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Madagascar says it foiled plot to kill President Andry Rajoelina

Foreign nationals among those arrested over plan to 'kill and neutralise' senior political figures, attorney general says.



Andry Rajoelina was sworn in as president of Madagascar in 2019 [File: Malin Palm/Reuters]

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Authorities in Madagascar have said several “foreign and Malagasy” suspects were arrested over a suspected plot to assassinate President Andry Rajoelina.

Attorney General Berthine Razafiarivony said on Thursday the arrests took place on Tuesday as part of an investigation “into an attack on state security”.

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Razafiarivony, addressing reporters, also said the foiled plot included the “killing and neutralisation” of senior political figures other than the president.

There was no official confirmation about the nationality of the foreign suspects.

The extent of the plan, or how far advanced, was not immediately clear.

During the country’s Independence Day celebrations on June 26, the gendarmerie announced that they had foiled an assassination attempt on their boss, General Richard Ravalomanana, who is also Rajoelina’s right-hand man.

Rajoelina was sworn in as president of the Indian Ocean island country in 2019 after a hard-fought election beset by allegations of fraud and a constitutional court challenge from his main rival and predecessor Marc Ravalomanana .

The 44-year-old first seized power in March 2009 from Ravalomanana with the backing of the military and remained president of a transitional government until 2014.

The former French colony has had a long history of coups and unrest since gaining independence from France in 1960.

The island is internationally famed for its unique wildlife and vanilla but is heavily dependent on foreign aid. Nine out of 10 people live on less than \$2 a day.

The country has been under a lockdown since the COVID-19 pandemic hit last year and its southern region is in the [grips of a famine](#).

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