

I.Coast paper suspended after it calls for vote 'boycott'

The Ivory Coast's press regulator has suspended an opposition newspaper for three days after it called for a "boycott" of Sunday's presidential election, the paper's director said on Thursday.



Image via [123RF](#)

A statement from the country's National Press Council (CNP) said the daily *Le Temps* was suspended after it published a page reading "The time has come, dare to say no to rigged elections."

The words were printed over a photo of former Ivory Coast parliament speaker Mamadou Koulibaly -- who in early October dropped out of the presidential race saying the election was "rigged" -- along with a list of complaints, such as saying the electoral commission was "compliant".

The paper is seen as supporting former ruler Laurent Gbagbo who is on trial in The Hague over war crimes charges. The paper's director Yacouba Gbane said that the decision was not surprising, because they had "been in the sights of the CNP". He called the move "harassment".

The CNP said the ad "was indeed a call to boycott" elections, and called it an attack on "public order". *Le Temps* will not be published on Sunday, with the next issue appearing on newsstands on Monday, the day after the controversial vote.

Five years after winning office in a vote marred by violence, Ivory Coast President Alassane Ouattara is the favourite going into an election seen as critical to sealing the peace.

But voter apathy and opposition criticism of the country's electoral commission threaten to undermine the credibility of the 25 October vote.

Source: AFP

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