

# The AfriFiles

Volume III - September, 2025

We Know Africa

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teeters on  
edge of war**



**Kagame's gamble  
for hosting USA  
deportees**



**Simbu's  
treasured Tokyo  
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# MBOSSA

**Turns Tanzania's  
ports into 3 Cs**

**Cargo,  
Cash and  
Change**





# MBOSSA

Turns Tanzania's ports into 3 Cs

Cargo, Cash and Change

## Cover Story:

The AfriFiles puts this story on the cover to spotlight the noteworthy achievements of the Tanzania Ports Authority in three years - obsessed by the leadership of DG Plasduce Mbossa, the dedication of TPA staff, trusted business partners, and strong government support. **Listen to an audio analysis of TPA's successes - Page 6**

## The AfriFiles Profile:

The AfriFiles is the continent's flagship monthly technology-powered magazine, driven by Africa's top editors and journalists. Shared free through WhatsApp, Signal, LinkedIn, email, and social platforms. Here, Africa's leaders and citizens unite to tell the real stories - of victories, challenges, and futures being built. Bold, incisive, and unapologetically African. The AfriFiles delivers the insights and perspectives that shape tomorrow.



## The Team

Interim Chairman; Chief Knowledge Advisor: **Simon MKINA** (Tanzania)  
Interim Vice Chairman: **Emmanuel DOGBEVI** (Ghana)  
Secretary: **Emmanuel MUTAIZIBWA** (Uganda)

### Address:

Secretariat - IAJC,  
20 Bldg - Baker Street,  
Rosebank, Johannesburg,  
South Africa.  
Email: [iajc@africa](mailto:iajc@africa)

### Editorial:

Editor-in-Chief: **Simon MKINA** (Tanzania)  
Managing Editor: **Manaseli SIBO** (South Africa)  
Editor: **Phinius GANIZWA** (Uganda)  
Chief Sub Editor: **Nkwame AWESI** (Ghana)  
Chief Reporter: **Julie KAMANENE** (Rwanda)  
Senior Reporter: **Johnson WILLIAMS** (Nigeria)  
Creation Lead: **Yassin LUPATU** (Tanzania)

### Contact:

General Enquires: [info@theafrifiles.com](mailto:info@theafrifiles.com)  
Editorial: [editor@theafrifiles.com](mailto:editor@theafrifiles.com)  
Advertisement: [adverts@theafrifiles.com](mailto:adverts@theafrifiles.com)  
Ombudsman: In case of any complaints, please channel your concerns to: [ombuds@gmail.com](mailto:ombuds@gmail.com)

## Who Reads The AfriFiles?

The AfriFiles reaches a global audience of institutions and individuals seeking timely, accurate, and incisive analysis of Africa's history, challenges, and developments.

Its subscribers include elite individuals, government agencies, defense, intelligence, foreign affairs, and diplomatic corps - alongside multilateral bodies, business networks, universities and academic institutions.

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# 3.9

The number of hectares of forest that African loses annually

# 60%

The percentages of unemployed Africans are under 25 in the continent

## Hair toothpaste heals teeth

**A** groundbreaking study from King's College London suggests a future where toothpaste made from human hair could repair damaged teeth and stop decay in its earliest stages.

The secret is keratin - a protein found in hair, skin and wool - long prized in shampoos for its repairing power.

Scientists found that when keratin mixes with minerals in saliva, it forms a protective layer that mimics natural enamel, healing micro-cracks before you even notice.

Unlike fluoride, which only slows erosion, keratin can halt it completely. Within two to three years, keratin-based toothpaste or gels could hit shelves—offering a greener, self-healing alternative for millions.

## Global Beats



## QR Code toilet revolution

JAPAN's bathroom innovator, Toto, rolled out a new QR code service in August 2025 designed to make public restrooms smarter and more user-friendly.

By simply scanning a QR code, users can instantly check the availability of nearby restrooms, monitor live congestion levels, and even report problems such as broken or dirty facilities.

The multilingual platform - available in English, Chinese, Korean, and more - directs users to an interactive website showing which cubicles are free.

Integrated with facility management systems, the service also alerts staff to issues like unclean stalls or unusually long occupancy, allowing them to respond swiftly or politely advise waiting customers.

With this digital leap, Toto is redefining restroom convenience in a country already famed for its world-class toilets.

## Trump turns WH into gold

PRESIDENT Donald Trump has kicked off a jaw-dropping \$200 million renovation of the White House - all funded by private donations, including his own.

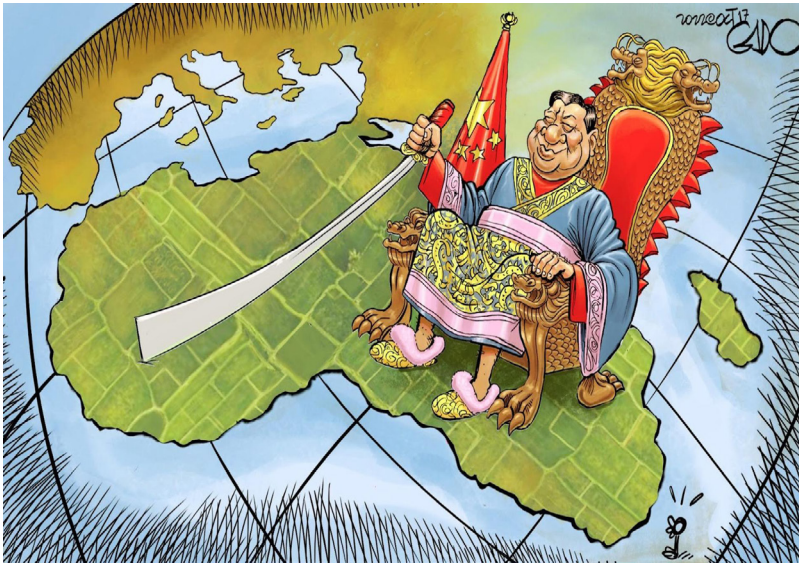
The makeover promises to transform the world's most famous residence into the most expensive presidential home on the planet.

Plans include a colossal 90,000-square-foot state ballroom, a paved Rose Garden, and even gold accents gleaming in the Oval Office.

The ballroom is designed to replace the massive tents often used for state events, while the upgrades unmistakably stamp a "Trump-style" signature across America's executive mansion.

For Trump, it's not just a renovation. It's a legacy project - a golden imprint on the house that symbolizes American power.

## Cartoon by Gado



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You cannot carry out fundamental change without a certain amount of madness.

*Former President of Burkina Faso  
Thomas Sankara*



## Letters to the Editor

### Shining alight on Africa's opportunities

Hello Editor,

AFRICA is brimming with opportunities - yet the world rarely hears about them. Western media tend to focus on negative stories, leaving our achievements in the shadows.

It's time for African media, like The Afri-Files, to take the spotlight. By highlighting the continent's growth and potential, we can inspire Diaspora investment and global recognition of what Africa has to offer.

**Salum Matheme,**  
Amsterdam  
– via email

### Africa beyond the stereotypes

Hello Editor,

IT's time to challenge the myths about Africa. Too often, Western media paint our continent as a land of endless poverty and despair—nothing could be further from the truth.

Not every African lives in a mud hut or next to roaming wildlife. Millions of us thrive in modern, bustling cities, and wildlife is largely confined to protected reserves. Africa is diverse, dynamic, and far more than the stereotypes suggest.

**Miss Johan Comely**  
– via email

### Peaceful elections for Tanzania

Hello Editor,

WITH Tanzania's general elections approaching, I'm concerned by reports of intimidation against journalists and government critics. Freedom to report and speak openly is essential, especially at such a pivotal time.

The country must prioritize peace and calm as citizens head to the polls. A peaceful election is not just a process - it's the foundation of a thriving democracy.

**Malcom Gibsson**  
– via WhatsApp



The bird's view of the harbour in Dar es Salaam.

# Mbossa turns Tanzania's ports into 3 Cs

▶  [Listen to analysis on mobile](#)

▶  [Listen to analysis on PC](#)

By **Simon Mkina, Dar es Salaam**

IN the bustling port city of Dar es Salaam - where cargo ships anchor day and night and cranes stand tall against the skyline like metallic sentinels - one man has quietly engineered a maritime revolution that has reshaped Tanzania's economy.

His name is **Placedus Mbossa**, Director General of the Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA). Since his appointment by President Samia Suluhu Hassan on July 4, 2022, Mbossa has transformed the entity from a struggling bureaucracy into a revenue powerhouse and a cornerstone of Tanzania's development agenda.

When he took the helm, Tanzania's ports - especially Dar es Salaam, Tanga, and Mtwara - were mired in inefficiencies, revenue leakages, and persistent concerns over corruption and smuggling.



Cargo delays, aging infrastructure, and systemic bottlenecks in the ports threatened the nation's ambition to become a regional trade hub.

Today, the picture is very different. TPA is profitable, efficient, and one of the government's largest non-tax revenue contributors.

Under Mbossa's stewardship, it has become a model of how strategic leadership and reform can unlock the potential of a state institution.

