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CHURCH MUST BUILD, NOT JUST PRAY—ED

■ President challenges religious institutions to fight corruption, curb drug abuse and drive education, healthcare and food production

Abel Karowangoro

President Emmerson Mnangagwa has challenged churches to move beyond prayer and become active partners in building, modernising and industrialising Zimbabwe, saying faith must produce tangible improvements in people's lives.
The President also called on religious institutions to confront corruption, drug and substance abuse, food insecurity and moral decline as part of their responsibility to the nation.
His address was delivered on his behalf by Defence Minister Oppah Muchinguri-Kashiri at the Apostolic Faith Mission in Zimbabwe's annual general conference at Rufaro Conference Centre in Chatsworth, Masvingo, on Saturday.
The conference was held under the theme, "Elevation, Excellence and Impact", and brought together church leaders, congregants and senior government officials.
"The Church's role in a modern-day economy is not only limited to prayer, but broadly to also help build, industrialise and modernise our country," President Mnangagwa said.

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SIR WICKNELL CHIVAYO'S US$320K NKOMO TRIBUTE

By Hurumende News Desk

Businessman Wicknell Chivayo has pledged US$250,000, two vehicles and a substantial consignment of information and communication technology equipment to the John Landa Nkomo Trust, describing the gesture as a tribute to the late former Vice President's contribution to Zimbabwe's liberation and national unity.
Chivayo announced the donation on Saturday as Zimbabweans commemorated the birthday of Dr John Landa Nkomo, who was born in Tsholotsho on August 22, 1934, and died on January 17, 2013.
The businessman said the US$250,000 would support further development at the school associated with the Trust. He also pledged a brand-new single-cab vehicle for the headmaster and a Toyota Coaster bus.
The Coaster is expected to complement a 76-seater bus Chivayo said he donated to the institution last year.
As part of the package, Chivayo promised 100 desktop computers, 50 laptops and 50 printers for the establishment and development of what he described as a state-of-the-art computer laboratory.
"Our children must be equipped with modern technology and given every opportunity to compete in an increasingly digital world," Chivayo said in a statement published on his social-media platforms.
If delivered and properly installed, the equipment could expand access to dig-

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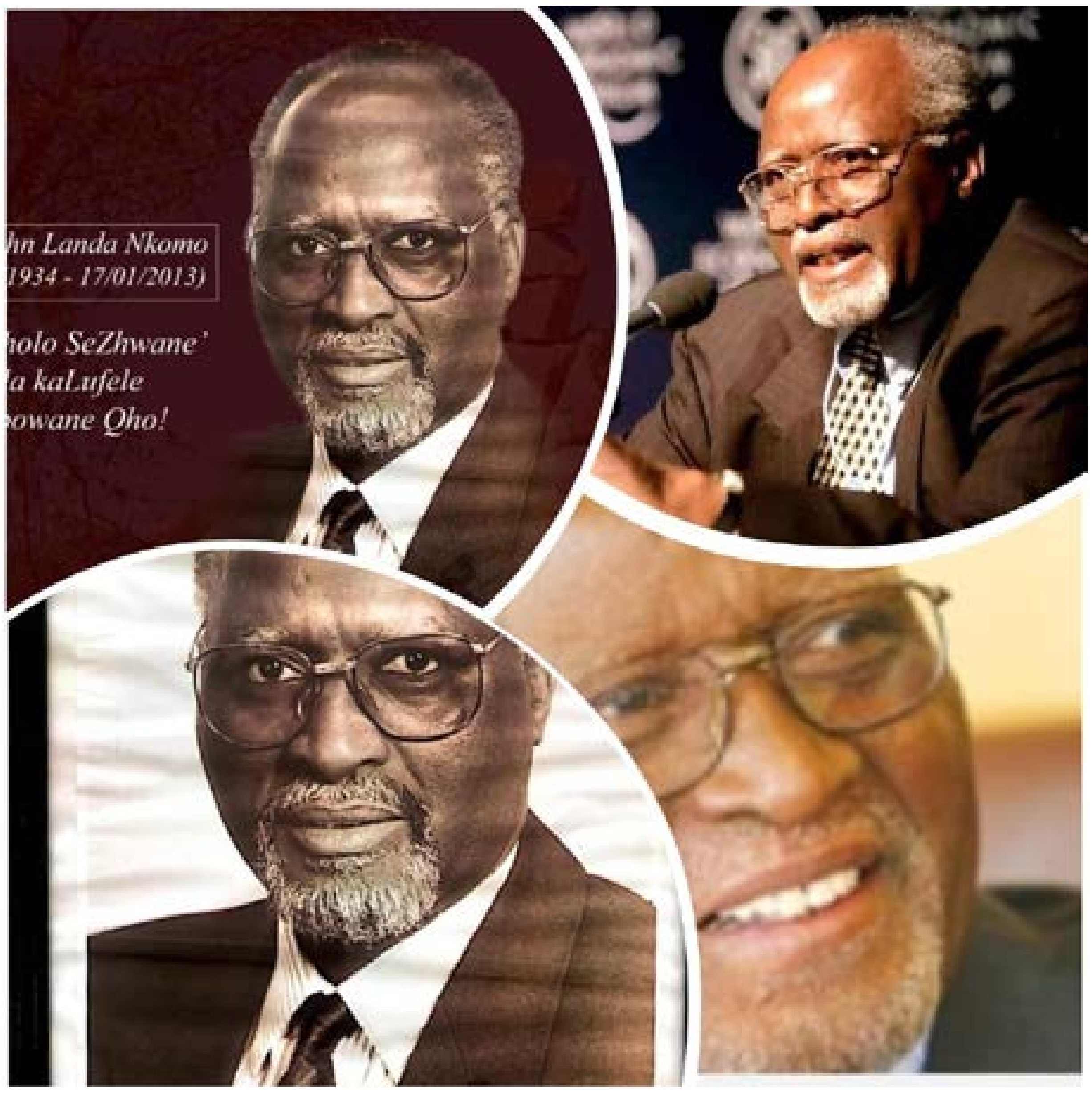

CHURCH MUST BUILD, NOT JUST PRAY—ED

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"Together, let us work hand in hand, accelerating the realisation of our national development aspirations and Vision 2030."

The call places churches—among the country's most influential and widely distributed institutions—at the centre of national development.

Across Zimbabwe, religious organisations already operate schools, universities, hospitals, clinics, farms and humanitarian programmes. The President said these structures should be expanded to help communities acquire education, healthcare, skills and economic opportunities.

At the conference, Muchinguri-Kashiri handed AFM leader Bishop Dr Amos Madawo an offer letter for 50 hectares of land on which the church intends to establish a university.

The land allocation followed an earlier commitment by President Mnangagwa to provide the church with additional space for its educational development programme.

If successfully established and adequately funded, the proposed university would broaden AFM's contribution to higher education and skills development. The institution would, however, be expected to satisfy the country's accreditation, governance and academic standards before enrolling students.

President Mnangagwa said the proposed university should serve the country beyond the church's membership.

"Your proposed university will not only serve the AFM community but contribute to the overall human capital development of our entire nation," he said. "No one must be left behind."

He said Zimbabwe required higher-learning institutions capable of producing innovative, practical and solution-oriented graduates who could establish industries, develop technology and respond to national challenges.

The proposed institution aligns with Heritage-Based Education 5.0, which promotes teaching, research, innovation, industrialisation and community service.

President Mnangagwa commended AFM for establishing learning centres across the country, including Rufaro High School.

He said the school's Ordinary and Advanced Level results demonstrated what could be achieved when faith was converted into practical action.

The school is also developing a self-sustaining model that combines academic education with vocational training, giving pupils practical skills alongside conventional classroom qualifications.

The President said such initiatives demonstrated the value of cooperation between the State and religious institutions.

"The unbreakable relationship between the State and the Church is one that we cherish and continue to strengthen," he said.

"After all, we share a common responsibility towards moulding a morally upright, united, peaceful and prosperous nation."

