Beat: News

ACLED Regional Overview - Africa (21-27 May 2022)

ReliefWeb Analysis

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ARAC International Global Media Partners - Last week in Africa, election-related violence broke out in Kenya and Nigeria; a dispute between mining communities escalated in Chad; gunmen attacked county commissioners in South Sudan; and shifting violence in North Kivu territory displaced thousands in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In Burkina Faso, Al Qaeda-affiliated Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) and Islamic State Sahel Province (IS Sahel) militants carried out a series of deadly attacks, resulting in sustained high levels of violence across the Boucle du Mouhoun, Center-East, East, and Sahel regions. In the Kossi province of the Boucle du Mouhoun region, the Burkinabe military conducted aerial strikes, which contributed to the 100% increase in violence in Boucle du Mouhoun last week relative to the past month flagged by ACLED's Subnational Surge Tracker. In the Madjoari department of the East region, JNIM militants killed scores of civilians trying to flee from a village under the militant's control (VOA, 27 May 2022). The Burkinabe military forces repelled an apparent JNIM attack with French and Nigerien air support in Bam province of the Center-North region. IS Sahel concentrated offensives in the Sahel region, killing dozens of civilians across Seno and Oudalan provinces and clashing with Volunteer for Defense of Homeland (VDP) in Seno province.

Levels of violence remained the highest in the Mopti region of Mali, where JNIM attacked civilians and clashed with the Dan Na Ambassagou militia. In response to violent events concerning JNIM, the military forces launched an anti-militant operation in the Bankass circle. Despite military sources claiming more than a dozen fatalities among JNIM militants during Bankass offensives (Malijet, 30 May 2022), locals contend some fatalities were among civilians. Elsewhere, the IS Sahel killed tens of ethnic Tuareg civilians in Inekar and fought against Movement for the Salvation of Azawad (MSA) militants in Emis-Emis, Gao region.

In Nigeria, the military continued the Hadin Kai anti-militant operation, which began in April 2021, conducting aerial bombardments and artillery shelling in Damboa and Kukawa local government areas (LGAs) of Borno state (PR Nigeria, 30 April 2021). As a result, estimated fatalities in Borno state last week nearly doubled from the weekly average relative to the previous year, according to ACLED data. In addition, election-related violence surged with the upcoming presidential primary elections. Clashes erupted between People's Democratic Party (PDP) opposition party members in Bayelsa, Gombe, and Oyo states as party members and delegates confronted each other over grievances relating to delegate lists and consensus selection of candidates, resulting in several fatalities. Members of the All Progressives Congress (APC) ruling party also engaged in violence during the presidential primary elections in Kogi, Lagos, and Taraba states.

In** Chad**, a dispute between mineworkers escalated into large-scale conflict between armed groups in Kouri Bougoudi town of Tibesti region, resulting in around a hundred fatalities (Anadolu Agency, 25 May 2022). Chadian forces denied their engagement in the conflict but accused Libyan armed groups of intervening in the fighting (RFI, 28 May 2022). ACLED recorded ongoing violence in the Tebesti region involving miners in recent years.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, thousands of people fled from Rutshuru and Nyiragongo territories in North Kivu following increased fighting and exchanges of territorial control between military forces (FARDC) and March 23 Movement (M23) rebels in these areas (UNHCR, 27 May 2022). These were the first events concerning M23 in Nyiragongo since 2017 and contributed to violence tripling in North Kivu last week relative to the past month (ACLED Subnational Surge Tracker). In Ituri, Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) killed more than a dozen people taken hostage and left their decapitated bodies on the banks of the Ituri river while taking many hostages in Irumu.

In Kenya, political gatherings turned violent ahead of the August elections. Suspected Pokot militants also continued to kill civilians and seize livestock in Baringo, Turkana and Elgeyo-Marakwet counties. Violence increased by 36% in the past month across the country compared to the past year, as flagged by ACLED's Conflict Change Map,

In Somalia, Al Shabaab militant attacks against government and African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) forces continued, with militants claiming the killing of more than a dozen soldiers in Balcad town. However, military special forces regained control of War-Ciise from militants in Middle Shabelle. In Galgaduud and Hiraan, Galmudug security forces clashed with Ahlu Sunna

Wal Jamaa (ASWJ) and later issued an arrest warrant for 18 ASWJ militants, including defected Somali soldiers (Goobjoog, 25 May 2022).

In South Sudan, gunmen attacked county commissioners in Jonglei and Unity states. Murle cattle raiders also attacked Mundari pastoralists in Central Equatoria, killing civilians and stealing livestock. Across the country, these trends contributed to the 54% increase in violence over the past week relative to the past month, according to ACLED's Conflict Change Map.

In Sudan, anti-coup demonstrations continued amidst the arrest of a third Sudanese Communist Party leader, Amal El Zein, who had met with heads of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (el Hilu) and Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (al-Nur) factions in South Kordofan (Radio Dabanga, 24 May 2022). Security forces arrested another opposition party leader in **Zimbabwe. **Godfrey Mubatsa of the Manicaland secretary-general of the Citizens' Coalition for Change (CCC) was detained on charges of violating the Maintenance of Peace and Order Act in continued harassment of CCC members by security forces following a strong performance in the March by-elections (BBC, 24 March 2022; RFI, 28 March 2022).

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