

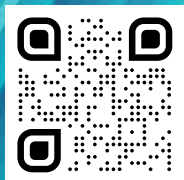


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JANUARY 2023

TANZANIA

25TH JANUARY 2023

TANZANIA OPPOSITION LEADER TUNDU LISSU RETURNS FROM EXILE

Tanzania opposition leader Tundu Lissu has returned to the country from self-imposed exile in Belgium, where he had lived since surviving an assassination attempt in 2017 when he was shot 16 times. The outspoken politician arrived at Dar es Salaam airport Wednesday and was welcomed by hundreds of supporters, with many clapping and cheering. Lissu was seen waving his Chadema party flag while perched through the sunroof of a car as he greeted supporters who had gathered along the roads and were following him on foot, in cars, and on motorcycles to a rally. There, Lissu called for political change in Tanzania. “Let’s not make God carry the burdens that we are capable of carrying,” he said. “The problem of life’s challenges is the problem of governance.” “If you are really tired, the medicine I will give you is this: let’s find a constitutional solution, let’s find a political solution, let’s find a new constitution.”

While living abroad, Lissu was a presidential candidate in the 2020 general election but lost in a landslide to the late President John Magufuli. Chadema rejected the official results, saying the election was tainted with widespread irregularities. Lissu’s supporters say his return paves the way for a return to democracy in the country. John Pambalu, a national chairperson of Chadema’s youth wing, too, emphasized the need for a new constitution. “We need to see there are political rights and for the steps that we are taking to advocate for the new constitution; his (Lissu’s) contribution is needed physically in Tanzania,” he said. “His contribution is needed in the party and the country and is essential in ensuring that we reach a point where we’ll write a new constitution that will bring democracy and true freedom.

Lightness Juma, a Chadema supporter, says Lissu’s return makes her happy and optimistic about the future. “We are here in this place with happiness and joy as you can see, to welcome our beloved father who is going to be the president of Tanzania in 2025,” she said. Lissu’s return comes almost three weeks after Tanzania President Samia Hassan lifted a ban on political rallies. Imposed by former president Magufuli in 2016, the ban prohibited political parties from holding rallies and even engaging in internal political activities. Since coming to power in 2021, following the sudden death of Magufuli, Hassan has moved away from many of her predecessors’ policies. Last year, she lifted restrictions on media outlets.

SOURCE:

<https://www.voanews.com/a/tanzania-opposition-leader-tundu-lissu-returns-from-exile/6933675.html>

29TH JANUARY

KLM ADAMANT OVER TANZANIA CIVIL UNREST CLAIM, APOLOGISES TO KENYA

Dutch Airliner- KLM has maintained its stand over the civil unrest in Tanzania, but has apologized to Kenya regarding a statement they issued on Friday, January 27 that said that there was a potential civil unrest in the two countries. The position comes at a time when Tanzanian authorities have urged the public to ignore the statement calling it baseless. “This statement is baseless, alarmist, unfounded, inconsiderate and insensitive and has caused unnecessary fear and panic to the general public and aviation industry at large,” said Prof Makame Mbarawa the minister of works and transport. In a statement released on late Saturday, January 28, the airline said the alert, which was only meant for our customers in Tanzania, was inadvertently and erroneously also shared with our customers in Kenya.

We made a mistake in our rebook policy and initially included Kenya. “This is incorrect and we would like to apologize for this,” reads the statement. It adds: KLM takes this opportunity to sincerely apologize to its customers, partners and to the Government and people of Kenya for the inconvenience and damage the said erroneous alert may have caused. The correct position is that at KLM flights in and out of Nairobi remain as per schedule and no interruptions are anticipated. The statement further said Air France-KLM group has communicated the correct position to the relevant government authorities through its Nairobi office but did not make similar efforts in Tanzania where they maintained their stand.

According to the Ministry of Works and Transport, on the claimed date, there was no recorded civil unrest within the territory of the United Republic of Tanzania which impair the Aviation operations within the country. The ministry said operations at the Julius Nyerere International Airport and Kilimanjaro International Airport continued without any interruptions, the entire weekend. On January 27, at JNIA 17 out of 18 International Scheduled Flights with 2545 passengers were facilitated while at KIA 5 international flights with 823 passengers were facilitated. Until 3:15 PM on Saturday, 12 International Scheduled Flights landed at JNIA and were were facilitated.

SOURCE:

<https://www.thecitizen.co.tz/tanzania/news/national/klm-adamant-over-tanzania-civil-unrest-claim-apologises-to-kenya--4103004>

29TH JANUARY

SIMBA GO TO THE POLLS TODAY

ALL is set as Simba go to polls to elect a new Chairman and five Board of Directors members in the Extraordinary General Meeting at Julius Nyerere International Convention Centre (JNICC) in Dar as Salaam today. Eligible Simba members are therefore privileged to exercise their rights of selecting leaders they think will be at the forefront in steering their club further and driving it to the Promised Land. The exercise comes a few days after the club unmasked Imani Kajula as their Chief Executive Officer (CEO) succeeding Barbara Gonzalez whose tenure apparently expired. Recently, the club's Election Committee paraded 14 candidates cleared to compete for the club's chairmanship and five Board of Directors membership slots ahead of today's elections. In his remarks after their introduction, the committee's chairman Boniface Lihamwike insisted that the election should be done in a free and fair environment without breaking any of the available election guidelines.