The State–Church partnership can widen access to essential services, particularly in rural and underserved communities where government facilities may be limited. However, effective partnerships also require transparent administration, clear public-service standards and equitable access regardless of a beneficiary's religious affiliation.

Muchinguri-Kashiri also officially opened Rufaro Clinic, a youth ministry-led project constructed at the conference centre.

The clinic is expected to serve congregants and surrounding communities, improving access to basic healthcare for thousands of residents.

President Mnangagwa said the facility would complement the Government's efforts to achieve universal health coverage.

"In the health sector, your contributions are equally commendable," he said. "The construction of a clinic here at Rufaro Conference Centre is set to improve healthcare access for thousands of people in this community."

The President also urged churches to speak openly against corruption, describing the practice as a major obstacle to economic and social progress.

"Corruption remains a cancer that undermines our development efforts," he said.

Defence Minister Oppah Muchinguri-Kashiri hands AFM in Zimbabwe an offer letter for 50 hectares of land to construct a university aligned with the Heritage-Based Education 5.0 model. She also commissioned Rufaro Clinic, built by the church to provide healthcare services to the local community. Picture Credit: Hurumende News Hub

"The Church, as a moral compass, must not remain silent on these matters but expose and reject corruption in whatever form it manifests."

The call places a responsibility on church leaders to apply the same moral standards to public institutions, private organisations and their own administrative systems.

Religious organisations command significant public trust and can encourage ethical leadership. Their credibility, however, depends on their willingness to oppose wrongdoing consistently, regardless of the status or political affiliation of those involved.

President Mnangagwa said the Church also had an urgent role in protecting young people from drug and substance abuse.

Zimbabwe has intensified efforts against illicit drugs amid concern that substance abuse is destroying families, increasing crime and depriving the country of a productive generation.

The President called on church elders and young congregants to reach youths outside religious institutions and offer them guidance, support and a sense of purpose.

"The youth of Zimbabwe must be saved," he said. "As elders, we should never neglect this duty."

He said the intervention was necessary as drug abuse continued to damage the country's social fabric.

Churches can support the national response through prevention campaigns, counselling, rehabilitation referrals and reintegration programmes. Specialists, however, stress that spiritual guidance should complement—not replace—professional medical and psychological treatment for addiction.

The President also called for stronger participation in agriculture amid predictions of an El Niño-induced drought during the 2026/27 season.

He urged families, communities and religious institutions to adopt climate-resilient farming methods, including the Pfumvudza/Intwasa programme.

"The predictions of the El Niño-induced drought must ignite in us all, household by household, greater determination and focus," he said.

"Let us work hard on our God-given land so that we produce what we eat and guarantee national food security and sovereignty."

President Mnangagwa said the Government would continue providing farmers with inputs, fertilisers and chemicals while expanding support for resilient, diversified and productive agricultural projects.

"No one will die of hunger," he said.

Masvingo Provincial Affairs and Devolution Minister Ezra Chadzamira commended the Government for maintaining an environment in which religious organisations could worship and undertake development projects.

Bishop Madawo said AFM valued its working relationship with the Government and would continue investing in schools, clinics and other community initiatives.

"Your Government has created a conducive environment for churches to operate," he said. "We are partnering the Government in building schools, clinics and other projects."

The conference was also attended by Deputy Chief Secretary in the Office of the President and Cabinet Reverend Paul Damasane and other senior government officials.

The President's message ultimately set a broader standard for the modern Church: prayer must be accompanied by action, while faith must be visible in classrooms, clinics, productive farms, ethical leadership and economically empowered communities.

SIR WICKNELL CHIVAYO'S US$320K NKOMO TRIBUTE

From page 1

ital learning at the school. However, its long-term impact will also depend on reliable electricity, internet connectivity, secure facilities, qualified ICT teachers and a sustainable maintenance programme.

Chivayo separately announced personal cash gifts of US$50,000 to Trust chairman Jabulani Nkomo and US$20,000 to his wife, Busi. This brings the publicly announced cash pledges to US$320,000, although only US$250,000 is earmarked for institutional development.

The separation between the institutional donation and personal gifts is significant. The Trust's development funds would ordinarily be expected to be accounted for through its governance structures, while the US$70,000 offered to the couple constitutes private gifts.

By the time of publication, the Trust had not publicly released a detailed expenditure plan for the US$250,000 or a timetable for the delivery of the vehicles and ICT equipment. The announcement therefore remains a pledge pending formal handover and confirmation by the beneficiaries.

Chivayo praised Jabulani Nkomo for what he called his commitment to preserving and advancing his father's legacy.

Dr Nkomo was a veteran nationalist who served in several senior government positions before becoming Vice President in December 2009. He also served as Speaker of Parliament and chaired the Organ on National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration.

His public life became closely associated with the message: "Peace begins with me, peace begins with you, peace begins with all of us."

Chivayo said the former Vice President represented patriotism, sacrifice, humility, unity and public service.

"Zimbabwe will forever remember your sacrifice, your wisdom and your contribution to the nation," he said.

Zvishavane man stabs village head

Itai Mazire

A 30-year-old Zvishavane man has been sentenced to an effective 54 months in prison after viciously attacking and stabbing his village head, before destroying property and fleeing the scene.

Wellington Dzingisai of Mukamba Village appeared before the Gweru Magistrates' Court, where he was convicted on charges of attempted murder and malicious damage to property following the incident on 7 August 2026.

The court heard that the violence erupted at around 1800 hours, with the National Prosecuting Authority (NPAZ) stating that the situation escalated rapidly when the accused confronted the victim.

According to the NPAZ, "The offender accused the victim of disrupting his stay in the village by reporting his presence to the police whenever he returned to the area."

The confrontation quickly turned deadly. The NPAZ detailed the horrific attack, stating that "The offender then produced a knife and stabbed the complainant twice in the chest and once in the abdomen."

In a brazen act of destruction, Dzingisai did not stop at the assault.

The prosecution detailed that "After the stabbing, he went outside and damaged 14 D11 window panes and the main door before fleeing the scene."

The victim was rushed to hospital for urgent medical treatment. Dzingisai was subsequently arrested following a police report, leading to the successful prosecution of the case.

In delivering the sentence, the court imposed a total of 84 months' imprisonment. However, 24 months were wholly suspended for five years on condition the accused does not commit a similar offense. A further six months were suspended on condition he restitutes the victim the US$210 worth of property he damaged, leaving an effective 54-month prison term.

The NPAZ reiterated its commitment to holding perpetrators of violent crime accountable.

Nine Killed on Roads as ZRP Intensifies Drug and Misconduct Crackdown

At least nine people were killed and 28 others injured in three major road accidents during a week marked by drug-related arrests, disciplinary action against a police officer and continued recovery operations following the Kariba boat disaster.
A review of updates published by the Zimbabwe Republic Police on its official X account, @PoliceZimbabwe, between August 17 and 23 shows that road carnage dominated the week's serious incidents.

Two die in Boterekwa bus accident

Two passengers died and 22 people were injured after an Inter Africa bus overturned at the Boterekwa Escarpment in Shurugwi on Friday.
Police said the accident occurred at the 40-kilometre peg along the Gweru–Zvishavane Road at around 6pm.
The bus was carrying 61 passengers towards Zvishavane when its driver allegedly lost control while descending the escarpment. It veered off the road, overturned and landed on its side.
The two victims died at the scene, while the driver and 21 passengers sustained injuries of varying severity. The injured were taken to Shurugwi District Hospital.
National police spokesperson Commissioner Paul Nyathi urged motorists to observe speed limits, maintain their vehicles and use appropriate gears when descending steep slopes.

Four killed at Ngundu blackspot

Four passengers died on the spot in another head-on collision at the two-kilometre peg along the Ngundu–Tanganda Road on Thursday night.
Police said a Toyota Probox carrying 10 passengers towards Ngundu collided with a Hino rigid truck travelling towards Chiredzi at around 8pm.
Six other passengers in the Probox suffered serious injuries and were taken for medical treatment. The victims' bodies were conveyed to Neshuro District Hospital for post-mortem examinations.
The accident once again raised concern over the use of small vehicles as informal public transport. The Probox was carrying substantially more passengers than its standard passenger capacity.

