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HIGHLIGHTS

- Former President François Bozizé has gone into exile in Guinea-Bissau, President Umaro Sissoco Embaló confirmed. Bozizé wrote a declaration on 9 March in which he stressed that he did not surrender and would continue his fight to overthrow President Faustin Archange Touadéra.
- The Central African authorities denied the existence of a memorandum from the United States (US) demanding the departure of Wagner's Russian paramilitaries from the country in exchange for training FACA (Central African Armed Forces) and an increase in humanitarian aid to the country.
- Touadéra met, at his request, with his French counterpart, Emmanuel Macron, on the side-lines of the One Forest Summit in Gabon. No precise roadmap was discussed on the way forward during the closed-door meeting but, on the side of the Élysée, the resumption of contacts between Touadéra and Macron is seen as "an end in itself."
- Touadéra told the UN Least Developed Countries (LDCs) meeting in Doha that his resource-rich but impoverished country was being looted by Western powers.
- The European Union (EU) has imposed additional restrictive measures against individuals and entities linked to the Wagner Group in the Central African Republic (CAR), amongst others against Vitalii Viktorovitch Perfilev, Touadéra's security advisor.
- During a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) meeting on 21 February, the Special Representative of the Secretary General for CAR and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the CAR (MINUSCA), Valentine Rugwabiza, noted the growing sophistication of attacks on the FACA and "a change in tactics."

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (CAR)



- The UN Independent Expert on the CAR, Yao Agetse, said that in the last quarter of 2022, MINUSCA's Human Rights Division documented and verified 483 human rights violations and abuses which affected 1,300 civilian victims. FACA and allied bilateral forces were responsible for 58% of violations resulting in 70% of casualties.
- The Atlas of Impunity, which assessed 197 countries on unaccountable governance, abuse of human rights, economic exploitation, conflict and violence and environmental degradation on a 0-5 scale, with higher scores signifying more impunity, awarded CAR a score of 3.77 and it is ranked at 5.
- The 2023 Index of Economic Freedom published by the Heritage Foundation ranks CAR at 166 out of 176 countries (176=worst; 1=best). CAR falls in the category of "Repressed" nations.
- The 2023 Legatum Prosperity Index, compiled by the Legatum Institute, a London-based think-tank, based on a definition of prosperity that combines economic growth with quantified measures of happiness and quality of life, ranked CAR at 165 out of 167 countries (1=best; 167=worst), down from 163 in 2013.
- On 11 March, at the headquarters of the National Party for a New Centrafrique (PNCN) of Cyriaque Gonda, some party leaders and political figures gathered for the signing of the charter of the Union of Democratic Forces (UFDO), a new "constructive" opposition coalition created by Touadéra.
- According to Freedom House's Freedom in the World 2023 report, CAR is rated as "Not Free" with an aggregate score of 7/100 (0=Least Free, 100=Most Free).
- On 6 March 2023, a fire, which the government said was arson, caused damage at Brasserie Motte Cordonnier Afrique (MOCAF), France's Castel subsidiary in the CAR. Wagner is blamed for the attack.



CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (CAR)



- On 19 March 2023, nine Chinese national were killed during an attack on the Chimbolo gold mine, located about twenty kilometres east of Bambari, capital of the Ouaka prefecture, run by the Gold Coast Group. The Coalition of Patriots for Change (CPC), initially blamed by some for the attack, put out a statement, denying involvement and blamed Wagner. The Special Representative of the President of Russia for the Middle East and Africa, Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Leonidovich Bogdanov said that illegal armed groups operating in the CAR rely, among other things, on the organisational and financial support of their former colonial masters.
- Heads of state from the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) met in the Cameroonian capital, Yaoundé, for a one-day summit to discuss the region's economy and the impact of the war in Ukraine. The meeting saw Paul Biya pass on the mandate as head of the conference to Touadéra for one year.
- After carrying out several missions inside the country as part of raising awareness on peaceful transhumance between herders and farmers, the Minister of Livestock and Animal Health, Hassan Bouba, allegedly flew to South Africa for medical care.

