Mauritania factfile 400km



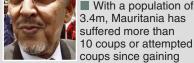
SAHARA

MAURITANIA



MALI SÉNEGAL

Nouakchott



independence from France in 1960 2005: Gen. Mohamed Ould Abdel

Aziz masterminds coup, ending 21-year dictatorship of President Maaouya Sid'Ahmed Ould Taya

2007: Sidi Ould Cheikh Abdallahi (above) wins nation's first democratic presidential election. Abdallahi angers Aziz supporters by opening dialogue with Al Qaeda-linked extremists

■ Dec-Feb 2008: Attacks by Islamic extremists leave seven people dead, including four French tourists

Aug 6: Aziz mounts bloodless coup after Abdallahi sacks several top army officers

Picture: Getty Images

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