

Madagascar: President Andry Rajoelina takes over for the third term

December 25th, 2023

December 23, 2023: **ANTANANARIVO**, Madagascar: Dutch Model **Marloes Horst**, 34, posed for her SI Swim Photoshoot in Madagascar. “I’ve been waiting for this moment for so long and we’re doing it in such a beautiful place,” she gushed while on location with the SI Swimsuit team.

(Reference: Please see <http://tinyurl.com/5avj4uaj> for photogrpahs of Marloes Horst.)

December 16, 2023: President **Andry Rajoelina** was sworn in for a third term after being declared the winner of last month’s presidential election **November 16th, 2023**. Rajoelina won 58.95% of the votes cast. Turnout was just over 46%, down on the previous presidential election in 2018, a dip the election commission blamed on an “ambient political climate” in the Indian Ocean Island nation.

December 1, 2023: The **High Constitutional Court** (HCC) confirmed President **Andry Rajoelina** as the victor of the presidential election.

Note: Please read “Madagascar : Court pushes back presidential election by one week” dated October 13, 2023 at <https://diqinews360.com/madagascar-court-pushes-back-presidential-election/>.

However, the election was not without controversy. In fact, ten of the dozen other candidates refused to campaign and called on voters to shun the ballot.

December 16th, 2023: Despite the international concerns over the island’s future, President Rajoelina took the oath in a packed stadium, to start a new term as Madagascar’s leader.

The ten opposition candidates, who had boycotted the election, had announced that they would not recognize the results and that they would continue protest action.

The government had instituted heightened security in main urban centers along key thoroughfares and near government buildings, especially in Antananarivo. Security measures include increased security measures may at **Ivato International Airport** (TNR), which would be used by visiting dignitaries.



December 16th, 2023: ANTANANARIVO, Madagascar: President **Andry Rajoelina** swearing ceremony for the third term

Six African heads of state were present at the swearing-in ceremony.

Addressing the people at the swearing ceremony President Andry Rajoelina said that he would unite all the Malagasy people. He said that his government would pay special attention to poor, the elderly, women, young people and children. He declared that the three pillars of his administration would be human capital, industrialization and improving the management of public administration.

India's Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** conveyed "Hearty congratulations @SE_Rajoelina on your re-election as the President of Madagascar. Look forward to working closely with you to further strengthen India-Madagascar partnership and **Vision SAGAR**".

Vision SAGAR is India's policy of maritime cooperation in the Indian Ocean region. The acronym stands for Security and Growth for All in the Region. It was first announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 12, 2015. The policy aims to strengthen India's relationships with its maritime neighbors and promote regional stability and security.

In March 2018, during the visit of the President of India to Madagascar a bilateral MOU related to defense cooperation was signed. The MOU aims to consolidate defense cooperation between the two countries through joint military exercises, capacity building,

and establishment of a semaphore system (*a military signaling system*) on the coast for white shipping.

Madagascar's laws do not permit dual citizenship. The readers of www.diginews360.com may be remembering that on 13th October 2023, we have pointed out that President's family, including **Andry Rajoelina** himself, had accepted French citizenship through naturalization in 2014. Before the elections, when it was pointed out that according to Citizenship rules of Madagascar, Andry Rajoelina should not be eligible to stand for election of presidency. Andry's party had said that the government had not yet informed Andry that he was no longer a citizen of Madagascar. The party said till the government officially informed Andry, he continued to be a citizen of Madagascar.

Last month the Constitutional Court had dismissed appeals to have President Andry Rajoelina's candidacy declared void over his dual French nationality, sparking opposition anger.

Rajoelina, 49, resigned on September 9, 2023 in line with the constitution in order to run for re-election. The president of the Senate, **Herimanana Razafimahefa**, was supposed to take over but declined for "personal reasons", leaving the task to a "**collegial government**" headed by the Prime Minister **Christian Ntsay**, an ally of Rajoelina.

The opposition considers the delay in stripping him of his Citizenship was improper, since since Andry himself was the president. The 11 opposition candidates have since led almost daily, till the voting on November 16th, 2023, unauthorised marches in the capital, which were met with a heavy police presence and tear gas.

It may be noted that the **Southern African Development Community (SADC)** has endorsed the election despite the chaos surrounding it.

The opposition accuses Rajoelina of corruption, greed and of turning a blind eye to the pillage of the country's natural resources, including its precious rosewood forests.

Rajoelina, 49, had won the last vote in **December 2018** after beating **Ravalomanana** in the second round of elections, which were said to have been marred by irregularities. Rajoelina first assumed power in 2009 after the military backed his ousting of Ravalomanana.