### **The Mbossa another doctrine – 3D; Discipline, Digitization, Development**

Mbossa's leadership style is defined by quiet discipline, system-based management, and an unyielding focus on results.

His first priority was institutional reform - tightening audits, strengthening internal controls, and injecting transparency into procurement and revenue collection.

But his boldest move was digitization. He spearheaded the rollout of an integrated digital platform for cargo handling, port operations, and payments. This cut down human contact, curbed corruption, and drastically improved efficiency, enabling traders to move goods faster and at lower costs.

"Ports are the lifeline of trade. If you want to stimulate national development, you must fix the ports," Mbossa told delegates at a logistics conference in Dar es Salaam. His reforms turned that principle into reality.

At Dar es Salaam Port, cargo throughput surged and turnaround times for ships shrank from days to mere hours.

Between 2020/21 and 2023/24, revenue collections soared by over 577.6 billion Tanzanian shillings - a 64 percent increase.

Annual cargo throughput across Dar es Salaam, Tanga, and Mtwara rose by 9.43 million tonnes, a 55 percent jump.

Ship turnaround times fell by more than 10 days for general cargo vessels and to less than 24 hours for container ships. Regional trade volumes climbed 65 percent.

### **Regional Integration and Strategic Expansion**

Mbossa recognized early on that Tanzania's ports are not just national gateways but regional lifelines. Landlocked nations such as Zambia, Malawi, Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo depend on them for their imports and exports.



### **Huge vessels carrying containers dock at Dar es Salaam Port**

To strengthen Tanzania's role as East Africa's logistics hub, he championed strategic expansion - modernizing berths, boosting road and rail links, and expanding storage capacity.

The Standard Gauge Railway (SGR), now integrated into port operations, has become central to his vision of seamless cargo movement inland.

He also oversaw major upgrades at Tanga and Mtwara ports. Tanga is now a crucial support base for projects like the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP), while Mtwara is unlocking the economic promise of southern Tanzania.

### **Challenges and Resilience**

The transformation was not without hurdles. Global shipping disruptions during the Covid-19 pandemic, domestic political pressures, and resistance from vested interests all tested Mbossa's resolve. Yet he stayed the course, letting results speak louder than rhetoric.



Containers handling at Dar es Salaam Port

Colleagues describe him as low-profile but uncompromising. “He walks the talk,” said one senior port official. “Under him, mediocrity has no place.”

National Impact: Ports as Catalysts of Development

TPA’s resurgence has ripple effects across Tanzania. Revenues generated under Mbossa have bolstered infrastructure, healthcare, education, and other national priorities.

The country’s logistics ranking has improved, and investor confidence in port infrastructure is rising.

On the regional stage, Tanzania has solidified its role as the preferred trade gateway for its neighbors, positioning itself as a leader in East African integration and logistics.

**The Legacy of Transformation**

As Tanzania pushes toward industrialization, export growth, and middle-income status, Mbossa’s leadership at TPA stands as a case study in public-sector transformation.

His legacy is measured not only in cargo volumes and revenue figures but also in the restored confidence that Tanzania can manage its strategic assets effectively.

Asked about his future vision, Mbossa remains characteristically focused: “My goal is simple - make Tanzania’s ports the most efficient and trusted in Africa, and of course, beyond.”

In a region where ports have too often symbolized stagnation, Placedus Mbossa has turned them into engines of progress. ■



President Samia Suluhu Hassan decorates TPA boss Plasduce Mbossa after she cut the ribbon to open the Kwala Dry Port in Vigwaza, Coast Region, July 31, 2025. (Pics: Special Correspondent).

**Dar es Salaam, Tanga, Mtwara Ports modernized**

<p><b>55%</b> </p> <p>Annual cargo throughput for Dar es Salaam, Tanga and Mtwara Ports increased by <b>9.43 Million Tons</b> from year 2020/21 to year 2023/24.</p>	<p>Average ship turnaround time reduced by more than <b>10 days (240 hours)</b> for Dry General Cargo Vessel and less than <b>1 day (24 hours)</b> for Container Vessel.</p>
<p>Revenue growth for Dar es Salaam, Tanga and Mtwara Ports increased by <b>Shillings 577.688 Billion</b> from year 2020/21 to year 2023/24.</p>	<p>Regional trade volume handled by 3 ports increased by <b>3.6 Million Tons (65%)</b> from year 2020/21 to year 2023/24.</p>

Source: Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA)

# South Sudan teeters on edge of war

By Moses NANG

In the sweltering heat of Upper Nile, the air carries more than dust and smoke—it carries the tense hum of anticipation, the fear of another eruption of violence.

South Sudan, the world's youngest nation, barely a decade old, teeters once again on the edge of war.

Despite a peace agreement brokered in 2018, the fragile truce between factions loyal to rival leaders is showing deep cracks, raising fears that the country could return to the dark days of civil conflict that have defined much of its short history.

The internationally backed peace deal, hailed at the time as a path toward national unity, promised a power-sharing government and the disarmament of militias.

**Several agreements signed, but implementation has been slow and shaky in the country rich of oil with huge number of poor natives.**

Yet, as observers note, the agreement was always more aspirational than enforceable. Both sides - forces loyal to President Salva Kiir and those loyal to First Vice-President Riek Machar - have repeatedly violated its terms.

What began as political disagreements quickly escalated into armed clashes, exposing the limits of diplomacy in a nation where grievances run deep, and allegiances are complex.

Six months ago, First Vice-President Machar, along with his wife, Interior Minister Angelina Jany Teny, was placed under house arrest.

This action followed violent confrontations in Upper Nile, where Nuer youth from the notorious White Army clashed with government forces supported by river gunboats and helicopter gunships.

The clashes claimed the life of Lieutenant-General David Majur Dak, a loss that sent shockwaves through both communities and reignited old suspicions. For many, the house arrest was a symbolic act, a sign that the delicate balance of the peace agreement was failing.



South Sudan's President Salva Kiir. Photo: AP

At the core of South Sudan's instability lies more than internal rivalries. The nation is rich in oil, a resource that has drawn the attention of foreign powers.

Russia and China, eager to secure their stakes in the country's oil production, have increasingly become players in South Sudan's internal affairs.

Analysts warn that this external interference, while framed as investment and aid, has fueled tensions and created incentives for both sides to cling to power rather than compromise.

The result is a dangerous cocktail of domestic grievances and international competition, leaving ordinary citizens caught in the crossfire.

Life for South Sudanese families in conflict zones has become a daily struggle for survival. Villages in Upper Nile and Unity states have reported displacement on an alarming scale.

Farmers abandon their fields, children miss school, and access to medical care becomes almost impossible.



South Sudanese government soldiers prepare to fight rebels (above) near the town of Bor. Photo: Jake Simkin/AP



# 2011

**South Sudan became the world's newest country on July 9, 2011, after seceding from Sudan. The country continues to grapple with severe poverty exacerbated by prolonged conflict, political instability, and climate-related shocks.**

Humanitarian agencies, already stretched thin, warn that a return to large-scale fighting could trigger a crisis worse than anything the country has experienced in years.

The White Army, a youth militia largely drawn from the Nuer community, has become both a symbol of resistance and a source of fear.

Initially formed to protect local communities during earlier conflicts, its members now operate with increasing autonomy, often clashing with government forces in unpredictable ways.

Lieutenant-General Dak's death underscored the lethal potential of these confrontations and the fragile nature of command and control within both the military and militia structures.

Politically, the stalemate between Kiir and Machar has become personal as much as it is strategic.

Power-sharing arrangements have frequently broken down over disputes about appointments, resource allocation, and control over oil-rich regions.

Machar's house arrest is seen by his supporters as an affront to the peace deal, while Kiir's backers argue it was necessary to prevent further destabilization.

Both sides, however, underestimate how quickly grievances can escalate into open conflict in a country where decades of war have normalized violence as a tool of political negotiation.

International mediators have expressed growing concern. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the African Union, and the United Nations have all urged restraint and renewed dialogue.

Yet, the repeated violations of the 2018 agreement have left many diplomats frustrated. Some argue that without a credible enforcement mechanism, peace deals will continue to exist only on paper.

Others stress that sustainable peace requires addressing the root causes of conflict—ethnic rivalry, competition over resources, and historical marginalization—not just negotiating political settlements in the capital, Juba.

For ordinary South Sudanese, the prospect of renewed war is a bitter history. Families who survived the civil war of 2013–2018 remember the horror of famine, mass displacement, and indiscriminate violence.

For many, the current political maneuvers are more than abstract disputes - they are harbingers of a potential humanitarian catastrophe.

"We thought the fighting was over," says Achol Deng, a mother of four from Malakal. "But now, we hear the soldiers are back, and people are leaving their homes again. We do not know if we will survive another war."

The stakes are high, not just for South Sudan, but for the region. Renewed conflict could destabilize neighboring countries such as Sudan, Uganda, and Kenya, triggering a new wave of refugees and threatening regional trade and security.

Oil production, a cornerstone of South Sudan's fragile economy, could be disrupted, sending shockwaves through global markets where China and Russia have significant investments. In short, the world is watching, but the people on the ground are the ones who bear the heaviest burden.

There are glimmers of hope. Civil society organizations continue to advocate for dialogue and reconciliation.

