

Chad Foils Coup Plot and Arrests 2 Officers

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By REUTERS

NDJAMENA, [Chad](#), March 15 (Reuters) — Chad said Wednesday that it had foiled a coup attempt by a group of soldiers who had been plotting to shoot down President Idriss Déby's plane.

Information Minister Hourmadji Moussa Doumgor said two high-ranking plotters, a colonel and a commander, had been captured and others were fleeing toward the eastern part of the country with government forces in pursuit.

Mr. Déby, himself a former army commander who seized power in the arid, landlocked country with oil deposits in a 1990 revolt, has recently faced a spate of military desertions and attacks from the east by groups of antigovernment rebels.

He has repeatedly accused [Sudan](#) of backing efforts to overthrow him, a charge Sudan denies. Conflict in Sudan's Western Darfur region has spilled over into Chad.

Mr. Doumgor said the coup plotters had planned to try to shoot down Mr. Déby's plane as he returned from a summit meeting of central African leaders held in Bata, [Equatorial Guinea](#), this week. Diplomats said the president, apparently tipped off about the plot, had left the summit meeting early on Tuesday.