

New passport for the Alliance of Sahel States

Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, which are governed by military juntas, will introduce a new biometric passport in the coming days. The military juntas say they want to build a community of sovereign peoples based on African values and 'far from the control of foreign powers'. The three countries, whose militaries seized power in a series of coups between 2020 and 2023, announced their plan to leave ECOWAS in January. Following the coups, the West African countries sanctioned the juntas in an attempt to persuade them to swiftly restore civilian rule. It remains unclear how the new passports will affect their nationals travelling to other Ecowas states, where they could travel visa-free as holders of a regional passport from 15 countries. 18.09.2024

Congo-DRC: 37 death sentences

A military court has sentenced 37 people, including three US citizens, to death for their involvement in a failed coup d'état in May. The defendants - including a Briton, a Belgian and a Canadian - have five days to appeal against the judgement. Fourteen people were acquitted in the trial that opened in June. According to the military, armed men had briefly occupied a presidential office in the capital Kinshasa on 19 May at the time of the attempted coup d'état. Their leader, US-based Congolese politician Christian Malanga, was killed by security forces and two security officers were also killed in the failed takeover. 17.09.2024

Angola: Diamond production and synthetic stones

The national Angolan diamond company *Endiama* recorded a sharp decline in both the number of diamonds mined and the prices of the stones sold in the first half of the year. Prices are 30 to 50 % lower than expected. The country partly blames synthetic diamonds for the fall in prices. More than 86% of sales went to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), with the remainder going to Belgium.

USA seeks bases

After withdrawing from Chad and Niger and turning the Sahel towards Russia, the United States is negotiating with the Ivory Coast, Ghana and Benin to establish military bases. America is seeking partnerships with 'like-minded countries with democratic values, common goals and shared challenges across the West African coastal region,' said General Michael Langley of the Marine Corps. In 2018, the US built Air Base 201 in the desert city of Agadez in Niger at a cost of around €1.9bn, from which it was able to conduct both manned and unmanned surveillance flights. They abandoned this base this month. The USA also withdrew the personnel of the Special Operations Task Force, which is stationed at a French army base in the Chadian capital N'Djamena

South Sudan: Elections postponed once again

The long-awaited elections have been postponed again for another two years. Since South Sudan gained its hard-won independence from Sudan in 2011, citizens have been waiting to elect their leaders, with the world's youngest state still plagued by violence and political infighting. Although a peace deal six years ago ended the civil war between President Salva Kiir and his bitter rival, Vice President Riek Machar, which lasted from 2013 to 2018, feuds between the two have repeatedly delayed

the transition that was supposed to pave the way for future elections. An 'extension of the country's transition period by two years has been announced, as well as a postponement of elections originally scheduled for December 2024 to 22 December 2026,' according to Kiir's office. 16.09.2024

Nigeria: Lagos focuses on waterways - Omi Eko

Lagos, flanked by lagoon waters and the Atlantic Ocean, has long utilised its waterways as an alternative to the chaotic streets of the megacity. While most Lagosians live on the mainland, many offices and workplaces are located on the islands - Victoria Island, Ikoyi, Lagos Island and Lekki - which are connected by a series of bridges. But soon more commuters in the city of 20 million will be able to travel by boat, as there are plans for a massive expansion of waterway transport. The programme - known as Omi Eko or Lagos Water in the Yoruba language - is funded by the French development agency AFD and the EU institutions and aims to reduce carbon dioxide emissions with a fleet of electrically powered ferries. Over the next three years, the project will establish 15 ferry routes with more than 75 electric vessels and modernise the docking system and dredging routes. To overcome the city's weak electricity grid, solar panels and generators for compressed natural gas will recharge the vessels at the landing stages. 16.09.2024

Botswana: Another giant diamond found

Another super diamond has been found in the Karowe mine. Although it is smaller than the 2,942-carat stone discovered at the same site in August, it is still around a third of the size of the largest diamond ever found, the famous Cullinan diamond in South Africa. The youngest gem weighs 1,094 carats. 16.09.2024

Malawi: Climate change and banana wine

The banana plantations of the farmers in the Karonga district were washed away by the rising water levels caused by the increasing rainfall, forcing them to move to higher but hotter areas where temperatures rise to 42 °C. The extreme heat caused the bananas to ripen too quickly, leading to high losses. The extreme heat caused the bananas to ripen too quickly, resulting in high losses. The farmers discovered the production of banana wine. For the farmers, it's not just about making wine, but also about survival, resilience and capitalising on the new opportunities brought about by climate change. 15.09.2024

Gabon: Gorillas and medicinal herbs

According to scientists, 'self-medicating' gorillas could provide clues for the future discovery of medicines. An injured orangutan made headlines for using a plant paste to heal an injury. Researchers in Gabon analysed tropical plants eaten by wild gorillas and identified four plants with medicinal properties. Laboratory studies showed that the plants have a high content of antioxidants and antimicrobial substances. One of them proved to be promising in the fight against super bacteria. 14.09.2024

More Info: <https://netzwerkafrika.de/>

Angola: Lobito Corridor railway project

Mali: Authorities in Mali have declared the capital, Bamako, "under control" following an attack involving gunfire near a gendarmerie building and a military zone close to the city's airport.