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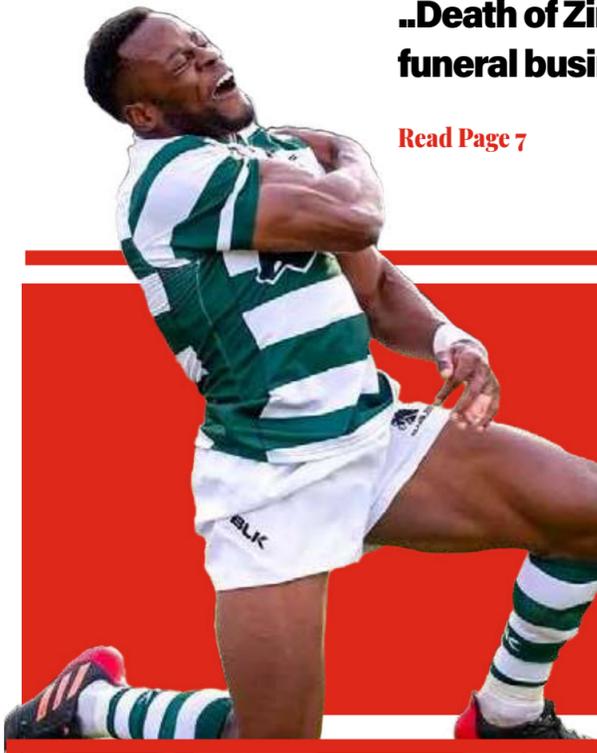
**Read Page 7**



**ARTS & CULTURE**

**...Adele review - a truly singular blend of talent**

**Read Page 15**



**SPORTS**

**...Sables inch closer to WCqualification**

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# REVIEW & MAIL

*Zimbabwe's Quality Journalism*

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# 'EAKE PRINCE' SELLS HOT DUBAI AIR IN ZIM

**Questions over authenticity of United Arab Emirates "Prince" who visited Zimbabwe in May and promised to establish an airline**  
*(See story page 3)*

**INSIDE**



**Lowdown on China's top envoy's visit to Zim: P3**

# EU bid to control Africa exposed

Chris Mahove



The European Union's (EU) desire to control how Africa governs herself was exposed last week after the bloc threatened to stop its funding of the Pan African Parliament simply because it had elected Zimbabwean Chief Fortune Charumbira as President against its wishes.

The EU, which slapped Zimbabwe with sanctions in 2002 following the Fast Track Resettlement Programme to address the imbalances in land ownership skewed in favour of a minority white farming community, did not want Zimbabwe to lead the legislative body of the African Union (AU).

And in protest against Chief Charumbira's election, the bloc sought to scuttle PAP's operations by withdrawing its support.

Political analysts accused the European Union of attempting to control the PAP through funding and urged the bloc to stop its unwarranted interference in African affairs.

Chief Charumbira, who is a ZANU PF senator for Masvingo and President of the Chiefs Council in Zimbabwe, was elected unopposed, becoming the first ever PAP President from the Southern Africa region since its inception in 2004.

However, the EU, riled by Charumbira's election, threatened to stop funding the PAP, arguing that Charumbira was abetting human rights abuses back home through his support for the ruling ZANU PF government.

But analysts who spoke to the Review & Mail said the EU was stooping too low and should stop interfering in internal African events.

"The EU is stooping too low by involving itself in internal events of the PAP that were conducted through a democratic process. It risks tarnishing its image if it were to react with the all-too familiar hammer of sanctions to every decision that does not go its way of liking," said Political analyst, Nunurai Zunidza.

Zunidza said one of the first and main goals of the PAP was critically to lobby African governments to fund continental institutions like the parent AU and cut down or eradicate external funding.

"The Pan-African Parliament itself is revolutionary in nature and was conceived out of an idea to transform the way Africa governs itself politically, economically and socially and to also chart the new trajectory towards a united Africa, calls that are gaining momentum," he said.

Zunidza said although Chief Charumbira might on the face of it appear unsuitable for that important unifying role given his partial status back home where he had not shied away from pledging his loyalty to a political party in a situation where he was constituted to be apolitical, his learned Pan-African objectives and his background as a legitimate traditional leader could be of value to the PAP.

## Charumbira hits ground running in dismantling domination, divisions :PAP

President of the Pan-African Parliament, Chief Fortune Charumbira said for the first time in the history of the continental assembly, leadership of the eleven committees have now been equitably shared among all regions, following his unprecedented election as a candidate from the southern region.

"The conflict did not start in 2021, and the divisions have been getting sharper and sharper with members of parliament and even staff here. The issue Francophones and Anglophones exists. We want to destroy that culture. It is there among MPs and we want to destroy it," Charumbira spoke to Independent Media at the Pan-African Parliament premises in Midrand, Ekurhuleni.

"I think the continent should celebrate what we did on Friday. It is one of the critical steps towards uniting this Parliament. These things (divisions) come out every time we hold elections either for the top bureau, caucuses or the committees. For this first time, we said no region shall take all the chairship of the regions."

Previously, Charumbira said a region could even take five chairships of the committees.

"Now we have said two (chairs) per region, and we have five regions. Each region also gets two vices and rapporteur. The three positions in the eleventh committee, by

Another political analyst, Maxwell Saungweme said the EU would be overreacting by trying to influence PAP through funding.

"They should leave Africans to decide for themselves and their funding must enable this self-agency of Africans than being paternalistic and driving particular agendas," he said.

He said Zimbabweans should be happy that a fellow countryman had been elected to lead a continental body, noting that understanding that fact alone was being Zimbabwean and Pan-African.

"Of course Charumbira is an accessory to electoral fraud and rights abuses linked to the ZANU PF regime. Maybe having him there is an entry point to address rights and other issues beveling Zimbabwe. People should leverage him being there to transform the way he sees the issues in Zimbabwe and eschew the rogue ZANU PF approach," he said.

He said those lambasting him would likely lose an opportunity to have him reformed so he could influence ZANU PF to move away from their transgressions in the country.

South African opposition leader, Julius Malema, said the PAP had looked at who was best suited to take the institution forward, adding that the issue of Chief Charumbira's political involvement was neither here nor there.

He said Chief Charumbira had been



President of the Pan-African Parliament, Chief Fortune Charumbira. Photo: Pan-African Parliament/Twitter

the big regions. East and West (regions) got extra for their numbers," he said.

"We were expecting a lot of resistance in committees but as we sit here, we are very happy. Every region has taken at least two chairpersons. They are chairing two committees. Every region also has positions of vice chair, with two for rapporteur. Previously, one region may have none in terms

seen to be the most capacitated leader who would take the PAP forward, adding it had nothing to do with what the EU wanted.

He said the threats by the European Union to withdraw funding of the PAP were attempts by the bloc to dictate issues to Africa, adding it was not the place of the EU to dictate to Africans.

"If #EU wants to withdraw their money because it wants to dictate to Africans what to do, that one I don't have sympathy with; they can take their money, they can actually go to hell with their money" he said.

Some Zimbabweans, however, took to social media to express their displeasure at Charumbira's election, accusing him of disrespecting the Constitution of Zimbabwe.

"As a Zimbabwean I am embarrassed, as an African I am in shock that every other African can't see what this man is all about. He is a chief who is not allowed by the constitution to participate in partisan politics....but that's exactly what he does, he belongs to a cult called ZANU PF," tweeted one @McDee1981.

In 2018, Chief Charumbira made news after he publicly stated that chiefs would continue supporting ZANU PF and were ready to be taken to court for their defiance.

This was however, in contravention of Section 281 (2) (a) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe which bars traditional leaders from being members of

of chairs, and one position of vice only but not this time. Already, we are uniting the regions."

Fireworks were expected last week when the 275 Pan-African Parliament's members regrouped to elect new leaders and map out the way forward for a continent battling rampant unemployment, rising food and fuel prices, as well as a chronic electricity shortage.

Despite some low-key regional squabbling, the Zimbabwean senator and traditional leader Charumbira emerged victorious, tasked with the huge responsibility to map the way forward for the consultative continental body.

This ordinary session of the fifth Parliament of the PAP was officially opened by African Union Commission (AUC) chairperson Dr Moussa Faki Mahamat standing in for AU chairperson and Senegalese president Macky Sall.

In his opening address, Mahamat called for "unity and to put Africans first" at the opening ceremony of the PAP Session.

During the proceedings last week, Zimbabwean legislator, Tatenda Mavetera, was sworn in as a member to replace Barbara Rwodzi, who was appointed Deputy Minister for Environment, Climate, Tourism and Hospitality Industry by Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa.

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any political party or in any way participate in partisan politics or further interests of political parties.

The PAP election was delayed for a year due to bickering over adaptation of the principle of rotation with the Southern African region insisting that the general AU principle of rotation among the continent's five regions should be applied to the PAP.

Chief Charumbira garnered 203 votes, with 161 parliamentarians voting against him, 31 abstaining while 11 spoiled their ballots.

There are 235 representatives in the PAP who are elected by parliamentarians from 47 of the 54 AU member countries, with each member state sending five parliamentarians.

Chief Charumbira, who has been the Vice President, took over from Bouras Djamel of Algeria who has been Acting President Since April 2020.

The Pan-African Parliament (PAP) is one of the organs of the African Union (AU) as set out by the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community (Abuja Treaty). The Parliament is intended as a platform for people from all African states to be involved in discussions and decision-making on the problems and challenges facing the continent.

The first Parliament was inaugurated on the 18 March 2004, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Pan-African Parliament has its seat in Midrand, South Africa.



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# Inside top Chinese diplomat's visit to Zim



Tichaona Zindoga

The visit over the weekend to Zimbabwe by Chinese diplomat, Yang Jiechi, who is the Director of the Office of Foreign Affairs Commission in the ruling Communist Party of China and a Politburo member, was a significant marker of political relations between the two countries.

Mr Yang is also a former Foreign Affairs Minister of China, and he was accompanied by a clump of officials.

He jetted into Zimbabwe on Saturday and he met President Emmerson Mnangagwa on Sunday morning.

Among his engagements, packed in 24 hours, Mr Yang had conversations with Zimbabwe's Foreign Affairs Minister Fred Shava and the President.

The two sides held talks on trade, future cooperation and how to consolidate the comprehensive cooperation between the two countries.

Both sides expressed confidence on the future relations of the two countries, led by the respective governing parties that share a long history of friendship.

There is currently lots of evidence of fruitful cooperation with the completion of projects this year, and others in 2023.

Mr Yang's visit was part of a four-nation tour that also included Pakistan, United Arab Emirates and Mozambique.

His itinerary to the four countries on the roster reveals a number of things, which make the context of how his visit to Zimbabwe is an important marker of strong bilateral relations with China.

First of all, Mr Yang's stature as a top diplomat is underscored by the fact that he has been deployed on important missions across the globe, as China systematically engages the world, incorporating both major powers and smaller countries.

A fortnight ago, Mr Yang met the United States of America's National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan in Luxembourg - a follow up meeting of a phone call (another important gesture) - and had a "candid, substantive, and productive discussion of a number of regional and global security issues, as well as key issues in US-China re-

lations', according to a brief at the end of the engagement. Previously he had held a phone conversation with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, in which they emphasised that China-US cooperation must be mutually beneficial and address each other's concerns in a balanced manner.

Last year, in February, Mr Yang met with Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni in Entebbe, Uganda; and Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani in Doha.

His latest diplomatic foray to the four countries, including Zimbabwe, speaks to the systematic and meticulous way China's diplomacy is being handled from Beijing.

### China-Zimbabwe relations: A turning point

There are clear and present indications that Zimbabwe and China's relations are about to take a significant turn for the better this year.

Diplomatic and international relations watchers will quickly notice that, at present, there is a strong currency in the relations between Zimbabwe and China that probably dwarfs any other.

This is on the back of close cooperation between the two countries with China assisting Zimbabwe on a number of areas. Not least, China has been a significant pillar of support for Zimbabwe after the Southern African country was placed under punitive sanctions by Western countries.

The completion of the new Parliament building, the pharmaceutical warehouse, energy projects and transport infrastructure in Zimbabwe with the aid of China have created a whole new vibe. On the other hand, big Chinese businesses have begun to show massive footprint in Zimbabwe, which could strengthen the two countries' march into a shared future.

The Ambassador of China to Zimbabwe, Guo Shaochun, recently called 2022 "a year of harvest". The relations between the two countries have borne fruit, and the harder one looks, the more it is to be realised that the bonds between the two countries have strengthened in a way that had not been appreciated before.

Only now is this reality dawning - to shiny fruits such as the massive infrastructure China has built - and this has impressed many good-willed observers, while shock-



Yang Jiechi shaking hands with a Zimbabwean official.

ing, awing and angering detractors. The latter point bears a little more emphasis.

The flourishing of the relations between Zimbabwe and China, which has borne tangible and practical results, has led to frantic efforts by detractors to try to reverse or undo the progress made in the cooperation. In particular, the United States of America - which has been trying to have influence in the country through opposition proxies - is unsettled and is currently trying out a number of strategies to undermine the cooperation between Zimbabwe and China.

Typically, the US has deployed the opposition, civil society and the media to smear Chinese investments as well as aid and cooperation with Zimbabwe. Lately, there has been shrill propaganda in the media against Chinese investments while labour unions and civil society groups have been equipped with a war chest to fight and smear China.

All this makes the present moment, a turning point: a critical juncture.

Mr Yang's visit should also be read in the context of relations between the CPC and Zanu-PF. The deployment by China of a high-ranking Party official to Zimbabwe is an indication of the cooperation between the two revolutionary parties.

President Mnangagwa is the First Secretary of the governing party, Zanu-PF.

Countless exchanges and cooperation have been undertaken by both sides in recent years.

### Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy in action

It is also critical to note that Mr Yang's visit is a motion in the diplomatic approach and philosophy by China's leader, President Xi Jinping whose "Thought on Diplomacy" had

become a guiding light in China's engagement and cooperation with the world.

Under the Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy, China will adhere to the principles of sincerity, affinity, good faith and practical results, uphold the values of shared interests and the greater good, and promote the Spirit of China-Africa Friendship and Cooperation.

The Chinese leader emphasised this in 2018 during the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation summit in Beijing.

During that summit, President Xi emphasised that China respects, loves and supports Africa and firmly follows a "five-no" approach in its relations with Africa. This entails no interference into African countries' pursuit of development paths that fit their national conditions; no interference into African countries' internal affairs; no imposition of China's will on African countries; no attachment of political strings to assistance to Africa; and no seeking of selfish political gains in investment and financing cooperation with Africa.

President Xi also made proposals on building a China-Africa community of shared future characterized by joint responsibility, win-win cooperation, happiness for all, cultural prosperity, common security, and harmony between humanity and nature, which has been the overall framework of China-Africa cooperation in the new era.

Zimbabwe is benefiting from President Xi's philosophy and pragmatic approach to global affairs.

The practical cooperation that is now taking place in Zimbabwe, and bearing fruit, is a result of the Chinese leader's vision.

The visit by Mr Yang underscores the importance of Zimbabwe as one of the key cogs of the China-Africa cooperation.

At the end the visit was satisfying on many level, on both sides. President Mnangagwa applauded "solid relations between Zimbabwe and China".

"This is why we are still here and remain independent so these solid friends of Zimbabwe".

Mr Yang said of Zimbabwe-China relations: "Practical cooperation has delivered important progress... we have set a good example South-South cooperation."

# UAE 'Prince' sells hot air in Zimbabwe

Tichaona Zindoga in Harare & Zvakwana Sweto in Dubai

Questions have arisen as to the authenticity of a United Arab Emirates "Prince" who visited Zimbabwe in May and promised to establish an airline and other investments in the country.

Local media touted one Sultan Khalil Ibrahim Albalushi, describing him as a billionaire prince and CEO of Rind Properties which was claimed to be one of the biggest real estate companies in Dubai and the rest of the UAE.

According to the reports, the property firm had a staff complement of 400, and a partner of EMAAR, a property company in the UAE and listed on the Dubai Financial Market.

Further, it was claimed that Rind Properties had clinched deals in several global markets, including in France, the United States of America, Lebanon, Kuwait, Algeria, Libya and in Britain.

And the investor was said to be eyeing real estate and aviation sectors in Zimbabwe.

He promptly lodged investment proposals with the Zimbabwe Investment Development Authority (Zida), with further interests in exploring opportunities in the mining industry.

However, investigations by this publication in Harare and United Arab Emirates over the past fortnight suggest that the so-called Prince Sultan may have just sold hot air from Dubai where he is said to have made contacts at the Zimbabwe pavilion during the 2021 Dubai Expo that concluded in April.

The company does not feature in the UAE's real estate directory, the territory's most authoritative database of companies in the sector.

A number of anomalies then emerged.

"A company that employs more than 400 people in Dubai will be among the top Real Estate companies in UAE," a source in Dubai said. "The company is not even appearing on DLD's (Department of Land Dubai) list of Real Estate Companies."