According to him, the chairman post is being contested by Adv Moses Kaluwa and Murtaza Mungungu as the latter seeks to be re-elected for the hot seat for another four-year duration. However, those vying for the Board of Directors membership are Seif Muba, Seleman Said, Idd Kitete, Issa Iddi, Abubakari Zebo, Abdallah Mgomba, Elisony Mweladzi, Rashid Khamsini, Rodney Chiduo, Aziz Mohamed, Asha Baraka, and Pendo Mapugilo. Furthermore, Lihamwike insisted that one of the five members to be elected must be a with cleared contenders have been selling their agendas to the Simba fraternity on what they intend to implement once given a green light to accommodate the positions they are battling for. As such, people are anxiously waiting to see the product of the election and their new leaders ready to work for a game in terms of ensuring that the club becomes among the best in the continent.

Under the current tutelage of Head Coach Roberto Oliviera, Simba have repeatedly claimed that they want to stamp success in the approaching CAF Champions League (CAF CL) matches slated to flag off next month. The Brazilian trainer insists that he wants to win the CAF CL championship at the helm of the Msimbazi street giants hence football family is expecting much from the Msimbazi Street Reds in international games this term. man thus according to the requirements of the available laws governing the election.

SOURCE:

<https://allafrica.com/stories/202301300075.html>

ERITREA

27TH JANUARY 2023

RUSSIAN FOREIGN MINISTER VISITS ERITREA, AN ALLY IN ITS WAR ON UKRAINE

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov arrived in Eritrea on Thursday for a surprise one-day visit where he met with both President Isaias Afewerki and Foreign Minister Osman Saleh. Eritrea, an authoritarian country in the Horn of Africa, is one of just five states that voted in March 2022 against the UN resolution condemning the invasion of Ukraine, along with Russia, Belarus, Syria and North Korea. According to the Russian state news agency TASS Lavrov, who also stopped off in the Red Sea port of Massawa, said: “I would like to mention the possibility of using the logistical potential of the Massawa port and the city’s airport.

The airport of Massawa looks interesting from the point of view of its transit possibilities. Our partners are interested in the study, and we are ready to help them.” The Red Sea is a narrow waterway that is also strategically important. At its northern end is the Suez Canal, a potential choke point for cargo ships entering the Mediterranean from the Indian Ocean. Afewerki’s regime has ruled the country, one of the most closed in the world, with an iron fist since its independence from Ethiopia in 1993. His army is also accused of numerous abuses against the civilian population in the Tigray region of northern Ethiopia, where it supported the Ethiopian army against the Tigrayan rebels in a deadly conflict between November 2020 and November 2022. These troops, present in this region since the beginning of the war, began to withdraw at the end of last week, announced the United States and the Ethiopian government.

SOURCE:

<https://www.africanews.com/2023/01/27/russian-foreign-minister-visits-eritrea-an-ally-in-its-war-on-ukraine/>

SOUTH SUDAN

EMBASSIES WARN OF NEW VIOLENCE IN SOUTH SUDAN AHEAD OF POPE VISIT

The embassies of Britain, Norway, and the United States have expressed grave concerns about possible new fighting in South Sudan's Upper Nile State. The warning by the so-called Troika Embassies comes just days ahead of Pope Francis' first visit to South Sudan on Friday for what the Vatican is calling a pilgrimage of peace. Serious security alarms have been sounded barely 24 hours before Pope Francis arrives in South Sudan's capital for what is seen as an attempt by Vatican to find a lasting peace in the war-torn nation. Already, foreign embassies have sent out warnings of a possible outbreak of war in parts of the country.

The U.S., UK and Norway, who are also peace guarantors for South Sudan's revitalized transitional government, said violence may break out in Upper Nile, the north-eastern state that borders Ethiopia and Sudan on the north. U.S. Ambassador to South Sudan Michael Adler told reporters in Juba that the Troika Embassies will always stand with those who call and work for peace in South Sudan. "In that regard, we note with grave concern indications of preparation for renewed fighting in Upper Nile State. South Sudanese transitional leaders and political actors in Juba have a responsibility to act to prevent this and to find peaceful and sustainable solutions." Michael English of UNMISS, the U.N. peacekeeping mission in South Sudan, said he is concerned about reports of a military build-up in an area under the control of a militia group — the Agwelek forces.

The group is under the command of former South Sudanese army general turned rebel, Johnson Olony. Agwelek, a militia perceived to be friendly to the national army, has denied these allegations. Last year, the militia group signed an agreement with the national government to integrate part of their forces into the national army. Paul Achot is head of the Agwelek delegation to Juba, where he's talking with government officials about implementing the agreement signed between Agwelek and the army in January 2022. "There is no preparation of any sort, from our side, to go and attack anybody," he said. "So I was surprised myself to hear the UNMISS, who is supposed to be neutral, pointing fingers against us, saying that we are preparing to go and attack other forces." In 2022, fighting between Agwelek and other militias displaced over 60,000 people.

The South Sudanese army says it is ready to defend the population in case of renewed clashes. Meanwhile, the government said Thursday that it will deploy over 5,000 security personnel in Juba to ensure calm during the pope's visit. Pope Francis is coming to Juba to deliver a message of peace and reconciliation in a country still struggling with inter-communal violence. This will be a continuation of a process that began in 2019 when the pope hosted then-political foes President Salva Kiir and opposition leader Riek Machar at the Vatican. Pope Francis will be accompanied on the ecumenical visit by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Moderator of the Church of Scotland.