Drug-related arrests in Beitbridge and Mutare

Police arrested three people in separate operations targeting unregistered medicines and cannabis on August 20.
In Beitbridge, officers arrested Mthumba Mangala, 18, at Parks area for alleged unlawful possession of unregistered medicines.
Police said the suspect was found with contraband identified as Astra Pain tablets. The quantity was not specified in the publicly accessible section of the statement.
In Penhalonga, Mutare, police arrested Tinotenda Mudzigaire, 27, and Memory Jose, 30, at Mbare area near Redwing Mine.
The two were allegedly found in unlawful possession of dagga. Police did not immediately disclose the weight or estimated street value of the recovered drug.
The three suspects are presumed innocent until convicted by a court.
Police officer arrested after viral confrontation
The ZRP also confirmed the arrest of a constable captured in a viral confrontation with a City of Harare security officer in the central business district.
The altercation reportedly occurred after municipal officers stopped a commuter omnibus linked to the police officer for allegedly violating council by-laws.
Police said the constable was facing both criminal and internal disciplinary proceedings.
"The public is advised that the constable involved was arrested and is now facing both criminal and disciplinary charges," the ZRP said.
The action followed public calls for police authorities to investigate the officer's conduct after footage of the confrontation circulated widely online.

Three die on Mutare–Burma Valley Road

Three passengers were also killed following a head-on collision involving a Toyota Wish and a Nissan NV350 along the Mutare–Burma Valley Road.
The accident occurred at the 19-kilometre peg on August 19.
The Toyota Wish was carrying nine passengers, while the Nissan vehicle had five occupants. Police said three passengers in the Wish suffered severe injuries and were pronounced dead upon admission to Victoria Chitepo Hospital.
Investigations into the circumstances surrounding the collision are continuing. The three accidents left at least nine people dead and 28 injured. The figure excludes any injuries not specified in the police report on the Mutare collision.

Kariba disaster toll reaches 94

Police search teams continued operations on Lake Kariba during the week as the death toll from the RIDA passenger boat disaster rose to 94.
The vessel capsized near Long Island on August 11 while transporting passengers from Kariba towards fishing camps and island communities.
The ZRP said search teams would remain deployed to locate any missing passengers or bodies. The number of people aboard has been difficult to establish conclusively because some passengers, particularly children, were reportedly not included in formal travel records.
The disaster remained the country's largest ongoing police-led search and victim-identification operation during the week.

Road deaths dominate police week

The latest accidents have renewed concern over speeding, vehicle overloading and the use of Toyota Wish and Probox vehicles for informal passenger transport.
Across the Ngundu and Mutare accidents, the two small vehicles were carrying a combined 19 passengers.
The Boterekwa crash also underscored the dangers associated with steep and mountainous roads, especially when vehicles are carrying large numbers of passengers.
Police have urged motorists to avoid speeding and overloading, regularly service their vehicles and exercise additional caution at night, on steep descents and at recognised accident blackspots.


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Zim-SA Turn Liberation History into Cultural Diplomacy

A new heritage agreement gives Pretoria an opportunity to build a permanent presence at Harare's Museum of African Liberation—but its significance will depend on whether political commitments are translated into accessible, professionally curated public history.

Abel Karowangoro

When President Emmerson Mnangagwa invited South Africa to develop the land allocated to it at the Museum of African Liberation in Harare, the request carried meaning beyond the construction of another national exhibition.

It was an invitation for South Africa to document its anti-apartheid struggle within a broader African liberation narrative—one in which Zimbabwe, Zambia, Mozambique, Angola, Tanzania and other countries were not distant observers, but active participants.

South Africa's proposed presence at the museum could help reconnect a liberation history that modern national borders and competing political narratives have often fragmented.

The project gained fresh momentum on August 21 when Zimbabwe and South Africa signed a Memorandum of Understanding on arts, culture and heritage during the Fourth Session of their Bi-National Commission in Pretoria.

The MoU was among six instruments adopted by Presidents Mnangagwa and Cyril Ramaphosa as the neighbouring countries sought to convert long-standing historical ties into practical cooperation.

For the Museum of African Liberation, the agreement creates an institutional basis for South Africa to move beyond expressions of support and begin developing its allocated site at Liberation City.

"Zimbabwe looks forward to South Africa taking steps to develop land allocated to it at the Museum of African Liberation in Zimbabwe," Mnangagwa said after the signing.

"The Museum provides a unique platform to showcase the country's heroic anti-apartheid struggle and its significant contribution to the liberation of African countries. This will go a long way in preserving this legacy, as well as inspiring present and future generations."

A struggle that crossed borders

South Africa's liberation history cannot be fully explained within South Africa alone.

After the apartheid government banned the African National Congress and Pan Africanist Congress in 1960, liberation movements increasingly operated from outside the country. Several independent African states provided political support, diplomatic platforms, training facilities and refuge to exiled activists.

Zimbabwe's relationship with the South African struggle became particularly significant after independence in 1980. Zimbabwe hosted South African liberation activists and became one of the Frontline States that opposed apartheid despite facing military, economic and security pressure from Pretoria.

The apartheid state pursued opponents across the region and destabilised neighbouring countries through military raids, covert operations and support for armed movements. Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Angola, Zambia and Botswana carried part of the cost of supporting South Africa's liberation.

A South African section at the Harare museum can therefore explore two interconnected histories: the internal resistance of South Africans and the regional solidarity that helped sustain it.

It can document the contribution of organisations such as the ANC, PAC, South African Communist Party, trade unions, churches, students, women's movements and civic organisations while also recognising the role played by neighbouring countries.

That wider approach would prevent the exhibition from becoming a narrow account centred only on political leaders and military organisations.

From political history to cultural diplomacy

Museums are not merely buildings where old objects are stored. They are institutions through which societies decide what to remember, how to explain the past and which experiences deserve public recognition.

The Museum of African Liberation is being developed by the Institute of African Knowledge as a Pan-African heritage and cultural-diplomacy project.

It forms part of Liberation City, an approximately 100-hectare development along Samora Machel Avenue West in Harare. The broader concept includes cultural, tourism, conference and commercial infrastructure.

Zimbabwe has granted the development national-priority-project status and views it as part of its bid to host the 2027 African Union Mid-Year Coordination Summit.

South Africa's participation could strengthen the museum's continental character. It could also provide Pretoria with a platform to tell its liberation story to African and international visitors outside the familiar settings of Robben Island, Constitution Hill, the Apartheid Museum and other South African heritage institutions.

Unlike a conventional diplomatic mission, a national exhibition at Liberation City would communicate through archives, personal testimonies, photographs, artefacts, film, music and interactive technology.

That is cultural diplomacy: using history, knowledge and creative expression to build relationships between societies.

An opportunity for difficult, inclusive history

The quality of South Africa's contribution will depend on what story it chooses to tell.

A meaningful exhibition should go beyond a celebratory account of victory over apartheid. It should explain the racial laws and economic system that sustained apartheid, the forced removals that reshaped communities and the resistance that emerged in workplaces, schools, universities, churches and townships.

It should recognise landmark events such as the Sharpeville massacre, the Rivonia Trial, the 1976 Soweto uprising, the growth of the trade-union movement, states of emergency during the 1980s and the negotiations that produced democratic rule in 1994.

But it should also preserve individual voices.

Oral histories from former combatants, political prisoners, exiles, women, students, workers, artists and families affected by forced removals would give the exhibition human depth. Regional witnesses who accommodated exiles or survived cross-border attacks should also be represented.

Women's experiences are especially important. Liberation histories are frequently dominated by male leaders, leaving women visible mainly as supporters rather than strategists, organisers, combatants and political thinkers.

Young visitors should encounter a history that explains complexity rather than offering only slogans.