Local peace committees, often composed of elders and community leaders, work tirelessly to mediate disputes before they escalate.



**South Sudan's first Vice President Riek Machar.**

Humanitarian groups strive to provide aid and education, even in areas at high risk of violence. Yet, these efforts face an uphill battle against entrenched political rivalries, militarized youth groups, and the shadow of foreign influence.

Experts argue that preventing a return to war requires more than negotiations between Kiir and Machar. "Peace must be inclusive," says Dr. Rebecca Nyandeng, a veteran South Sudanese peace mediator.

"It cannot be limited to elite power-sharing. Communities, youth groups, women, and local leaders must be part of the process. Otherwise, the cycle of violence will repeat itself, as it has for decades."

The coming months will be critical. Whether South Sudan can avoid sliding back into conflict depends on the willingness of its leaders to compromise, the capacity of international actors to enforce peace, and the resilience of ordinary citizens who yearn for stability.

Without decisive action, the 2018 peace deal may join the long list of agreements in South Sudan that promised much but delivered little.

As the sun sets over the Nile, casting long shadows across a land scarred by conflict, one cannot help but wonder if the world will witness yet another chapter of war in South Sudan.

For now, the country stands at a crossroads. The choices made today - by leaders, mediators, and communities alike - will determine whether South Sudan can finally turn the page or be forced to relive the tragedies of its past.

The people wait, cautiously, desperately, hoping that the guns remain silent. But in South Sudan, hope has always been fragile. And fragile hope can easily shatter. ■

# Promise, pressure on 24-hour, after dark businesses

By Nkwame AWESI

**W**HEN dusk falls on Ghana's capital city, Accra, the streets do not sleep. Traders still haggle in markets, food vendors fire up grills, and truckers load goods for long hauls.

But in 2025, this natural buzz has been folded into a national blueprint. President John Mahama's 24-hour economy and accelerated export development programme aims to turn round-the-clock activity into a deliberate driver of growth.

The plan is bold. Government models project up to three million new jobs and a surge in GDP by extending production hours, keeping factories humming and ports moving through the night.

The logic is simple; if existing capital can be used beyond the 9 - 5 window, Ghana can raise productivity without building entirely new plants.

For exporters of cocoa, cashew, or processed foods, shorter turnaround times could be a competitive edge.

The initiative also seeks to formalize what already exists. Night markets, logistics crews, and informal service workers form a large share of Ghana's urban economy.

With investment in lighting, policing, and sanitation, these spaces could become safer, more profitable, and taxable. Tourism and hospitality stand to gain as well, positioning Accra and Kumasi as 24-hour cities.

Yet the hurdles are real. Continuous operations demand reliable electricity, secure transport for night workers, and labour protections such as shift premiums and safety rules. Without these, Ghana risks amplifying precarious work rather than creating decent jobs.

Infrastructure gaps and fiscal constraints also raise questions about how quickly the initiative can move from pilots to scale.

Still, the symbolism matters. In a region where governments often talk of job creation in abstract terms, Ghana is experimenting with a concrete, visible policy.



Exotic Ghana street food tour at night!! exploring Osu night market, Accra, Ghana. Photo: Blastours

The outcome will depend on execution; coordinated ministries, private-sector buy-in, and sustained investment in the basics that make a city run after dark.

For now, the 24-hour economy is both a promise and a pressure test - a gamble that Ghana's nights can be as productive as its days, and that growth can be found not just in new projects, but in the extra hours waiting to be unlocked. ■



400

Millions of people in Africa lack access to safe drinking water

25

Millions of people are living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa, accounting for two-thirds of the global total

## Kagame’s gamble for hosting USA deportees

By Julius KAMANENE

**T**HIS August, 2025, Rwanda quietly stepped into the center of America’s immigration storm.

Kigali announced it would accept up to 250 migrants deported from the United States, under a new bilateral agreement that has stirred both praise and criticism.

For Washington, the deal is a pressure valve. The U.S. faces growing political battles over border security and deportations, and partnering with Rwanda offers an outlet - both logistically and diplomatically.

In return, Rwanda secures a financial package to support housing, healthcare, and skills training for the deportees, positioning itself as a dependable partner in solving one of the world’s most contentious policy dilemmas.

President Paul Kagame’s government insists the deportees will not be jailed or mistreated. Officials emphasize that Rwanda will pre-approve all arrivals, providing them with reintegration programs designed to help them rebuild their lives.

“This is a humanitarian commitment as much as a partnership,” a Rwandan official said. “We are offering people dignity when other systems have failed them.” Yet critics see something different. Human rights groups warn that Rwanda’s record on political freedoms makes it an uneasy custodian of vulnerable populations.

Skeptics argue that the deal, like similar arrangements Rwanda has struck with Britain in recent years, turns the country into a convenient outsourcing hub for Western migration challenges.

At home, reactions are mixed. Some Rwandans view the agreement as a sign of international trust, cementing their country’s role as a global player despite its small size.

Others question whether a nation still grap-



Rwanda’s President Paul Kagame. Photo: Radar Africa

pling with poverty and limited resources can truly absorb new communities without social strain.

Beyond the immediate controversy, the U.S.–Rwanda deal illustrates a broader shift; African states increasingly positioning themselves within global migration politics, not as passive actors but as negotiators with leverage.

For Rwanda, a country still defined by its post-genocide rebirth, this move signals ambition - and invites scrutiny.

As the first deportees arrive later this year, the world will be watching closely; will Rwanda prove a safe haven, or does this partnership risk becoming another chapter in the politics of displacement? ■



Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jammah (ASWJ) militants posing outside a government building in Cabo Delgado province. (Photo: Risk Intelligence)

Despite the influx of multinational companies and significant investments, local employment opportunities in the gas and mining sectors have been minimal. Many of the jobs created are filled by workers from other regions or countries, often due to higher skill requirements.

# Cabo Delgado's struggle between gas and war

By Julius AFONSO

**U**NDER the sun-scorched expanses of Cabo Delgado, northern Mozambique, the promise of prosperity now smells faintly of gunpowder.

Once hailed as Africa's next energy frontier, the region's massive natural gas fields - meant to transform the nation into a liquefied natural gas powerhouse - have become a battleground.

Insurgents have turned off the gas, literally and metaphorically, exposing a cruel paradox; abundance fueling violence rather than development.

The story is painfully familiar. Gas discoveries in 2009 promised jobs, schools, and roads. Instead, they delivered eviction notices, environmental degradation, and armed militancy.

Islamist insurgents, cloaked in ideology yet fueled by grievances over inequality and corruption, have targeted gas installations not merely to sabotage energy projects but to claim attention in a world that otherwise ignores the suffering of the locals.

Villages are razed, families displaced, and a population already living on the margins is pushed further into despair.

It is tempting to blame the insurgents alone, but that would be a convenient oversimplification.

Foreign corporations and a distant state have often treated Cabo Delgado as a gas reserve rather than a human landscape.

Security is prioritized over social welfare, and pipelines are protected more vigorously than communities.

In this vacuum, the insurgency thrives. By attacking gas infrastructure, these fighters are sending a message; wealth without justice is volatile, and extraction without inclusion is unsustainable.

Mozambique's tragedy is a cautionary tale for resource-rich nations. Natural riches are not inherently a blessing; they are a responsibility.

The global market may shrug as Local natural Gas (LNG) flows resume elsewhere, but on the ground, lives remain broken and futures uncertain.

For Cabo Delgado, the insurgents' attacks are not merely acts of terror - they are the alarm bells of a system that has promised much and delivered little.

Until the Mozambican state and international actors recognize the human cost behind the gas flares, the cycle of destruction will continue.

Gas is power, yes, but in Cabo Delgado, power has been weaponized - and the people are paying the price. ■



It is important that the continent produces skills that will help grow its economy. Africa has the capacity and the intellectuals needed to address its challenges — we must invest in developing them.”

**Former South African President, Thabo Mbeki**

## AGOA and the fight for Africa’s trade future

By Piersel CHURCHILL

**W**HEN the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) was signed into law in 2000, it was sold as a game-changer; a ticket for African countries to access the U.S. market duty-free.

Twenty-five years later, with AGOA set to expire this year - in 2025, the continent faces a sobering question - has it been a springboard for growth, or just a lifeline that’s about to snap?

AGOA opened U.S. markets to more than 6,500 African products, from textiles and coffee to oil and minerals. In some countries, it transformed economies.

**By providing new market opportunities, AGOA has helped bolster economic growth, promoted economic and political reform, and improved U.S. economic relations in the region.**

Lesotho became a major clothing exporter; Kenya’s apparel sector boomed; and Ethiopia built industrial parks geared toward American buyers. For resource exporters like Nigeria and Angola, oil flowed under AGOA’s umbrella.

But the benefits have been lopsided. Only a handful of nations take full advantage, and most exports remain low-value goods. The dream of industrialization - African factories producing competitive, value-added products for the global market—has largely stalled.

Critics argue AGOA encouraged dependency rather than innovation. “You can’t build an economy on cheap textiles and crude exports,” one economist in Nairobi says bluntly.