SOURCE:

<https://www.voanews.com/a/embassies-warn-of-new-violence-in-south-sudan-ahead-of-pope-visit/6945481.html>

POPE AT MASS IN SOUTH SUDAN: IN THE NAME OF JESUS, LAY DOWN THE WEAPONS OF HATRED

At a Mass in South Sudan on Sunday, Pope Francis urged Christians in the war-torn African country to make “a decisive contribution to changing history” by refusing to repay evil with evil. “In the name of Jesus and of his Beatitudes, let us lay down the weapons of hatred and revenge, in order to take up those of prayer and charity,” Pope Francis said in his homily in Juba on Feb. 5. “I gather here with you in the name of Jesus Christ, the God of love, the God who achieved peace through his cross. ... Jesus, crucified in the lives of so many of you, in so many people in this country; Jesus, the risen Lord, the victor over evil and death,” he said.

More than 100,000 people attended the papal Mass in Juba held on the grounds of a mausoleum commemorating John Garang, a liberation leader known as the “father of South Sudan,” though he died in a helicopter crash before the newest African country gained its independence in 2011 and plunged into a brutal civil war two years later. South Sudan’s civil war resulted in the deaths of an estimated 400,000 people. And while the country reached a formal peace agreement nearly three years ago, violent conflicts continue in parts of the country.

Pope Francis underlined that South Sudan’s Christians are called to be “light that shines in the darkness” by living out the Beatitudes. “This country, so beautiful yet ravaged by violence, needs the light that each one of you has, or better, the light that each one of you is,” he said. During the Mass, dancers wearing bright yellow sashes adorned with a large photo of Pope Francis and photos of other clergy danced in the field below the altar as a 300-person choir sang hymns and waved their hands. The first and second Scripture readings were read by religious sisters who care for orphans in Rajaf, South Sudan.

President Salva Kiir Mayardit attended the Mass sitting with South Sudan’s five vice presidents, 10 state governors, and other key political leaders. In his homily, Pope Francis said that Christians are called to be “people capable of building good human relationships as a way of curbing the corruption of evil, the disease of division, the filth of fraudulent business dealings and the plague of injustice.” He explained that the Beatitudes “revolutionize the standards of this world and our usual way of thinking” by telling us that “we must not aim to be strong, rich, and powerful but humble, meek, and merciful; to do no evil to anyone, but to be peacemakers for everyone.

Several African cardinals concelebrated the Mass, including Cardinal Berhaneyesus Demerew, archbishop of Addis Ababa; Cardinal Fridolin Ambongo, archbishop of Kinshasa; and Cardinal Gabriel Zubeir Wako, archbishop emeritus of Khartoum, Sudan. Pope Francis spent a moment in prayer before a large statue of Our Lady of Africa located beside the altar at the end of the Mass. In his Angelus message, he entrusted South Sudan’s peace process to Our Lady of Africa, reminding the crowd that the Virgin Mary is the Queen of Peace. “We pray to her now, and we entrust to her the cause of peace in South Sudan and in the entire African continent, where so many of our brothers and sisters in the faith experience persecution and danger, where great numbers of people suffer from conflict, exploitation, and poverty,” he said.

Pope Francis also recalled the testimony of Sudan's **St. Josephine Bakhita**, whom he called "a great woman who by God's grace transformed into hope all the sufferings that she endured." "Hope is the word I would leave with each of you, as a gift to share, a seed to bear fruit," he said

SOURCE:

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/253559/pope-francis-at-mass-in-south-sudan-in-the-name-of-jesus-lay-down-the-weapons-of-hatred>

26TH JANUARY

SOUTH SUDAN'S KIIR MAKES SEVERAL CHANGES IN STATE LEADERSHIP

South Sudan's President Salva Kiir has issued several decrees, removing and replacing officials and legislators in states. Kiir, in a decree read on the state-owned television (SSBC), sacked Upper Nile State governor, Budhok Ayang Kur, replacing him with James Odhok. Odhok, a member of the armed opposition faction (SPLM-IO), previously chaired its national committee for culture, youth and sports in Upper Nile. It is widely anticipated that the former governor's removal was linked to the recent spate of violence and inter-communal clashes in Upper Nile state. Separately, Kiir relieved the Unity State advisor on gender, child and social welfare, Yoane Jek Guop. He did not appoint a successor for the position. The South Sudanese leader also sacked Unity State Minister of Animal Resources and Fisheries, James Tunguar, Rubkona County commissioner, James Gatluak Nyak and state anti-corruption commissioner, Charles Wal.

He appointed Lony Majier as Unity State Minister of Animal Resources and Fisheries, Dhol Khoriom Liling as Rukona County Commissioner and Kuol Majok was appointed the new anti-corruption commissioner in Unity state. Kiir also appointed Bol Akot Agok as Yirol West County commissioner, replacing Andrew Achieng who resigned after his arrest by state authorities. Also, Majur Deng was removed from the position of Unity State chairperson of the Employee Justice Chamber and replaced with Lino Kum Ngor. The decree also affected lawmakers in the Revitalised Transitional National Legislative Assembly (RTNLA) from Jonglei, Eastern and Western Equatoria states.

