

MONTHLY UPDATE

IN TRANSFORMATION
INITIATIVE

16 FEBRUARY • NO 2/2021

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
OF CONGO (DRC)



MAIN STORIES

New Prime Minister

Power Shift Creaks
Open Door to Reform

Stabilising the DRC
after An Apex Power
Struggle

Time for the DRC to
Show Leadership at
the African Union

Human Rights Watch
Report

Controversial
DRC Businessman
Pardoned by Trump-
Administration

Why It's Hard for
Congo's Coltan
Miners to Abide by
the Law

HIGHLIGHTS

- President Felix Tshisekedi named mining executive and ally Sama Lukonde Kyenge as prime minister. Earlier reports suggested that Tshisekedi wanted Moïse Katumbi to be prime minister but the latter declined.
- The parliamentary power shift to the Sacred Union has continued with the removal and resignation of prominent pro-Kabila office bearers.
- Indirect calls for the secession of Katanga by a former pro-Kabila head of Independent Electoral Commission (CENI), led to his arrest.
- The Democracy Index 2020 ranked the DRC 166 out of 166 countries globally (1 is best), and 44 out of 44 in the Sub-Saharan Africa regional ranking.
- Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index ranked the DRC 170 out of 180 countries (1 is best).
- Human rights in the DRC took a downturn in 2020, especially in the Ituri and North Kivu provinces.
- North Kivu has the highest number of child abductees and recruits for armed groups.
- ADF (Allied Democratic Forces) insurgents killed at least 46 people across the Beni and Ituri regions while Bakata-Katanga militia separatists attacked military camps in Lubumbashi.
- Humanitarian assistance is required for 19.6 million people in the DRC.
- A renewed outbreak of Ebola is feared following a few new cases, with health officials racing to vaccinate residents.

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- By 16 February, the DRC had a total of 24 386 coronavirus cases, 693 deaths and 15 412 recoveries. The number of tests is unknown.
- Experts say host communities need to be integrated in IDP (internally displaced persons) response planning to prevent conflict.
- Management changes at Gecamines has bolstered President Tshisekedi's influence at the expense of former President Joseph Kabila.
- Efforts are being made to 're-sanction' DRC businessman Dan Gertler under the US Global Magnitsky Act.
- Illegal DRC coltan miners shun the law due to high international demand and socio-economic deprivation.
- The DRC's mining sector had been boosted by surging battery metals demand.
- The DRC's GDP is expected to grow by 3.5% in 2021 and 4% in 2022, while inflation will be an estimated 48.5% in 2021.
- President Tshisekedi could use the African Union (AU) chairmanship to increase his stature multilaterally and domestically.
- According to the International Crisis Group, the European Union (EU) needs to push the government toward reform, albeit in a manner that avoids instability.
- The US Africa Command wants to strengthen military relations with the DRC.
- Egypt wants the DRC's support to resolve the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) issue.
- President Tshisekedi is lobbying for his country to be awarded the position of executive secretary of SADC.
- DRC and Rwanda have agreed to cooperate on political, economic and security issues. They are also planning military operations to neutralise various non-state armed groups in the DRC.