The source explained: "Dubai is well known for its ability to host exhibitions and conferences that boost real estate business as it is one of the most preferred cities to invest in terms of property. One such event is the International Property Show which was held in March this year, and Rind Properties did not take part."

The company does not have publicly available information, and has no working website, while its social media accounts were last updated over a year ago.

Contacted for comment, one of the local agents for the "Prince Sultan", Darlington Chipfupi, insisted that his client was a bona fide investor.

He said when the investor came to Zimbabwe he met a tragedy of losing his mother and had to immediately return, with his director Alder Archibald - said to be an Indian national - taking over duties of the visit.

Chipfupi said the visit did not make much inroad, and came both for holiday and business.

"Institutionally, we couldn't make it much because we were still waiting for some clearance from ZIDA," Chipfupi said.



He said the party ended up meeting with some individuals including businessman Philip Chiyangwa, the chairman of Zimbabwe Travel Agents and others in the real estate and mining sectors.

Chipfupi said Albalushi then instructed them to register an airline company.

"When he left he later communicated to us that we need to go ahead and we registered a company; we now have the Fly-stream Airlines which (business) we now want to establish for both charter and commercial flights for Zimbabwe as well as an aviation school.

"As we speak right now we are currently in the gazetting stage, waiting for the 20 days to lapse and if we are lucky we proceed and do the registration process. From that stage we will be applying for the permit through our registration as Fly-



stream Airlines," Chipfupi said.

He said he was receiving "tremendous support" from Government of Zimbabwe.

However, challenged on the authenticity and origin of the investor, Chipfupi floundered.

"If it is possible we may share some of the documents that are available," he pleaded.

He then sent our team a Commercial License from the Government of Dubai that states that Sultan Khalil Albalushi is a real estate broker, as a "sole establishment". Under the license category, the holder is permitted to act as leasing property brokerage, real estate management supervision and real estate buying and selling brokerage.

The license has since expired; as the expiry date on the document was May 26, 2022. Chipfupi insisted that Albalushi was from the royal family in Ajman.

However, our investigations suggested otherwise.

Ajman is ruled by His Highness Sheikh Humaid bin Rashid Al Nuaimi and there is no relationship with Albalushi, which this publication could establish at the time of writing.

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# Zim-UK ties 'improve' despite CHOGM setback

Chris Mahove



With less than 48 hours after the Commonwealth failed to discuss the re-admission of Zimbabwe into the economic bloc, the country's Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Fredrick Shava was in London on a follow up re-engagement visit.

The bloc admitted Togo and Gabon ostensibly based on the assessment of several standards such as the democratic process, good governance and rule of law at its meeting which ended last week.

Zimbabwean Ambassador to Rwanda, Charity Manyeruke participated at the summit as an observer.

But while others saw the non-re-admittance of Zimbabwe as a snub on the country by Britain, Shava was invited to Britain two days after the CHOGM where he met with Westminster Africa Business Group led by its Chairman, Hon Laurence Robertson at the British Parliament on June 29.

Shava also met with the UK's Minister of State for Africa, Hon. Vicky Ford, in the context of re-engagement.

"They discussed how the two countries' bilateral relations could be improved," the Ministry stated on its micro-blogging site twitter.

"Hon. Robertson stated that they were

pleased with Zimbabwe's re-engagement drive and that they will bring British business people with interests in various sectors of the Zimbabwean economy," the Ministry said.

A local political analyst, Maxwell Saungweme said Zimbabweans should not look much into the decision by the Commonwealth to deny the Southern African country re-admittance into the body, saying the decision was by no means a matter of principle, although nothing had changed since the coming in of the Second Republic in 2017.

"But that body is also influenced by politics and Zimbabweans must not read too much into its decision. It may just be a matter of time and politics before Zimbabwe is readmitted, not a matter of principle," he said

Saungweme said people also need to start questioning colonialism and what Commonwealth represented.

He, however, said the failure of readmission had poured cold water on President Mnangagwa's re-engagement efforts.

Zimbabwe, which had a sizeable presence at the CHOGM, was seeking re-admission into the economic bloc from which it dis-engaged in 2003 during the era of the late President Robert Mugabe.

The new dispensation applied for re-admission in May, 2018 but the government has been accused of human rights viola-



tions and lack of rule of law.

Minister Shava's visit comes after British Under-Secretary in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, Vicky Ford told Parliament last week that the UK Minister for Africa had met with President Emmerson Mnangagwa at the COP 26 in November 2021 where they discussed bi-lateral relations, human rights, sanctions, elections and climate change.

Ford said the United Kingdom was set to invest in Zimbabwe in the area of clean energy and climate change.

"The UK is working with the Government of Zimbabwe to create an enabling market environment that will attract British investment in clean renewable energy. The UK is also supporting Zim-

babwe to deal with the effects of climate change through programmes focusing on water and energy infrastructure and climate-smart agriculture," she said.

Ford was responding to a question by Ruth Jones who wanted to know if had been any recent discussions on the aid funding required to help Zimbabwe tackle climate change.

She said the UK had welcomed Zimbabwe's commitment to a 40% reduction in green-house gas emissions by 2030 and was looking forward to engaging the Southern African country on its implementation.

The visit by Minister Shava is expected to further cement bi-lateral relations between the two countries.

## New monetary policies require our support: CPC

Albert Chavhunduka



The Consumer Protection Commission (CPC) has expressed optimism in the new measures announced by Finance Minister Professor Mthuli Ncube (pictured) last week as part of efforts to rein in the skyrocketing inflation and retain confidence in the market.

Last month, inflation topped 191%-amongst the highest in the world as the local currency continued to lose weight against the US dollar.

Among some of the measures announced by the Finance Minister included entrenching in law the multi-currency system for the foreseeable future, legalising the existing inter-bank market system of "willing buyer-willing seller" and the introduction of gold coins among others.

Speaking to Review & Mail CPC chairman Dr Mthokozisi Nkosi said the policy interventions announced a week ago required collective support for them to have the expected impact on the economy.

"It's too early to give a comprehensive comment on the market reaction to the newly announced measures although we continue to see the usual suspects in the retail sector changing prices every day," said Dr Nkosi.

"It's a great move by the Monetary Authorities that requires everyone's support. The measures must be given a chance. Of course, the consumers need breathing space from this price madness and want the interventions to yield instant results."

Dr Nkosi urged government to come up with more policies that free up the market and promote competition and encourage cooperation between government, industry and consumers.

"As CPC, we obviously want more to cushion the consumers. We expect more to be done in the supply chain. We want more suppliers to intensify competition thereby stabilising and lowering the prices. Market dominance in the form of cartels and monopolies must be dealt with decisive-



ly," he said.

"Hence, we encourage the government to come up with deliberate policies that include fast-tracking devolution, removal or relaxing sector registration fees and entry restrictions, tax relief and encouraging strategic partnerships for basic commodities.

"Genuine engagement on a routine basis with all the concerned parties including government sector regulations, Industry and Consumers must be encouraged."

Analyst Vince Musewe applauded the introduction of gold coins which he said could be used as security and as an investment instrument which would help to boost value of the local currency and curb inflation.

"Typically it has happened in other countries, for example in India where if you want to borrow money you can use them as security because gold gains price over long term and the idea is that the value of gold coins will actually exceed inflation," said Musewe.

"It's a good thing because it gives us another asset class because what has been happening currently is that people just invest in US dollar so that they can save. So now we are saying there is another alternative asset that can store value and that is the gold coins."

However, some of these policy interventions were quickly dismissed by some sectors for "bringing nothing new to the table", noting that like the already existing policies, they lacked the capacity to curb hyperinflation.

## Oppenheimer goes to court to block mineral exploration at their Zim cattle ranch

A court has stopped a miner from prospecting for gold on a ranch owned by the Oppenheimer family.

The Oppenheimers, through their company Shangani Holistic, turned to the courts after a South African firm Pearline Mineral Exploration started conducting an aerial geophysical survey of the property.

The ranch employs 400 people and keeps at least 8 000 cattle for beef exports.

The Oppenheimer family has secured a court interdict in Zimbabwe to block mineral exploration at its cattle ranch in Matabeleland South.

The 65 000-hectare Shangani Ranch holds at least 8 000 cattle and is believed to be rich in gold, silver, copper, antimony, lead, cobalt, manganese, zinc, nickel, chrome, graphite, and lithium.

Through their company, Shangani Holistic, the family turned to the courts after a South African firm Pearline Mineral Exploration started conducting an aerial survey of the property.

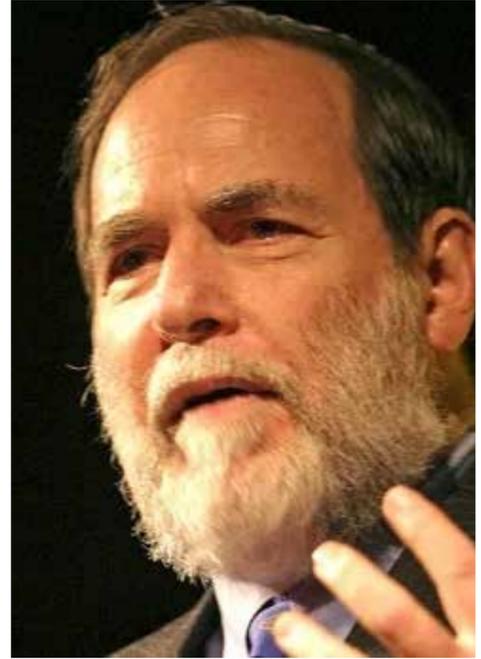
Harare High Court Judge Siyabona Paul Musithu ruled that Pearline Mineral Exploration should stop "mineral mining activities whatsoever", at the ranch.

The Oppenheimers argued before court that the farm had 400 employees who run an operation that exports beef to the United Kingdom. They said they hold 8 000 cattle at the ranch.

The farm is also a sanctuary for wildlife as it serves as a corridor for migrating animals. At the farm, there's a school for the local community, mostly for children of employees, with about 150 pupils.

As such, Justice Musithu ruled that mining activities would affect the community as well as wildlife conservation.

"The mineral exploration does not only have the potential to cause harm to the environment, but also to live-



stock and wildlife. There is clearly a reasonable apprehension of harm if the project proceeds without due regard to the law," he said.

The Oppenheimers acquired the property in 1937 two years before World War II. At the time the area stretched 140 000 hectares.

But it was reduced by more than half when the late president Robert Mugabe began the chaotic land reform that resulted in at least 4 000 white commercial farmers being displaced.

In 2014, to protect his family interests, Nicky Oppenheimer heir to the DeBeers diamond fortune met the late Mugabe.

"I was with Nicky, about a week ago here, he has land here and he comes to his farm once in a while. He said I normally wear three hats, the De Beers Diamonds hat, then the Anglo Gold hat, and the Oppenheimer family hat, but today I am not wearing any of the other two I first mentioned," Mugabe said at a diamond seminar at the time following the meeting.

# Controversy stalks Pomona deal

Chris Mahove



Controversy continues to trail the Pomona Waste to Energy deal, with revelations that an American investor who initially wanted to implement the project pulled out after an army colonel demanded US\$6000 bribe to facilitate the deal.

United States based businessman-cum politician, Maxwell Shumba says the project was his initial idea which was stolen from him after an American investor, Renewable Energy Inc. (REI), he had roped in to fund the project refused to pay the US\$6 000 bribe.

The project was planned for five largest cities in Zimbabwe, namely Harare, Bulawayo, Gweru, Mutare and Kwekwe.

Shumba, who is the president of opposition ZimFirst political party, claimed the Pomona Waste to Energy Deal was corruptly awarded to GeorGINIX.

“I started the project and approached the Harare City Council and they signed a Memorandum of Understanding but later reneged on the agreement. We went to July Moyo who referred us to a corrupt Army Colonel

who demanded US\$6 000 bribe to facilitate the deal and the investor pulled out and the project was awarded to the Colonel who I presume then shopped around for sponsors for the project,” he said.

Shumba said their contact person in Harare, one Edwin Manziki had been told by council officials to bring a value proposition for the project, which they did.

“They then asked us to put in documentation for the immediate MOU and then we agreed on the next step which was a meeting to discuss the details of how we were going to move forward and everything to do with the project. Indeed, as agreed, we bought tickets and a week before (our scheduled trip to Zimbabwe) I was told that the gentleman at council told our contact person that he did not agree. So I had a long conversation with him, I still have the chats in which he said he was not aware and he was telling us there was a tender process and they had already awarded the tender,” he said.

In an email to Shumba on March 1, 2018, Manziki said the colonel had demanded that he takes up the role of Consultant for the project until it was launched by President Emmerson

Mnangagwa.

The consultant’s role was to facilitate meetings and obtaining letters of agreements with stakeholders such as the Zimbabwe Investment Centre, Zimbabwe Power Company, Zimbabwe Electricity Transmission and Distribution Company, Zimbabwe Energy Regulatory Authority, the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe and local authorities.

The colonel, as the consultant had proposed a company share structure which would have seen the foreign investor controlling 60 %, ZPC 20%, City of Harare 10% and another 10 % for locals.

He said this share structure would facilitate continued running of the plant at high electricity rates of around 12 cents per kWh

However, the investors had insisted on getting a kickback so that he could facilitate the obtaining of the requisite letters of agreement with the mentioned stakeholders.

He had promised that the whole process would be done in less than a week

Wrote Manziki to Shumba; “The colonel read through our document, viewed the video then said the following. I quote ‘You know what Mazingi,

this is a very viable initiative. We were on the verge of awarding this project to one company but we discovered that these guys do not have the financial muscle they claimed they had. So since I have known you for so long and believe you are bringing something that will make us achieve our set targets in the shortest time, I will assist you all the way (but) remember you cannot remove corruption in a day”.

Shumba said they eventually gave up on the deal since the Minister, who they had expected to assist, was the one who had referred them to corrupt officials who made the deal impossible.

Harare City Council went on to award the deal to GeorGINIX BV after it was signed by MDC-Alliance councillors in the absence of CCC councillors who had been recalled by Douglas Mwonzora.

CCC councillors, however, made a resolution to cancel the deal soon after their re-election in the March 26 by-elections saying it was illegally into.

Residents have since the deal in court while at the same time Local Government Minister July Moyo has since reversed the Harare City Council resolution cancelling the Pomona deal.

## Food insecurity to worsen in Zim: World Food Programme

Review & Mail Writers



The World Food Programme (WFP) says Zimbabwe is one of the 20 countries which urgently require humanitarian support as food insecurity set to worsen in the next six months as 2.9 million people were already food insecure during the beginning of 2022.

Zimbabwe becomes a new entry joining other countries which include Sri Lanka, West African coastal countries, Angola, Lebanon, Mozambique and Ukraine which continue to be hunger hotspots with food becoming increasingly out of reach for millions of people.

Last month, WFP and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) issued an early alert for urgent humanitarian action in 20 hunger hotspots where hunger is expected to worsen from June to September 2022.

Writing on twitter, WFP said the situation in Zimbabwe is set to worsen in the following months citing a number of causes for food insecurity which included a poor start of the season, high inflation and continuation of the war in Ukraine among many others.

“Zimbabwe has been added to the list of countries with hunger hotspots, a designation for places where food insecurity is expected to worsen over the next months,” read the statement.

“Zimbabwe is a new country with hunger hotspots, firstly due to rainfall deficits throughout the season which cut the 2022 cereal production below average, caused permanent crop wilting in four provinces. Secondly, persistently high inflation rates, low availability of maize (staple food).

“Moreover, a continuation of the war in Ukraine could further exacerbate access to food and increase food prices as 2.9 million people were already food insecure in the first months of 2022. Zimbabwe is one of the 20 countries that need the most urgent support.”

Latest inflation figures from the Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (Zimstats) revealed that the country’s annual rate reached 191% last month causing a massive blow to the pur-



chasing power of millions of people.

Last week, Finance and Economic Development Minister Professor Mthuli Ncube announced a number of new measures by government to tackle the worsening economic crisis prevailing in the country and retain stability and value of the local currency.

After just after six months, people in extreme poverty rose from 29% in 2018 (4.5 million) to 49% (7.9 million) while at the same time the local currency continue to lose weight against the US dollar to the extent that the national budget shot from \$8.1 billion in 2018 to \$968 billion this year.

As at April 1, 2022, only 5000 of the expected 30 000 metric tonnes of maize had been delivered to the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) according to the Ministry of Agriculture.

Government has since evoked Statutory Instrument 145 of 2019 which states that “no person or statutory body or company or entity shall buy or otherwise acquire any maize from any farmer or producer otherwise than through the Grain Marketing Board.”

This was done to ensure that enough grain was delivered to the GMB for the country’s needs.

## Civic group calls for reversal of ZEP termination

Albert Chavhunduka



A South African civil society group, Kopanang Africa Against Xenophobia (KAAX) has called on the government to reverse its decision to terminate the Zimbabwean Exemption Permits (ZEP) together with other discriminatory policies which seek to isolate immigrants in the country.