SOURCE:

<https://sudantribune.com/article269981/>

30TH JANUARY 2023

SUDAN HOSTS SECOND LARGEST NUMBERS OF REFUGEES IN AFRICA

Sudan is the second last host of refugees in African with the figure estimated at almost 1 million, a new report indicates. The Sudan Refugee Response Plan (CRP) for January-December 2023 says the country has provided protection for refugees and asylum seekers from South Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Central African Republic, Chad, Syria, Yemen, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo since 1965. Under the co-leadership of the Sudan Commission for Refugees (COR) and United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR), the CRP provides strategic guidance to the inter-agency refugee response, lays out the refugee coordination structure and estimates the financial requirements to respond to the identified needs. “While some refugees, such as the Ethiopians fleeing the conflict in Tigray, arrived recently, others, such as the Eritreans, fled their home country decades ago,” partly reads the latest response plan.

Sudan is reportedly one of the main hosting countries for South Sudanese refugees, with currently over 800,000 persons in the country. According to the country’s refugee response plan, Khartoum and White Nile States continue to host together more than half of all refugees in Sudan. Approximately 38% of Sudan’s refugee populations reportedly live in 25 camps across the country, mostly in Kassala, Gedaref, White Nile and East Darfur. “The remaining 62 per cent live outside of camps, amid local communities in 2023, UNHCR Sudan said it would require at least \$396 million to deliver an effective response and provide life-saving assistance and protection.at are hosting refugees in towns and villages,” it further stressed.

SOURCE:

<https://sudantribune.com/article270163/>

ETHIOPIA

14TH JANUARY 2023

The Ethiopian National Defence Force (ENDF) and Oromia regional special forces – and the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF)-Shane continued in Oromia region while Eritrean forces withdrew from key towns in Tigray region. Clashes between government forces and the OLF-Shane were recorded in Gamo Waliso and Bada Gora kebeles in Liban Jawi woreda and Seyo area in Dano woreda in West Shewa zone in Oromia (see map below). The two parties clashed in these areas for five days, starting from 11 January until 15 January.

Member of the OLF-Shane also entered Muke Turi town in North Shewa zone and killed two police officers on 19 January. These officers were killed when they tried to stop members of the OLF-Shane from looting the properties of the local residents. Also in Oromia region, between 13 to 16 January, Somali ethnic militias clashed with Oromo ethnic militias in Tulu Guled, Fefem, Chafe Badu, Merar, and Hosale kebeles in Chinaksen woreda in East Hararge zone. Due to these clashes, three militiamen were killed, and eight others were wounded.

The Ethiopian government communication minister stated last week that the government is taking “all-inclusive measures” – both political and military measures – against the OLF-Shane in Oromia region to bring more stability in the region as well as in the neighbouring regions.² According to the minister, the government is ready to reintegrate those members of the group who surrender peacefully into society, and will take military action against those who refuse to accept the government’s call to surrender.

The minister blamed the OLF-Shane for the failure of previous attempts to resolve the conflict peacefully. In November, Oromia regional officials stated that they would not negotiate with the OLF-Shane due to its lacking of a “chain of command” and “divisions along regionalism,” also pointing out that the group is “unorganized and lacks purpose and leadership organization.”³ In response, the OLF-Shane announced that it would only enter into negotiations with the federal government through a neutral, third-state actor, and that any negotiations through the “regime’s cadres – whatever elderly title they carry for the day – will not work.”⁴ Violence targeting civilians continued in Oromia last week, with three such events being recorded in the region. These attacks were conducted by the ENDF, Oromia regional special forces, kebele militiamen, and Fano militia members.

On 14 January, government forces – assumed to be members of the ENDF and Oromia special forces – opened fire on civilian homes in Sombo Chitu and Hidabu Sindi kebeles in Ifata (Ilfeta) woreda in West Shewa zone and burned several civilian houses. A few days later, on 18 January, presumed kebele militia members shot and killed five prisoners in Bofa (Warji) town in Boset woreda in East Shewa zone after taking them out of prison. The reason behind these attacks is unknown. It was also reported that around 14 January, Fano militia members shot and killed an unknown number of civilians in Serar Kulla (Selelkula) kebele in Dera woreda in North Shewa zone after accusing them of collaborating with the OLF-Shane.

In Tigray region, on 17 January, the ENDF peacefully entered Adigrat town in Eastern Tigray zone and took control of the town's military base. Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) forces had reportedly withdrawn from the town on 13 January. Additionally, several reports indicated that starting from 18 January, Eritrean Defence Forces (EDF) began to withdraw from Adwa, Aksum, and Shire towns, and Felafil and Endebagerima areas in Tigray region.⁵ The head of the African Union (AU) negotiation team, former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, stated that the EDF had started to withdraw from Tigray region and that now "all Eritreans are at the border" but also admitted that "not all had returned home."⁶ However, TPLF spokesman, Getachew Reda, refuted this statement and asked the AU Monitoring, Verification and Compliance Mission to "do their job first before such remarks are made."⁷ In the meantime, the Ethiopian government communication minister asked some top leaders of the TPLF to refrain from releasing negative statements like "condemning government forces and presenting neighbouring regional forces as destructive and TPLF forces as innocent."⁸ According to him, such statements are against the spirit of the peace agreement signed in November 2022.

Lastly, in Benshangul/Gumuz region, on 15 January, kebele militiamen associated with Abramo woreda shot and killed a member of the Benishangul People's Liberation Movement during an opening ceremony of a sub-branch office of the party in Yemba Sizim kebele in Abramo woreda in Asosa zone. Seven other people were injured in the attack.

SOURCE:

<https://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/ethiopia-epo-weekly-14-20-january-2023>

KENYA

30TH JANUARY 2023

IS THERE HOPE FOR A DYING RIVER IN KENYA'S GROWING CAPITAL?