Now, the stakes are higher. With the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) creating a \$3.4 trillion single market at home, African



Uganda’s President Yoweri Museveni. Photo: AFP

leaders are demanding more than symbolic gestures from Washington.

They want trade frameworks that support manufacturing, green energy, and value-added agriculture - not just raw materials flowing one way.

Meanwhile, geopolitics looms large. China has entrenched itself as Africa’s top trading partner through its Belt and Road projects.

The EU is stepping up with its Global Gateway. For the U.S., renewing or reforming AGOA is not just about economics - it’s about proving it still matters in Africa’s future.

The countdown is on. If AGOA is renewed with fresh ambition, it could fuel Africa’s industrial take-off. If not, the continent may pivot decisively toward Asia and itself.

Either way, Africa is no longer waiting to be saved—it is ready to set its own trade terms. ■



# Africa's global family returns

By AfriFiles REPORTER

IN a bright co-working space in Accra, a software engineer who spent a decade in Silicon Valley now spends six months a year mentoring local startups.

She shares global coding practices, fundraising strategies, and networking tips. “Impact isn’t just in sending money,” she says. “It’s in sharing what I’ve learned abroad.”

Across Africa, similar stories unfold. Doctors from Europe fly back to perform free surgeries in under-resourced hospitals.

Entrepreneurs from North America invest in fintech startups in Nairobi, Kenya, helping young innovators scale.

Remittances are vital - Africans abroad send over \$100 billion annually - but the real change comes from knowledge, skills, and connections.

In Ethiopia, diaspora professionals helped modernize the national airline, bringing global expertise to local operations.

In Rwanda, returnees have been instrumental in transforming Kigali into a tech hub, men-

toring startups and attracting international investors.

Artists and filmmakers abroad are reshaping global perceptions of Africa, telling stories of creativity and resilience rather than poverty and conflict.

Challenges remain. Many diasporans face bureaucratic barriers and cultural gaps when trying to contribute.

Some locals perceive returnees as overbearing. Bridging this divide requires humility on both sides; African governments must create supportive policies, while diaspora professionals must engage as partners, not patrons.

Campaigns like Ghana’s “Year of Return” show what is possible. By reconnecting with ancestral roots, thousands of Africans abroad not only rediscover heritage but also invest in businesses, cultural projects, and education initiatives.

The diaspora carries the best of both worlds; global experience and African identity. They prove that development isn’t only about money - it’s about ideas, mentorship, and collaborative effort.

Africa’s future will be shaped not just on the continent, but across oceans, as returnees, mentors, and investors work together to turn potential into progress. ■

# Sumaye breaks the silence on Tanzania's fragile democracy

▶ He is still the longest serving prime minister under one president

**Great Interview**



**F**REDERICK Tluway Sumaye occupies a singular place in Tanzania’s post-independence history.

He is the country’s longest-serving prime minister, holding office for a full decade under President Benjamin Mkapa from 1995 to 2005.

His premiership coincided with a period of enormous change: the dismantling of socialist legacies, the painful birth of economic liberalization, and the early struggles of multiparty democracy.

Before stepping into the premiership, Sumaye had already built a career in agriculture policy. In 1985, President Ali Hassan Mwinyi appointed him as Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Cooperatives.

Nearly a decade later, he was promoted to full minister, before being elevated to the second-highest office in the land.

In his ten years as prime minister, he became a key figure in steering structural reforms, negotiating with donors, and navigating Tanzania’s first truly multiparty parliament.

Today, at 75, Sumaye is no longer in active politics, but his reflections carry the weight of lived history. In a candid conversation with a journalist, **Elizabeth Hombo**, he opens up about the struggles of economic management, the fragility of democratic institutions, corruption’s stranglehold on politics, and his views on President Samia Suluhu Hassan’s leadership.

**Question:** When you left office in 2005, the economy was stable and growing. Yet poverty levels today have not declined at the same pace as GDP. What went wrong?

Sumaye: It is hard for me to point to one thing and say, “this is where it went wrong.” But I can tell you what we faced when we came in.

The economy we inherited in 1995 was in a terrible state. To build a healthy economy, you first have to establish macroeconomic stability. That was our main priority.

Of course, we did not ignore the microeconomic side, but stabilization takes time, especially when the starting point is so weak. That is why our first five years were extremely difficult. Many Tanzanians complained that President Mkapa was making life harder—but in truth, we were stabilizing the fundamentals.

We focused on inflation, fiscal discipline, and restoring confidence in the financial system. By



the time we left, prices were stable, and fluctuations were under control. That was no accident; it was the result of macroeconomic discipline.

What disrupted that stability later on, I cannot say. That is for those who came after us to explain.

**Question:** Tanzania has no legal framework protecting national development plans, so each administration seems to abandon its predecessor’s roadmap. How damaging is this?

Sumaye: It is one of Africa’s most serious weaknesses. We come up with excellent national plans, but once leadership changes, the plans are discarded.

I recall President Mkapa once speaking at the World Economic Forum in Dar es Salaam. He said: “After you leave office, no one at home consults you anymore—yet outsiders still value your experience.” That is the irony. Africans ignore their former leaders, while the world listens to them.

This lack of continuity explains why we struggle with sustainable development. Every new government wants its own signature plan. We forget that development is a long relay race, not a sprint.

**Question:** Many argue that Tanzania needs a new constitution to fix its governance problems. Do you agree?

Sumaye: People ask me this often, and my answer remains the same: a new constitution is not a magic wand. It cannot stop a bad leader from making reckless decisions if the systems to restrain him are weak.



Senior Editor Peter Nyanje (L) and journalist Elizabeth Hombo interview Sumaye in his Dar es Salaam office. (Photo: Fidelis Felix).

The constitution we use today is the same one that guided Nyerere, Mwinyi, Mkapa, and Kikwete. Under them, governance was relatively stable. But under President John Magufuli, with the exact same constitution, things were very different. That shows the problem is not just the text—it is the strength of the systems.

In developed democracies, systems are strong enough to stop a president from acting recklessly. In Tanzania, the presidency is almost unchecked. That is the difference. My hope is that one day we will reach a point where systems, not individuals, truly govern.

**Question:** But could a new constitution at least help strengthen those systems?

Sumaye: To some extent, yes. A constitution aligned with enforceable systems is helpful. But look at the United States: the president cannot take major actions without the system's consent. If he overreaches, the system blocks him. That is the level of institutional power we should aim for.

**Question:** Looking back, what achievement from your ten years as Prime Minister gives you the most pride?

Sumaye: I dislike boasting, because government is collective work. But if I must highlight something, I would say stabilizing a collapsing economy is one.

I was also the first prime minister to preside over a multiparty parliament. That was no small matter. We strengthened democracy while carrying out sweeping civil service reforms—without chaos. Our international partners were surprised.

We respected parliament. We reformed health, education, and other sectors. That is the legacy: a functioning government, not an individual glory.

**Question:** You later joined the opposition before returning to CCM. How do you assess the state of democracy?

Sumaye: When I joined the opposition, I made it clear it was not out of anger with CCM. My concern was the imbalance of a dominant party against weak competitors.

In any multiparty system, if one party remains overwhelmingly powerful, one day the people will reject it, even if it performs well. If there is no strong alternative, the country risks chaos.

That is why I joined Chadema—to help build a credible alternative. Unfortunately, I found opposition politics frustrating. I wanted to transform Chadema from an activist movement into a real political party. Some resisted, accusing me of being a CCM spy. It was absurd.

I told them: you cannot fight the police, the security services, and state machinery with activism alone. Only a strong political institution can capture State House. When I pushed for internal reforms, resistance grew. That is when I realized my mission there would not succeed.

**Question:** President Samia Suluhu Hassan has now led for over four years. How do you view her leadership?

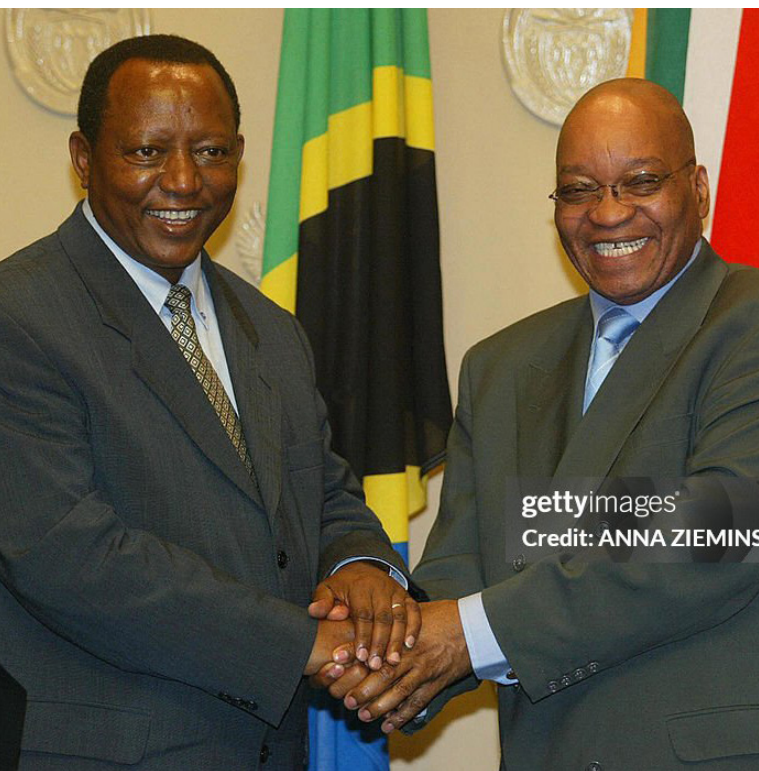
Sumaye: Frankly, I admire her style. She leads without haughtiness. She has restored hope.