At least 178 000 holders of the Zimbabwe Exemption Permit (ZEP) are facing an uncertain future following the SA government’s decision to terminate the renewal of the permits.

Foreign nationals were given a one year “grace period” to migrate to other visas in order to extend their stay or face deportation by year end.

“Migration and immigration policies that are discriminatory against those who are seeking asylum here and a continuation of the policies which we had in the 1990s. We need to integrate people instead of putting them in camps or deporting them or blaming people because they are trying to work for a living,” KAAX spokesperson Dr Dale McKinley told Review & Mail.

“We need to stop the legislation that is now being introduced by the ruling party here that create for example work quotas on people who were not born in this country, revisiting the skills, all the different kinds of visas and permits and also the ZEP.

“Giving people who have lived here for the past 20-25 years just a year to try to sort their things out and try to force them back to their country is inhuman and this needs to be stopped. There is need for a proper process of revamping permit systems and migration systems so that everybody had an equal opportunity and chance to be legal in this country.”

Dr McKinley criticised politicians for showboating and using the immigration crisis to pit SA citizens against foreign nationals.

“The failure of the ANC government to deliver the basic services and the socio-economic needs of the large portion of the people that have contributed to huge material desperation and the tendency of people blaming others such as migrants and others for their problems,” he said.

“We believe that a range of things can be done to begin to address and confront and find more lasting solutions. Some of those obviously include a new political approach so people stop using xenophobia and stop scapegoating foreigners and international migrants for the problems that are South African problems and problems of the ruling political party here.

“In other words, beginning to take responsibility and constructively address the problems instead of trying to blame it on others and this will be one of the key things. You can’t have a situation where you don’t change your policies and expect that poor people are going to be able to find the basics of life and when migrants and South African citizens clash on these things, it creates what we call a constructive conflict between the poor from other countries and within South Africa itself.”

Dr McKinley added, “It can certainly set things back a bit or change its course but it’s not going to reverse it. Now what KAAX is saying is the politicians and those in position of leadership must act responsibly and stop fanning the flames or pouring fuel on the fire on these xenophobic tendencies and feelings which is what they are doing.

“This is what will go on to exacerbating the situation and increase the tension between some South African citizens and other international migrants.”

He accused the government of taking a lukewarm approach in its foreign policy which he said contributed to bad socio-economic situations for people in other countries including Zimbabwe which has led to an immigration crisis in the region.

A fortnight ago, the Helen Suzman Foundation (HSF) took the SA government to court accusing it of terminating the ZEP without following the proper procedures or fair process and give the holders of the permit an opportunity to regularise their status.

McKinley blamed SA for failing to address the situation in Zimbabwe which he said had forced millions of people to flock into the neighbouring country in search of jobs and better living standards following the country’s economic collapse.

# Zim election fever or Zim election ignorance

Lovemore Jack



It is July 2022. We are slowly approaching a five year tally since the 30th of July 2018 elections which had a great deal of contestation and whose immediate aftermath was the eruption of post-election violence that erupted in Harare two days after polling on 30 July 2018. In August 2018, most, if not all, of us will recall that a Commission of Inquiry was set up by President E.D. Mnangagwa. The President appointed a commission in terms of the Commissions of Inquiry Act [Chapter 10:07]. The commission's terms of reference, he stated, were as follows:

- a) to inquire into the circumstances leading to the 1st of August 2018, post-election violence;
- b) to identify the actors and their leaders, their motive and strategies employed in the protests;
- c) to inquire into the intervention by the Zimbabwe Republic Police in the maintenance of law and order;
- d) to investigate the circumstances which necessitated the involvement of the military in assisting in the maintenance of law and order
- e) to consider whether the degree of force used was appropriate to the ensuing threat to public safety, law and order
- f) to assess extent of damage/injury caused thereof [sic];
- g) to investigate any other matters which the Commission of Inquiry may deem appropriate and relevant to the inquiry;
- h) to make suitable recommendations; and
- i) to report to the President in writing, the result of the inquiry within a period of three months from the date of swearing-in of the Commissioners.

The seven-member commission was chaired by former South African President Kgalema Montlante and comprised of British Advocate Rodney Dixon, Tanzanian retired General Davis Mwamunyangwe and ex-Commonwealth Secretary General Chief Emeke Anaoku. Locals included Professors Lovemore Madhuku (Constitutional Law expert), Charity Manyeruke (Political science) and former Law Society of Zimbabwe President, Ms Vimbai Nyemba. The commission had a three-month term ending December 19, 2018.

While the purpose and intent of the appointing authority may have raised several questions in some quarters, other spheres held the view that the commission exuded some balance, international outlook and possible impartiality. Notwithstanding the argument of impartiality or any other related debate, the commission pre-

sented the following compelling findings:

- 1) The challenges bedeviling the country largely emanate from poor adherence to constitutionalism;
- 2) The role of the Military in political affairs of the state has increased or has become overt in recent years;
- 3) Electoral processes in Zimbabwe, while largely timely and legal are held under highly contestable and un-free and unfair political environments;
- 4) The state is highly polarized.

The findings of this 2018 Commission of Inquiry certainly highlighted the challenges facing our democratic institution. The big question, that however, remains is: How much of the findings and recommendations of this 2018 Commission have been realised and let alone respected?

My forecast is that come July 2023, the President will once again announce election dates for a watershed election which should once again give birth to yet another five-year administration to run the country. I continue to question how much electoral reform and security sector reforms have been introduced to wet the citizens' appetite to go and vote. I have traversed the country in the two months that I have visited my country of birth – Zimbabwe – but I continue to be surprised by an almost total absence of election fever. I further, question

whether there is election ignorance in Zimbabwe.

There seems to be a lot of talk and expectation about the forthcoming elections in the diaspora community than in Zimbabwe. This raises the question whether the diaspora vote will be given thumbs up in 2023. As much as Zimbabweans have trekked to as far away countries as imaginable, the love for the motherland has never died away and diaspora Zimbabweans do exude a fever to partake in the 2023 elections. The central questions are: Will the Zimbabwe election playing field allow the diaspora to vote? Will local Zimbabweans be motivated to move out of the voter apathy state which tends to characterize general elections? How much prepared is the country to be in a position to avoid political violence similar to the pre-election and post-election violence which have been witnessed in the past?

Aside from calls to return to constitutionalism, electoral reforms and security sector reforms, the 2018 commission of Inquiry does allude to the fact that the state is highly polarized and as such peace building, nation building, and unity must characterize the reform process going forward. A highly polarized state thus presents a platform where economic reforms in such a state face insurmountable hurdles and can only fail. Polariza-

tion breeds economic stagnation and violence – this is a critical stumbling block for Zimbabwe's developmental agenda. This raises the fundamental question; do we first address the weak economic fundamentals in the country or do we ignite and foster nation building through first partaking in the ballot as a united state with a common purpose which is not highly polarized?

## WHAT BEHOLDS ZIM ELECTIONS 2023? - WHAT OUGHT TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE INTERIM?

- Need to respect the supremacy of the Constitution;
- Bring on board the diaspora vote;
- Judiciary must be truly impartial and not be seen to show allegiance to a given political party – pre-election, during elections and post-elections. The legal framework provides Independence of ZEC through the constitution but is undermined in the enabling framework particularly sections 9, 12, and 192(6) which subordinate the electoral commission to the executive arm of government;
- Need to dispel that the 2023 election is already a foregone conclusion which is already stolen from the voter – this being a notion that the ballot does not hold a true result which is free of manipulation. This is a fundamental step which will turn voter apathy into motivation and interest to vote;
- Need to instill confidence in the public that the electoral system is free and fair and thus capable of delivering credible, acceptable results. Systematic manipulation of electoral processes in Zimbabwe is well documented and continues to hinder effective participation of citizens in electoral processes. Major tools of systematic manipulation of elections in Zimbabwe consist of intimidation, vote buying, traditional leaders, abuse of state media, misuse of state resources and the security sector;
- Election administration in particular results transmission need to be conducted in a transparent, verifiable, and accountable manner. While the process itself and the time frame are clearly laid out and in order, there are several dark spaces limiting stakeholder access particularly the collation and announcement process;
- Need to distance the security sector from electoral process – pre-election, during elections and post-elections. Best practice in security reforms includes making the security sector answerable to the Parliament of Zimbabwe. Parliament must be accorded powers to confirm declaration of war and invite the military to hearings where necessary.

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# Death of Zimbabwe's funeral business

When Sithembiso Nkala\* died last month at the age of 46 in a small Bulawayo township, the red flag mounted at the gate of her uncle's house to announce the funeral flapped against the cool early winter breeze for almost two weeks.

The Nkala family had to wait until enough money was raised before she could finally be laid to rest. They solicited funds from well-wishers to buy a cheap coffin and pay municipality cemetery fees.

## Nkala's case is not isolated.

In April, a municipality councillor in Bulawayo had to make passionate pleas to residents to contribute to the funeral expenses of a widow who lived with several grandchildren who had not been attending classes because she could not afford tuition fees.

Families here make sure a funeral gathering does not last more days than necessary because of the costs that come with feeding mourners.

At funeral parlours, the lowest priced coffin costs about US\$300 — more than a civil servant's salary — while backyard carpenters peg a cheap coffin at about US\$100, forcing many families to abandon funeral policies altogether.

It is at funerals that the poverty of families comes into full public glare.

Because Nkala had no funeral policy and did not belong to any burial society, the family needed anything up to US\$200 to ensure she was given a decent send-off. No one in the family has formal employment.

"We couldn't bury her on time as we would have wished," a family representative said.

Although people living in townships have, for years, contributed small amounts to neighbours' funerals, this has not been enough to meet costs. Most of the money goes towards feeding mourners.

In the past, a family member of the deceased would go house-to-house collecting maize meal but with the cost of the country's staple also affected by price hikes, that tradition is now history.

Coupled with the absence of once thriving burial societies and incomes corroded by inflation, deaths have brought fresh headaches. In recent years, funeral policy premiums have not been spared the wrath of daily price increases.

Last month, the Funeral Services Group — Zimbabwe, which provided funeral policies considered affordable by many, announced it was shutting down its operations without providing reasons.

Policy holders were told their accounts were being migrated to another underwriter but at increased monthly premiums. This raised fears that amid poor regulation of the sector, policyholders would be left with no recourse.

Nyaradzo, one of the country's leading funeral service companies, announced a 300% increase in premiums in February, citing a tough operating environment.

The highest Nyaradzo premium now costs ZW\$2025 (about US\$5 or R75 on the



**Hard times: Only people with families in the diaspora who can send money home, and the elite, can afford luxury funerals in Zimbabwe. Everyone else worries how they will pay for coffins and the food for mourners. Photo: Marco Longari/AFP**

illegal parallel market) per adult.

But the premium is alternatively pegged at a permanent US\$10 per family member because the greenback offers a stable cushion against inflation shocks, highlighting the difficulty of doing business not just in the funeral sector but across all economic activities.

According to documentation from Nyaradzo, the company's cheapest funeral cover costs ZW\$1742 which is pegged at US\$7 without regard to the prevailing official exchange rate, a Nyaradzo sales representative said.

Retired civil servants such as Methembe Ncube have found it particularly tough.

During his time as a secondary school headmaster, the company through which he had a funeral policy deducted premiums from the Salaries Service Bureau, a department responsible for government employees' remuneration.

Since retiring five years ago, he says his pension is so little he has not been able to service his policy, which has since lapsed despite monthly payments. "When I die I won't get any assistance. The only assured assistance will come from people's goodwill."

Ncube said he has children living and perhaps working in South Africa. He is not sure because they have not communicated for years.

Doves Funeral Services, founded more than a century ago, has said it has seen clients withdrawing policies because they can no longer afford the premiums. Others are only withdrawing specific services such as buses for transporting mourners.

"Just like any other business operating in our environment, the rate of inflation continues to affect our business and we are consistently seized with initiatives to hedge against inflation," said Doves' spokesperson, Innocent Tshuma.

"Now and then we do receive requests for donations with regards to funeral services at zero cost to the bereaved family, or at a significant discount. As a responsible corporate citizen we have initiated rendering assistance where it is needed."

The Nkala family's experience is a tale of extreme opposites when compared to families with relatives in Zimbabwe's diaspora; remittances have meant quick burials, easing the emotional strain for bereaved families.

When David Gama\* died last month at the age of 80, the opulence of the funeral resembled a wedding feast. There was a giant marquee, a professional catering team, buses and a mile-long procession befitting a state funeral, thanks to his children and grandchildren scattered around the world.

Despite this public show of private wealth, the anticipated funeral sector riches have proven to be elusive.

In Bulawayo's Kelvin industrial area, where small funeral parlours once thrived, businesses have been replaced by activities such as sewing and brick moulding.

Susan Mlotshwa, who once ran a small parlour, said she could no longer sustain the operation because families who were provided with services on credit routinely failed to pay.

"The business was doing well in the ear-

ly years when we started around 2015 despite the economy being bad," Mlotshwa said. "Our mission was to ensure families concentrated on the funeral arrangement without worrying too much about money but this failed because many just ignored our payment requests. You would sound cruel demanding money for a funeral. I just couldn't take it anymore."

Mlotshwa now survives by selling groceries from the back of her car.

## Increase in pauper burials

The hardships facing the funeral business have spawned more pauper burials, according to hospital officials, with families increasingly failing to claim the bodies of relatives because they cannot afford funeral expenses.

Early this year, the United Bulawayo Hospitals said that in the past four months of 2021, 90 pauper's burials were conducted. One official told a regional newspaper that stillbirths were receiving the most pauper burials because the mothers "gave false addresses so that they cannot be traced".

"The trend of pauper burials has not changed over the years. Stillbirths are given normal graves and at times relatives may not feel it is worth it to pay for the grave, especially those who may have financial problems," said Nesisa Mpfu, the city's spokesperson.

According to the Bulawayo municipality, despite the difficulties of holding a traditional funeral, few people are choosing cremation even though it is a cheaper option.

"The city has tried to encourage the public to embrace cremation, however cultural and religious beliefs have hampered this. The failure to embrace cremation has seriously affected sustainability and availability of burial space in the city," Mpfu said.

The shocks in the funeral sector have also been felt by cross-border transporters who repatriate bodies from countries such as neighbouring South Africa.

"Some families now prefer to bury their relatives in South Africa where that relative died because of the costs involved in bringing the body to Zimbabwe," said Nkululeko Mpfu, a cross-border transporter.

Repatriating a body from South Africa to Zimbabwe is expensive, with one family recently being quoted R34000 (about US\$2200), but with further shopping around, they found a "cheaper" transporter at R24000 (about US\$1600).

With funeral service companies struggling because of families failing to raise such amounts, illegal cross-border transporters known as omalayitsha have emerged.

"We are also struggling. There is no business," Mlotshwa said, referring to a sector that was once considered the safest business bet because, as some put it, "people will always die."

\*Names changed to protect identities.

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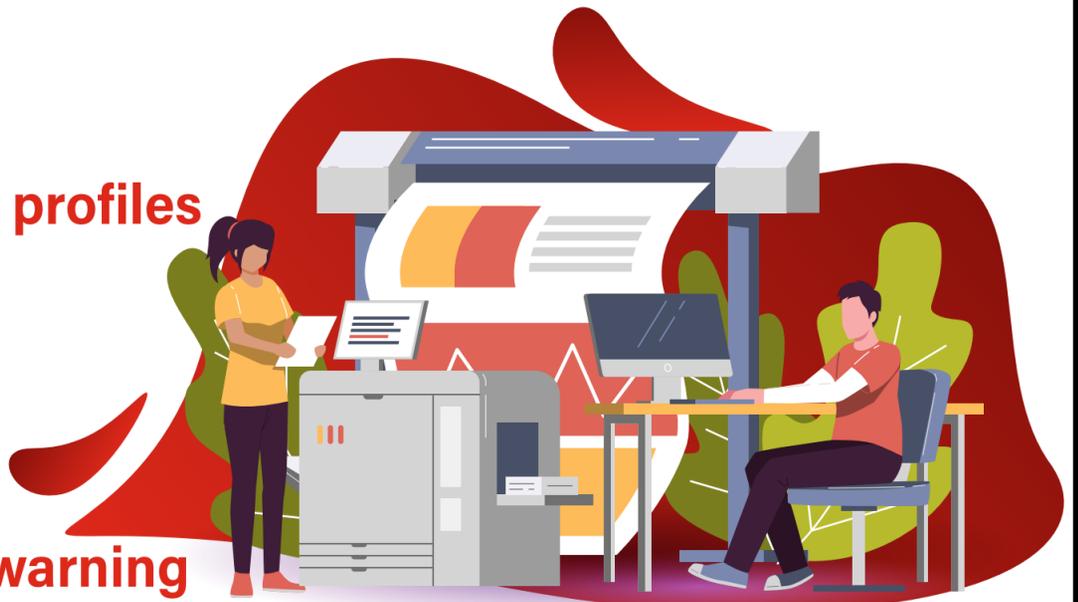
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# Sunflowers and dried mangoes are the key to surviving climate change in rural Zim

One afternoon in Mupindi Village, Gokwe South, more than 400 kilometres from Zimbabwe's capital Harare, a smallholder farmer called Bernard Mupindi is pruning the rough, hairy triangular leaves that grow around the stem of a sunflower.