Vultures scavenge for dead animals along a river turned sewer conduit in Kenya's capital Nairobi. Its waters turn from clear to black as it traverses informal settlements and industrial hubs.

The river and its tributaries cross Kibera, known as Africa's largest slum with close to 200,000 residents, and other informal settlements. It skirts dozens of factories that manufacture textiles, liquor and building materials. Many have been accused by environmentalists of discharging raw sewage and other pollutants like oil, plastic and glass into the water.

Now the new national government, [installed after the August election](#), says it's on a mission to clean up the Nairobi River. Nairobi is one of Africa's fastest growing cities and is struggling to balance the needs of creating jobs and protecting the environment from pollution.

The government has formed a commission whose mandate is to clean up and restore the river basin. No deadline has been announced yet, and no budget. The commission has yet to meet.

Experts and locals alike fear the water is harming plants in nearby farms that feed residents. Some community-based organizations help clean up the river. But families in the rapidly growing downstream suburb of Athi River, some 30 kilometers (19 miles) away, say they can no longer rely on the water for basic needs. Anne Nduta, 25, uses the river's dark waters to wash her babies' clothes by hand.

"When it rains, the Athi River water is usually full of garbage, and when it clears a bit we use it to wash clothes," said the mother-of-two. "But as the dry season continues, the water becomes darker in color and we have to start buying expensive borehole water."

A 20-liter (5-gallon) jerrican of borehole water sells for 20 shillings (\$0.16), and Nduta would need four of them to wash her babies' clothes every three days. Her problems start upstream, where informal settlements have directed some of their sewer lines straight into the Nairobi River.

Ecologist Stephen Obiero said that sewage in the river used to irrigate farmland can cause "the possibility of contamination of the plant products with bacteria, viruses, protozoa ... if not properly handled by the end users."

SOURCE:

<https://apnews.com/article/kenya-athi-river-at-risk-eb5956f6cfbe72331b9dae38d5d390ca>

21ST DECEMBER 2023

KENYA TOURIST BOAT CAPSIZES; 3 DEAD, 1 MISSING

A boat carrying tourists capsized in southeastern Kenya on Saturday, killing three people and leaving one person missing, police said. Around two dozen people were rescued.

The cause of the capsizing wasn't immediately known. The boat was carrying 29 people, 15 of whom were foreigners, and it overturned at the Watamu Marine National Park and Reserve, which is a common tourist destination along the coast north of Mombasa.

Twenty-five people were rescued and some were hospitalized and in stable condition, Malindi sub-county Deputy Police Commander Solomon Odero said. He ruled out speculation that the boat was overloaded.

The nationalities of the foreigners who were involved weren't immediately revealed.

SOURCE:

<https://apnews.com/article/kenya-business-65904ecf1830c21b8bc37f136150ff54>

20TH JANUARY 2023

KENYAN SECURITY FORCES KILL 10 SUSPECTED AL-SHABAB FIGHTERS

Kenya has suffered attacks for a decade as retribution for joining the peacekeeping force fighting al-Shabab in Somalia. Kenyan security forces have killed 10 fighters from the Somalia-based al-Shabab group in eastern Kenya, a government official says.

They also recovered rocket-propelled grenades and improvised explosive devices after fighting the group on Wednesday in the village of Galmagalla in Garissa County, Thomas Bett, deputy county commissioner of the Bura East sub-county, said on Thursday.

The operation to flush out the Somalia militants' group in the region was carried out by our multi-agency team, ... and [it] managed to neutralise 10 Islamist group militants and recovered assault weapons," he told the Reuters new agency.

Spokespeople for al-Shabab could not be reached for comment. The al-Qaeda affiliate has made incursions into Kenya for years to pressure the country into withdrawing its troops from the African Union-mandated peacekeeping force helping Somalia's central government fight the group.

Al-Shabab has targeted security forces, schools, vehicles, towns and telecommunications infrastructure in eastern Kenya although the frequency and intensity of their attacks have declined in recent years.

SOURCE:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/1/20/kenyan-security-forces-kill-10-suspected-al-shabab-fighters>

UGANDA

11TH JANUARY 2023

EBOLA OUTBREAK IN UGANDA, AS OF 11 JANUARY 2023

Overall, 142 confirmed cases of Sudan virus disease (SVD) were reported, of which 55 died (CFR: 39%), and 87 recovered. In addition, 22 deaths among probable cases were reported in individuals who died before samples could be taken (overall CFR: 47%). At least 19 healthcare workers were infected, of whom seven died.

Over 4000 contacts were followed up for 21 days ([WHO AFRO News](#)).

Overall, nine Ugandan districts were affected by this outbreak: Bunyangabu, Jinja, Kagadi, Kampala, Kassanda, Kyegegwa, Masaka, Mubende, and Wakiso.

On 20 September 2022, the Ministry of Health in Uganda, together with WHO AFRO, confirmed an outbreak of SVD in Mubende District, Uganda, after one fatal case was confirmed.

The index case was a 24-year-old man, a resident of Ngabano village of the Madudu sub-county in Mubende District. The patient experienced high fever, diarrhoea, abdominal pain, and began vomiting blood on 11 September 2022. Samples were collected on 17 September 2022 and SVD was laboratory-confirmed on 19 September. The patient died on the same day, five days after hospitalisation.

This was the fifth SVD outbreak that occurred in Uganda.

