

Ghana: HIV self-test

To curb the spread of the virus in the country, the country has launched an HIV self-testing programme. The test kit allows people to check their own status. According to the AIDS Commission, there are more than 350 000 people living with HIV in Ghana, but only 71 % know their status.

South Africa: 12th official language

South Africa is the fourth country on the continent to recognise sign language as an official language, after Kenya, Zimbabwe and Uganda. It is now South Africa's 12th official language: isiZulu ((**23.8%**= *mother tongue*)), isiXhosa (**17.6%**), Afrikaans (**13.3%**), Northern Sotho (**9.4%**), English (**8.2%**), seTswana (**8.2%**), seSotho (**7.9%**), xiTsonga (**4.4%**), siSwati (**2.7%**), Venda (**2.4%**) and isiNdebele (**1.6%**). It is estimated that there are 600,000 deaf people and 1.4 million people with hearing loss in the country. 20.07.2023

Western Sahara part of Morocco?!

Israel has become the second country in the world - after the US under Trump - to recognise Morocco's sovereignty over the disputed territory of Western Sahara, furthering Morocco's efforts to solidify its claim to the region. Israel's decision comes at a time of growing rivalry between Morocco and Algeria after the two neighbouring countries severed diplomatic ties in 2021. Internationally, the claim to Western Sahara formulated by Morocco has not yet been recognised by any other states. The territory of Western Sahara was formerly a Spanish colony until it was annexed by Morocco in 1975. The United Nations has classified it as non-self-governing territory. Morocco claims the territory for itself, but the indigenous population of Western Sahara, led by the Algerian-backed Polisario Front, wants an independent state. 19.07.2023

Congo-DRC: Mining partnership worth billions

The United Arab Emirates has signed a contract worth USD 1.9 billion with the state-owned mining company **Societe Aurifere du Kivu et du Maniema (Sakima)**. The agreement provides for the "construction of more than 4 industrial mines" in the provinces of South Kivu and Maniema. State-owned **Sakima** holds mining concessions for tin, tantalum, wolfram and gold in this part of the DRC. The agreement was reached after the DRC signed a 25-year contract with the Primera Group from the United Arab Emirates in December for export rights to "manually" mined ores. These are metals mined by independent miners who are not employed by mining companies. 19.07.2023

South Africa: Arrest would be a declaration of war

President Cyril Ramaphosa has declared that the arrest of Vladimir Putin - should he attend the BRICS- Summit in Johannesburg next month - would constitute a declaration of war against Russia. The Russian president is the subject of an arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC). The opposition Democratic Alliance (DA) has gone to court to force the South African authorities - an ICC member - to make the arrest. 18.07.2023

Ethiopia: Social media back

For the first time in more than five months, access to Facebook, Telegram, TikTok and YouTube is possible

again. The blockage was imposed on 9 February 2023 after tensions between the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the government. According to the Internet Society, the outage has cost Ethiopia at least \$42 million because of the impact it has had on businesses. Some areas in the northern Tigray region, where a brutal two-year conflict ended last November, remain without internet access. 19.07.2023

South Africa: Poaching and trade in succulents

Succulents are plants that store water in their leaves and stems. They are prized for their beauty and rarity, but they are also being poached at an alarming rate. There is an increasing demand, and the illegal market is expanding. The same criminal organisations that smuggle illegal abalone or rhino horn also trade in succulents. The syndicates engage in cross-border trade as these plants become more popular in markets such as the US, EU and China. This poaching poses a serious threat to the survival of many succulent species in their natural habitats, disrupting fragile ecosystems and undermining conservation efforts. One of these hotspots is the "Succulent Karoo", which covers 116,000 square kilometres in South Africa's Western and Northern Cape provinces and extends as far as Namibia. 18.07.2023

Kenya: New refugee camp policy

Kenya will change its policy and abandon camp placement of refugees in favour of resettlement and reintegration. The move marks a departure from the policy of Uhuru Kenyatta's government, which had once proposed closing refugee camps in the country. Kenya hosts around 600,000 refugees, with almost half of the people being housed in the Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps. 18.07.2023

Libya: Warning after closure of oil fields

According to the Zawi tribal leader, Al-Senussi al-Ahlaq, production at the El Feel, Sharara and 108 oil fields was halted on 13 July in protest at the abduction of former Finance Minister Faraj Bumatari by the Al-Zawi tribe. Al-Ahlaq said the closure of al-Fil was done to put pressure on the authorities in Tripoli to release Bumatari. The Sharara field is one of Libya's largest producing areas with a capacity of 300,000 bpd. It has often been the target of political unrest. Libya has been in a civil war since 2011. The two rival governments are each supported by various international actors and armed militias in the country. The House of Representatives is based in the eastern city of Tobruk, while the rival chamber and Prime Minister Abdul Hamad Dbeibah are based in the capital Tripoli. 17.07.2023

Central Africa: Wagner Group strengthens forces

Several hundred "experienced" Wagner forces have arrived in the Central African Republic to assist the Armed Forces of the Central African Republic (FACA) and law enforcement agencies in providing security ahead of the constitutional referendum scheduled for 30 July. If the new constitution is adopted, the two-year presidential term limit will no longer apply, allowing the president to run for a third term. 17.07.2023

More Info: <https://netzwerkafrika.de/>

Kenya: No more anti-government protests