The blooming yellow sunflowers in this 3.5-hectare piece of land are less than a month away from harvest. Mupindi still recalls growing sunflowers for his family to eat around a decade ago, but he had no idea how quickly that would change.

Little did he know, growing sunflowers would soon serve to counter the effects of climate change.

"I used to grow cotton, maize as well as sunflower on a small piece of land. Back then we used to have better rains in this area," he explains.

"For the past five years, we've been having a series of heatwaves. Maize and cotton farming became unproductive. So, I had to try drought-resilient crops such as sunflower."

Other drought-resilient crops that Mupindi grows include groundnuts, Bambaranuts, millet and sorghum.

The father of three received training on drought-resilient crop farming in October 2019, which proved essential to his business today. He says he was taught at the Agricultural Business Center (ABC) in Gokwe, which uses a pro-business investment approach to help smallholder farmers have high income-generating potential.

ABC is a European Union-funded project which is being implemented by German charity, Welthungerhilfe (WHH) with support from Empretec Zimbabwe, a capacity-building programme of the United Nations' (UN) trade agency UNCTAD.

Mupindi's wife Alleta Muzenda was also part of ABC's capacity-building training programme in October. She explains how it helped them to earn a living through sunflower farming.

"I can pay fees for my children and buy food for the family," she says.

Food insecurity in Zimbabwe

At the end of 2020, the UN World Food Programme estimated that the number of food-insecure Zimbabweans was up to 8.6 million people – a staggering 60 per cent of the population.

A combination of factors is to blame.

Zimbabwe is experiencing its worst economic crisis in decades with a three-figure inflation rate, leading to an increase in the cost of living.

The prices of basic commodities including maize, the staple cereal, have gone beyond the reach of many.

For the past five years, lack of rain leading to drought has been hitting subsistence farmers like Mupindi's family hard.

These farmers account for three-quarters of Zimbabwe's population.

The southern African nation, which was once the breadbasket of the continent, imported an estimated 1.1 million tonnes



Smallholder farmer Bernard Mupindi holding a sunflower disk in his field. - Farai Shawn Matiashe

of grain last year to meet demand, according to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation.

But the power of the sunflower and other drought-resilient crops is that they can survive the dry spell for a month, says another smallholder farmer in Gokwe South, Savirios Chingura. Other crops like maize, however, cannot go for two weeks without adequate water.

In the fragile Zimbabwean economy, farmers struggle to buy inputs, but with sunflower and other drought-resilient crops, they can still have a bumper harvest without the need for any additional nutrients.

"Sunflower does not require any nutrients," says Chingura. "We also get cooking oil from the seeds and stock feed."

Mupindi village head, Hlekiso Mupindi, says drought-resilient crops have proven to be effective in safeguarding his community against hunger as well as mitigating the impacts of climate change.

"We had to embrace drought-resilient crops in this area. This helps us to be food secure," he says.

An unusually rainy season Shumirai Mabeka, an Agricultural Technical and Extension Services (Agritex) supervisor in Gokwe South, is positive about the future. She says they are expecting a better harvest this season when compared to the previous two seasons.

"This year even those smallholder farmers who were not part of the ABC project also grew drought-resilient crops in their fields. Our crop harvest this year is promising because we even had flash floods for the first time in two seasons," Mabeka adds.

Cumulative rainfall and distribution can be crucial to the success of the harvest.

ABC general manager, Vernon Mushoriwa, says even though they aim to reach up to 15,000 people with their project, they have already made contact with 5200 farmers and 4800 youths have also learnt entrepreneurship skills.

Climate change requires farmers to innovate around production techniques, adds Zimbabwe Farmers Union executive director Paul Zakariya.

"This entails researching the best crops to grow as well as the best varieties. Drought-tolerant crops have been known to do very well in most parts of the Midlands Province, Gokwe in particular," he says.

"Produced on a (large) scale, the crops can financially sustain those rural communities and ensure better living standards."

Drying mangoes and sunflower processing

At their processing factory in Gokwe Centre, ABC also uses the sun to dry mangoes for sale in supermarkets around the country.

With Coronavirus restrictions in place, farmers in Gokwe could not travel to Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second-largest city, 300 kilometres away, to sell their fresh mangoes, which resulted in an excess of the fruit. But they were rescued by a dried fruit processing centre which opened in November 2020.

The dried mangoes are sold for more than the fresh mangoes and are popular during the fruit's off season.

Plus, the ABC also processes sunflower seeds into oil and peanuts into peanut butter.

WHH head of project, Thomas Heyland, says when WHH's project ends in December this year, ABC working with farmers will continue generating enough profit to at least cover the running costs of the business.

"Farmers will be shareholders through the Farmers in Action Cooperative and thus have the possibility to guide the actions and decide with the other shareholders on how to reinvest profits," he tells Euronews Living.

For smallholder farmer Mupindi, he hopes to grow drought-resilient crops like sunflower on most of his eight-hectare piece of land, next season.

"In the next season if I get the support, I wish to grow sunflowers covering three-quarters of the eight hectares of land as part of my commercial farming efforts," he concludes.

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# A resurgence of regional rivalries

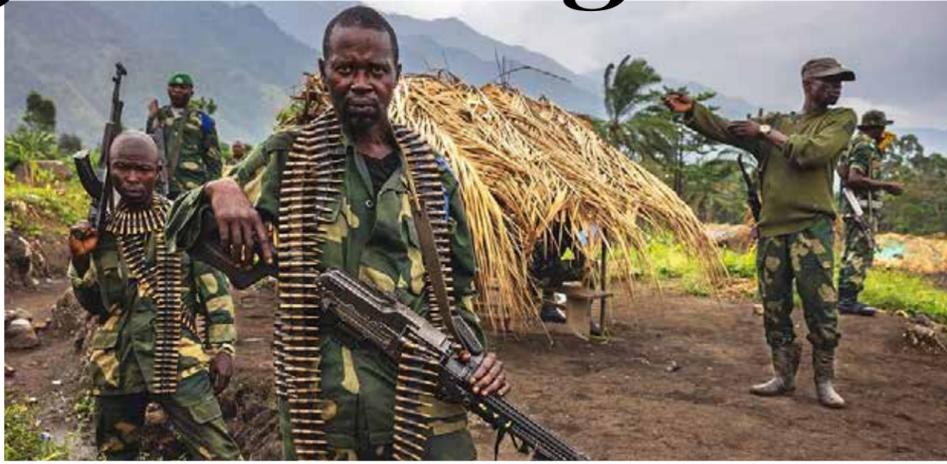
The blood-soaked east of Congo can seem depressingly complex. More than 120 armed groups—a few with political aims, most mineral-hungry bandits with ak-47s—make life miserable for millions in a vast region stretching from South Sudan to Tanzania (see map). Congo's neighbours, especially Rwanda and Uganda, have a history of fighting on its soil and looting the minerals beneath it. During the second Congo war (1998–2003), anywhere from 800,000 to 5m people died, mostly of war-related hunger or disease.

To simplify things, consider that it is almost 1,600km from Kinshasa, the capital of Congo, to Goma, the main city in the east. Nine other African capitals are closer. Maps show roads linking Congo's east and west, but on the ground they are often not there. The government in Kinshasa struggles to find out what is happening in the east, let alone govern it.

Such geographical constraints did not stop Félix Tshisekedi from pledging to pacify the region when he became Congo's president in 2019, after a rigged election. Yet today the army is in danger of being overrun in the east by just one rebel outfit, known as M23. Though no one expects a third great war, few predict peace, either.

M23's attacks in recent weeks have displaced tens of thousands of people, and led to fears that the group intends to capture Goma, a city of about 2m. The rebels began their offensive in November, emerging from hideouts in a volcanic mountain range tucked into a corner of Congo that borders both Rwanda and Uganda. Since May they have attacked army bases and captured more territory. On June 13th they seized Bunagana, a town on Congo's border with Uganda where they have been "taxing" cross-border trade.

M23 is led by ethnic Tutsis, Rwanda's minority group and the main victims of the genocide in 1994, which was perpetrated by Rwanda's then Hutu-controlled government. The militia emerged in 2012 with the backing of Rwanda and soon captured Goma. That prompted the formation of a UN intervention force, which attacked its bases in Congo, and international pres-



sure on Rwanda to cut its supply lines.

After Congolese and UN troops defeated M23 in 2013, the group splintered and fled into Rwanda and Uganda. Both of Congo's neighbours refused to extradite the group's commanders, enabling them to escape justice for war crimes. In 2017 its members slipped back into Congo.

M23's latest offensive has been confined to a small patch of North Kivu province, where thousands of UN troops are stationed. Things could get worse. The UN says M23 has sophisticated firepower and the ability to target aircraft, adding weight to accusations it downed a UN helicopter in March, killing eight peacekeepers. Congo's army has had to redeploy troops who had been fighting jihadists affiliated to Islamic State and calling themselves the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF). This group was responsible for bomb attacks in Congo and Uganda's capital, Kampala. "Tshisekedi looks like he may lose control over large parts of the east," says a fretful diplomat.

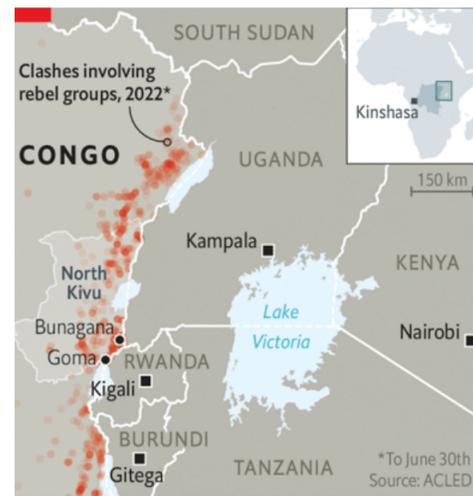
More importantly, though, the resurgence of M23 signals renewed meddling in eastern Congo by its neighbours as well as fresh sparring between them to control its mineral wealth. Congo's government accuses Rwanda of once again backing M23 (which Rwanda strongly denies). Rwanda's president, Paul Kagame, retorts that Congo's army is enlisting the support of a Rwandan rebel group originally formed by Hutus accused of involvement in the

genocide. As tensions between Congo and Rwanda ratchet up, so too does ethnic hatred. Angry mobs in Kinshasa and in the east are looking to lynch people they think might be Tutsi.

Some argue that Congo's president is to blame because he invited foreign meddling. "He subcontracted the security of his country," says Martin Fayulu, the candidate who actually won the election that Mr Tshisekedi stole in December 2018. In 2019 Mr Tshisekedi allowed Rwandan forces to target Hutu rebels in Congo. That upset Uganda, perhaps because it worried Rwanda might muscle in on networks smuggling coltan and Congolese gold, which is a big export-earner for Uganda.

After the ADF bombings in Kampala, Mr Tshisekedi allowed Uganda to send troops across the border to attack that group. But Rwanda's hackles were raised when the Ugandan army protected road-building projects in Congo that will probably draw Congolese trade (and perhaps smuggling) towards Uganda and away from Rwanda. M23 re-emerged soon after this. Now that the group is back in business, Congolese officials suspect it is also getting support from Uganda, which hopes to weaken Rwanda's influence over it.

In other words, after Mr Tshisekedi asked Rwanda and Uganda to suppress some rebels on his behalf, they spurred the rise of another, deadlier group. So Mr Tshisekedi is once again trying to subcontract his problems. At a summit in Kenya on June



The Economist

20th he authorised the deployment within Congo of a Kenyan-led force with troops from members of the East African Community, the regional bloc (though on the condition that Rwanda is not part of it).

"The regional force has its limitations," says Jason Stearns, the author of "The War that Doesn't Say Its Name". He adds that it may not add many troops to the thousands already stationed there by the UN and others. "But once you deploy troops you also get political involvement and interest." That, he argues, could lead to others in the region, including Kenya, pressing Rwanda and Uganda to isolate M23.

Western countries, which have long backed Mr Kagame as a force for stability in the region after he ended Rwanda's genocide, are losing patience with him now that he is spreading chaos instead. "This is a real moment of truth for Kagame," says a Western diplomat.

It is also one for Mr Tshisekedi, who is still hoping that outsiders will take responsibility for pacifying eastern Congo. It might be better for Congo if he cleaned up the Congolese army. Its troops are notoriously brutal and corrupt, often selling their guns to the armed groups they are supposed to be fighting. Without a competent army, Congo will remain at the mercy of its predatory neighbours.

--The Economist

## Book on Robert Mugabe's legacy has many flaws

Development studies professor David Moore's new book, *Mugabe's Legacy: Coups, Conspiracies and the Conceits of Power in Zimbabwe*, attempts to understand the legacy of Robert Mugabe (pictured), who led Zimbabwe from 1980 to 2017, when he lost power in a military coup.

Moore maintains that Mugabe's legacy revolves around what he terms "the three Cs": coups, conspiracies and conceits of political power. He shows that "the three Cs" have their origins in the perilous politics of the independence struggle, in which Mugabe was a key participant.

The book consists of a prologue and 10 chapters. The first chapter seeks "to erect a conceptual structure on which the Zimbabwe 'facts' will sit". Chapters two to five set out "the making of Mugabe and his legacy" in the liberation struggle years. Chapters six to nine trace the independence time trajectory of Mugabe's political career through to the 2017 coup. Chapter ten examines Zimbabwean politics after Mugabe's fall from power and death in 2019.

The scholars Ezra Chitando; Sue Onslow and Martin Plaut; Stephen Chan; and Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Pedzisai Ruhanya, among others, have debated the legacies of Mugabe's 37-year rule.

Moore largely ignores the contributions of these important contending studies about Mugabe's legacies. This is subnormal academic practice. Consequently, the precise ways in which his book surpasses or buttresses competing works about Mugabe's legacy are indistinct.

Bar an interview with the veteran nationalist politician Edgar Tekere (who had a mammoth lifelong axe to grind with Mug-

abe) in 2004, Moore did not interview anybody else in Zanu-PF who knew Mugabe well, or worked closely with him for an extended period. For that reason, the book is bereft of exceptionally revealing findings about Mugabe's leadership, legacy and the politics of Zanu-PF. Moore's main sources are unremarkable diplomatic cables in Western archives and material already in the public domain such as newspaper articles, NGO reports and published books. They do not make for a groundbreaking book.

**Missing the point**

We live in an age where the decolonisation of the knowledge agenda has, rightly, come to the fore in the academy. In light of this, I expected arguments about Mugabe's leadership developed by black Zimbabwean scholars based in Zimbabwe to be central to Moore's analysis. In place of debates about Mugabe by black Zimbabwean scholars, he has the thought of 20th century Italian Marxist intellectual-politician Antonio Gramsci as his book's central point of reference.

Moore invokes Gramsci ad infinitum, without ever properly contextualising his ideas or making clear their illuminating pertinence in debates about Mugabe's legacy. Nor does Moore use his study of Mugabe's legacy to extend and refine Gramscian theories. My comprehension of Mugabe, his legacy and Zanu-PF was not enhanced in any novel way after all that Gramsci.

Discussion of real and imagined coups is an important theme in Moore's book. This is presented as a key component of Mugabe's legacy. But, Moore does not engage



relevant coup and military rule literature in order to enhance our understanding of Zimbabwe's 2017 coup, and for the coup to advance broader studies about the nature and effects of coups, such as work by Samuel Decalo, Kristen Harkness, Nainihal Singh, Barbara Geddes and Alicia Decker, among others.

Moore states that he finds coup literature "boring" because it consists of "conservative tracts on the primordial-like prebendal and neo-patrimonial coupishness of Africans" (page 164). Serious coup scholars will bristle at his characterisation of their work as "conservative", and defined by a propensity to regard Africans as innately prone to coup making because of personalised patronage-based politics.

Moore cursorily engages the African studies scholar Ali Mazrui's 1973 article, called *Lumpen Proletariat and Lumpen Militariat: African Soldiers as New Political Class*, about the consequences of coups, to underline why he finds coup literature "boring" and unhelpful.

The problem with this is that Mazrui's article is dated and was hardly authoritative

even in 1973. Moore depicts a crude caricature of a diverse, sophisticated, instructive and evolving coup and military rule literature.

**Portrayal of women**

Feminist scholarship has done much to challenge patriarchal erasure and trivialisation of women in political science. Moore's book does precisely what feminist scholars have critiqued for decades now. It is laden with unquestioned patriarchal notions and gendered trivialisations that impoverish the study of politics.

