

# MONTHLY UPDATE

IN TRANSFORMATION  
INITIATIVE

14 MAY • NO 5/2021

## MADAGASCAR



### MAIN STORIES

Rajoelina  
Working Hard

A New Diplomacy  
Advisor for Rajoelina

Media Under Threat

Humanitarian  
Developments

### HIGHLIGHTS

- President Andry Rajoelina was on a tour of the country to visit cities most affected by COVID-19, to commission infrastructure projects and to dish out Covid-Organics (CVO) Plus capsules during the first weeks of May 2021. He also toured the south of the country where drought and malnutrition are running amok.
- Patrick Rajoelina is the new special advisor in charge of diplomacy and economic cooperation to President Andry Rajoelina. Patrick Rajoelina, a former senior official in the French administration, is a lobbyist through his own communications company, Prince.
- Rajoelina, when asked by journalists about his possible candidacy in the next presidential election in 2023, said “everything in its time”, adding that he has a 5-year contract with the Malagasy people and “I am currently working to honour this contract”.
- Prime Minister Christian Ntsay has kept a low profile since Rajoelina started looking for a new head of government early in 2021. Ntsay is allegedly looking at the diplomatic service, targeting the Washington embassy, which currently has no ambassador.
- Florent Rakotoarisoa was elected as the president of the High Constitutional Court (HCC). Rakotoarisoa replaced Jean Eric Rakotoarisoa.
- The Tiako i Madagasikara party (TIM) of former president Marc Ravalomanana made its “declaration of existence” to the Ministry of the Interior and Decentralisation, in accordance with the provisions of Law No.2011-012.
- Madagascar came in at 98 out of 104 (1=best; 104=worst) in the inaugural Chandler Good Government Index (CGGI) report. The index rankings are based on seven pillars: leadership and foresight, robust laws and policies, strong institutions, financial stewardship,

# MADAGASCAR



attractive marketplace, global influence and reputation, as well as helping people rise.

- Government issued a decree on 22 April banning all radio stations and audio-visual programmes “susceptible of threatening public order and security and threatening national unity”. The decree was reversed on 26 April after a backlash from civil society and media organisations. It was replaced by another decree forcing radio stations and television programmes to submit and uphold a “letter of commitment” with the ministry in charge of communication in exchange for being able to go on air.
- People took to the streets in Antsirabe on 6 May to protest against the measures imposed in the fight against the coronavirus. In Antsirabe, local authorities decided to impose a curfew from 14h00 to strengthen the fight against COVID-19.
- The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) warned that the humanitarian crisis gripping the country is deteriorating rapidly. Aid agencies say the number of children admitted for treatment for severe and acute malnutrition in the first quarter of 2021 was four times the five-year average.
- For the first time since a methodology to rank food security threats was introduced by the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) in 2016, people have been recorded in the “catastrophe” category – the highest level of the five-step scale describing people who have exhausted their coping strategies.
- As of 14 May 2021, Madagascar had 39 759 confirmed coronavirus cases, 37 150 recoveries and 745 deaths. On May 8 it received the first 250 000 doses of Covishield. Madagascar, on 10 May, rolled out its COVID-19 vaccination campaign.
- Rajoelina, on 3 May 2021, announced the extension of the state of health emergency for two more weeks.
- The World Bank said in its April 2021 economic report that the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the economy was more severe

# MADAGASCAR



than previously projected. Growth is estimated at -4.2% in 2020, which is 3 percentage points lower than the October 2020 projection. GDP growth is expected to reach 2% in 2021.

- The Central Bank (BFM) forecasts growth of 3.2% for 2021. It has revised downwards the country's growth forecasts set at 4.5% in the 2021 Finance Law.
- The three suspects, Francis Deliot Regasy, Mahamodo Mahavavona and Zava Herimanana Anjaranantenain, arrested in South Africa for trying to smuggle 73.5 kilograms of gold bars worth about \$4.5 million will remain in custody. The Malagasy Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicated that the request for extradition of the three was still under consideration by South Africa, as well as the request for the return of the gold.
- The 2020 United States (US) Report on International Religious Freedom states that Muslims born in the country continued to report that despite generations of residence, some members of their community were unable to acquire Malagasy nationality. Members of some Protestant churches reported they experienced discrimination in employment practices due to their religious affiliation.