Under President Magufuli, many thought the country was on the right path. In reality, it was sinking. I could see it collapsing. President Samia has at least pulled us back onto safer ground.

Of course, no leader is straight perfect. But businesspeople no longer fear arbitrary confiscation. Tax officials still misbehave sometimes, but she corrects them. People are now breathe in peace and work with confidence. That is progress.

**Question:** Corruption in politics remains a persistent concern. Is it still as bad?

Sumaye: It is worse than ever. Today, if you want to contest for parliament, the first question people ask is: “Do you have money?” Even your spouse may ask you that.



Cape Town, South Africa: Tanzanian Prime Minister Frederick Sumaye (L) shakes hands with South African Deputy President Jacob Zuma at the conclusion of bilateral talks at Tuynhuis in Cape Town 19 October 2004. AFP Photo/Anna Zieminski)

“

Every leader has faults,” he reflects, “but overall, the country is safer now. My prayer is that we build stronger systems, because only then will both our democracy and our economy truly prosper.”

This shuts out capable people without wealth. Instead, moneyed individuals—sometimes with little ability—dominate. That is dangerous for democracy.

Even ordinary voters now expect bribes. They say openly: “We will vote for whoever gives us the most.” I have asked them why, and their answer is chilling: “Since MPs enrich themselves in parliament, we might as well benefit too.” This mindset is alarming.

**Question:** Do current leaders consult you?

Sumaye: Rarely. Occasionally, yes, but not often. Leaders seldom seek the counsel of former officials. I try to advise when I can, but it is not easy to reach the president—she is extremely busy.

**Question:** Between CCM and Chadema, where did you feel more at peace?

Sumaye: Politics is never peaceful. In CCM, I had fewer challenges because I was part of leadership. In Chadema, it was tougher. I tried to build them up, but progress was slow, often reversed.

Many urged me to form my own party. Some even promised funding. But I refused. At my age and with my resources, it made no sense. Instead, I have chosen to remain available as an adviser to anyone who seeks my guidance.

### Final Reflections

At 75, Frederick Sumaye has no ambitions left for political office. But his voice remains firm on the future of Tanzania’s democracy. He argues that strong institutions—not just constitutions—are the key to governance. He warns that corruption, especially money-driven politics, threatens democracy’s very survival. He insists that without a credible opposition, multiparty democracy cannot take root.

And yet, he retains hope. He sees President Samia steering Tanzania back to stability.

“Every leader has faults,” he reflects, “but overall, the country is safer now. My prayer is that we build stronger systems, because only then will both our democracy and our economy truly prosper.” ■

# Visiting Ngorongoro Crater is a real journey to Eden

In the heart of East Africa, where volcanoes sleep and wildlife reigns, a sacred balance between humans and nature still exists.



📍 Destiny | Ngorongoro



By Simon MKINA

**A**T sunrise, the mists of the highlands part slowly, revealing a vast emerald basin encircled by ancient volcanic walls. Below, life stirs. Elephants roam silently across dew-drenched plains, lions bask in golden light, and Maasai herders in red shukas tend their cattle.

This is Ngorongoro Crater, one of the most astonishing places on Earth—and arguably the closest thing we have to Eden.

### The First Glimpse: Awe on Arrival

To reach Ngorongoro is to travel through Tanzania’s mythical landscapes—starting with the boundless plains of the Serengeti, where life seems to overflow. It was here, just a few kilometers from the crater rim, that I met Lauren, a traveler from Oregon, USA, on her first African safari. Her reaction was immediate and unfiltered.

“Wow,” she whispered repeatedly as giraffes strode across the horizon and zebras pranced through the tall grass. “It’s like the Garden of Eden—how is this real?”

Her wonder wasn’t misplaced. Tanzania is a country blessed with extraordinary abundance. But her awe was laced with puzzlement. “Your country has so much,” she asked one evening at camp, “so why is there still poverty? With this beauty, these resources... shouldn’t everyone be thriving?”

It’s a question many travelers wrestle with. And while the answers are complex—rooted in historical, economic, and political contexts—what’s undeniable is that the Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA) remains one of the most vivid examples of Africa’s rich natural heritage, and a model of cohabitation unlike any other.

### The Wild Classroom: A Safari of Stories

Our guide, Robert Manoni, is a walking encyclopedia of the wild. Once a veterinary doctor, he now leads expeditions with Africa Safari Company, using his deep understanding of animal behavior to open tourists’ eyes to the subtleties of nature.

As we cruised through the Serengeti en route to Ngorongoro, Robert shared tales of animal alliances that sound like fables but are rooted in science.



We don't fear these animals," he said with a smile. "They are our friends. We understand them, and they understand us."

signaling when it's time to eat. How elephants, though massive, operate in matriarchal harmony.

Every mile deeper into the wilderness made us realize: the Serengeti and Ngorongoro aren't just scenic—they're alive with intelligence, hierarchy, and interdependence.

### Descent into Paradise

Nothing, however, prepared us for the descent into Ngorongoro Crater.

The journey down begins at the rim—a cool, fog-kissed ledge 2,200 meters above sea level. The road snakes downward along the escarpment, every turn revealing more of the 264-square-kilometer caldera floor below. It's a descent not just in elevation, but into another world—one suspended in time.

When our vehicle finally reached the crater floor, silence fell across the group. Before us, nature unfolded in surreal harmony: lions and buffaloes resting within eyeshot, warthogs snuffling near grazing elephants, hyenas nursing cubs without concern for the nearby safari truck.

And then, the most extraordinary sight: Maasai cattle drinking from the same waterhole as zebras and antelopes, under the watchful eye of Maasai herders.

"It's real," Lauren gasped her earlier Eden comparison now undeniable.

### Where Cattle and Lions Coexist

This is where Ngorongoro defies all expectations. Unlike national parks, the conservation area allows human habitation—specifically by the Maasai people, who have lived here for centuries in harmony with the ecosystem.

We met Olosot, a teenage herder with a beaded necklace and a calm presence that radiated confidence. He stood just meters from a pair of elephants, guiding his goats with a stick.

"We don't fear these animals," he said with a smile. "They are our friends. We understand them, and they understand us."

When asked whether he ever hunts wildlife, he shook his head. "We only eat our cattle. The wild animals, they are sacred. They are part of the land, just like us."

"See the hartebeests and zebras?" he pointed. "They travel together. The zebras can sense danger quickly. The hartebeests? They're better at finding good pasture. So, they depend on each other."

Even love and survival have their rhythms. "A dominant Grant's gazelle male can mate with over a hundred females," Robert explained with a chuckle. "But he must defend them all—every single one. If another male comes close, there's a fight. No mercy."

His stories weren't just captivating—they were lessons in ecological intelligence. How zebras, though appearing identical, each wear a unique set of stripes like fingerprints. How lions rely on lionesses not just for hunting but for



Ngorongoro Crater

What makes this coexistence possible? As Robert explained, wild animals in the crater recognize the scent of the Maasai—accepting them as part of the ecosystem. But outsiders, especially tourists, must always remain inside vehicles.

### **Water, salt, and flamingoes**

We stop at Lake Makat, a shallow, soda-rich lake in the crater's heart. Flamingoes turn its surface into a watercolor of pink and white, their elegant necks bent toward the water, feeding on salt-loving algae and insects.

Robert explains how the lake is a lifeline. Though salty, it never dries—offering water and minerals to animals year-round. Around it grows grass rich in salt, a favorite for many herbivores.

It's another reminder that Ngorongoro is a self-sustaining system—one where every plant, predator, bird, and breeze has a role to play.

### **Lessons from the Crater**

The Ngorongoro Crater is more than a marvel of geology or a hotspot of biodiversity. It is, in many ways, a mirror. A reflection of what's possible when humans live not above nature, but within it.

Here, animals do not flee from people. Lions do not hunt livestock. The Maasai do not take more than they need. And the land gives back in abundance—grass, water, life.

Yes, challenges remain. Population growth, tourism pressure, and climate change are all threats on the horizon. But for now, Ngorongoro remains one of the last places where the ancient promise of Eden feels alive.

### **Why Ngorongoro Matters**

In a world reeling from environmental degradation and the disconnection between people and planet, Ngorongoro offers a hopeful blueprint. Not a museum frozen in time, but a living ecosystem where balance is maintained through knowledge, culture, and respect.

For tourists, it is unforgettable. For conservationists, it is sacred. For the Maasai, it is home.

As we drove back up the crater rim, Lauren looked out one last time at the vast green bowl below.

"I came for wildlife," she said. "But I found something deeper. Peace. Wisdom. A reminder of how we're supposed to live."