Moore writes as if nothing can be gained analytically by treating women (Zimbabwe's former first lady Grace Mugabe, specifically) seriously. By this I mean methodically tracing, listening to and understanding women's actual political incentives and experiences.

Moore employs sexist tropes when discussing Grace Mugabe's role in politics and the 2017 coup. For example, he describes her as "the volatile former secretary", "the woman who whipped her son's girlfriend" and "incendiary Grace". Yet there is no mention of the equally notable emotional volatility of the powerful political men – Mugabe, Constantino Chiwenge, Dzinache Machingura, Joshua Nkomo, Samora Machel and Josiah Tongogara – who he discusses in his book.

**Conclusion**

Moore did not unearth any treasures in his research of Mugabe's legacy. He has not even drawn a map that might lead us to an enhanced understanding of the making of Mugabe and his legacy, the politics of Zanu-PF, and coups and their corollaries.

--The Conversation

# Corruption: Africa's undeclared pandemic

On June 21, Malawi's President Lazarus Chakwera fired the country's chief of police, suspended several senior government officials and also took the extraordinary step of stripping his deputy, Saulos Chilima, of all powers after they were accused of receiving kickbacks from UK-based businessman Zuneth Sattar in exchange for government contracts worth more than \$150m.

While Chilima is the highest-ranking official in Malawi to be removed from power over alleged corruption to date, few were shocked by the accusations. After all, it was only in January that Chakwera had to dissolve the country's cabinet after three prominent ministers – Lands Minister Kezzie Msukwa, Labour Minister Ken Kandodo and Energy Minister Newton Kambala – faced corruption charges.

Sadly, a corruption pandemic is raging in Malawi – and on the rest of the continent.

Indeed, from Malawi to South Africa and Zimbabwe, from Angola to Mozambique and Namibia, in countries across Africa high-ranking civil servants and their relatives, in cahoots with industry and business leaders, seem to have long been shamelessly stealing from the long-suffering masses.

South Africa, for instance, has recently been rocked by allegations that former President Jacob Zuma and a plethora of former ministers and CEOs of state-owned companies systematically planned and executed state capture to aid the wealthy Gupta family and line their pockets. On June 22, South Africa's Chief Justice Raymond Zondo released the final instalment of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into State Capture and found that the ruling African National Congress party, under Zuma, "permitted, supported and enabled corruption and state capture". He also criticised current President Cyril Ramaphosa, who served as vice president under Zuma, for hesitating "to act with more urgency" to resist the emergence and establishment of state capture.

Beyond the Gupta scandal, South Africa is battling to recover millions of dollars it lost through dodgy contracts linked to the nationwide campaign to combat the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

In Zimbabwe, Kudakwashe Tagwirei, a businessman allied to President Emmerson Mnangagwa, stands accused of amassing \$90m through a shady central bank deal.

In Mozambique, ex-President Armando Guebuza's son, Ndambi, former Finance Minister Manuel Chang, and several other senior governing party members stand accused of participating in the disappearance of loans – taken out to finance maritime surveillance, fishing, and shipyard projects – worth \$2.2bn.

In Namibia, former Fisheries Minister Bernhardt Esau and former Justice Minister Sacky Shanghala stand accused of taking bribes worth millions of dollars from an Icelandic fishing company.

In Angola, Isabel dos Santos, the daughter of Angola's former President José Eduardo dos Santos, is being accused of making billions of dollars through illicit activities.

The damage high-level and systemic corruption inflicts on already struggling African economies cannot be ignored or written off as normal or negligible. The illicit activities of elected officials, bureaucrats and industry leaders are leaving states unable to deliver the most basic services to their citizens.

Just last year, acting UN Resident Coordinator Rudolf Schwenk said Malawi is unable to provide its citizens with "effective healthcare, quality education, accessible justice and an accountable and responsive democracy" because of high levels of corruption.

South Africa, meanwhile, is experiencing rolling blackouts, largely because corruption and gross mismanagement have debilitated state utility Eskom. To make mat-



Members of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) carry placards as they take part in a nationwide strike over issues including corruption and job losses in Cape Town, South Africa, October 7, 2020 [Mike Hutchings/Reuters]

ters worse, the country is experiencing this lack of reliable energy amid an unemployment crisis – today, a record 7.9 million South Africans are believed to be jobless.

In addition to the localised corruption perpetrated through state-owned entities, the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) estimates that Africa loses about \$88.6bn, or 3.7 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP), annually in illicit financial flows. This mammoth loss should not surprise anyone. After all, many countries topping Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index, such as Sudan, Equatorial Guinea, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Chad, Burundi, Somalia, the Republic of the Congo and South Sudan are all in Africa.

Small wonder then that Africa's youth are extremely worried about the deplorable and depreciating state of affairs on the continent. According to the Africa Youth Survey 2022 (PDF) published on June 14, Africa's youths believe that the creation of "new, well-paying jobs" and "reducing government corruption" should be the continent's two leading priorities. The survey interviewed young adults, many of whom are students, from 16 African countries, including Nigeria, South Africa, Ghana, Angola, Kenya, Gabon and Malawi.

Young people are clearly aware that corruption is perhaps Africa's number one problem. But are the institutions tasked with moving the continent forward taking this devastating ailment as seriously as they should?

Well, they say that they do. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the African Union (AU) have each established protocols on corruption.

The AU appears to be particularly proud of its anti-corruption efforts. It brags that its fight against corruption "has contributed significantly to the ongoing transformation of economies across the continent and reinforces the determination towards achieving inclusive and sustainable development as envisaged in Africa's Agenda 2063".

In reality, however, these institutions' well-advertised efforts to fight corruption have hardly delivered any tangible gains. As the above examples well demonstrate, corruption is still as rife as ever on the continent.

The only thing that changed in recent years is the fact that, due to a public awakening about the harms of corruption, most African politicians are now feeling the need to announce their determination

stands accused of "presiding over a dysfunctional government, a corrupt government".

So while Africa's leaders are undoubtedly talking the talk, they seem unable to walk the walk.

But after a pandemic that intensified existing economic struggles, and amid a major conflict in Europe threatening Africa's food security, among many other challenges, the AU cannot continue its fight against corruption with empty platitudes and box-ticking exercises.

The body that is tasked with leading the continent towards better democratic governance and sustainable prosperity should accept before it is too late that there is a corruption pandemic under way in Africa, and the business-as-usual approach to battling it is proving mostly ineffective. Consequently, it must change tack and begin to systemically hold leaders accountable for their failure to stem government corruption.

The AU must establish credible continent-wide standards and independent surveillance mechanisms to advance the anti-corruption agenda, and implement them, vigorously, as a means to promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance.

Eradicating corruption is not only essential to establishing firm adherence to the rule of law and political stability, but it is also critical to promoting economic growth and reducing poverty in countries such as Malawi, Nigeria and South Africa. It is time for the AU to assert its independence and demonstrate a strong, renewed and active commitment to mitigate the socioeconomic consequences of bad leadership in Africa.

If it does not take swift action to end corruption, economies across the continent may soon fall victim to this undeclared but devastatingly deadly pandemic.

--Al Jazeera

to fight corruption during their electoral campaigns.

These election promises, however, seldom transfer into action.

Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari, for example, ran for office on an anti-corruption ticket in 2015, but Nigerians believe corruption has, in fact, mushroomed under his watch.

Similarly, Ramaphosa staked his presidential campaign in 2019 on a pledge to set South Africa on a path of renewal, transparency and accountability, but South Africans believe corruption has actually worsened under his management.

Like Buhari and Ramaphosa, Mnangagwa's anti-corruption campaign in Zimbabwe has yielded meagre returns and he

# Broad vistas await as China-Africa relations deepen

Since the establishment of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in 2000, Sino-African relations have achieved comprehensive and in-depth development. The African economy has also maintained very good momentum of development, in particular before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, when more than 10 African countries had an average annual economic growth rate of more than 5 percent.

The value of FOCAC is that it provides an integrated framework for governing China-Africa relations, and acts as a mechanism to promote diplomatic, trade, security and investment relations between China and African countries.

When the forum was founded in 2000, the yearly trade volume between China and Africa was only about \$10.6 billion. As of 2019, the figure had reached about \$208.7 billion, increasing twentyfold. China's direct investments in Africa reached \$49.1 billion in 2019, up nearly 100-fold from 2000.

China has built more than 6,000 kilometers of railways and roads in Africa, nearly 20 ports and more than 80 large-scale power facilities, as well as 45 gymnasiums, more than 130 hospitals and medical centers, and more than 100 schools, which have brought significant progress to Africa's economic and social development. There are also thousands of Chinese companies operating in Africa, and China has started duty-free treatment for some products from the least-developed countries in Africa. Around 5,000 items are now covered by the preferential policies.

Africa is a very promising continent and, naturally, the developed countries of the West would like to enhance their relations with Africa.

However, China has outperformed other countries in terms of cooperation and

providing assistance to African countries. For example, the level of Chinese investment in Africa has shown a remarkable performance. From 2000 to 2014, China's foreign direct investment has risen from 2 percent of the United States' levels to 55 percent, according to the China Africa Research Initiative at Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies in Washington.

As another example, according to database company Statista, the average number of jobs created each year through Chinese projects in Africa from 2010 to 2019 was about 18,500, compared with about 12,000 through US projects, around 7,700 resulting from French projects, and about 5,000 through projects of the United Kingdom.

I believe that this can be attributed to the extensive and honest Chinese efforts to build a solid trust with African countries by sticking to the following principles: not interfering with African countries' exploring of development paths that suit their national conditions, not interfering in African countries' internal affairs, not attaching political conditions to aid to Africa, and not seeking private political gains in investment and financing in Africa.

According to China's Foreign Ministry, the theme for China-Africa cooperation in the next three years and beyond is "Deepening the Sino-African partnership and promoting sustainable development to build a China-Africa community with a shared future in the new era". This theme is particularly important, as the pandemic ravages the world, severely affecting Africa's socioeconomic development.

China has assisted Africa with COVID-19 vaccines, the local manufacturing of vaccines, medical services and supplies, and capacity building. For example, Chinese biopharmaceutical company Sino-



This photo shows the 8th Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in Dakar, capital of Senegal, on Nov 30, 2021. [Photo/Xinhua]

vac jointly produces COVID-19 vaccines with Egypt's state-owned vaccine producer VACSERA. In addition, during the Extraordinary China-Africa Summit on Solidarity Against COVID-19 in June 2020, President Xi Jinping emphasized that "China takes seriously the debt concerns of African countries and will earnestly act on the G20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative, through friendly consultation as equals, and expedite support for the African countries worst hit by COVID-19".

In the process of deepening China-Africa relations, China has been subjected to slander and smears from Western countries, including claims of so-called "neocolonialism" or "debt traps" in Africa.

The media war led by the West aims to thwart the advancement of China-Africa relations. Actually, most debts are due to infrastructure projects that are long-term, with long-horizon returns. However, these projects attain a very good level of economic and social returns, from employment to poverty alleviation. In addition, these projects are the decisions of African countries based on their own conditions.

Looking to the future, the China-Africa friendship and cooperation have broad vistas, and China and Africa can forge an even stronger comprehensive strategic and cooperative partnership.

--ChinaDaily

## The quest by Zim's poorest for a few grams of golden hope

The clinking sound of metal tools hacking against rocks along the dry riverbed shatters the serenity of the pristine Bhuka mountains of Masvingo, Zimbabwe. A small group of women and children dressed in shabby brown clothes busily dig in the rich soil, using the most rudimentary utensils to look for gold-bearing stones and nuggets.

One of the women, Thelma Murambiwa, furtively digs into the developing burrow - turning the soil over and keeping a sharp eye out for the glitter of gold.

A few droplets of sweat trickle down her weary forehead. She knows the pit can cave in any second. She deposits her three-year-old daughter on a mound of sand, where she can regularly cast an eye on the restless toddler and look out for approaching police officers.

A few metres away from Thelma's spot, a teenage boy also digs for gold using a small sharp pick, breathing in the dust that emerges.

Should any of these pits fail to yield any gold, the women and children pick up their tools and head for another virgin area of the riverbed to dig.

Little opportunity

The thin line between sleeping hungry and going to prison does not matter to them anymore. The allure of gold and United States dollars drives them to keep digging for this precious metal.

Employment opportunities in Zimbabwe have hit an all-time low, as the economy continues to take knocks due to political snags.

The government of Zimbabwe attributes its hardships to western sanctions imposed as part of a regime change agenda, while the west has fingered human rights abuses and corruption as Harare's Achilles heel.

The gold rush in Bhuka is part of a broader mining boom across many parts of the country, driven by high mineral prices, a

rapidly shrinking industrial base, struggling crop prices and a poor agricultural season.

The hardest hit have been society's most vulnerable members, women and children. More women and children as young as 12 are working in illegal gold panning, along hazardous river banks, strewn with dangerous pits.

Notwithstanding the dangers of small-scale artisanal mining, such as collapsing pits and potential arrest by police, hordes of women and children are chasing alluvial gold that will get them out of their misery.

Gold is one of Zimbabwe's top foreign currency earners. According to Fidelity Printers and Refiners (FPR), the country's sole government owned gold buying firm, gold output by both small scale and large-scale miners went up by 79 percent in May 2022, compared to the same period last year.

Gifts on the mountain

The dry riverbed, which meanders across the mountain, bears the ugly marks of endless gold panning activities, posing huge physical risk to the unobservant eye.

The riverbed is an eyesore, as deep pits and dug-out rocks scar the mutilated environment. Some trees hang precariously while others cave in to the loosened soil, lying lifelessly, uprooted.

One child, named Alex to protect his identity, aged 14, told Africa Calling that ever since he began alluvial gold panning during the 2020 coronavirus lockdown, he has never looked back.

"We didn't have much to do so we just joined others who were already involved in gold panning. We just work in this field because we need to raise money for food and it's not necessarily that we are trying to get rich," said Alex.

Alex said that he and his older colleagues face very difficult times with the regular police raids as some of them have been ar-

rested and locked up for a minimum of two years, without the option of a fine.

Section 3 subsection 1 of the Gold Trade Act prohibits dealing in or possession of gold without the required licence. This law also has a provision for a maximum of five years imprisonment for illegal gold possession.

"We can barely make money for survival because we spend a lot of our time fleeing police raids," he said.

"We can even spend two days away from the pits, things are just so tough. I'm taking care of my siblings through this way of life," he added.

Earning a living illegally

Thelma, a resilient single mother-of-five, began gold panning last year and has managed to send her children to school through this illegal activity

"I saw that there isn't any other plan for me to get money," she said.

"The buyers usually pay 45 US dollars per gram of gold but I feel that with the high percentage or quality of alluvial gold, we are being ripped off.

"At least if they could pay us 55 US dollars per gram that would be far better."

Alluvial gold fetches top prices on the black market as the quality of the gold is very high.

Most buyers pay 58 US dollars to 60 US dollars per gram for such gold. Asked if they could sell the gold through official channels to FPR, Thelma said that was out the question as they are working without a permit.

She points out that their level of desperation in order to survive leaves her and her family without room for price negotiations on the black market.

"The regular police raids as we work are a cat and mouse game," she added.

"We are ever ready to flee. Some of us get caught ... it's such a huge drawback. As we dig for this gold, we are very united, we take turns to look out for any new and suspi-



cious faces as we work.

At times we share the proceeds from the mining. Our families can at least have a meal, it's better than nothing."

Business aspirations

Thelma said that she hopes to pull herself out of illegal gold panning and aspires to one day raise capital to start a small business. She wants to buy bales of second-hand clothes from Mozambique for resale.

The economic situation in the country is not conducive to sustaining rural people's livelihoods, leaving them without any income generating projects which they can run, said Daniel Chitenje, the Masvingo regional representative of the Zimbabwe Miners Federation (ZMF).

The ZMF is a government initiative formed to effect sustainable growth and transformation of the artisanal and small-scale mining industry.

"This economic crisis has caused some parents to take their children to dig for alluvial gold in the riverbeds.

"The mountainous Bhuka area is very rich in alluvial gold deposits, so it is very lucrative. Once a child leaves school and manages to get some gold for sale, he or she won't leave such activities as the child has cash in hand, time and again," said Chitenje.

Chitenje told Africa Calling that entire families are digging for gold because this is the only way they can survive right now.

He said that as a small-scale and artisanal representative body, the ZMF has a program for women in mining.

\*Name changed for security reasons  
--uknews

# Guardianship and custody of minors



**Legal Corner**  
with  
Reuben Mukavhi

A legal guardian of a minor is a person who has the legal authority to care for the personal and property interests of the minor. The law is that the natural parents of a minor child are joint guardians of their child, regardless of whether they are living together as husband and wife or not. This is the import of section 3 of the Guardianship of Minors Act, which provides that the rights of guardianship of the father shall be exercised in consultation with the mother. An amendment to this position is in the offing. The amendment proposes that only parents who are living together exercise joint guardianship, and that once they are living apart, the parent with custody of the minor has sole guardianship of the minor.