A museum must be more than a monument

The MoU is an important diplomatic step, but an agreement does not itself create an exhibition.

South Africa and Zimbabwe will still have to resolve questions of funding, architectural responsibility, curation, archival loans, ownership of objects, conservation standards and long-term maintenance.

They will also have to decide which institutions will lead the work. South Africa has a wide network of museums, archives, universities, liberation foundations and heritage agencies whose expertise could strengthen the project.

Professional historians, archivists, conservators, educators and exhibition designers should participate alongside government officials and liberation veterans.

The process must also be transparent enough to build public confidence. Timelines, budgets, curatorial leadership and implementation responsibilities should be clearly communicated.

Without proper planning, allocated land could remain undeveloped or produce an exhibition that is visually impressive but historically shallow.

The challenge of contested memory

Liberation history is politically sensitive because the past remains connected to present-day power.

Governments and political movements may understandably want to celebrate their contributions, but public museums have a broader responsibility. They must preserve evidence, acknowledge disagreement and make room for experiences that do not fit neatly into official narratives.

For the Museum of African Liberation to gain academic and international credibility, it must distinguish between commemoration and historical inquiry.

Commemoration honours sacrifice. Historical inquiry asks difficult questions, compares evidence and accepts that participants may remember the same event differently.

The strongest museum would accommodate both.

It should recognise liberation movements without reducing African independence to the history of political parties alone. Workers, traditional leaders, religious groups, journalists, artists, lawyers and ordinary families also shaped the struggle against colonialism and apartheid.

Such an approach would make the museum useful not only to political delegations, but also to schools, universities, researchers, tourists and families seeking to understand their past.

Economic and tourism potential

If developed professionally, South Africa's exhibition could add value to Zimbabwe's tourism offering.

Harare is often treated as a transit point rather than a major heritage destination. Liberation City could encourage visitors to spend more time in the capital, supporting hotels, restaurants, transport services, tour operators and creative businesses.

The project could also create employment for researchers, archivists, curators, guides, technicians, designers and cultural practitioners.

Joint exhibitions, student exchanges, academic conferences and travelling displays could extend the cooperation beyond the physical museum.

Digital access will be equally important. A well-designed online archive could allow students across Africa to explore documents, oral histories and educational material without travelling to Harare.

That would help the project become a continental knowledge institution rather than a ceremonial site visited mainly during official events.

Testing the promise of the BNC

The South Africa–Zimbabwe BNC was established in 2015 as the main platform for managing relations between the two countries.

Its agenda extends beyond heritage to trade, investment, energy, infrastructure, migration, security and social cooperation. More than 33 agreements and memoranda of understanding have been concluded under the broader bilateral relationship, according to the South African Presidency.

The challenge facing both governments is implementation.

Ramaphosa used the latest meeting to argue that the countries' historic relationship must produce tangible benefits for their populations. Mnangagwa similarly called for outcomes that advance economic integration and industrialisation.

South Africa's participation in the museum will provide a visible test of that commitment. The public will be able to see whether the signed instrument moves from diplomatic language to design, construction, curation and eventual opening.

Preserving history for a generation without living memory

A growing share of the region's population was born after Zimbabwean independence in 1980 and South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994.

For these young Africans, colonial rule and apartheid are inherited history rather than lived experience.

That distance makes serious heritage institutions increasingly important. Without archives, oral testimony and accessible public education, liberation history can be reduced to annual speeches, political slogans or competing claims circulated on social media.

A well-curated museum cannot settle every historical debate, but it can give future generations access to evidence and multiple perspectives.

South Africa's allocated space at Liberation City therefore represents more than a building project. It offers an opportunity to explain how apartheid affected an entire region, how African countries supported one another and why political freedom emerged from a struggle that crossed borders.

The MoU has opened the diplomatic door. The next challenge is to build an exhibition capable of matching the weight of the history it is expected to preserve.

President Emmerson Mnangagwa and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa co-chair the Fourth Session of the Zimbabwe–South Africa Bi-National Commission in Pretoria on August 21, 2026. Credit: SABC News.

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Three women face drug charges after Bulawayo lodge arrest

Three women appeared before a Bulawayo magistrate on Thursday following their arrest at a lodge in Ilanda suburb, where prosecutors allege police found drugs and a large amount of cash.

The accused are Dyonne Tanaka Tafirenyika, 28, Amina Jassinta Jessub Arab, 47, and Noreen Jessub, 51. They are facing charges linked to the alleged possession and dealing of dangerous drugs.

The women were arrested on Wednesday. The National Prosecuting Authority said police subsequently searched their rooms at the lodge. Investigators allegedly recovered a sachet of crystal methamphetamine, a second sachet containing cocaine and US$53,055 in cash from Tafirenyika's room.

The prosecution told the court that the cash had raised particular concern and was suspected to be the proceeds of crime. Prosecutors also alleged that Tafirenyika had not provided a satisfactory explanation for possessing the money.

The State opposed bail for all three accused. Investigating officer Phillimon Gumberu reportedly told the court that there was "overwhelming evidence" against them and argued that they could flee the country or otherwise evade trial.

Prosecutors further alleged that the accused were linked to a broader criminal enterprise. On that basis, the State asked the court to reject their bail application, maintaining that it had direct evidence connecting the women to the alleged offences.

The defence opposed the State's application and argued that the three women were suitable candidates for release on bail.

Defence lawyer Brezhnev Mathonsi told the court that the accused persons' passports were already in the possession of the State, reducing the likelihood of flight. He also argued that there was limited risk of witness interference because investigators had already collected evidence from the alleged scene.

The magistrate is expected to consider the competing arguments before making a determination on bail.

The allegations have not been tested in court. The accused persons are presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

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Turn Global Attention Into Tourism Growth

The decision by Mercedes-Benz, one of the world's most recognisable brands, to include Zimbabwe in an international visit is a welcome endorsement of the country's tourism potential.
Its delegation of senior executives and influencers from Germany experienced the Victoria Falls Bridge, the Big Tree, Victoria Falls Hotel and Zimbabwe's renowned hospitality.
Their positive response confirms an important reality: Zimbabwe possesses more than spectacular landscapes and wildlife. Its culture, history and people are equally powerful tourism assets.
The visit came at an opportune time, as Zimbabwe prepares to host the 19th Sanganai/Hlanganani/Dzimbahwe Tourism Expo in Masvingo from September 9 to 12.
Germany is already one of Zimbabwe's leading tourism source markets. The expected participation of German and other international buyers at Sanganai presents an opportunity to convert favourable impressions into tour packages, bookings, investment and enduring commercial partnerships.
Global exposure, however, is not an end in itself. International visitors may admire Zimbabwe, but the country earns lasting value only when that attention produces repeat visits, longer stays, higher expenditure and recommendations to other travellers.
Authorities and tourism operators must therefore build on the Mercedes-Benz visit through sustained destination marketing. Content produced by visiting executives and influencers should be amplified across international platforms, particularly in Germany and other priority markets.
Tourism promotion must also extend beyond Victoria Falls. The decision to host Sanganai in Masvingo and arrange familiarisation tours to places such as Chiredzi is a positive step towards distributing tourism benefits across the country.
Zimbabwe should package connected travel experiences incorporating Victoria Falls, Great Zimbabwe, Gonarezhou, the Eastern Highlands, Matobo, Kariba and community-based cultural attractions. Visitors must be encouraged to explore more destinations and stay longer.
This ambition must be supported by dependable air connectivity, good roads, efficient border processes, competitive prices, quality accommodation and consistently high service standards. Attractive marketing cannot compensate indefinitely for difficult travel or poor visitor experiences.
Local communities must also benefit meaningfully. Tourism becomes sustainable when it creates jobs, supports

small businesses, protects heritage and gives communities an economic interest in conserving natural resources.
Mercedes-Benz has helped place Zimbabwe before a valuable global audience. Sanganai will bring international buyers directly into the country. The responsibility now rests with Government and the tourism industry to turn this exposure into measurable economic growth.
Zimbabwe already has the attractions. It must now ensure that every international endorsement becomes an invitation, and every visitor becomes an ambassador for Destination Zimbabwe.