Come see where Earth still whispers the ancient story of Paradise. ■

# City unplugged life in Johannesburg's dark age



Jacoba Guild, a resident of Claremont Village.  
(Photo: Screengrab).

By Ferial HAFFAJEE

WITH nearly 100,000 reported outages in just nine months, Johannesburg is running on diesel, firewood — and desperation.

Behind City Power's collapsing infrastructure are stories of businesses shuttered, fridges emptied, and families left unsafe in the dark. For many Joburgers, electricity has become a luxury.

In Alexandra, where power cuts are constant, residents say outages now last weeks, not hours. "We no longer buy food to freeze," says Ntuthuko Zulu (not real name), "we live day-to-day - which is expensive."

Illegal connections, cable theft and failing transformers keep whole blocks powerless, while residents stand outside in their pyjamas waiting for overstretched City Power teams to



We had demand but no power to cook. Stock spoiled, customers left. Sixteen-hour outages are normal now."

restore supply.

For Nathi Dankuru, the unpredictability is crushing. Load reduction, meant to last two hours, often stretches into days. "When power comes back, it burns TVs and appliances," he says.

Businesses are buckling. Clement, who runs a small restaurant in East Bank, says December and January were brutal.

"We had demand but no power to cook. Stock spoiled, customers left. Sixteen-hour outages are normal now." With no generator, his livelihood hangs by a plug.

In Claremont, outages stall both factories and farms. Community leader Moegamat Jones, who built an eco-village and garden on a cleared dumpsite, says: "When the power goes, pumps stop, crops suffer, everything slows."

For pensioner Jacoba Guild, outages mean spoiled food, flooding fridges and greater danger. "Two women were robbed walking to the tuckshop because we can't store food anymore," she says.

Everywhere, survival costs climb; R40,000 inverters, diesel bills, solar geysers, candles. Residents lose not only cash but safety, health and dignity.

What City Power describes as "load reduction" and "breakdowns" are, for households, nights of fear and meals skipped.

Johannesburg's grid is dimming, and so is faith in its future. The testimonies reveal a city where people improvise to survive, but also a city left behind by those meant to keep the lights on. ■

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# President Netumbo ignites bold new future

By Isabella ELIJAH

**M**ARCH 21, 2025, dawned with a historic promise over Namibia. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, 72, a veteran of decades in politics, was sworn in as the country's first female president.

"This is not just my victory; it is Namibia's moment," she told an exuberant crowd, her voice steady with conviction.



Long known for her diplomatic finesse as Vice President and Foreign Minister, Nandi-Ndaitwah now faces a different challenge; meeting soaring public expectations at home.

Her winning of 57% of the vote, means she has the mandate - but opposition parties warn that legitimacy must be paired with action.

The Supreme Court dismissed their challenges, clearing the path for her leadership, but scrutiny will be relentless.

From the start, Nandi-Ndaitwah signaled a bold agenda. "Education is the cornerstone of our future," she said, unveiling plans for free higher education and vocational training beginning in 2026.

For Namibia's predominantly young population, it is a lifeline long awaited. Families burdened by tuition costs now glimpse a horizon of opportunity, and the country's youth see themselves finally included in shaping the nation.

Economic reform is another battleground. Namibia has long depended on mining and extractive industries, leaving its economy vulnerable.

Nandi-Ndaitwah promises to invest in agriculture, renewable energy, and technology, aiming to ignite entrepreneurship and create jobs.

At the same time, she has begun reshaping government ministries to cut bureaucratic red tape, insisting, "Efficiency is not optional - it is our duty to the people."

Yet the path is steep. Funding free education, attracting meaningful investment, and tackling unemployment are monumental tasks.

Citizens are also watching for her commitment to transparency and anti-corruption. One young activist remarked, "We hope she's not just making speeches but actually changing the system."

For Namibia, this presidency is more than a historic first - it is a test of whether decades of experience can translate into tangible progress.

Nandi-Ndaitwah's early steps hint at determination and vision, but in a nation hungry for change, promises alone are not enough.

The eyes of Namibia are on her, and the world is watching as this new chapter begins. ■



Girls carry drinking water from a well in the Kanyama compound. Credit: Simon Townsley /The Telegraph

# Struggling to survive in the villages

By Marcel MAGWESO

THE sun rises over dusty villages, painting mud walls in shades of gold, but for many families, a new day brings more worry than hope.

Mothers cradle babies on their hips while carrying bundles of maize meal to sell. Children with bare feet scurry past cracked paths, chasing the elusive promise of a better tomorrow.

Despite talk of growth and progress, the reality in these villages is a daily fight to survive.

The work is endless, yet rewards are meager. Crops fail in the scorching sun, and markets barely offer enough income to feed a family.

“Even when there’s work, the pay is barely enough to feed my children,” says Esther Mwila, a mother of four. Poverty weighs heaviest on women, who shoulder the double burden of providing for families and maintaining households under impossible conditions.

Droughts have made life even harsher. Rivers run dry, maize withers in the fields, and water for daily use is scarce. “Some nights we go to bed with empty stomachs. The children cry, but what can I do?” says Joseph Phiri, a farmer in one of the northern villages. Food aid and water rationing help a little, but the struggle never ends.

Illness shadows these communities too. Cholera outbreaks and contaminated water claim lives, leaving clinics overflowing with patients desperate for medicine and treatment.

“I’ve lost my husband to disease, and now I fear the water my children drink,” laments Grace Banda, a widow living on the outskirts.

Yet amid hardship, villagers find ways to endure. Social programs provide small but vital cash transfers to help families access food, healthcare, and schooling.

Community gardens and solar energy projects offer glimmers of hope. “Even a little sunlight can give us power for a pump or a lamp. It feels like a chance to breathe,” says Mary Chanda, a local resident.

Life in these villages is a story of contrasts: struggle and resilience, despair and hope. The headlines may speak of numbers, but the heartbeat of the nation lives here, in homes and fields, in the courage of ordinary people.

“We may be poor, but we are not broken,” says Esther Mwila, her eyes scanning the dusty horizon.

In their fight to survive, the true story of life in the villages unfolds - not in statistics, but in courage, determination, and the quiet will to endure. ■

# Simbu's treasured Tokyo marathon victory

By AfriFiles REPORTER

THE streets of Tokyo, Japan were electric, every step of the marathon echoing through the city as the world's best long-distance runners chased glory.

Amid the pack, Tanzania's Alphonse Felix Simbu ran with a quiet confidence that only comes from years of dedication.

This was more than a race; it was a chance to rewrite history, to remind the world that Tanzania, a nation with a storied marathon legacy, still belonged at the top.

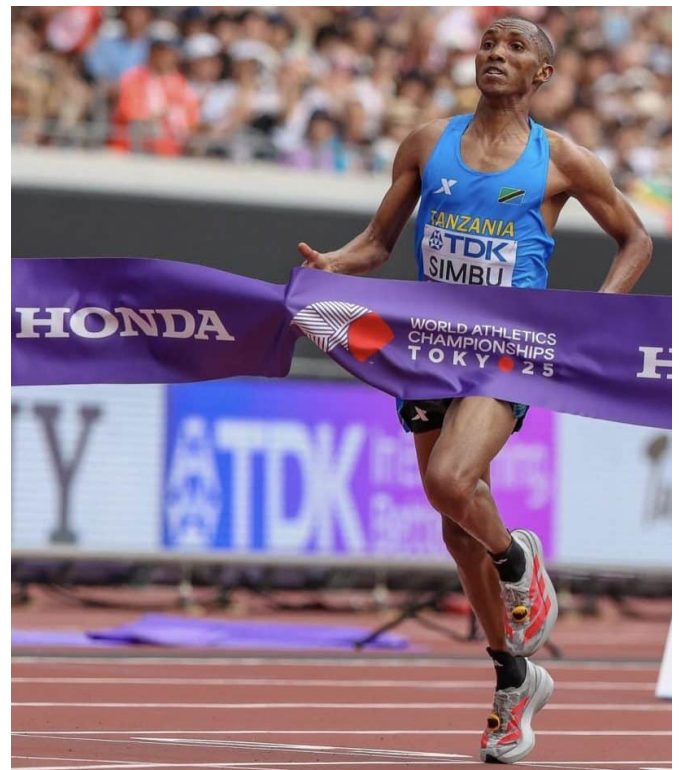
From the first kilometer, Simbu paced himself with precision, blending strategy with sheer endurance.

Mile after mile, the sun beat down, legs burned, and the wind tugged at his stride, yet, he remained focused, eyes fixed on the horizon and a dream decades in the making.

With every heartbeat, he carried the spirit of Juma Ikangaa, the legendary Tanzanian who once dominated New York, whose mantra - that preparation defines victory - had inspired generations.

As the marathon entered its final stretch, the tension was palpable. Germany's Amanal Petros surged ahead, Italy's Iliass Aouani fought back, and the world seemed to hold its breath.

Then, in a moment that felt suspended in time, Simbu unleashed a burst of speed, crossing the finish line just 0.03 seconds ahead.



Tanzania's Alphonse Felix Simbu crosses the finish line to win the men's marathon final - September 15, 2025. Photo: Reuters/Dylan Martinez.