Where the parents of a minor child are divorced or are living apart, then either

parent can apply for sole guardianship, so that he/she becomes the only guardian of the child to the exclusion of the other.

The legal guardian of a minor child makes legal decisions about the health, education, etc., of the child. If the parents are still joint guardians, then these decisions have to be made by them together.

Custody is about living with the child or determining where the child will live in Zimbabwe. It is about the day-to-day wellbeing of the child, including such things as which school or church the child will go to, what the child will eat, what the child will wear. When the parents of a minor child are living together, the question of custody does not normally arise, because they have custody of their child. The question of custody arises where the parents live apart. In our present law, when the parents of a minor child commence to live apart, the mother of that minor shall have the sole custody until an order regulating the custody of that minor is made. The



law of custody thus favors the mother. If anyone unlawfully deprives the mother of her custody, she can go to the Children's Court to get a declaratory order that she has sole custody of the child.

When one parent has custody of a minor, the other parent can be granted access to the minor. This means physical access to the minor child, including seeing the child and spending time with the child. In deciding access, the Children's Court takes into account the best interests of the child to come up with terms that would be reasonable in the circum-

stances. For example, the court might allow the non-custodian parent to have the child during weekends or school holidays, or to spend stated times with the child under the supervision of the custodian parent, depending on the circumstances of the case.

It is important to recognize the overriding provisions of section 81 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe, which guarantees the rights of children. Subsection 2 thereof states that a child's best interests are paramount in any matter concerning the child. This means that when any court is dealing with say, guardianship of or custody of or access to a minor child, the paramount consideration should be the best interests of the child. This provision came with the new Constitution in 2013, and has the effect of making the interests of the child (not those of the parents) the centre of the whole matter. The explanations above on guardianship, custody and access should therefore be understood in the context of this overriding constitutional provision.

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## Suicide Part 2



**Gamuchirai Chinamasa**  
Mental Health Talk



If you are worried about someone else who maybe suicidal, it is important to talk about suicide. Talking about suicide will not give them ideas. You need to talk about it to figure out how you can help. You start by asking the person you are worried about if they want to end their life soon and if they have a plan, make sure you know their plan because it shows how thought out the idea is; meaning it is likely to happen, it is no longer a fantasy. If they have a plan by law you contact their family or health authorities that can help and monitor them. Unfortunately in Zimbabwe what seems so simple isn't always easy, our hotline for suicide calls either aren't updated, aren't answered or not helpful. Organizations that can assist are overwhelmed, outdated or expensive. I would suggest if you aren't a medical person and this is your friend or family member, you should call your family doctor and ask for advice on way forward and as you wait for this, I advise that you monitor them and not let them out of your sight till things have been put in order. If they do want to end their life soon and have a plan, it is an emergency. Do not leave the other person alone. Stay with the person until the suicide crisis line workers or emergency workers say you can leave. If they do not have a plan to end their life, they still need extra help. You can help by listening to the other person. You can also help them find extra support such as therapists and counsellors etc.

Many people feel like they are all alone with their painful feelings. Listening shows them that they are not alone. You do not have to say much at all. You just have to be there for them. Listening to someone in pain can save their life, don't be so quick to find them annoying or ignore them:

- Take the other person seriously no matter how you feel about the topic. They are in pain and they need help.
- Show the other person that you are a good person to talk to. Do not judge them or make fun of them or gossip about them.
- Trust is very important. Do not make promises that you cannot keep.
- Show that you understand they

have a serious problem. Do not give advice like, "cheer up" or "pull yourself together."

There are many myths when it comes to the area of suicide, such as:

- **Myth:** Suicide is not very common.
  - **Fact:** Someone dies by suicide almost every day.
  - **Myth:** Thinking about suicide is not very common.
  - **Fact:** One in every nine people has thought about suicide at some time.
  - **Myth:** Someone who wants to die by suicide just wants to die.
  - **Fact:** People who die by suicide do not necessarily want to end their lives. They want to get rid of bad things in their lives. They do not know what else to do. They are in so much pain they don't know what to do
  - **Myth:** People who attempt suicide just want attention.
  - **Fact:** A suicide attempt does show that someone needs help. People who attempt suicide often think it is the only way to stop their pain. Their feelings are very real and very hard to deal with, it is in no way attention seeking, half the time they haven't thought what will people say or do they just want the pain to stop.
  - **Myth:** People who survive a suicide attempt will never try to end their life again.
  - **Fact:** Most people who die by suicide have attempted suicide in the past.
  - **Myth:** Only people with a mental illness think about suicide.
  - **Fact:** You do not need to have a mental illness to think about suicide. Some people think about suicide because they do not know what else to do. But many people who attempt suicide or die by suicide have a mental illness. They may not know they have a mental illness at the time.
  - **Myth:** Talking about suicide will make people think about dying by suicide.
  - **Fact:** Talking about suicide does not give people ideas. Talking honestly about suicide is a good way to find out if someone needs help. Talking about suicide lowers the risk of suicide and takes away the stigmatization and allows for them to be open and honest before it is too late.
- Losing a loved one by suicide can be very hard or even having one that attempted suicide and fighting for their

life in hospital or rehab is very painful and emotionally exhausting. You may wonder if you could have done more to help them. You may not understand why it happened. You may feel ashamed and angry. It is important to know that suicide is not your fault. Many things go into someone's decision to end their life.

Here are a few ways to cope with loss of a loved one from suicide:

- Talk with your family and friends. Let everyone share their feelings.
- Some people may not know how to help you. It is okay to tell them what you need.
- Find a support group in your community. It may be helpful to talk to other people who lost a loved one by suicide.
- Remember that healing takes time. You can take as much time as you need.
- Honour your loved one's life in a way that is meaningful to you.
- If you are having a hard time coping, it is a good idea to talk to a counsellor.

What I do know is the worst thing that you can say to someone that is suicidal or survived from suicide or a loved one of someone who has is this:

- "You should endure the pain you go through to save others from it."
- "They are selfish and weak."
- "They are so absorbed in the bad of their own lives. They don't think about the other people in their lives."
- "They are lazy and attention seekers."
- "How could they want to end their life over a partner or job, so childish."
- "They are a bad influence stay away from them."

Suicidal ideation and suicide attempts don't usually occur in the context of clear thinking. Mental illness can make thought processes less and less logical. Their thought process is a process that can cause narrowing of focus that can facilitate a shift from thinking about suicide to acting upon it. So, is suicide selfish? I would say a resounding no. And to those who do think it is, I think it's worth some self-reflection to see where that's actually coming from.

Attitudes matter when it comes to suicide. Unconstructive attitudes, such as the selfishness viewpoint or that they are a bad influence thought, promote silence, as people are fearful of being judged. When it comes to suicide, silence can be deadly. Please don't be the one to lead someone to suicidal thoughts because of your judgment of him or her without understanding



them or the thought process one goes through when feeling suicidal. Just because someone close to you has not experienced this horrific feeling does not mean it's your place to then judge them because it shows lack of information and empathy.

Suicide is a tragic act with tough emotional effects for its survivors and for families of its victims. Suicide should be prevented at all cost. Suicide is no small issue. The World Health Organization (WHO) states that "worldwide, suicide is among the top five causes of mortality in the 15- to 19-year age group and in many countries it ranks first or second as a cause of death among both boys and girls in this age group."

In Zimbabwe cases of suicide are on the rise, which is alarming and a major cause for concern for society as more young people continue to prematurely end their lives and most of these cases or signs go unnoticed or ignored. The rise in cases is scary because as a country we are not equipped to handle these matters the way we should if we are notified in the right time. A lot of reports have been shared of students from various universities in the country ending their lives by suicide.

There is however no single cause to suicide. It often occurs when stressors exceed current coping abilities of someone suffering from a mental health condition such as depression, stress or substance abuse disorders. Suicide in Zimbabwe has been largely attributed to economic challenges and marital conflicts usually associated with infidelity.

LET'S FIGHT AGAINST THE STIGMA!!

# EDITORS COMMENT

## ECONOMIC POLICIES WILL ONLY WORK WITH POLITICAL WILL

Elsewhere in this edition we report that President Emmerson Mnangagwa has said that government would take drastic action against businesses that were participating in the rampant price increases and destabilising the market by abusing the foreign currency auction system.

The President said equally, government's expectations will be less sympathetic to gratuitous calls for repeated protection by corporates who intercept benefits from State support through extortionate pricing of goods and services.

"We have tried moral persuasion which some in business mistake for weakness. We may now need to devise new strategies which ensure the consumer is respected and benefits from opportunities available to the market by Government through benefitting corporates."

Finance and Economic development Minister Mthuli Ncube last week announced a raft of economic measures meant to stabilise the economy and stir the country towards attain its goal of an upper middle income economy by 2030.

While these new policy measures by the Minister are well meaning, the generality of Zimbabweans have reacted with the usual doubts over their ability to stir the country out of its economic quagmire.

And the people are somehow justified to feel the way they do about the new measures. The reason simply being that the country has had high sounding policies which have failed to achieve the desired results in the past.

The failure of the previous measures and policies is not necessarily because they were poorly crafted. Zimbabwe has a history of crafting very good policies, only to falter on implementation and adherence.

It is not surprising therefore, that some of these good policies have failed to yield desired results here in Zimbabwe, yet they have been borrowed by other African countries who have gone on to implement them successfully.

This is because while we have sharp minds who know what needs to be done for the economy to blossom, we have very few people who have the political will to transform these policies into action on the ground.

Zimbabwe is endowed with so many resources that it should never be counted among the world's poor countries, but what we lack are citizens who are serious about growing the economy as a whole.

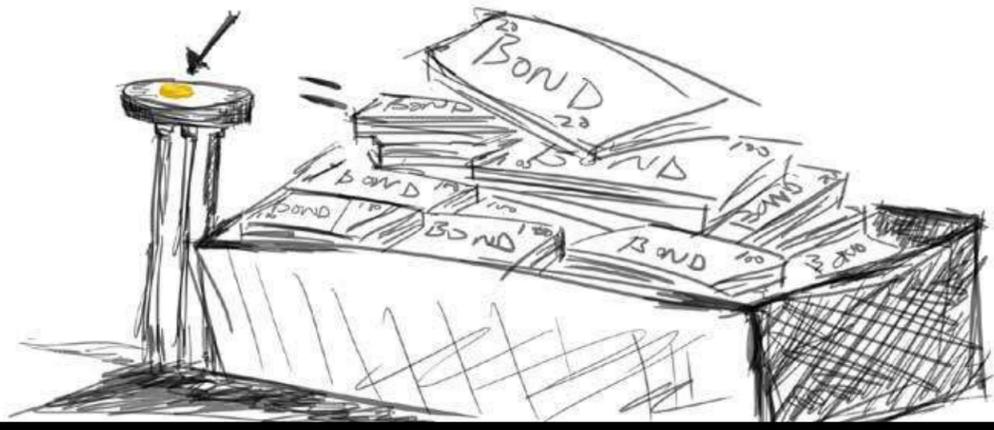
Individualism is what has stifled economic development in this country, as each one of us only sees opportunities for their personal benefit at the expense of the economy.

That is why we have individuals who are prepared to scupper development projects coming into the country simply because the investor has not given them any kick-backs, or businesspeople involved in speculative activities without looking at how it negatively affects the economy.

There are currently a number of development projects going on around the country, most notably in the mining sector. Projects that can easily transform the country's economy in no time.

But without the political will to do what is right and follow policy and respect the laws of the country, these projects will count for nothing as they will end up benefitting a few at the expense of the general populace.

### 1 gold coin = box of bond notes



## "No to retribution", Read the placard



The day was November 24th, the year was 2017.

It was a day of renewed hope in Zimbabwe, and Zimbabweans were celebrating what nobody had dreamt would ever happen in this generation; a development which they only read in the news from other countries: Change of presidents! In Zimbabwe! It was indeed a dream to many.

Multitudes thronged the national sports stadium in celebration of a new dawn. Placards with different messages which spelt out burial of past errors and misdeeds flew in all directions. Prominent among the placards was the message "No to retribution".

The situation in Zimbabwe had reached another level.

Now, hearken people of my Fatherland; here is a reminder of a message which we displayed on the day of a 'new era'. We fight, we argue, but eventually we find each other. We are a people together, let us recognise the need for unity, coexistence, and tolerance. The message on the November placard was loudly clear to the need for us all to forgive and let go of the dark past. We have situations in our various communities which are not pleasant at all and must be contained. Let us always educate ourselves that difference in opinion and ideology must never breed hatred among people. Where I differ with one on how I see things, they should not take it as a fight; instead, we need to put our respective views on the table and be able to find grey areas which bind us as a people.

It is sad that we still have sections of our society where citizens lock doors to purported enemies in the label of ZANU PF, G40 or opposition. Why must people hate each other based on political inclinations? It is very disheartening. When "No to retribution" was waved, I thought we all had seen light, and we were ready



to progress as a nation. Little did I know that among us were still some forces of negation whose agenda was rooted on revenge, which has degenerated into abductions, murders and alleged political assassinations? The society has become so polarized such that freedoms and rights of common citizens are infringed without limit.

Peace begins with each one of us in our different corners and levels in society. Our national leaders are called upon to lead by example. We have citizens who fear returning home because knives and daggers are sharpened and ready for them. Is that the kind of people we have chosen to be? Where is forgiveness? Fellow citizens, should we not have razed everything to the foundation and start afresh? That way, we rise stronger and be able to build our nation together. There is indeed need to pardon each other, even if it means presidential amnesty to those who are on wanted list for political 'crimes'. I believe that a genuine hand of reconciliation will attract order and peace in our beloved country. If in 1980 we could forgive and work with erstwhile enemies from the Rhodesian era who oppressed and killed our forebears, and raped our mothers, why should it be difficult to forgive our own brothers and sisters who yearn to return home and be

with their loved ones.

I have doubts if any state president would condone the retributive attitude of some in the ranks of political parties who seek revenge on whatever they may allege to have been wronged. We need to move forward together as a nation. Retributive attitudes are retrogressive.

It is so shameful to witness the fracas which occurred in Nyatsime area. We must always learn to give justice a chance, whether natural or judicial justice. As for the murders which are alarmingly taking place everywhere so randomly, we should not engage in acts which cause further deaths; we must instead allow justice to take its course. Leaders must learn to preach peace in their numerous gatherings so as to promote harmony in our societies. Let us not engage in provocative acts which cause violence and unnecessary loss of lives.

So, political leaders, I call upon you to refrain from displaying tendencies which you would not wish to be unleashed upon you in the event that tables have turned: no situation lasts forever. The level of hatred and toxicity which we experience in our areas of residence on the basis of political alignment is so atrocious to the extent that we wonder how we are going to avoid chaos in the forthcoming 2023 election period. Leaders must start now addressing followers on the need to cherish humanity and act in a way which promotes cohesion. It is so wrong to allow ourselves to be incited into fighting neighbor against neighbor just to serve interests of a particular politician. The amount of barbarism which transact on the political fora in this country must never be tolerated. Supporters of various political parties must be urged to conduct their campaigns in a manner which promotes peace and tolerance.

We must not seek to settle old personal scores by using political routes; there are always better means to deal with disputes without causing harm on people and property.

So, Zimbabwe, the message is clear: Say 'No to retribution'.

## About us

We are an independent, critical and alternative media platform established in the year 2021, specializing in quality or good journalism made up of professional journalism and well-curated content from various contributors, writers as well as authoritative interviews with a range of sources that make news locally and internationally.

We strive to be an independent, non-partisan alternative platform that serves our clientele, in its diversity, well and timely.

As a media establishment, we are also dedicated to play the normative role to educate citizens, play a watchdog role through exposure of abuses and excesses of the powerful in society, including politicians and the corporate world.



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## Adele review – a truly singular blend of talent

Hyde Park, London

She may come wreathed in the glamour of Hollywood, but her patter is homegrown – and her vocal artistry has few peers

Adele performs in Hyde Park, London.

Dorian Lynskey

Adele's first line, "Hello, it's me, I was wondering if after all these years you'd like to meet," carries extra weight tonight. It's five years to the day since the singer cancelled two Wembley Stadium shows due to damaged vocal cords and retreated from the public eye. This is her first full public concert anywhere in the world since then, so she takes nothing for granted. When 65,000 people sing the chorus to *Someone Like You*, there is a distinct possibility that she will melt down to a puddle of tears. "You sounded bloody lovely," she says.

Adele remains a unique proposition: a torch singer who specialises in ballads about shredded hearts ("I don't have many uptempo bangers") yet chats away between them like a beloved family friend who always brings wine. You might imagine that five more years in Los Angeles and a swerve towards old Hollywood glamour had changed her to some extent. At the start of the show everything looks gold, her hair and jewellery

chiming with the stage décor and the evening sunlight. But as soon as she starts talking it's as if she never left Tottenham. She natters about Billie Eilish, *Stranger Things*, sciatica and forgetting lyrics, offers to buy one 18-year-old fan a birthday drink and swears with jolly gusto. "My son's here tonight," she says, "so cover your ears, baby."