Mutapa Gold reclaims Phoenix Prince after illegal mining chaos, ropes in Navid as project managers

Itai Mazire

STATE-OWNED Mutapa Gold Resources is turning artisanal mining into a formal gold production model at its Bindura operations, in a major push to boost output and safeguard State assets.
Central to this transformative blueprint is the strategic engagement of Navid as project manager. Bringing a masterclass in operational dexterity, Navid steps into the fray to weave structure into the chaos managing critical vectors of security, rigorous auditing, and miner welfare. Navid's appointment is no mere administrative assignment; it is a harmonious marriage of deep-rooted legacy knowledge and an intuitive, nuanced understanding of artisanal mining behavioral traits. Navid is managing the model at its Phoenix Prince area in Bindura popularly known as Kitsiyatota replicating similar arrangements already in place at Jena Mine in Silobela and Elvington Mine in Chegutu.
The move comes as Zimbabwe recorded its highest-ever gold deliveries of 46,7 tonnes to Fidelity Gold Refinery last year, worth over US$4,6 billion. Artisanal and small-scale miners accounted for 34,87 tonnes, or 74,5 percent of total output.
Mutapa Gold Resources general manager responsible for contract mining, Engineer Tirivashe Vere, said the company had taken control of Mining Lease 21 at Phoenix Prince area to restore order without decimating economic activity.
"We did not stop any of the activities, or we do not intend to stop any of the activities, but we want to transform what was being done into what can fit into our structures.
"And this structure of what we call the artisanal contract mining model, we have tried it, we have tested it, we are doing it elsewhere, and we also know how to support it.
"This model seeks to achieve two things at once: increase immediate gold production while preserving the option to develop larger deposits in future," Eng Vere told stakeholders, including members of the Joint Operations Command and artisanal and small-scale miners, among others, during a town hall meeting in Bindura on Tuesday.
Mutapa Gold Resources is the country's largest producer of the yellow metal. In the nine months to December 2025, the mining group's operations produced 2,354 kilogrammes of gold, followed by 901 kg in the three months to March and 925 kg during the quarter ended June 2026.
Under the new arrangement, Mutapa Gold Resources will take a 30 percent share of gross revenue from contracted miners.
"In terms of expectations, we have cut out expectations. As a Government company, we are guided on what we take as a return.
"You are going to tell me that maybe you are taking out too much; we should negotiate on this, some of the lines are not negotiable — we are guided according to where we are coming from so you will see that in the contracts," he said.
In return, the mining giant will provide technical support including geologists, mining engineers, surveyors and metallurgists to make operations safer and more productive.
Eng Vere said the Phoenix Prince area had for years been subjected to illegal mining, with little formal production accruing to the State.
There are an estimated 200 shafts in the area, with Eng Vere saying that instead of the traditional tribute system, his organisation had opted for mining contracts that are expected to reduce bureaucracy and give both parties flexibility.
Non-performing contractors risk losing their claims, while speculative occupation of shafts will no longer be allowed.
"So we have issued contracts through the project managers that shaft owners have contracts with project managers and if you are not performing you are going to be chucked out — you don't come and take a shaft for speculation because someone is looking for the economic benefit from that shaft and also you don't self-allocate shafts, you need to be orderly," Eng Vere said.
This is in line with the "use-it-or-lose-it" policy the Government has adopted.
Under the contract mining arrangement, Eng Vere said project managers — anchored by Navid's operational ground presence — will administer the contracts directly rather than company senior executives.
The company, which holds more than 52 000 hectares of gold claims through Freda Rebecca Mine across the country in areas such as Silobela, Bindura and Shamva, is also engaging owners of plant and equipment to regularise their operations.
Mutapa said the formalisation drive was not a replacement for large-scale mining. Exploration through drilling and aeromagnetic surveys will continue alongside artisanal operations to identify deposits for future open-pit or underground mines.
The company retains the right to develop commercial deposits, meaning areas currently worked by artisanal

miners could eventually become part of deeper mining operations reaching up to 1 000 metres.
"In terms of our future, we need to do proper exploration, and as we do the exploration, we also need to map the current activities with the future activities, so you might see that we might be bringing in drill rigs, aeromagnetic surveys and it remains our right to do that.
"We will continue to invest looking into the future — artisanal activities when they end, some of you might have graduated and we might go deeper together; we mine up to a thousand metres and if the artisanal miners are capable and have developed the skills, we may walk that journey together," Eng Vere said.

GetBucks Boosts Digital Banking Drive

Shyline Majaji

The digital banking sector has received a boost after GetBucks Microfinance Bank raised its core capital above the regulatory minimum, strengthening its capacity to expand technology-driven savings, payments and lending services.
GetBucks joined African Century Limited, Success Bank Limited, InnBucks Microbank Limited and Mukuru Financial Services among deposit-taking microfinance institutions that had surpassed the local-currency equivalent of the US$5 million minimum capital requirement by June 2026.
The development increased the number of adequately capitalised deposit-taking microfinance institutions, commonly known as DTMFIs, from four in 2025 to five out of the seven currently operating in Zimbabwe.
A stronger capital position gives the institutions greater capacity to invest in mobile banking, digital payments, automated lending and other financial services capable of reaching customers without conventional bank branches.
GetBucks' improved position is particularly important as Zimbabwe increasingly shifts towards technology-based banking. Digital platforms are becoming central to serving small businesses, informal traders, low-income households and customers in communities where traditional banking infrastructure remains limited.
By using mobile platforms and transaction data, microfinance banks can lower the cost of serving geographically dispersed customers while accelerating payments and credit assessments.
Capital, however, remains critical because DTMFIs accept deposits from the public. It provides a financial cushion against loan defaults, operational losses, cyber incidents and other shocks that could affect depositors and confidence in the financial system.
Despite the sector's improvement, Zimbabwe Women Microfinance Bank and Empowerment Bank remained below the minimum capital requirement as of June, highlighting continuing weaknesses within parts of the industry.
Their position means that the sector has not yet achieved universal compliance, despite most operational institutions now exceeding the regulatory benchmark.
The Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe will consequently be expected to maintain scrutiny of the two undercapitalised institutions and ensure that they implement credible recapitalisation plans.
Capital compliance at a single reporting date does not necessarily demonstrate that an institution is financially sound. Regulators must also assess liquidity, profitability, non-performing loans, governance, risk controls and the sustainability of the capital base.
The cancellation of Lion Finance's licence on December 10, 2025, demonstrated the consequences of prolonged undercapitalisation, weak governance and failure to address supervisory concerns.
The case also underlined the importance of strong oversight as digital financial institutions expand rapidly and begin handling larger volumes of deposits, payments and customer information.
While technology can widen financial inclusion, it introduces additional risks involving cybersecurity, data protection, fraud, system failures and irresponsible automated lending. Capital expansion must therefore be accompanied by stronger digital security and corporate governance systems.
The five compliant institutions represent different models of financial service delivery. InnBucks and Mukuru have built significant visibility around digital payments and money-transfer services, while GetBucks has focused on technology-supported banking and credit products.
Their improved capitalisation provides a stronger foundation for competition and innovation within the financial services industry. It could also support the introduction of more accessible savings products and faster credit facilities for small and emerging enterprises.
For customers, however, the real measure of progress will be whether stronger balance sheets result in secure, affordable and reliable financial services.
Digital credit must also be priced responsibly to prevent financially vulnerable customers from becoming trapped in expensive short-term debt.

GetBucks Microfinance Bank has surpassed the US$5 million minimum capital requirement, strengthening its capacity to expand digital banking services. — Picture: File

Institutions should provide transparent information about interest rates, fees, repayment periods and penalties.
GetBucks' emergence from below the capital threshold represents measurable progress for the institution and the wider microfinance banking sector.
The next test will be whether the stronger capital position translates into sustainable digital expansion, greater protection for depositors and improved access to finance without introducing new risks to Zimbabwe's financial system.