Officially, both he and Petros finished in 2:09:48, but Simbu's triumph was unmistakable. History had been made; Tanzania had claimed gold at the World Athletics Championships marathon for the first time in decades.

Back home, especially in the City of Dar es Salaam – where soccer is dominated, few people glued in pubs erupted in jubilation after the announcement of Simbu's noteworthy victory.

President Samia Suluhu Hassan hailed Simbu as a national hero, a beacon of determination, and a reminder that dreams nurtured with discipline and heart could indeed become reality.

Simbu's victory is more than a medal. It is a story of resilience, a celebration of Tanzania's athletic heritage, and a signal to the world that greatness can emerge from the most unexpected places.

His triumph in Tokyo is a vivid reminder that the marathon of life rewards courage, patience, and relentless belief - and that sometimes, history waits quietly, ready to be seized in the final, breathtaking stride. ■



# Inside INEC's flawed vote management

Nigeria's introduction of new election technology raised hopes for a free and fair 2023 presidential vote. Yet, altered tally sheets, missing signatures, blurry uploads, and selfies as results cast doubt on legitimacy.

By Johnson WILLIAMS

**B**ALLOTS in Port Harcourt during Nigeria's 2023 presidential election revealed something unusual: votes had been crossed out and rewritten.

At one polling unit in Obio-Akpor, officials submitted a statement showing the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) with 202 votes. But the tally in words said Labour Party (LP) won with 198. Closer inspection revealed "202" had been written over the original "4."

Such irregularities were not isolated. The Center for Collaborative Investigative Journalism (CCIJ) reviewed thousands of polling station documents uploaded to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

At least 20 forms in Rivers State showed overwritten results, while nearly 4,000 nationwide lacked required signatures, 13,000 lacked official stamps, and more than 14,000 were too blurry to read.

INEC declined to answer questions about the altered or uncertified documents.

Election experts said these raise serious doubts about credibility.

"They could indicate manipulation and undermine trust in the electoral outcome," said Chibuike Mgbeahuruike of the Centre for Democracy and Development.

The problems extended beyond Rivers State, in Kano, Kogi, Plateau, and Kwara states, figures were also altered. In some places, more votes were recorded than accredited voters.

Elsewhere, tally sheets from different polling units appeared written in the same hand, with improbable patterns suggesting fabrication.

Technology meant to boost transparency also failed. The Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS), supplied by China's Shenzhen Emperor Technology, struggled with poor internet connections and undertrained staff.

Some workers uploaded selfies, luxury goods, and even homework instead of results. In Gombe, 77 percent of uploads were blurry. In many areas, BVAS failed to verify voters, allowing ballots without accreditation.

Reports also surfaced of ballot boxes snatched, polling sites where no voting occurred but results were filed, and overvoting where totals exceeded registered voters.

Party agents and residents described massive support for Labour Party, yet official results often credited APC with victory.

Despite mounting evidence, INEC has not explained why thousands of results were altered, unsigned, or missing.

Observers warn that such flaws erode faith in Nigeria's democracy. As Mgbeahuruike put it: "The sheer scale of irregularities means the outcome of the 2023 presidential election will remain deeply questionable." ■



An Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) officer uses a Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS) machine during the general election in Ibadan, Oyo State on February 25, 2023. Photo:Ayo Adams.



## Mandela: From prison walls to State House

By AfriFile REPORTER

**F**EW stories in modern history carry the same weight of resilience, sacrifice, and triumph as that of Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela.

His journey - from the confines of a prison cell to the grandeur of the state house - remains one of the most powerful symbols of hope and justice the world has ever seen.

Born in 1918 in the tiny village of Mvezo in South Africa's Eastern Cape, Mandela grew up under the crushing weight of racial segregation.

He witnessed firsthand how black South Africans were treated as second-class citizens in their own country. These injustices planted in him a deep sense of purpose: to dedicate his life to freedom and equality.

As a young lawyer in Johannesburg, Mandela co-founded the first black law firm in the country, offering affordable legal aid to those who had nowhere else to turn.

Soon, however, he realized that the system itself was designed to crush the dreams of his people. He joined the African National Congress

(ANC) and began organizing campaigns of defiance and resistance against apartheid, the brutal policy of racial separation that denied millions their basic rights – just because they are black in colour.

The apartheid regime responded with iron fists. Mandela and his comrades were hunted, harassed, and jailed.

In 1964, during the infamous Rivonia Trial, Mandela stood in court and declared he was prepared to die for the ideal of a free and democratic South Africa.

His words shook the conscience of the world. Sentenced to life imprisonment, Mandela was banished to the harsh confines of Robben Island.

For 27 long years, the prison cell was his home. The walls were damp, the meals meager, and the guards merciless. Yet Mandela remained unbroken. Behind bars, he studied, he taught fellow inmates, and he wrote letters of courage.

Most importantly, he forgave. He once said, "Resentment is like drinking poison and hoping it will kill your enemies." Instead of allowing bitterness to consume him, Mandela nurtured within himself the seeds of reconciliation.

His imprisonment turned him into a global icon. Across continents, millions marched, sang, and demanded; “Free Nelson Mandela!” Pressure mounted on the apartheid government, while inside prison, Mandela negotiated quietly with his captors, insisting that freedom could only be achieved through peace.

In 1990, the prison gates finally opened. Mandela walked out, fist raised, to a sea of jubilant supporters. The world watched in awe as the man who had spent nearly three decades behind bars chose not vengeance, but unity.

He preached forgiveness, urging South Africans of all races to build a future together.

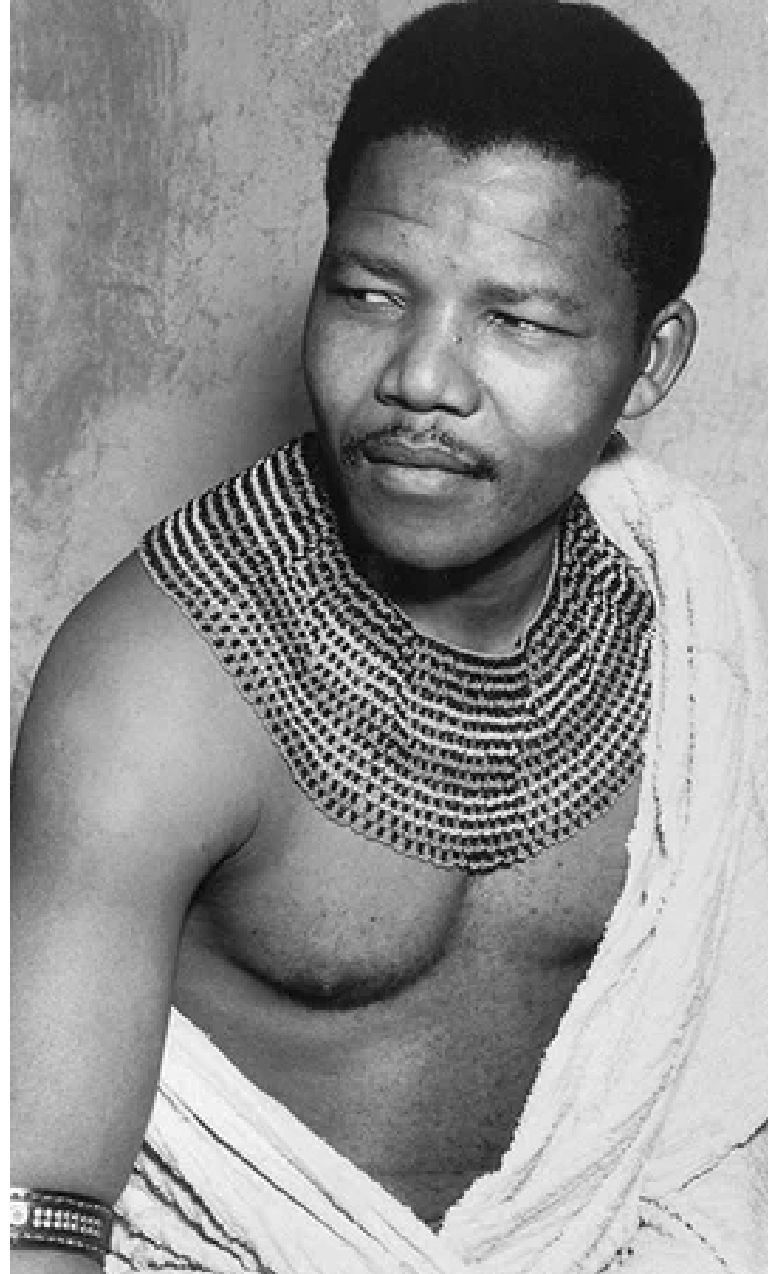
Four years later, history was made. In 1994, South Africa held its first democratic elections. Millions of black South Africans, who had been denied the right to vote for generations, queued for hours under the sun.

When the ballots were counted, Nelson Mandela became the country’s first black president. At last - the prisoner had become the president.

In the Union Buildings in Pretoria, Mandela took the oath of office with the world watching. His presidency was not about revenge but about healing.