Compared to Adele's last tour, this production has more class than flash. There are simple but effective visual motifs on the high-definition screens and, towards the end, the classic troika of confetti, flames and fireworks, but most of the time the primary visual spectacle is Adele's face. Her records give no hint as to how much fun she has on stage. There are moments when she rolls her eyes or sticks out her tongue like a tipsy fan rather than a performer, finding pockets of hilarity in songs that would seem to offer none. She talks about playing "a good old set" and calls *Send My Love (To Your New Lover)* "a little jig".

All this informality and self-deprecation means that her vocal artistry sometimes hits like an ambush: the barnstorming roar of *Rolling in the Deep*, the Bond melodrama of *Skyfall*, the perfectly controlled tenderness of *Make You Feel My Love*. One minute she is tucking her micro-



Adele performs in Hyde Park, London. Photograph: Gareth Cattermole/Getty Images for Adele

phone into her cleavage and firing T-shirts into the audience; the next she is waist-deep in her divorce on *Easy on Me*. Fans may be used to this unusual dichotomy by now – imagine if Aretha Franklin had been a regular on *EastEnders* – but it takes an exceptional combination of charm and talent to pull it off.

For two hours a spirit of giddy celebration sweeps across Hyde Park. Somewhere in the crowd, one wom-

an alternates between shuddering with sobs and wielding a wine bottle as if it were a microphone. That right there is the Adele experience.

Comments on this piece are pre-moderated to ensure discussion remains on topics raised by the writer. Please be aware there may be a short delay in comments appearing on the site.

--TheGuardian

## Stiiv's new EP album a reflection of ghetto life

Tawanda Munthali



His latest offering is pregnant with issues that Chitungwiza based rapper Stephen Tadiwa Mugarisi, popularly known as Stiiv recently released an extended play (EP) titled *Every Ghetto, Every City*.

The EP has four tracks; *Rugare*, *Paunochema*, *Holy Water* and *Level* which carry messages that most especially those living in marginalised communities can relate to.

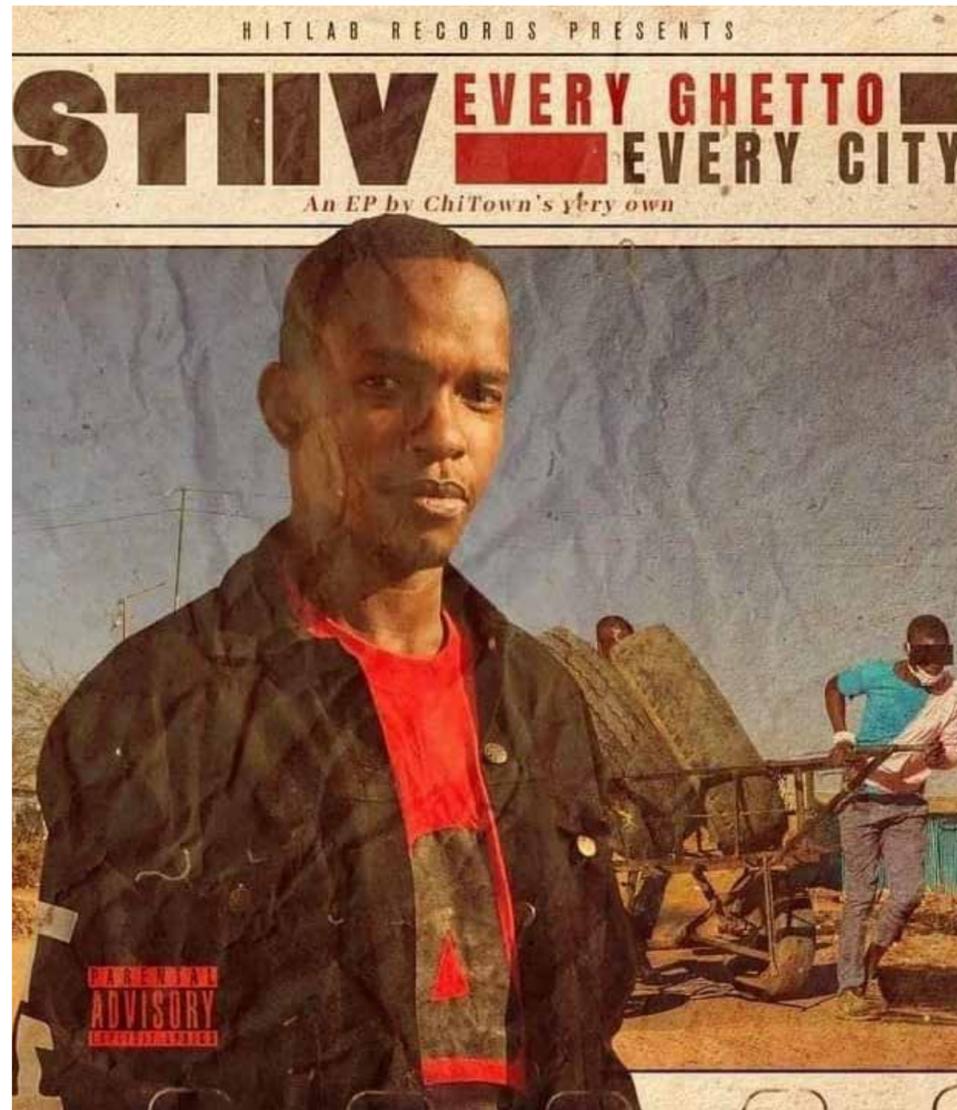
Stiiv said he realised that there was more to life and decided to release the project that reconnected with the society.

"I had just finished last year a little bit distracted from everything. And when 2022 came I was beginning to realise how much to life I had missed. Reconnecting with society was a major key in this EP. And when Rayo sent the beats everything was history" said the wordsmith.

Mugarisi said he draws some inspiration from the late pen slinger Dambudzo Marechera as he even named his previous EP after the famous poem 'A letter to Samantha' by the late writer.

"I think the ideas were provoked by Marechera to any society he came in touch with. He wrote some of the finest pieces in African literature. My influence is drawn from the kind of music that carries a positive or intellectual picture to my audience. Some say conscious rap," said the Chitungwiza bred rapper.

Stiiv was introduced to the genre by brothers from his neighbourhood and he quickly fell in love with the genus. He also got inspiration from the rap-



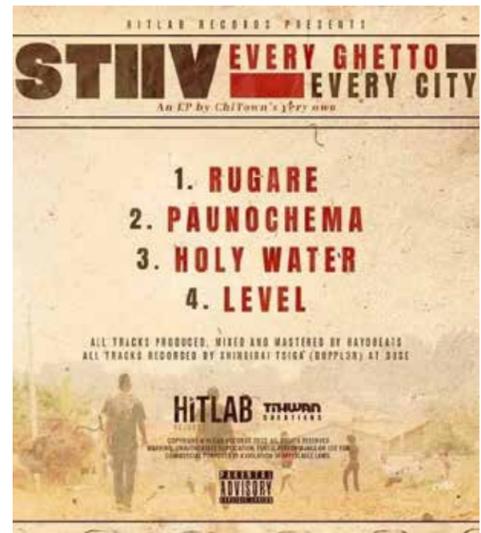
pers he listened to and that made him pen his own rhymes.

The opening track *Rugare* is a summary of the life that some live as it talks about retrenchment, poverty, the issues of sickness and hope of things eventually going in the right

direction as well as persistence.

most come across with in their day to day lives. *Every Ghetto, Every City* was produced by Rayo Beats and is available on various digital platforms.

<https://audiocus.com/album/1/stiiv/every-ghetto-every-city>





## Economy to shift from light to heavy industries: ED

Albert Chavhunduka



President Emmerson Mnangagwa says the country's economy is on a rebound and his government is making impactful transformations which are attracting the interest of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other foreign direct investments.

Since last month, President Mnangagwa has been visiting a number of notable projects around the country across different sectors which are set to turn the country's economic fortunes.

Some of these key development projects which he toured include Chinese-run Bikita lithium project in Masvingo, Muzarabani oil and gas project, Hwange thermal power project, Goromonzi lithium and Makaha gold mine in Mashonaland East.

Last week, he also commissioned the US\$20-million-dollar Mount Meru Millers plant in rural Seke as part of agro-driven rural industrialisation.

President Mnangagwa said the country continued to record massive economic developments despite the prevailing global economic crisis and the burden of illegal sanctions imposed on the country.

Writing in his weekly column, "None But Ourselves" published in state media, he said the country was on a positive economic trajectory despite efforts by detractors to sabo-

tage the economy.

"Not many see these developments which are unfolding beneath the common gaze and certainly beyond flippant headlines. Yet this is a great story which we are slowly but surely writing, in spite of illegal sanctions which were designed to break us," said President Mnangagwa.

"Our detractors who include local players relish painting a picture of gloom and doom in order to induce despondency in our nation. Yet the story of our economy which is on the rebound is being noticed by many, principally investors, the World Bank and even the International Monetary Fund.

"What makes it even more spectacular is the fact that it is home-grown to the extent it is unfolding without external borrowing."

He added, "The key lesson from current global turbulence is economic sovereignty. We should break free from any limiting outlooks and linkages including those foisted on us by colonial history. We are not owned by any country, wedded to any region or hemisphere.

"While we belong to Africa, our hunt takes us worldwide in search of those inputs we need as an economy, as an ambitious people and as a going nation."

President Mnangagwa said the recent raft of measures announced by Treasury are meant to steer the country in the right direction and urged the citizens to protect the



gains which the country has achieved so far. "This past week our Treasury announced far-reaching policy changes which seek to right-set our economy for durable growth and buoyant activity in production. Treasury also announced a raft of safety nets we need to cushion our people in this phase of transition," he said.

"We have to protect the gains we have made so far, while preparing to scale up economic activity. Zimbabwe is defiantly in the middle of a bold, irreversible forward march even against veritable external shocks and numerous impediments placed in her way.

"The current turbulence in the global arena has not and should not dampen us; rather, it should spur us on, tickle creativity and bolster our resolve to emerge stronger and more resilient. We have what it takes and

strong partners ready to walk with us."

He further said government would take drastic action against businesses that were participating in the rampant price increases and destabilising the market by abusing the foreign currency auction system.

"Equally, government's expectations will be less sympathetic to gratuitous calls for repeated protection by corporates who intercept benefits from State support through extortionate pricing of goods and services," said President Mnangagwa.

"We have tried moral persuasion which some in business mistake for weakness. We may now need to devise new strategies which ensure the consumer is respected and benefits from opportunities availed to the market by Government through benefitting corporates."

## Midyear global economic outlook

**The future will look nothing like the past**. The first half of 2022 is not a period we want to be repeated, but the second half of the year may prove even worse. Global regional economic divides, a higher inflation reality, and, worst-case, outright war are just some of the eventualities that could lie ahead.

### BeyondWords

The first half of the year is drawing to a nail-biting close both economically and in the financial markets, with economists and analysts characterising the transition to the second half as "a turning point", "a new paradigm" and "a potential change in regime".

What do they mean by that? For a start, it means that the issues that financial markets have been grappling with, which have caused the extreme volatility that prevailed during the first half, may become far bigger and cause more seismic changes than anticipated. If central banks increase interest rates too sharply, pushing the global economy into recession, that could prove to be just the tip of the iceberg.

Some of the seismic changes afoot that would change the fundamental make-up of the global economy as we know it include:

Deglobalisation and economic divides becoming deep-rooted

Deglobalisation has been the subject of much discussion over the past few years, stirred up by the US-China trade tensions that flared up under Donald Trump's watch. BIS refers to this in their analysis of what they call "the new age of uncertainty", saying that the war in Ukraine has reinforced a trend that had been on the rise before the pandemic, particularly when it comes to energy supply, "but also more broadly as demands for 'friend-shoring' are rising in the political arena". Friend-shoring is defined as trade between countries that have similar values

and institutions.

Friend-shoring is becoming particularly evident among emerging markets (EMs), with the recent BRICS conference highlighting that there's momentum behind BRICS members standing together on the global stage and even trying to build a BRICS reserve currency akin to the IMF's Special Drawing Rights, to wean them off their dependence on the dollar. It's a concerning development for South Africa because, if the government does go all-in, the country could well find itself on the wrong side of history

At Blackrock's midyear investment forum, all investment team attendees agreed that they saw signs of a new regime taking hold and pointed to how many emerging market countries were now trying to find a middle ground between the US and China.

"EM isn't what it used to be, anyway," they say. "The name itself is a misnomer as it hides an incredibly diverse set of countries. The old approach of chasing growth and cheap assets in EMs is outdated. It's now about quality investments, income potential and seeking out beneficiaries of 'friend-shoring'."

Geopolitical tensions turning into all-out war

Its four months since Russia invaded Ukraine and most of us still hang on to the belief (grim hope) that the war will be temporary and both sides will reach an agreement. Sanctions have been the primary tool the West has used to get Russia to the table — recent analysis shows export controls against Russia are working.

The Peterson Institute for International Economics (PIIE) has found that since the invasion, exports from sanctioning countries have fallen by 60% from their third- and fourth-quarter averages last year. And exports from non-sanctioning countries



like China have also gone down, by 40%. Surprising, because as PIIE comments: "China and other countries included to help Russia have evidently decided that it may be prudent not to try. Less encouraging is that although sanctions may be having a financial impact on Russia, there are absolutely no signs that we are anywhere near to seeing Russia capitulating."

In a signal that countries are preparing for a worst-case scenario, the latest Nato meeting sets the scene for a significant ramping up in military presence. The organisation also described Russia, unsurprisingly, as its "most direct threat", and, more surprisingly, formally tabled China's military might as a "serious challenge" to global stability.

Any escalation in military tensions beyond Russia's relentless onslaught in the Donbas region and ad hoc attacks on civilians outside that territory would take all economic bets off the table and truly signal the onset of a new world regime — one that fiscal and monetary policymakers

would be extremely hard-pressed to put to rights for years.

A new inflation reality

The forces behind rising prices are complex, affecting different regions differently. For instance, the US is experiencing a different type of inflation from Europe, with the latter experiencing the most acute price pressures from supply-driven forces triggered by the Ukraine war, while the former is primarily demand-driven.

Blackrock's view is: "The future path of inflation could well differ from its past trajectory as the economy enters a new landscape." The reasons are that megatrends that have dampened inflation could fade away or reverse and, in combination with the impact of the green transition, a new inflation environment could emerge, the investment manager contends.

One of Blackrock's three investment themes midway through the year is "living with inflation". It believes it's tough to see a perfect outcome in the growth-inflation trade-off facing central banks because overtightening by hiking interest rates too much could cause a recession, while not tightening enough could unanchor inflation expectations.

"The risk of unanchored inflation expectations has increased as inflation becomes more persistent," Blackrock notes.

The BIS paper on the implications for monetary policy in a new age of uncertainty also says that we should expect "a rather different inflation environment than the one we have been used to". We've been used to a stable, low-inflation world made possible by globalisation, digitalisation and demographic change, which have dampened inflation over the past decade.

"But the future path of inflation could differ from its past trajectory as the economy enters a new landscape. The dampening effect that these megatrends have had on inflation so far could fade away or even reverse. In combination with the impact of the green transition, a new inflation environment could emerge."

# Salah: Why new Liverpool deal goes beyond football

Ask any Liverpool fan what they think of Mohamed Salah's new contract and you will get a mixture of relief and joy that he will be "running down the wing" for another three years.

In his first season after moving from Italian club Roma in 2017, the "Egyptian King" was the Premier League's top scorer, and he then went on to help the club become European and English champions.

But he's won as many - if not more - plaudits for his persona and conduct off the pitch, helping to change perceptions of elite footballers and break cultural boundaries.

His charitable contributions - to education, healthcare and animal rights projects - have won praise and prompted a former football communications officer to remark that he has "never forgotten his roots".

But it was his act of prostrating in prayer after goals that reverberated in the wider global consciousness, even among those who don't follow football.

In 2015, two Liverpool fans performing the ritual Islamic prayer - coincidentally known as "salah" in Arabic - at Anfield were described as a "disgrace" by one Twitter user, who received widespread criticism for his comment.

Dr Solava Ibrahim, an Egyptian-British lecturer in international politics at Anglia Ruskin University, describes the then "dominant discourse" about Muslims as "being violent or constantly linked to terrorist attacks or debates around women's subjugation".

So as a long-time Liverpool supporter, she says it was "a huge wow moment" when fans started singing that Salah was "a gift from Allah" and that "if he scores another few, then I'll be Muslim too".

"It was showing not just acceptance but his position as a role model - not just for Arabs, Middle East and Africa but also for UK youngsters," she adds.

