

MONTHLY UPDATE

IN TRANSFORMATION
INITIATIVE

20 JANUARY • NO 1/2021

MADAGASCAR



MAIN STORIES

New Senators

A Cabinet Reshuffle?

Gold Smuggling

Humanitarian
Situation

HIGHLIGHTS

- The election of 12 new senators was confirmed by the High Constitutional Court (HCC) on 7 January 2021. La plateforme avec Andry Rajoelina (IRMAR – Platform with Andry Rajoelina) won 10 seats and the Malagasy Miara-Miainga (MMM), two seats.
- On 19 January, President Andry Rajoelina appointed six senators, including Herilaza Imbiki, the son of the former Minister of Justice, Anaclet Imbiki.
- Herimanana Razafimahefa, a fierce Rajoelina loyalist was elected as Senate President.
- The Director of the Civil Cabinet of the Presidency, Lova Hasinirina Ranoromaro, issued a statement in mid-January 2021 that Christian Ntsay would remain as prime minister and that Rajoelina would not proceed with a government reshuffle, 'at least for this month of January'. Relations between Rajoelina and Ntsay have reportedly deteriorated and the prime minister himself is ready to step down from his post.
- The influential bishop of Antananarivo, Odon Razanakolona, has put forward the name of his own French-Madagascan adviser Paul Rafanoharana for the position of prime minister. Raymond Ranjeva, a former judge at the International Court of Justice might also be in the running.
- Former President Marc Ravalomanana, continues to travel throughout the country to try and unite the opposition.
- Former President Hery Rajaonarimampianina described the situation in the country as 'deleterious', even 'explosive', because Rajoelina had failed to keep many of his promises.
- Several dozen soldiers were summoned to the Criminal Research Brigade of the National Gendarmerie in Fiadanana after they

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complained that they had not yet received their allowances for soldiers who carried out security missions in priority rural security areas (ZRPS). It is alleged that the rumours of a possible mutiny resulted in the summons.

- On 28 December 2020, an angry crowd stormed the Gendarmerie Brigade in Imerintsiatosika, which resulted in one death and substantial damage to the barracks.
- South African authorities arrested three suspected smugglers after finding 73.5 kilograms of gold bars worth about \$4.5 million in their hand luggage. The men were en route from Madagascar to Dubai via Ethiopia. Eight people have also been arrested by the Malagasy Anti-Corruption Centre (Pôle Anti Corruption – PAC) in connection with the case.
- During October to December 2020, 1.06 million people (27% of the analysed population) were estimated to be facing high levels of acute food insecurity. During January to April 2021, the situation is expected to deteriorate with 1.35 million people likely to face high levels of acute food insecurity.
- The World Food Programme (WFP) warned on 12 January 2021 that urgent action is required to prevent a humanitarian crisis in southern Madagascar. The WFP urgently needs US\$35 million to fund lifesaving food and cash distributions and malnutrition treatment programmes.
- The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said that \$76 million was urgently needed to help over one million people in southern Madagascar facing potentially life-threatening shortages of food, water and health.
- As of 20 January 2021, Madagascar had 18 301 confirmed coronavirus cases, 17 609 recoveries and 273 deaths. A sharp increase in cases of COVID-19 was recorded in January 2021. The World Bank offered its support to Madagascar if the country was ready to embark on a vaccination process.

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- Rajoelina said that unlike other countries which are still in the midst of the fight against COVID-19, 'Madagascar has been able to control the pandemic'.
- The former Director of JIRAMA (the state-owned electric utility and water services company), Désiré Rasidy, was sentenced to four years in prison on charges of money laundering, favouritism and forgery.
- The World Bank said in its latest Global Economic Prospects report for January 2021 that growth contracted by 4.2% in 2020 and it forecasts that the economy will grow by 2.0% in 2021 and 5.8% in 2022.
- The 2020 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report (HDR) shows that Madagascar's Human Development Index (HDI) value for 2019 is 0.528 – which put the country in the low human development category – positioning it at 164 out of 189 countries and territories.
- The African Development Bank (AfDB) approved a loan of \$42.9 million to finance the second phase of the Power Transmission Network Reinforcement and Interconnection Project in Madagascar (PRIRTEM-II).
- The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Liva Djacoba Tehindrazanarivelo, participated in the 20th meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). Tehindrazanarivelo congratulated France on its admission as a full member of the IORA.

