

# THE HINDU EDITORIAL ON COUP IN BURKINA FASO

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

Burkina Faso, once known as one of the most stable countries in West Africa, has been mired in a deadly cycle of jihadist violence since 2015. Monday's coup, in which [mutinous soldiers overthrew the democratically elected government](#) of President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, was a direct result of this growing instability which the government failed miserably to tackle. Mr. Kaboré was elected President in 2015 almost at the same time jihadists, belonging to al Qaeda and the Islamic State, were expanding across the Sahel region. They turned the vast countryside of this landlocked country bounded by Mali and Niger — both rocked by Islamist violence — into ungovernable territories. Over the last seven years, at least 2,000 people have been killed and over one million displaced in this country of 22 million people. The military and large sections of civilians saw the Kaboré government as ineffective, corrupt and out of touch with the ground reality. The coronavirus pandemic and the associated economic woes have also pushed the Burkinabe people further into misery. An uprising, touched off in the streets of Ouagadougou, the capital city, a few days ago, was followed by the mutiny. The soldiers moved in quickly, surrounding the presidential palace.

West Africa has seen a series of successful coups in recent months. In September 2021, special forces in Guinea ousted the government and captured power. In Mali, the military staged a coup for the second time in less than a year, in May 2021. While in Chad, the President was killed in conflict in April, Sudan saw the military throwing out a power-sharing agreement it had reached with civilian revolutionaries and taking the levers of the state in its hands. The ease with which the generals captured power in all these countries should be a warning to other elected governments in the continent. While taking power, all these military leaders promised elections, but soon their focus shifted to tightening their grip on power rather than resolving the crises that they used to justify their power grab or allowing a transition to a legitimate government. The story of Burkina Faso is not different. The coup was reportedly welcomed by protesters in the streets of Ouagadougou. It is understandable because the people, fed up with the jihadist violence and the state's inability in tackling it, may have thought the men in uniform could at least provide them better security. But this support could be short-lived as the power-hungry junta faces a terrorist machinery spread across the Sahel along with the post-coup political divisions and instability at home. Coups are hardly a solution to the many crises these countries face. Rather, the juntas, which lack political legitimacy, end up making them worse.

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