



Coup in Niger

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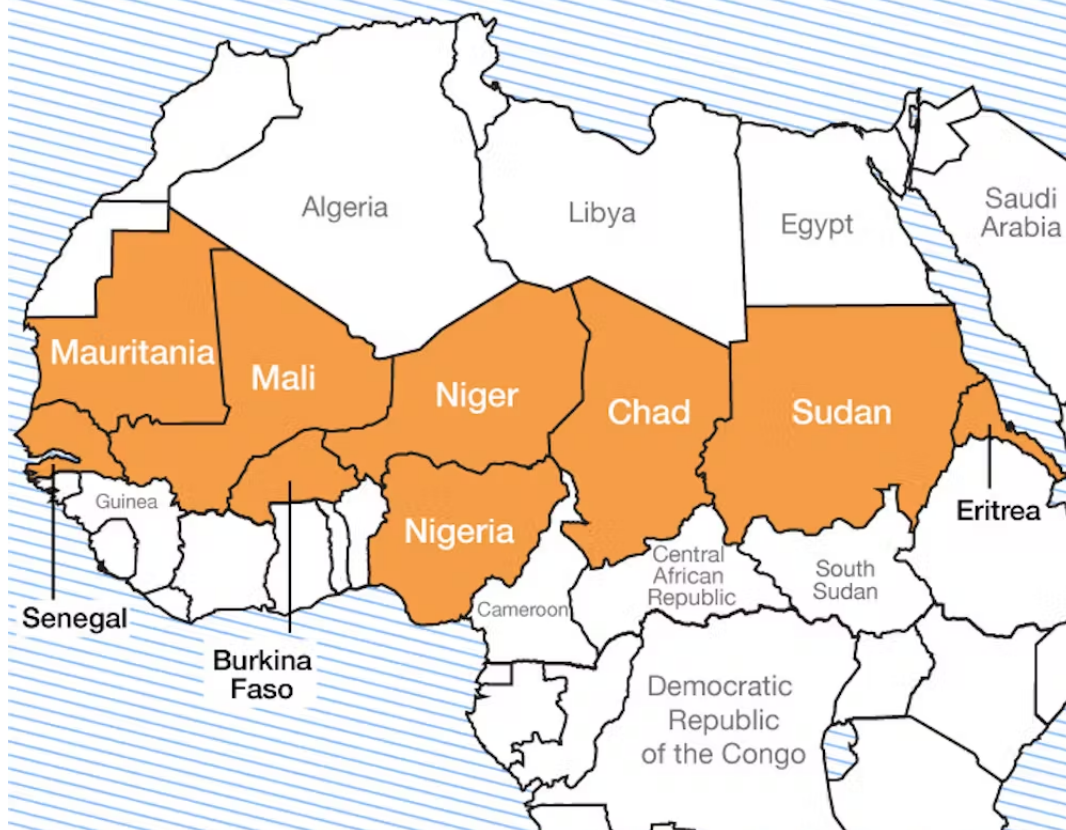
Why in News?

Niger is currently in the midst of a political upheaval as a [military coup](#) has taken control, ousting the democratically elected President.

- The [Sahel region](#), home to **Niger, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Senegal**, has witnessed political instability and ethnic tensions.
 - **Weak governance, corruption, and ethnic clashes** led to military interventions under the pretext of restoring stability.

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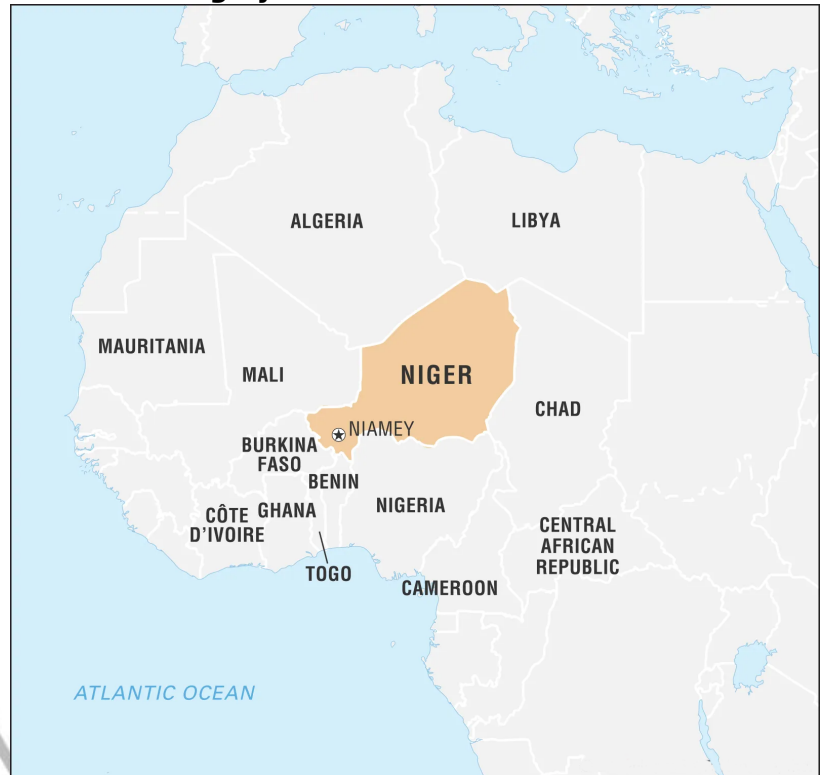
Sahel region, Africa



What are the Key Points About Niger?

- **Geography:**

- Niger is a landlocked country located in West Africa, bordered by **Algeria, Libya, Chad, Nigeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, and Mali.**
- Niger has more than 80% of its land area lying in the Sahara Desert.
 - Niger takes its name from the Niger River, which flows through the southwestern part of its territory
- It is the largest country in West Africa and **roughly twice the size of France.**
 - **Capital city: Niamey.**



- **Historical Context:**
 - Niger was a **French colony** until it gained independence in 1960.
 - The country experienced a series of military coups and political instability in the decades following independence.
- **Climate:** Desert, mostly hot, dry, dusty, tropical in extreme south.
- **Economy:** Niger is one of the **world's poorest countries** and faces challenges related to poverty, food security, and underdevelopment.
 - However, it has significant natural resources, including **gold mining reserves and a significant share of global uranium production.**
 - The economy is largely agrarian, with a focus on subsistence farming and livestock.
- **Ethnic Groups:** Hausa, Zarma-Songhai, Tuareg, Fulani, Kanuri, Arab, Toubou.
- **Official Language:** French language is recognized as the official language of Niger.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question:

Q. In the recent years Chad, Guinea, Mali and Sudan caught international attention for which one of the following reasons is common to all of them? (2023)

- (a) Discovery of rich deposits of rare earth elements
- (b) Establishment of Chinese military bases
- (c) Southward expansion of Sahara Desert
- (d) Successful coups

Ans: (d)