He created the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to address past crimes without igniting new cycles of hatred. He used sports, most famously the 1995 Rugby World Cup, to unite a divided nation under one flag.

Mandela’s life teaches that the human spirit, when anchored in justice and forgiveness, can overcome even the darkest chapters of history.



His journey from prison cells to state house reminds us that leadership is not about power but about service, sacrifice, and vision.

Today, Mandela’s legacy shines far beyond South Africa. His story continues to inspire movements for justice across the world.

He showed that even when the night is long and the chains are heavy, dawn will definitely come. The walls of prison cannot cage a dream, and no regime can silence the voice of freedom forever.

Nelson Mandela did not just lead a nation—he gave humanity a timeless lesson; that true greatness is measured not by how high we rise, but by how many we lift along the way.

Mandela stepped down after one term in 1999 and retired from public life in 2004.

He dedicated his later years to charitable causes, including fighting HIV/Aids through the Nelson Mandela Foundation. He died on December 5, 2013, at age 95 from a respiratory infection. ■



# Drowning in wealth oil, starving at the pump

By TheAfrifiles REPORTER

WONDERS never cease, yet Angola should not be running out of fuel. The country is Africa's second-largest oil producer after Nigeria, pumping over a million barrels of crude a day.

Oil accounts for more than 90 percent of Angola's exports and provides most of the government's revenue.

Yet in Luanda, queues of cars stretch for kilometers outside petrol stations, with frustrated drivers sometimes waiting hours to fill up - if fuel is available at all.

The paradox is striking; how can a nation so rich in crude oil suffer such acute shortages at home?

The roots of Angola's fuel crisis lie in a combination of structural dependence, weak refining capacity, and policy contradictions.

Despite its vast reserves, Angola refines very little of its crude. The country has only one aging refinery in Luanda, built in the 1950s, which covers just a fraction of domestic demand.

The bulk of Angola's fuel is imported, ironically from other countries that refine crude into petrol and diesel. When foreign exchange reserves dip or when international suppliers delay deliveries, Angolan pumps run dry.

Economic pressures have worsened the crisis. In recent years, the government has been trimming fuel subsidies under pressure from lenders such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), aiming to free up funds for social spending and reduce fiscal deficits.

But the move has made fuel more expensive

and created incentives for smuggling across porous borders to countries where prices are higher. The result; shortages at home, profits abroad.

At the same time, global oil price swings have left Angola exposed.

When prices spike, the government enjoys a revenue boost but still struggles to secure refined imports quickly enough.

When prices fall, dollar inflows shrink, making it harder to pay suppliers. This seesaw effect has created a fragile system that collapses whenever one piece falters.

Ordinary Angolans bear the brunt. Transport fares rise with every shortage, food prices surge, and businesses face power cuts as generators run out of diesel.

For a country that once dreamed of oil as a ticket to prosperity, the crisis has become a symbol of mismanagement.

Critics argue that successive governments have failed to invest in refining infrastructure, preferring to export crude and pocket revenues rather than build a sustainable energy base at home.

There are signs of change. Luanda has announced plans to construct new refineries in Cabinda and Lobito, with promises to meet domestic fuel demand within the next decade.

But for now, the paradox remains; Angola, a land awash with oil, cannot guarantee petrol for its people.

Until the gap between crude wealth and refined reality is closed, drivers in Luanda may still spend more time queuing at stations than moving on the road. ■



**No Fuel.** A Sonangol (Angolan National Petrol and Oil Company) petrol station in the city of Luanda in the capital of Angola. Photo: Rodger Bosch/AFP via Getty Images

# Crispy, irresistible Tanzania's 'chips-mayai'

By AfriFiles REPORTER

**I**N Tanzania's bustling towns and villages, one dish has risen from humble beginnings to become a national favorite; Chips Mayai—literally French fries with eggs, a golden marriage of fries and omelet.

The journey to the table begins in the open-air markets. Vendors select fresh, firm potatoes brought in from highland farms in Iringa, Njombe, or Kilimanjaro.

These potatoes are cleaned, peeled, and sliced into sticks - sometimes thin and crispy, other times chunky depending on the cook's style.

At the roadside kiosks, a wide wok of hot oil bubbles over a charcoal stove. The sliced potatoes are plunged in, sizzling loudly as they transform into golden fries - crispy on the outside, soft inside. The chips are lifted out, drained, and set aside for the next stage.

Now comes the star twist: mayai (eggs). Fresh eggs are cracked into a bowl, beaten, and often seasoned with salt, onions, tomatoes, green peppers, or even fresh coriander.

The hot pan receives a drizzle of oil, the fries are spread evenly, and the egg mixture is poured over, binding everything together. With a skilled hand, the cook flips the thick omelet, ensuring both sides are golden brown and fluffy yet firm.

Finally, the dish is slid onto a plate - sometimes garnished with 'kachumbari' (a fresh tomato-onion salad), chili sauce, or just a sprinkle of salt.

The result is hearty, affordable, and filling - a perfect street food loved by students, workers, and travelers alike.

From potato farms to sizzling pans, Chips Mayai is more than food; it's a snapshot of Tanzania's street culture, where simple ingredients come alive with flavor and flair.

No one can tell anything great about Tanzania without mentioning chips-mayai. Really grand food! ■



# The timeless story of African bronze bangles

By Julius LONGWAY

LONG before global trade reshaped the world, African artisans were already turning fire and metal into beauty.

By the 11th century, in kingdoms like Ghana and Ife in present-day Nigeria, bronze bangles were more than adornment—they were symbols of identity, power, and wealth.

From Ornament to Currency In West and Central Africa, these gleaming cuffs transcended fashion to become currency.

One bangle could purchase livestock, while a pile of them might secure land or cement trade in salt, cloth, and food.

They also carried social weight: families stacked them into dowries, traders measured them with care, and rulers guarded them as state treasure. In many ways, bronze bangles were the banking system of their time.

The Craft of Fire and Patience Forging them was a feat of artistry. Smiths mastered the lost-wax casting technique; shaping a design in wax, encasing it in clay, burning the wax away, then pouring molten bronze into the hollow.

Once cooled, the bangle was polished to a shine and sometimes engraved with intricate patterns. The process was painstaking, demanding both muscle and meticulousness. The result was an object tough enough to last centuries, yet refined enough to carry delicate detail - a balance of endurance and elegance that still feels modern.

Regional Signatures Styles spoke of place. In West Africa, spiraling designs curled around wrists like miniature sculptures. Central Africa favored broad, weighty cuffs that commanded attention.



Each region left its signature in the metal, details that still allow collectors to trace their origins today.

From Currency to Culture Though they no longer buy cattle or land, bronze bangles have slipped gracefully into new roles.

Their aged patina and sculptural forms make them irresistible to collectors and designers. Displayed in a trio on a sideboard, lined along a coffee table, or mounted on a wall, they blur the line between artifact and art.

They carry whispers of African history while fitting seamlessly into the bold, global homes of today.

Bronze bangles endure not just as relics, but as living reminders of Africa's creativity, trade, and timeless style. ■





# The rabbit who fooled the king

By The AfriFiles TEAM

**U**NDER the golden sky of the South African savannah, every blade of grass whispered secrets to the wind.

Herds grazed in peace - until the lion appeared. Crowned with a fiery mane, his roar at dawn shook the plains, and no creature dared drink while he lounged beneath the lone acacia.

Yet, among trembling hooves, one tiny soul dreamed of defiance; a rabbit with eyes bright as embers.

Though small, he was sharp-minded, whispering plans delicate as spider silk yet strong enough to snare even a king.

One morning, the rabbit approached the watering hole and called softly, "O mighty lion, urgent news from the riverbank!" He spoke of a monstrous snake haunting the pools. Intrigued, the lion followed, paws thundering. But at the clear water's edge, he saw only his reflection.

Mistaking it for a rival, he charged and smashed into the

pool, roaring in humiliation.

Word of the rabbit's trick spread swiftly, and the animals gathered beneath the acacia to forge a pact of mutual respect. No longer would fear rule the plains - the rabbit would mediate, ensuring harmony.

Yet the lion, pride wounded, tested him again. Beneath a fig tree he demanded, "fetch me the blue river flower that blooms only at midnight by the seven-cascade falls. Fail, and the watering hole is mine alone."

With courage burning, the rabbit ventured into the night. He braved rocks, predators, and torrents until, by moonlight, he cupped the trembling flower and whispered thanks. At dawn, breathless, he laid it before the lion.

The king's paw trembled as he bowed, touched by such courage. That morning, the savannah witnessed a miracle; lion - the king, and rabbit walking side by side, each carrying half the fragile bloom.

At the watering hole, the lion let the weakest drink first while the rabbit guided the herds. Fear gave way to unity. Over time, their partnership became legend, teaching that true leadership comes not from strength alone, but from courage, kindness, and respect.

As the sun set in rose and amber, the rabbit sat atop a rise, watching life flourish. The lion's roar no longer struck terror but rallied harmony.

And so, in the tapestry of the wild, it was the smallest stitch - the clever rabbit - that held the savannah whole.

\*This tale was extracted and edited from Fabula to embrace The AfriFiles editorial policy. ■



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