Medicines Control Authority of Zimbabwe laboratory personnel examine medical products as the regulator introduces a journalism award to promote accurate reporting on medicine safety, adverse reactions and responsible use.

MCAZ Launches Medicines Safety Journalism Award

New NJAMA category seeks to strengthen reporting on adverse drug reactions, medicine misuse and public-health misinformation

By Shyline Majaji

The Medicines Control Authority of Zimbabwe has partnered with the Zimbabwe Union of Journalists to introduce a Medicines Safety Journalist of the Year category at the 2025/2026 National Journalism and Media Awards.

The new award will recognise journalists whose print, broadcast or digital work improves public understanding of medicine safety, side effects, adverse drug reactions, rational medicine use and Zimbabwe's pharmacovigilance system.

The awards ceremony is expected to be held in Harare later this year.

MCAZ said the initiative comes as communities face growing volumes of unverified and potentially harmful information about medicines, medical devices and other healthcare products.

"The Medicines Safety Journalist of the Year award has been introduced to recognise journalists whose published or broadcast work advances public understanding of medicine safety, side effects, adverse drug reactions, rational medicine use and Zimbabwe's pharmacovigilance system," MCAZ said in a statement released on Friday.

The regulator said responsible journalism could help consumers make informed decisions while supporting national efforts to identify and respond to medicine-related risks.

Reporting beyond medicine availability

Public discussion about healthcare frequently concentrates on the availability and price of medicines. The new award seeks to encourage reporting beyond access by examining whether medicines are properly prescribed, correctly used and continuously monitored after entering the market.

A medicine may pass laboratory and clinical assessments before approval, but some uncommon adverse effects only become visible after it is used by a much larger population.

Pharmacovigilance is the system used to detect, assess, understand and prevent adverse effects and other medicine-related problems. Reports from patients, health workers, manufacturers and regulatory authorities can help identify previously unknown safety concerns.

MCAZ serves as Zimbabwe's National Pharmacovigilance Centre and has participated in the World Health Organisation's International Drug Monitoring Programme since 1998.

The authority said journalism could encourage patients and healthcare professionals to report suspected adverse reactions while explaining that a reported event does not automatically prove that a medicine caused it.

Accurate reporting is essential because poorly framed stories may cause unnecessary panic, discourage patients from completing treatment or amplify claims that are unsupported by scientific evidence.

Countering misinformation

Zimbabweans increasingly encounter medicine information through social-media platforms, informal messaging groups and online advertisements. Some posts promote unregistered products, unsupported treatments or misleading claims about the risks and benefits of approved medicines.

Such misinformation can delay professional diagnosis, encourage self-medication and expose patients to counterfeit or poor-quality products.

The new award is expected to encourage journalists to scrutinise those claims, consult qualified experts and explain regulatory decisions in language that ordinary readers can understand.

MCAZ said its collaboration with ZUJ would provide a platform to engage journalists, editors and media owners who influence public narratives on health and regulation.

ZUJ coordinates the annual National Journalism and Media Awards with supporting partners to recognise professional and ethical excellence across different media platforms.

The partnership could also encourage newsrooms to treat medicines regulation as a continuing public-interest beat rather than a subject covered only during emergencies, product recalls or disease outbreaks.

Independence remains essential

While sponsorship can support specialised reporting, the credibility of the award will depend on transparent judging and the protection of editorial independence.

Journalists must remain free to investigate MCAZ, pharmaceutical companies, healthcare institutions and government policy where legitimate public-interest questions arise.

Strong medicines-safety journalism should not simply repeat statements from regulators or manufacturers. It should test claims, consult independent specialists, examine available evidence and include the experiences of affected patients without sensationalising them.

The award's judging criteria, eligibility period, submission deadline and entry procedure were not provided in Friday's media release. ZUJ and MCAZ are expected to communicate detailed entry requirements before submissions are assessed.

Public-health mandate

MCAZ is a statutory authority established under the Medicines and Allied Substances Control Act. It regulates medicines, allied substances and medical devices to ensure that products made available in Zimbabwe meet safety, quality and efficacy requirements.

Its regulatory functions include product registration, licensing, laboratory testing, Good Manufacturing Practice inspections, post-market surveillance and pharmacovigilance.

The authority has attained World Health Organisation Global Benchmarking Tool Maturity Level Three status, indicating that Zimbabwe has a stable and functioning medicines-regulatory system.

MCAZ Director-General Richard Rukwata said the award forms part of a broader effort to strengthen cooperation between the regulator and the media.

The success of the initiative will ultimately be measured not only by the quality of winning entries, but by whether it produces sustained, independent and evidence-based reporting that helps Zimbabweans use medicines more safely.

Zimbabwe Links Media Growth to China Trade

Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services Minister Dr Zhemu Soda addresses the Seventh Forum on China–Africa Media Cooperation in Beijing, linking stronger media cooperation with Zimbabwe's growing trade opportunities in China. Picture credit:China Broadcasting International Economic and Technical Cooperation Co., Ltd.

- Zimbabwe's first commercial blueberry shipment to China has opened a new market for the country's rapidly expanding horticulture industry.
- China–Zimbabwe trade reached a record US$4.4 billion in 2025, rising 15.2 percent and leaving Zimbabwe with a US$740 million trade surplus
- Zimbabwe is seeking Chinese cooperation in AI-powered content localisation, 5G broadcasting, training and modern newsroom technologies.
- The next test is turning Beijing's commitments into investment, employment, modern media systems and wider markets for Zimbabwean products.

By Abel Karowangoro, Editor, Hurumende News Hub, and NING Kai (Victor), China Broadcasting International Economic and Technical Cooperation Co., Ltd.

Zimbabwe has placed artificial intelligence, modern broadcasting and export promotion at the centre of its media cooperation with China, with Information Minister Dr Jenfan Muswere "Zhemu" Soda using the country's first blueberry shipment to Beijing to demonstrate how strategic communication can support trade and economic development.

Dr Soda led Zimbabwe's delegation to the Seventh Forum on China–Africa Media Cooperation, which opened in Beijing on August 20 under the theme, "Sharing New Opportunities for Development, Creating a New Future for Audio-Visual Media."

The forum was co-hosted by China's National Radio and Television Administration, the Beijing Municipal People's Government and the African Union of Broadcasting.

It brought together about 400 representatives from China and 45 African countries, including a record 33 ministerial-level delegates.

Speaking during the main forum, Dr Soda drew attention to Zimbabwe's first commercial export of fresh blueberries to China in July.

"In July, just recently, Zimbabwe successfully exported its first shipment of fresh blueberries to China, opening up new opportunities and broad horizons for our horticultural industry," Dr Soda said.

The shipment followed the signing of a phytosanitary market-access protocol between Zimbabwe and China in September 2025.

China's decision to introduce zero-tariff treatment for imports from 53 African countries with which it has diplomatic relations, effective from May 1, 2026, has further improved the competitiveness of qualifying Zimbabwean products.

Zimbabwe began exporting blueberries to China in July, becoming one of the African countries seeking to benefit from the Chinese market's growing demand for fresh produce. Reuters reported that Zimbabwe is now Africa's third-largest blueberry producer after Morocco and South Africa.

Production increased from about 8,000 tonnes in 2024 to 9,500 tonnes in 2025 and is projected to reach approximately 12,000 tonnes from 850 hectares in 2026.

Blueberries signal export shift

Blueberries are increasingly being viewed as evidence that Zimbabwe can diversify its exports to China beyond minerals and tobacco.

According to figures attributed to Chinese customs authorities, bilateral trade reached a record US$4.4 billion in 2025, representing a 15.2 percent increase from the previous year.

Zimbabwe exported goods worth approximately US2.57billiontoChinawhileimportingproductsvaluedatUS1.83 billion, producing a trade surplus of about US$740 million. Chinese Ambassador to Zimbabwe Zhou Ding has also highlighted agriculture, mineral beneficiation and digital infrastructure as areas capable of driving stronger bilateral trade.