SOURCE:

<https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/news-events/ebola-outbreak-uganda>

24TH JANUARY 2023

UGANDA LAUNCHES FIRST OIL DRILLING PROGRAMME, TARGETS 2025 OUTPUT

Uganda discovered commercial oil reserves nearly 20 years ago but production has been delayed by lack of infrastructure. Uganda on Tuesday launched its first oil drilling programme, its petroleum agency said, a key milestone as the country races to meet its target of first oil output in 2025.

The Kingfisher field is part of a \$10bn scheme to develop Uganda's oil reserves under Lake Albert in the west of the country and build a vast pipeline to ship the crude to international markets via an Indian Ocean port in Tanzania.

The president [Yoweri Museveni] has officially commissioned the start of drilling campaign on the Kingfisher oilfield," the Petroleum Authority of Uganda (PAU) said on Twitter, describing the development as a "milestone".

The East African nation discovered commercial reserves of petroleum nearly two decades ago in one of the world's most biodiverse regions but production has been repeatedly delayed by a lack of infrastructure like a pipeline.

The Kingfisher field, operated by the state-owned China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC), is expected to produce 40,000 barrels of oil per day at its peak, PAU said. "We are excited as a country and Africa," energy minister Ruth Nankabirwa told the AFP news agency.

PAU, which regulates the petroleum sector, said President Yoweri Museveni launched the programme at a site in the Kingfisher project area, one of the country's two commercial oil development areas.

SOURCE:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/1/24/uganda-to-unveil-first-commercial-oil-production-drilling-programme>

1ST JANUARY 2023

STAMPEDE DURING NEW YEAR FIREWORKS KILLS AT LEAST NINE IN UGANDA

At least nine people die in a shopping mall crush as revellers rang in the New Year in capital Kampala, police said. At least nine people, including a 10-year-old boy, have died as crowds rushing to see a New Year's firework display got stuck in a narrow corridor in a shopping mall near Uganda's capital, police said.

People started pushing through a passage in the Freedom City Mall in Kampala just after clocks struck midnight, the police said on Sunday. "Very many people got stuck as they were entering in large numbers to see fireworks. In doing so, many people suffocated to death. So far nine people are confirmed dead," the police statement said.

People had been celebrating the New Year at the mall which is on a highway linking Kampala to Entebbe International Airport. "Emergency responders arrived on the scene and transported the injured individuals to the hospital, where nine were confirmed dead," police spokesman Luke Owoyesigire said.

Owoyesigyire added that “rash” acts and “negligence” had led to the tragedy. The celebrations to welcome in 2023 were the first in the East African country since restrictions linked to the COVID-19 pandemic and security issues were lifted.

SOURCE:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/1/1/stampede-during-new-year-fireworks-kills-at-least-nine-in-uganda>

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

15TH JANUARY 2023

SEVERAL KILLED IN DR CONGO CHURCH BOMB ATTACK

Attack took place during a Sunday service in the eastern city of Kasindi, the army said. At least 10 people have been killed and dozens of others wounded in a bomb attack during a service at a Protestant church in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), according to the country's army.

The explosion killed at least 10 people and wounded 39 others, army spokesman Anthony Mualushay said on Sunday. Both tolls were provisional, he added. Mualushay said the attack during the Sunday service in the city of Kasindi, on the border with Uganda, was likely carried out by the [Allied Democratic Forces](#) (ADF), a Ugandan armed group that has pledged allegiance to ISIL (ISIS).

Later on, Sunday, the ISIL group claimed responsibility for the attack. The ADF, which began as an uprising in Uganda but has been based in the DRC since the late 1990s. Survivors and witnesses said the blast severed some people's limbs from their bodies.

Masika Makasi, 25, was sitting under a tent outside the church when she heard a noise that sounded like a tire going flat, she told the Associated Press news agency from her home in Kasindi. Her leg was injured in the attack and her sister-in-law, who was several feet away, died instantly, Makasi said.

"I am traumatised from seeing people die around me," she said. Kasindi is in a province where Congolese and Ugandan forces have [launched a campaign against the ADF](#). It pledged allegiance to ISIL in mid-2019 and is accused of killing hundreds of villagers in frequent raids over the past two years.

Troops from Uganda's army have deployed to eastern Congo to try to stem the violence, but the attacks have increased and spread. ADF attacks since April have killed at least 370 civilians and involved the abduction of several hundred more, a report by the United Nations last month said.

SOURCE:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/1/15/several-killed-in-dr-congo-church-bomb-attack>

30TH JANUARY 2023

CONFLICT SURVIVORS TO MEET POPE FRANCIS ON HIS DR CONGO TRIP

Pope's long-awaited visit to DRC and South Sudan where two of the world's most neglected crises are ongoing. It took years for Marie Louise Wambale to re-establish her life after fighting between M23 rebels and the army of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in the country's eastern region forced her to flee with almost nothing about a decade ago.

Like most Catholics in the eastern DRC, she hoped that Pope Francis could bring a message of hope at a time when the rebels are posing their greatest threat here since 2012. Many people were disappointed because they wanted to welcome him to our home, for him to come here and live our suffering, to feel it with his own eyes," she said. "We wanted him to live it because there are many people who have fled the war. There are pregnant mothers who gave birth in the camps in very bad conditions – many women and children are suffering."