Najib Al-Hakimi, who works as a co-ordinator at the Liverpool Arabic Centre said he was "thrilled" by the song, "because people were looking at Muslims as if they were ignorant and terrorists".

"But by his actions, he was able to change that," he adds.

He has since noticed more members of the local Arab community going to Anfield

in recent years, adding: "Most of the youth are wearing his shirt and they'll talk about him, how good he is."

kids at Liverpool Arabic Centre, some in Mo Salah shirts. Image source, Liverpool Arabic Centre

Liverpool fan Neil Atkinson, who writes for The Anfield Wrap, has also noticed that "there's definitely been an element of shifting" across Merseyside.

"If people feel that the Muslim faith is other, Salah's actions are significant," he says.

"After he prays on the pitch, I love that he'll turn to celebrate with the crowd and he's also celebrating himself, which are good things."

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp has previously spoken about how the team incorporate time for Salah to perform religious rituals as part of match preparations.

Club captain Jordan Henderson has also said the team opts for non-alcoholic champagne at trophy presentations, adding: "Within the dressing rooms there's none of that [intolerance] so why isn't that the case in the outside world?"

Mr Atkinson believes the wider city of Liverpool "sees itself as quite different to the rest of England because it's a port... it wants to be more outward-looking".

Salah also gets a hero's reception when he is spotted out and about around Liverpool.

One young boy famously faced the force of his - literally - unswerving devotion when he ran into a lamppost while chasing Salah's car in 2019.

Louis Fowler bust his nose but was said to be "made up" when the player turned back to check on him.

Dr Ibrahim says the incident demonstrates Salah's "human touch and accessibility".

"He is much more famous than a lot of Nobel Prize winners but he's not seen as someone up in the clouds or in the elite classes, I think that's part of why his messages get through," she says.

Salah has previously spoken about how women "deserve more than what [society] give her now" and has since appeared in a Women's Day promotional video with his eldest daughter Makka, while also asking his wife Magi to accept the Golden Foot award on his behalf last year.

"You need to see the message," says Dr Ibrahim.



"It's not just rhetoric and action - and that's the power. It's subtle and real."

Louis Fowler had his picture taken with his hero before his family could clean him up

In one of many academic studies of what's now known as the "Salah effect", a number of Brits shared their views about how he had "opened people up to thinking about Islam in a different way".

Prof Grant Jarvie, who co-authored the research for the University of Edinburgh, said: "We were surprised - not so much about the impact of Mohamed Salah - but with these sort of studies, you normally get a mix of criticism and good things. But generally speaking, people were positive about Salah on and off the field."

He says the striker demonstrates "soft power potential", adding that "sport can be a good enabler of cultural relations".

The player's impact in reducing Islamophobia - particularly in a city with Britain's oldest mosque - has been described as "phenomenal" by Liverpool City Region Mayor Steve Rotherham, while Time magazine named Salah among the world's 100 most influential people in 2019.

Mohamed Salah hugs his daughter Makka as wife watches. Image source, Getty Images

ages

It's not been all goals and glory though. Salah divided public opinion during the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations after suggesting an Egyptian team-mate who apologised for committing sexual harassment should be given a "second chance".

Merseyside Police also had to remind him not to use a mobile phone while driving after he was filmed using a device in a car, which was surrounded by fans.

However, Salah's reputation remains relatively untarnished and with that comes a boost for Liverpool as a city.

While the region played a key role during the British Empire and later in culture and sport, its landmarks are becoming an increasingly familiar backdrop for adverts by Salah's international sponsors.

In echoes of The Beatles film A Hard Day's Night, a recent one shows him being chased by fans in a Pepsi commercial for Middle Eastern audiences.

Mr Atkinson says Salah's contract extension enables the striker to thrive in "that reflected glory of being Muslim, Arab, Egyptian, all the different parts of his identity - it makes everything brilliant for himself and Liverpool".

--BBC

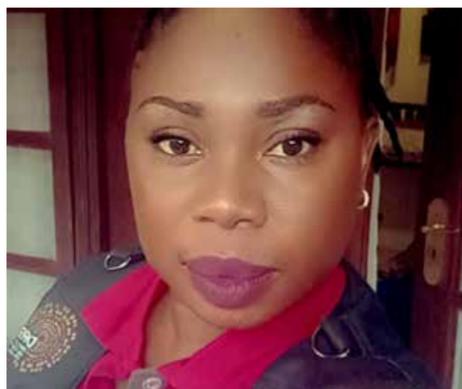
## Mzondo fight in women's corner

Shelly Guni



Gender equity has been a societal issue since the dawn of time. There are numerous accounts in recorded history of women facing issues of equity in their relationships, careers, education, and sporting opportunities. Zimbabwe Volleyball Association gender minority representative Kudzai Mzondo (pictured) believes women have a bigger role to play in sports, particularly volleyball. "I am pretty ambitious in my belief on the level at which women can participate. I believe we have not even started," she told Review and Mail. She said she aims to use her influence in making a positive change as she feels that there are a lot of challenges being faced by women in sport. "It is a great challenge with lots of barriers to women's participation in sport at all levels still being an issue. I hope to make a difference though in spite of the challenges." "The challenges are systemic as there are many fundamental issues that have still not been addressed or given the attention they deserve. "Let our participation not be about a quota system but let it become the norm that you find women everywhere in sport." Mzondo added that: "Ensure

continued support of vulnerable groups to participate fully in sport. This includes children, women and people with disabilities" Mzondo, has risen through the ranks of volleyball administration, having played the sport since primary school. She reflected on her journey. "I started playing volleyball in primary school at the age of 10. I never made it into the first six and was on the sidelines until I was in grade 7. "I got an opportunity to play a more active role in high school at Chaplin where I played for the first team from form 1 until I was in Upper 6. "Technically I was not very sound but I was passionate." Mzondo remembers how her volleyball journey took a positive turn. "When I got to the UZ I was fortunate enough to be selected for the national team and I went through a very strong foundational training camp. That was my turning point as I became a much better player. "From there I managed to play for various teams including UZ, Support unit, Stars Academy and eventually was co-founder of Panthers Volleyball Club. "I have since also become an administrator having been on the HVA and now the ZVA," she said. She also explains how she became the gender minority representative.



"I had to be convinced to take up the position if I am to be honest. I know the amount of work required for the post and I was not too keen but eventually I am in now." Asked on what her achievements has been so far, she said, "I think just stepping up on the plate and staying on this far has been a great achievement for me. Apart from this role I am a mum and career woman so splitting myself across all this can be so strenuous." She also took time to share her short and long term goals. "Develop and establish a system that can respond appropriately to the needs of all athletes and ensure a safe arena for full participation. "I want us to move from just token appearances in critical roles to more real participation in all facets of sport."

## Man Utd 'set Ronaldo price tag

Manchester United reportedly want to recoup the money they spent to bring Cristiano Ronaldo to Old Trafford in order to allow the Portuguese star leave this summer.

Ronaldo dropped a bombshell on Saturday as it was revealed he wants to leave United to play Champions League football. The 37-year-old - who scored 24 goals in all competitions for United last term - believes the club is unable to match his ambition.

Reports claimed that while the player has told the club he wants to leave if the Red Devils receive a 'suitable offer', the club have no intention of letting Ronaldo leave.

But The Times claim United would be willing to listen to offers, if suitors come up with at least the £12.9m they paid Juventus for his services last August, as they beat Manchester City to his signature.

That deal included bonuses and add-ons, taking the overall fee to a reported £17m.

Chelsea have the wherewithal to strike such a deal and are thought to be frontrunners to sign Ronaldo after Todd Boehly recently held talks with his agent Jorge Mendes.

But United are thought to be unlikely to sell their prized asset to a Premier League rival, meaning Bayern Munich could end up as Ronaldo's landing spot, as they look to cope with the potential departure of Robert Lewandowski, who is desperate to join Barcelona this summer. --f365

# The untold story of Moses Tarakinyu

Shelly Guni



Born and bred in Mutoko, Moses Tarakinyu (*pictured*) is one of the most promising and fast rising long distance runners.

The 27-year-old has cut a niche for himself in this unforgiving tough sports industry.

The undoubtable national half marathon champion yesterday cemented his place after winning the Econet Victoria Falls Half Marathon. He finished in one hour, three minutes and 31 seconds, which is his second personal best.

Later this year, Tarakinyu will be rubbing shoulders with other great players after booking a ticket to participate at the World Half Marathon to be held in China.

This year, Tarakinyu has won the Two Oceans half Marathon in South Africa. The Tanganda Half Marathon held in Mutare on June 6. He clocked, one hour, one minute and 22 seconds.

Before that, he won the inaugural, Mashwede road race.

Here is the story of a man who has achieved quite a lot in the little time he has been on the scene.

Tarakinyu grew up in a broken family. His parents had a separation and unlike many, he didn't have a stable childhood.

"Unfortunately my parents separat-

ed because my mother was crippled so she was abandoned by my father because of her disability," Tarakinyu said.

"During my primary school education I experienced a lot of movements, from my mother's place to my father and then to my grandparents due to the problems which were emanating between the two families."

Tarakinyu said the movements had a negative impact on his education.

"This disturbed my progress at school. Finally I later moved to Tafadzwa where I was now staying with my father but I could not perform well academically, could walk very long distances to and from school every day and could not afford school fees, books and uniforms so I could just go to school for the sake of attending."

As fate would have it, Tarakinyu through his participation in sport, got employed as an army officer.

And what would seem as a burden for the young Tarakinyu turned out to be a blessing in disguise.

"Because of the long distances I used to walk to school, I started enjoying sport especially athletics when I was doing form one and I was very much inspired by one of my teachers Mr Sydney Shayachimwe who always told me that I should work hard in sport since I had a talent and encouraged me to keep training although we were living in the rural areas.

"He kept assisting me so that I could access various competitions at provincial and national level. The Mash-East athletics board would also assist by sending me to competitions so that I could get exposure.

"During secondary school I would compete from national and regional competitions."

"I really need to continue participating in sport so as to look after my mother who has been there for me through thick and thin despite her disability."

Tarakinyu said his high school teacher Shayachimwe played an influential role in his career.

"He would ensure that he assists me whenever there is a competition and eventually I was employed because of his efforts."

In 2014, he took part at the Region 5 under 20 games, which was his first regional tournament.

He also took part at the All African games in Morocco in 2019 and finished on position 10 and described it as a great achievement considering it was a big competition.

"Winning the Two oceans Marathon was just something else. I always thank God for that."

He is now looking forward to the Soweto half Marathon and the World Half Marathon.

"In sport I can say I am intrinsically motivated because I take sport as my



life and my job.

"I have been into sport since childhood and now I am earning a living through my sport. I no longer care about those who look down upon sports because I know I am at work.

"My biggest achievement was my participation at the two Oceans half Marathon in South Africa which is a very big event. I won the event and had my new personal best of one hour one minute 38seconds which is a very good time which I am as well targeting to improve."

## 2023 finals moved to 2024 over weather concerns: AFCON

The next Africa Cup of Nations will be played in Ivory Coast in 2024, and not 2023, Confederation of African Football (Caf) president Patrice Motsepe said on Sunday.

The tournament was to be hosted in June-July 2023, which is the height of the rainy season in Ivory Coast.

"We cannot take the risk," the South African said in the Moroccan capital Rabat.

With the World Cup in Qatar taking place in November and December this year, the decision has been taken to postpone the finals rather than bring them forward.

It means the Nations Cup will be held in January and February for the second time in a row, after this year's tournament in Cameroon.

In 2017, Caf announced that it would move the finals from their traditional January-February slot to June-July in a bid to avoid repeated disputes with European clubs forced to release players in the middle of the season.

"January is not the ideal time because of the European clubs, but it is the only choice we have," Motsepe added.

Under former Caf president Issa Hayatou, who was overthrown in 2017, African football's ruling body refused to countenance any possible change of date for the months the continent's flagship sports event is hosted.

Yet just four months after taking charge, Hayatou's successor - Ahmad of Madagascar - turned this policy on its head following consultation with the continent's officials.

Caf Secretary-General Veron Mosenko-Omba said there are no plans to permanently move the finals back to January-February given the contrasting weather patterns across the continent at different times of the year.

When asked why it took Caf so long to make a decision on this matter, given that June and July have been the rainy seasons in Ivory Coast for many years, Motsepe failed to directly address the question - saying the choice had been



The Africa Cup of Nations was held in Cameroon in January and February this year

made 'out of courtesy' with Ivorian organisers.

Both Motsepe and Mosenko-Omba were speaking in Morocco, which is hosting the Women's Africa Cup of Nations.

African Super League On the agenda since Fifa President Gianni Infantino hinted at its possibility in 2019, the African Super League will get underway in August 2023.

The tournament will feature 24 teams and carry total prize money of \$100m, said Motsepe, adding that just over \$10m will go to the winner.

Citing 'financial challenges' in Caf

which he inherited from Ahmad, whom he replaced last year, Motsepe said that businesses are interested in sponsoring the event.

"The key issue for us is the abnormal interest we've been exposed to from some of the biggest and most prominent investors and sponsors," he said.

Caf also said that the African Champions League, which is open to all countries in Africa, will continue alongside the new African Super League, where the top 24 teams will be determined according to their Fifa ranking.

Following huge criticism by beaten finalists Al Ahly following the de-

cision to stage this year's Champions League final in the home stadium of eventual winners Wydad Casablanca, Caf has also announced that the decisive clash will return to being a two-legged format.

"I appreciate the huge amount of unhappiness that the president of Al Ahly expressed in relation to the hosting of the African Champions League final here [in Morocco]."

After over half a century of staging two-legged finals, Africa's leading club match became a one-off final from 2020-2022.



# Sports

# SABLES INCH CLOSER TO WC QUALIFICATION

The Zimbabwe senior rugby team (Sables) have moved an inch closer to qualifying for the 2023 Rugby World Cup finals in France. The team began its qualifying journey on Friday during the Africa cup which also doubles as the world qualifiers in Marseille. The Sables humiliated Ivory Coast 38-11 to the

Shelly Guni



ongoing world rugby qualifiers in France. The came in as a confidence booster for the Sables who are trying return to the global event after 31years. They now face tricky Namibia on Wednesday night. Zimbabwe got its tries courtesy of Matthew Macnab, Shayne Makombe who had a brace, Aiden Burnett and Matthew Mandiona. The Sables, who are ranked 27 on the world rankings last participated at the World rugby showcase in 1991. This was actual-

ly their second participation following making their debut in 1987. 24th placed Namibia shrugged off competition from Burkina Faso to book themselves a place in the semis. They (Namibia) won 71-5. Namibia was also part of the 2019 Rugby World Cup participants and have appeared six times at the world cup. The two teams left in the competition will then play-off for the Africa 1 place at Rugby World Cup 2023, in Pool A alongside three-time winners New Zealand, hosts France, Italy and the Americas 1 qualifier. The loser of the Rugby Africa Cup final will still have another chance to qualify for France 2023 via the Final Qualification Tournament in November 2022.



# QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE IMPORTANT FOR SPORTS DEVELOPMENT SAYS CTC



Shelly Guni



Success in any sporting discipline, tennis included, lies in setting up proper infrastructure and adequately investing in hu-

man capital, Chitungwiza Tennis Club (CTC) coach Taona Gweje strongly believes.

CTC has over the years been active in Chitungwiza strengthening the quality of tennis development in the community.

"To be quite honest, I think it all starts with the quality of infrastructure the player is exposed to and also the quality and experience of the coaches he or she works with.

There are so many players that have had the privilege of having gone through the hands of some of the best coaches in the world and that made a huge difference in determining what kind of player they would be.

"Some are not the most talented, but they are fortunate enough to have good j at my disposal and great coaches to train them.

"So, the secret to success lies in investing in infrastructure development and training more coaches to train these young kinds aspiring to become top players one day," he said.

Gweje said his tennis journey dates back to early the late 90s when the Chitungwiza tennis courts were constructed.

"I have been playing tennis since the courts were constructed in 1995.

"Little development has happened in terms of infrastructure but with what we have now,

we are trying to make a difference in the community.

"I will give an example of this court, at one point it became an idle place. But through passion, we found ourselves back and tried to maintain it to the standard it is now. But still there's still a long way to go." Gweje also lamented the issue of lack of funding.

"We have over kids who train here. But we have less than five rackets. Even the tennis balls are few. We are just trying to come out with something from the little resources we have. But I tell you, if things are equal and resources available, I tell you, we can produce world class athletes here.

"The talent is there, passionate children are here, all we need's a little funding to be able to realize our dream.

"And on that note, I'm pleading with the corporate world and well-wishers to support us in any form. This will go a long way in the lives of these youngsters," he said.

Gweje said the club is also helping in keeping kids away from drugs and substance abuse.

"Like I said, this initiative is there to develop sport in the community and also fight against the rampant drug abuse by our children in the community."