The export of blueberries represents a potential shift towards higher-value agricultural products, alongside citrus fruits, avocados and macadamia nuts.

However, capturing the full Chinese market will require greater investment in irrigation, cold-storage facilities, packaging, certification, transport and continuous compliance with sanitary and phytosanitary regulations.

Zimbabwean blueberry producers have also cited expensive credit and limited access to long-term financing as constraints on expansion.

Media enlisted to promote trade

Dr Soda said Zimbabwe's media industry was prepared to give greater coverage to the results of China–Zimbabwe economic cooperation.

The approach would position media as more than a channel for Government announcements. Broadcasting, digital content and documentary production could be used to market Zimbabwean products, explain Chinese import requirements and connect local producers with international markets.

"We will also learn from China's media experience through short-term courses and other formats, to upgrade the skills of our professionals and jointly tell more vivid stories like the blueberry story," Dr Soda said.

The minister's delegation included Ministry of Information Chief Director Dr Jonathan Gandari, Zimpapers chief executive William Chikoto and ZBC chief executive Sugar Chagonda.

Dr Soda told the forum that Zimbabwe wanted to adopt AI for automated content localisation, advanced audience analytics and the modernisation of broadcasting infrastructure.

AI-assisted transcription, translation, subtitling and voice technologies could enable Zimbabwean broadcasters to distribute information rapidly in Shona, Ndebele and other indigenous languages.

The technology could also help local media organisations study audience behaviour, produce specialised content and reach Zimbabweans living outside the country.

Beijing declaration targets AI and co-productions

The forum adopted the Joint Declaration of the Seventh Forum on China–Africa Media Cooperation and announced 80 achievements in radio, film, television and audiovisual cooperation.

China and participating African countries agreed to strengthen news exchanges, joint productions, programme translation, mutual broadcasting, youth training and cooperation in emerging formats such as micro-dramas.

The declaration also calls for cooperation in the application and governance of artificial intelligence.

Under the China–Africa audiovisual innovation programme, forum materials indicated that 133 audiovisual productions and 60 episodes of agricultural programmes were translated into English, French, Arabic and Swahili between September 2024 and June 2026.

Zimbabwe now has an opportunity to push for programmes to be translated into Shona and Ndebele while placing locally produced documentaries, films, agricultural programmes and tourism content on Chinese and African platforms.

Training must reach the whole industry

Dr Soda said cooperation with China had created scholarship and professional-training opportunities for Zimbabwean media practitioners.

These include intensive short courses and undergraduate and postgraduate placements at Chinese universities.

The impact will be greater if training opportunities reach beyond executives and public broadcasters to include independent publications, community radio stations, universities, filmmakers, technicians and young digital creators.

Zimbabwe's media industry is increasingly being shaped by online publications, podcasts, streaming services and social-media producers operating outside traditional broadcasting institutions.

These emerging platforms will require modern equipment, sustainable financing and training in AI, data journalism, cybersecurity and digital-content monetisation.

Implementation is the next test

The Beijing forum has presented Zimbabwe with opportunities in broadcasting technology, AI, skills development, co-productions and international content distribution.

However, the benefits will depend on measurable implementation.

Zimbabwe will need to complete broadcasting digitisation, improve internet connectivity, modernise studios and establish guidelines governing AI accuracy, copyright, privacy, deepfakes and audience data.

The country must also protect local intellectual property and ensure that Zimbabwean producers remain equal partners in international co-productions.

The blueberry shipment demonstrates that agreements can translate into tangible economic activity. The challenge is to replicate that progress across media technology, local content production and other export industries.

Zimbabwe's Beijing mission will ultimately be judged by whether it delivers modern newsrooms, skilled professionals, more indigenous-language programming and stronger international markets for Zimbabwean stories and products.

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Super El Niño Puts Zimbabwe on Alert

By Hurumende News Desk

Government is stepping up preparations to protect Zimbabwe's crops, livestock and water supplies as forecasts point to a potentially devastating El Niño that could become the strongest experienced in living memory.

The developing weather system has raised fears of another severe drought in Zimbabwe, where millions of rural households depend on rain-fed agriculture for food and income.

The United Kingdom's Met Office warned on Friday that the coming El Niño could become an "unprecedented event", while other international forecasting centres say it could rank among the strongest recorded since 1950.

Zimbabwe's Meteorological Services Department has also issued a preliminary warning over the possible development of El Niño conditions during the 2026/27 rainfall season.

Although the country's final seasonal forecast will determine the expected distribution of rainfall, previous El Niño seasons have brought prolonged dry spells, crop failures, livestock deaths and widespread water shortages.

Government is consequently moving to strengthen drought-resistant crop production, expand water harvesting, protect livestock and build strategic grain reserves before the rainfall season begins.

Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Mechanisation and Water Resources Development Professor Obert Jiri said climate resilience must begin with the type of seed planted by farmers.

"Irrigation infrastructure and fertilisers are useless if the seed placed in the soil cannot withstand thermal stress, optimise water-use efficiency or resist emerging pathogens," Prof Jiri said.

One Million Hectares Under Pfumvudza

Government is targeting one million hectares under the climate-proofed Pfumvudza/Intwasa programme this season.

Every participating household is expected to prepare at least three plots, with farmers being encouraged to complete land preparation while conditions remain dry.

The conservation-farming model is designed to protect soil moisture through minimum tillage, mulching and the precise application of seed and fertiliser.

It has become particularly important for communal farmers in drought-prone areas such as Matabeleland South, Matabeleland North, Masvingo, Midlands and southern parts of Manicaland.

Historical production figures show that Zimbabwe's maize harvest can fall by more than half during severe El Niño seasons. Farmers can collectively lose more than US$300 million through crop failure, livestock deaths and reduced agricultural activity.

The Government is also accelerating the development of climate-smart maize, traditional grain and legume varieties capable of surviving extreme heat and prolonged periods without rain.

Prof Jiri said modern breeding technologies could reduce the period required to develop new seed varieties from between 10 and 12 years to four to six years.

The varieties will also need to resist emerging pests and diseases, including fall armyworm, which has become a major threat to maize production.

Farmers in the country's driest regions are expected to place greater emphasis on sorghum, millet, cowpeas and other small grains that are better suited to low-rainfall conditions.

Grain Reserve Target Set at 450 000 Tonnes

The Government intends to establish strategic grain reserves of 450 000 tonnes through successive farming seasons.

The reserves will be supported by new artificial intelligence-powered silos that are expected to improve the monitoring of grain stocks, temperature, moisture and storage conditions.

The planned reserves could provide an important buffer if the El Niño results in reduced domestic production and forces Zimbabwe to increase grain imports.

However, the effectiveness of the strategy will depend on how quickly grain is mobilised and whether storage facilities across the country are rehabilitated before the harvest.

Livestock Farmers Face Feed Crisis

Livestock production is another major concern, particularly in Matabeleland, Masvingo and parts of the Midlands where grazing conditions can deteriorate rapidly during drought.

More than one million cattle reportedly died during the 1991/92 El Niño drought. A further 44 766 cattle deaths were recorded during the 2023/24 drought.

Farmers are now being urged to

Farmers preparing conservation plots or applying mulch. Farmers prepare Pfumvudza/Intwasa plots as Government targets one million hectares under climate-smart agriculture.

conserve grass, bale hay and retain maize stover and wheat straw instead of burning crop residues.

Government is targeting the production of seven million hay bales and the establishment of community fodder banks before natural pastures become depleted.

Locally adapted cattle breeds such as Mashona, Boran, Tuli and Nguni are also being promoted because of their ability to withstand high temperatures, limited grazing and longer journeys to water sources.

Veterinary authorities will need to intensify cattle dipping, vaccination and disease surveillance as weakened livestock become more vulnerable to infections.

Boreholes and Dams Under Pressure

Water shortages could become one of the most immediate consequences of a severe El Niño.