Now Wambale has been tasked with taking this message to the capital, Kinshasa, where she will be among the Congolese faithful chosen to meet Pope Francis. His long-awaited visit to DRC and South Sudan this week comes after he [postponed an earlier trip](#) late last year that had originally included a stop in the volatile east for health reasons. Insecurity, though, has soared in the months since so the pope is limiting his visit to Kinshasa.

"It is clear to anybody that there is a danger. But the danger, I would say, even more than for the pope is for the people," the Vatican's ambassador to DRC, Archbishop Ettore Balestrero told The Associated Press news agency.

The security requirements to protect people at a papal mass would be hard under ordinary circumstances, but even more delicate in an already dangerous area like the east, he said. An estimated two million Congolese are expected at the mass at Kinshasa airport on February 1, which he said would make it the largest crowd event in DRC's recent history.

Fighting in the eastern DRC, which involves [more than 120 armed groups](#), has simmered for years but spiked in late 2021 with the resurgence of the M23, which had been largely dormant for nearly a decade. The rebels have captured swaths of land and are accused by the United Nations and rights groups of committing atrocities against civilians. The violence, which has displaced approximately half a million people, has triggered a diplomatic spat with neighbouring Rwanda. Kinshasa [has accused](#) Kigali of backing the M23, an allegation also made by UN experts and the European Union.

SOURCE:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/1/30/survivors-of-conflict-to-meet-pope-francis-in-congo>

27TH JANUARY 2023

UNICEF URGES RELEASE OF 13 KIDNAPPED CHILDREN IN EASTERN DRC

The ADF, a central African affiliate of ISIL, is one of the deadliest armed groups in eastern DRC. The United Nations children's agency UNICEF urged on Friday for the release of 13 children who were abducted during a deadly attack in the Democratic Republic of Congo's eastern region this month.

In a statement, the agency said 11 boys and two girls were believed to have been kidnapped by an armed group during an attack on a village in North Kivu province. "UNICEF which condemns the abduction, is concerned that the abducted children are being inhumanely treated and is calling for them to be released immediately," it said.

On January 22, suspected [Allied Democratic Forces \(ADF\) members](#) killed at least 23 people during an attack on the village of Makugwe and kidnapped several people, sources previously told AFP. The ADF is one of the deadliest armed groups in eastern DRC, a volatile region that has been plagued by violence for decades.

The armed group – which the ISIL (ISIS) group has claimed as its central African affiliate – has been accused of slaughtering thousands of Congolese civilians and carrying out bomb attacks in Uganda. There are more than 120 other armed groups in eastern DRC, including the M23 rebels, which Kinshasa, the EU and UN have said are being backed by Rwanda. Kigali has continued to deny the allegations.

In 2021, the United States officially linked the ADF to ISIL and added it to its list of foreign "terrorist" organisations. On January 15, suspected ADF operatives also detonated a bomb in a church in North Kivu, killing at least 14 people and injuring another 63.

SOURCE:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/1/27/unicef-urges-release-of-13-kidnapped-children-in-east-dr-congo>

SOMALIA

30TH JANUARY 2023

WIFE OF ISLAMIC STATE LEADER JAILED FOR 8 YEARS IN SOMALIA

A military tribunal in Somalia has sentenced the wife of the head of a terrorist organization linked to the Islamic State group to eight years in prison for passing on information and organizing financial transactions for the group, a military official said Monday.

Fartun Abdirashid, wife of Abdiqadir Mumin, head of the Daesh group, was sentenced on Monday at a military court. She has been under custody since her arrest in March last year in the capital, Mogadishu. Abdirashid was accused of frequently transferring \$100 to \$200 to the group's members, the public prosecutor's office said.

She had a working relationship with [Bilal Al-Sudaani](#), a senior Islamic State group official who was killed on Wednesday in a U.S. raid in Somalia's northern Bari region. Mumin, a former al-Shabab cleric, pledged his allegiance to Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in 2015.

IS holds a smaller footprint in Somalia compared to the al-Shabab terrorist group that has carried out numerous attacks in the country. Somalia's forces are carrying out an offensive against al-Shabab that has been described as the most significant in more than a decade.

SOURCE:

<https://apnews.com/article/islamic-state-group-politics-mogadishu-somalia-prisons-2f97ce311c3f8ad3bbf3a-c8744a5633c>

29TH JANUARY 2023

US URGES DONORS TO GIVE FAR MORE AS SOMALIA FACES FAMINE

The first U.S. Cabinet member to visit Somalia since 2015 urged the world's distracted donors Sunday to give immediate help to a country facing [deadly famine](#), which she calls "the ultimate failure of the international community."

The U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, heard perhaps the starkest warning yet about the crisis: Excess deaths during what is now Somalia's longest

drought on record will “almost certainly” surpass those of the famine formally declared in the country in 2011, when more than a quarter-million people died.

This time, the world is looking elsewhere, many humanitarian officials say. “Many of the traditional donors have washed their hands and [focused on Ukraine](#),” the U.N. resident coordinator in Somalia, Adam Abdelmoula, told Thomas-Greenfield during a briefing in Mogadishu.

While the U.S. ambassador declined to openly “name and shame” in her speech calling on donors for more help, saying “The countries know who we’re talking about,” the U.N. resident coordinator didn’t hesitate.

The European Union, for example, funded just 10% of the humanitarian response plan for Somalia last year, Abdelmoula told The Associated Press. The EU gave \$74 million and the U.K. \$78 million, according to U.N. data. Japan gave \$27 million and Saudi Arabia \$22 million.

