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Note to Editors: This is a selection of news wire reports that have been edited to be relevant for audiences for the next two weeks. You are welcome to select and publish individual items or the whole stack.

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[NEWS ITEM TEXT]

Far-Right Libertarian Javier Milei Receives Largest Vote Share in Argentina's Primaries

[237 words]

With over 97 percent of votes counted, the far-right Liberty Advances presidential ticket has confirmed its lead in the primary elections held in Argentina on August 13, taking [30.04 percent of the votes](#). The [Javier Milei](#) and Victoria Villarruel duo polled ahead of right-wing Together for Change coalition, which received 28.28 percent of votes, and the progressive Union for the Homeland coalition, which received 27.27 percent.

In a speech given on Sunday night, Milei declared, "We will end Kirchnerism and the political caste!" The controversial candidate is running on a platform of dollarization,

reduction of state-funded pensions and social welfare programs, massively cutting public spending, lowering the age of prosecution, as well as the open carry of weapons and the elimination of the Central Bank.

Regarding the Together for Change coalition, former Security Minister Patricia Bullrich, who had received the support of former president Mauricio Macri, was victorious over Buenos Aires Mayor Horacio Rodríguez Larreta. In the Union for the Homeland coalition, Sergio Massa, who was backed by Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, won the contest against social leader Juan Grabois.

This year's elections are marked by the notable absence of Kirchner herself from the process. Despite having previously announced her intention to run for president again she was unable to run as a candidate. In the last year she not only suffered an intensified [lawfare campaign](#) against her but also survived an [assassination attempt](#).

ECOWAS Says “No Option Taken Off the Table,” Including the Use of Force, to Address Coup in Niger

[272 words]

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), led by Nigerian President Bola Tinubu said on August 10 that “no option had been taken off the table,” in terms of addressing the coup in Niger. Tinibu made this statement at the conclusion of the second emergency ECOWAS summit on the situation in Niger. ECOWAS also ordered the activation of a force on standby to intervene militarily in Niger.

Social movements and left organizations in West Africa and internationally have been [urging against any military intervention](#) from foreign powers since the coup took place. On July 30, just days after the coup, ECOWAS had issued an ultimatum saying it would “take all measures necessary,” including “the use of force,” if the ousted president and his government were not restored by Sunday, August 6. The bloc's push for the reinstatement of President Mohamed Bazoum has been echoed by imperialist forces such as France and the United States.

The coup and the installation of the National Council for the Safeguard of the Homeland (CNSP) has been accompanied by a popular uprising which demands an end to [French military presence](#) and imperialist economic policies such as the imposition of the CFA franc and the exploitative extraction of Niger's rich natural resources. Niger is the European Union's [second-largest supplier of uranium](#). The CNSP which took power on July 26 has strongly condemned the threats lodged against it by ECOWAS as well as its

non-military actions such as [imposing a no-fly zone](#) and [freezing Niger's assets](#) in its central and commercial banks. The CNSP has also been vocal in opposing Western demands for a reversal of the coup.

ASHA Workers in India's Bihar Demand Fair Pay, Pensions

[217 words]

Since July 12, thousands of Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) have been on indefinite strike, demanding that the state government provide higher wages, government employee status, a pension as a part of their retirement package, and the disbursement of pending payments from April 2019 to November 2020.

On Thursday, August 3, as many as 90,000 ASHAs staged a protest in the capital of India's Bihar State, Patna. Thousands gathered at the Gardanibagh in Patna and held a sit-in near the Bihar State Assembly premises. The workers have threatened to intensify their mobilization in the coming days if the authorities fail to address their demands.

ASHAs have been [demanding](#) a regular monthly wage of INR 10,000 (\$120) instead of the current 'reward' of INR 1,000 (\$12) a month, as well as pensions.

ASHAs are trained female health workers who perform a range of tasks, from community health planning to referral and accompaniment services for reproductive and child health, dissemination of information on issues which impact health like sanitation and nutrition, preventive care and treatment, and prenatal and postnatal care in terms of immunization and counseling. These health activists, first introduced under the National Rural Health Mission, are selected from within the village community and act as key intermediaries between them and the public health system.

South African Police Attack and Arrest Striking Workers at Ekapa Diamond Mines

[249 words]

Almost 700 workers employed at the Ekapa diamond mines in South Africa's Northern Cape province began an indefinite strike on August 7. Organized by the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA), workers have put down their tools in rejection of "starvation wages."

On August 10, as workers were picketing outside the mines, formerly owned by the De Beers mining company, police deployed water cannons and fired tear gas in an attempt to disperse them. Police then proceeded to arrest 43 workers, NUMSA regional organizer

Tshepo Mokhele, who was present at the picket, told Peoples Dispatch. The workers were granted bail on August 11.

NUMSA issued a 48-hour strike notice to Ekapa on August 4. The company threatened to lock out workers if they went ahead with the action, the union said in a statement on August 7. The striking workers, which include permanent, contractual, and trainee workers, represent over half of the 1,200 workers employed at the mine.

Among the key demands being raised by the workers is a 17 percent wage increase and an entry level salary of R17,500 (\$930.2). Workers have also sought a one-off payment of ex gratia funds amounting to R10,000 (\$530.1).

According to NUMSA, the current entry level salary is R5,700 (\$302.9) per month. For context, the cost of an average household food basket for the month of July, as calculated by the Pietermaritzburg Economic Justice and Dignity group, stood at R5,082.94 (\$270).