

Zimbabwe: No mobile phones while on duty

The government has banned police officers from using mobile phones at work. All police officers must hand in their mobile phones to their superiors when they arrive at the station and are only allowed to use them during breaks. No reasons for the ban were given in the memo, but it is widely believed that this could be part of efforts to curb corruption in the police force. 06.11.2024

Blitzschlag tötet 13 Kinder in einem Flüchtlingslager

The incident occurred in the Palabek refugee settlement in the north-west of the country. The area has recently experienced heavy rainfall with thunder and lightning. The victims were reportedly attending a church service on Saturday evening when the lightning struck. 13 children died and a further 34 people were injured. According to the UN Refugee Agency, more than 80,000 refugees and asylum seekers live in the Palabek refugee settlement. Many of them come from South Sudan. 05.11.

Mozambique: Maputo's hand-rolled cigars

Kamal Moukheiber saw a gap in the market and decided to produce cigars in Maputo. The tobacco is mainly produced in Mozambique, as the climate and soil are ideal for growing quality tobacco. His first Bongani cigars were sold in a shop in Mozambique in 2016. He now employs a dozen people and produces 10,000 to 12,000 cigars per month. About a third of the cigars are shipped throughout Africa, with Mozambique and South Africa being the largest markets, but they are also available online. Another third is sold in the United States and the final third in Europe. 05.11.2024

South Africa: Police force illegal miners to give up

Police have evicted and arrested 540 illegal miners from an abandoned mine shaft in the northern town of Orkney. Earlier this week, security forces had blocked the miners' food and water supplies in an attempt to force them out of the mine. According to the police, the miners were 'starving and dehydrated' and were forced to resurface; but 'hundreds, if not thousands' would still be underground. The mineral-rich country is home to thousands of illegal miners, known in the Zulu language as 'zama zamas' ('those who try their luck'). 04.11.2024

Malawi: Fuel shortage paralyzes life

Only the larger cities such as Blantyre, Lilongwe and Mzuzu are supplied with a limited amount of fuel, while the petrol stations further out remain empty. This means that people are sleeping outside the petrol stations and 500 and 1,000 vehicles are parked in front of them. Since June, the Malawian government has not been able to pay the 51 million US dollars required for the monthly import of the raw material. As a result, petrol is flourishing on the black market, where it costs twice or even three times as much. The government says it is in the process of addressing the shortage of foreign currency to pay the 75 million dollars to suppliers. 04.11.2024

Botswana: Democratic transition

President Mokgweetsi Masisi has accepted defeat after Botswana voters rejected the country's long-standing ruling party in elections on 30 October. Masisi's party, the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), has been in power since independence in 1966. In a press conference, Masisi said, 'I will respectfully step down and participate in a smooth transition process before the inauguration.'

Outgoing Botswana President Mokgweetsi Masisi has warned his successor Duma Boko that he faces a major economic challenge and will inherit a bankrupt government. The new President Duma Boko formed the UDC as a coalition alliance that brought together members of the Botswana People's Party (BPP) and the Botswana Movement for Democracy (BMD) in 2012. The UDC won 35 out of 61 seats. 03.11.2024

15 more languages on Google Speech

Google Speech, in collaboration with the research team at the AI Research Centre in Accra, Ghana, has announced the launch of voice search, talk-to-type on Gboard and voice input on Translate for 15 additional African languages. The new languages include Chichewa, Hausa, Igbo, Kikuyu, Nigerian Pidgin, Oromo, Rundi, Shona, Somali, Tigrinya, Twi, South Ndebele, Swati, Tswana and Yoruba. This brings the total number of languages with language support in Africa to 25 and worldwide to a total of 94 languages. African languages with voice input already available on Translate include Afrikaans, Amharic, Kinyarwanda, Sepedi, Sesotho, Swahili, Tsonga, Xhosa and Zulu. Enabling voice input in these new languages improves digital accessibility for some 300 million people across the continent, giving them the freedom to interact with the internet and communicate through the modality that comes most naturally to many people: their voice. 01.11.2024

Somalia: Turkish oil exploration - regional concerns

Turkey has launched a major oil and gas exploration mission off the coast of Somalia, with the state-owned Turkish Petroleum Corporation (TPAO) leading the operation. The Turkish exploration vessel, now in Somali waters, is expected to conduct seismic surveys in the coming months, heralding a new phase in Turkey's strategy to extend its energy reach beyond the Mediterranean. However, the exploration has raised concerns among regional stakeholders, including neighbouring countries and Somalia's regional leaders. Many fear that the project could strain maritime borders and spark disputes over ownership of resources, exacerbating the already delicate political situation in the Horn of Africa. 29.10.2024

Niger: Uranium production stopped

French nuclear multinational Orano will cease production at its Arlit uranium mine in northern Niger on 31 Oct. due to financial difficulties at its Nigerien subsidiary Somaïr. This decision is being taken because the border closures between Niger and Benin, which were triggered by the coup d'état in July 2023, have blocked all uranium exports. The closure of the main export corridor between Niger and Benin has left 1,050 tonnes of uranium concentrate from the 2023 and 2024 stockpiles stranded. The Arlit uranium mine is operated by the local subsidiary Somaïr, in which Orano holds 63.4% and the Nigerien state-owned company Sopamin the remainder. 29.10.2024

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