SOURCE:

<https://apnews.com/article/politics-mogadishu-famine-united-nations-somalia-24aa7ddd9b7b657277e83dc-089f51aa2>

27TH JANUARY 2023

US MILITARY KILLS SENIOR ISLAMIC STATE OFFICIAL IN SOMALIA

U.S. special operations forces have killed a senior Islamic State group official and 10 other terrorist operatives in remote northern Somalia, the Biden administration announced Thursday. The operation carried out on Wednesday targeted Bilal al-Sudani, a key financial facilitator for the global terrorist organization, in a mountainous cave complex.

“This action leaves the United States and its partners safer and more secure, and it reflects our steadfast commitment to protecting Americans from the threat of terrorism at home and abroad,” Défense Secretary Lloyd Austin said in a statement.

President Joe Biden was briefed last week about the proposed mission, which came together after months of planning. He gave final approval to carry out the operation this week following the recommendation of Austin and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Army Gen. Mark Milley, according to two senior Biden administration officials who briefed reporters on the operation on the condition of anonymity.

Al-Sudani, who has been on the radar for U.S. intelligence officials for years, played a key role

in helping to fund IS operations in Africa as well as the ISIS-K terrorist branch operating in Afghanistan, Austin said.

SOURCE:

<https://apnews.com/article/politics-mogadishu-europe-somalia-counterterrorism-d0a111658004a940ccd-935cf49187bee>

RWANDA

31TH JANUARY 2023

RWANDA “HERITAGE HUB” IS LAUNCHED

On 31 January 2023, the new Rwanda Heritage Hub was officially launched in the Kandt House Museum, Kigali. ICCROM [Heritage Hubs](#) are knowledge-based innovation centres that cultivate youth engagement, entrepreneurship and business development skills through creativity, digital technologies and partnership with Africa’s heritage protection and promotion community.

The Rwanda Heritage Hub is a joint initiative of Rome-based ICCROM (International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property) and the Government of Rwanda through the Inteko y’Umuco–Rwanda Cultural Heritage Academy (RCHA).

The Hub kicked off its activities with the launch of the “Incubation Laboratory” in November 2022. The Incubation Laboratory is a long-term project to support forty Rwandan youth’s ventures into digital entrepreneurship based on promoting cultural heritage and developing innovative products.

The official launch was attended by **Dr Webber Ndoro, Director-General of ICCROM, Amb. Robert Masozera, Director-General of Rwanda Cultural Heritage Academy (RCHA)** and honourable guests. The attendees visited the Heritage Hub and engaged with the young Rwandans benefiting from training on emerging digital technologies, successful business practices, the basics of Rwandan cultural heritage and cultural heritage management.

SOURCE:

<https://www.iccrom.org/news/rwanda-%E2%80%9Cheritage-hub%E2%80%9D-launched>

31TH JANUARY 2023

CALLS FOR INDEPENDENT PROBE INTO RWANDAN JOURNALIST’S DEATH

Dozens of African civil society groups and press associations on Tuesday called for an independent investigation into the death of a Rwanda-based journalist, saying the official explanation lacked backing evidence.

Investigative journalist John Williams Ntwali had previously expressed fears for his life and told the Human Rights Watch rights organization that he had received phone threats and had strangers visiting his house.

His family was informed on Jan. 19 of his death, which Rwandan police attributed to a motorbike accident. A joint statement by 90 organizations on Tuesday said that no evidence of the accident has yet been released.

“Rwandan authorities have failed to provide a police report, the exact location of the alleged accident, any photo or video evidence or detailed information on the others involved” in the accident, the statement said.

Ntwali has been described as Rwanda’s last independent journalist who exposed alleged human rights violations on detained opposition figures and journalists. His latest coverage was highlighting the plight of people facing land evictions by the authorities.

United States Agency for International Development Administrator Samantha Power on Saturday urged the Rwandan government to independently investigate Ntwali’s death. Rwanda has in the past been accused of infringing on media freedom.

SOURCE:

<https://apnews.com/article/politics-human-rights-watch-rwanda-6906d4052684be85f0761ece16e57512>

25TH JANUARY 2023

RWANDA FIRES ON CONGO MILITARY AIRCRAFT ACCUSED OF VIOLATION

Rwanda has fired on a Congolese military aircraft it alleges violated its airspace in a [new escalation of tensions](#) between the neighbours that has set off alarm across central Africa.

A Rwandan government statement said “defensive measures” were taken against a Sukhoi-25 from Congo on Tuesday evening, and it urged Congo to “stop this aggression.” Rwanda’s state broadcaster shared unverified video of what appeared to be a projectile fired at an aircraft.

Congo’s government in a statement asserted that the Rwandan attack on its fighter plane occurred in Congolese airspace near the city of Goma’s international airport and that the plane had not entered Rwandan airspace. It said the plane landed without major damage.

Congo considers this “a deliberate act of aggression that equals an act of war” with the goal of sabotaging regional peace efforts, the statement said.

The incident occurred a week before Pope Francis arrives in Congo's capital, Kinshasa, for a three-day visit to highlight the toll that decades of conflict have taken on the country, particularly eastern Congo, a volatile region rich in minerals critical to much of the world's technology.

Congo for months has accused Rwanda of supporting a rebel group called M23, one of dozens that's fighting in eastern Congo.

SOURCE:

<https://apnews.com/article/politics-democratic-republic-of-the-congo-government-rwanda-e5369010e5fde-37f9175abee87060a7>

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