditions, like tea drinking and horse racing. The fact is that piracy was legalized in England. Pirates were forbidden to attack English ships but were allowed to plunder rival vessels,” Zakharova wrote on Telegram. Zakharova’s criticism follows Sunak’s post on X, where he claimed that “Now is the time to seize [the Russian assets] and make Russia pay.”

RT: [Moscow accuses London of ‘piracy’](#) March 18th, 2025.

SYRIA STRIKES LEBANON AFTER BLAMING HEZBOLLAH FOR KILLING TROOPS

Syria’s military fired rockets and shells at Lebanon on Sunday after accusing Iran-backed Hezbollah of executing three Syrian army personnel, sparking unusual tensions between the two war-ravaged neighbors. The Lebanese militant group abducted the army personnel in an ambush on the joint border west of Syria’s Homs before killing them in Lebanon, Syrian state-run news agency Sana reported, citing a statement from the defense ministry. The ministry described the move as a “dangerous escalation” by Hezbollah, saying it would take all necessary measures to respond.

AP: [Syria Strikes Lebanon After Blaming Hezbollah for Killing Troops](#) March 17th, 2025.