More than 12 000 boreholes reportedly dried up during the 2015/16 El Niño, while 6 028 rural boreholes were dysfunctional during the 2023/24 drought.

A repeat of those conditions could leave communities competing with livestock for increasingly scarce water resources.

Government is therefore prioritising borehole rehabilitation, dam maintenance, water harvesting and the expansion of irrigation infrastructure.

Farmers with access to irrigation are being encouraged to use water-efficient systems and avoid planting crops that require large volumes of water where dam levels are already low.

Banks Challenged to Change Lending Models

Prof Jiri also challenged banks and agricultural finance institutions to redesign lending products around Zimbabwe's changing rainfall patterns.

"As we build resilient food systems, our finance institutions must understand and design financing models that fathom changed seasons, transformed risk architecture and the value farmers create," he said.

Traditional agricultural loans based on fixed planting and harvesting dates may expose both farmers and lenders to losses as rainfall seasons become increasingly unpredictable.

Climate-linked insurance, flexible repayment periods and financing for irrigation, solar-powered boreholes and fodder production could become critical under the emerging conditions.

Early-Warning System Activated8

Zimbabwe has meanwhile launched the Early Warnings for All initiative in Mutare to improve the dissemination of weather and disaster information.

The programme brings together the Meteorological Services Department, Civil Protection Unit, Zimbabwe National Water Authority, Postal and Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe Red Cross Society and development partners.

It is intended to ensure that weather warnings reach farmers through radio, mobile phones, extension officers and local leadership structures before hazards cause major losses.

The immediate priority is no longer simply forecasting drought. It is ensuring that farmers use the information to decide when to plant, which crops to grow, how many animals to keep and where to secure water and livestock feed.

The El Niño forecast is not yet a guarantee that every part of Zimbabwe will experience drought. Rainfall distribution can vary significantly between provinces and districts.

But after the crop failures, cattle deaths and water shortages experienced during previous El Niño seasons, Government is moving to prepare before the threat develops into another national food-security emergency.

Gold rush: Zim exports nearly double to $7.5BN as mining sector explodes

Itai Mazire

Zimbabwe's export earnings have skyrocketed 91 percent (%) to USD 7.53 billion in the first half of 2026, propelled by a mining sector frenzy that has seen gold revenues surge 176%, the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe(RBZ) has said.

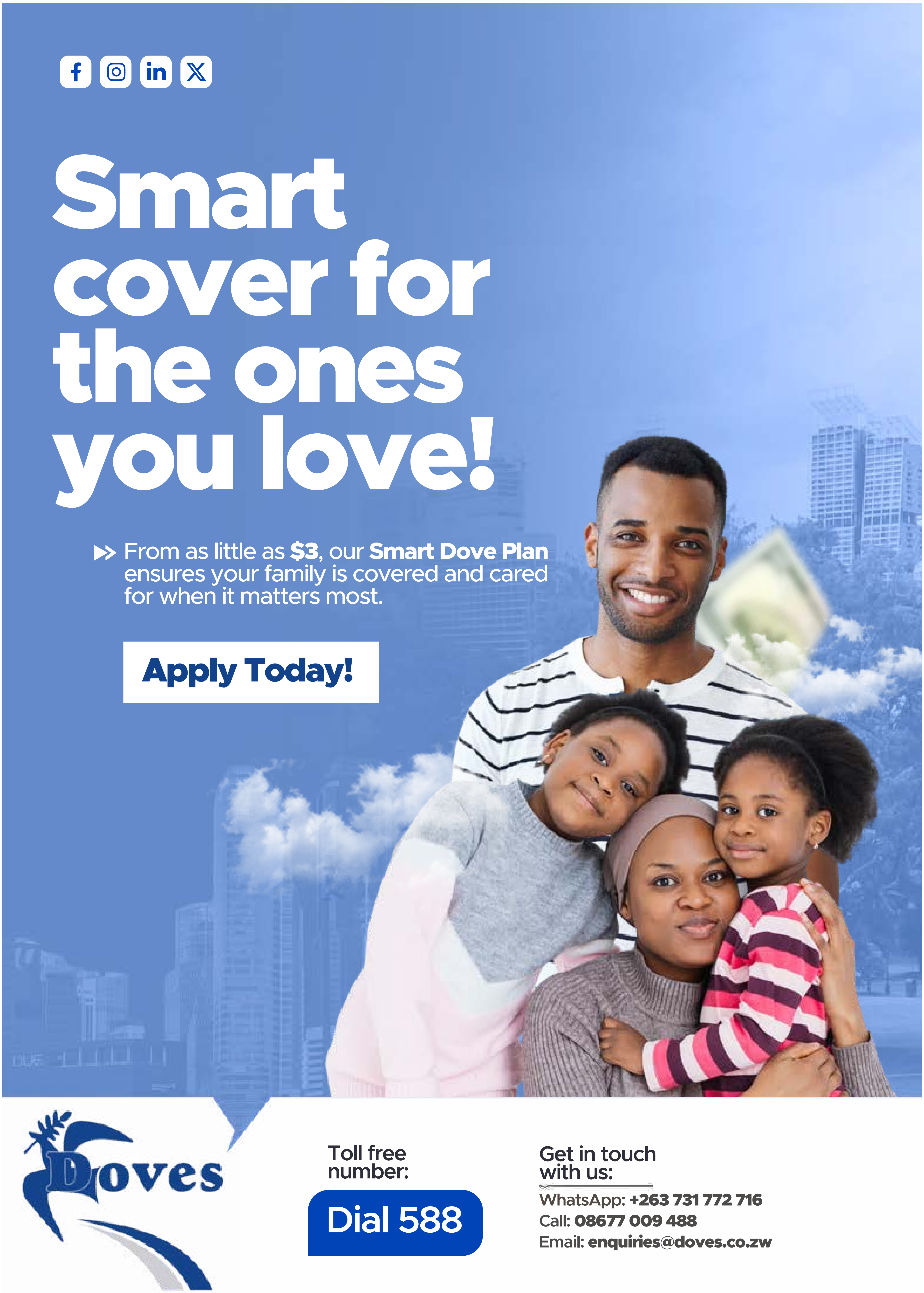
"The surge was driven by the mining sector, whose earnings jumped 121.3% to USD 6.21 billion," the RBZ stated, as the country's foreign currency generation shatters previous records.

"Gold led the growth, generating USD 3.82 billion, up 176%, while platinum earnings rose 82.8% to US$1.46 billion," the central bank confirmed, that the precious metal's dominant role in the export bonanza.

The figures, a dramatic leap from UD $3.95 billion recorded in the same period last year, highlight Zimbabwe's deepening reliance on mineral wealth, with tobacco exports also adding US$967.6 million – a 23.5% increase.

"The figures underline the growing contribution of Zimbabwe's mineral exports, particularly gold, to foreign currency generation and overall export growth," the RBZ said.

The mining-led windfall offers a critical buffer for the economy, though analysts warn of risks from over-reliance on volatile commodity prices.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ZiG Stability Opens Door to Cheaper Loans

RBZ challenges banks to lower lending rates as inflation falls to 3.2% and foreign currency reserves reach US$1.7 billion

Shyline Majaji

Zimbabwe's improving monetary stability has opened a new window for cheaper productive financing after annual ZiG inflation declined to 3.2 percent in July while foreign currency reserves rose to US$1.7 billion.

The developments mark a significant shift from the exchange-rate volatility and high inflation that previously disrupted household budgets, investment decisions and business planning.

According to the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe's 2026 Mid-Term Monetary Policy Review, annual ZiG inflation remained below five percent throughout the first seven months of the year.

The official exchange rate also remained relatively stable, averaging about ZiG25.93 to the United States dollar between January and July.

With inflation and exchange-rate pressures easing, the RBZ has now turned its attention to commercial banks, arguing that lending rates must decline so that monetary stability can translate into affordable financing for agriculture, mining, manufacturing and other productive sectors.

The central bank reduced its policy rate from 35 percent to 30 percent in June. It also lowered the rate on its Targeted Finance Facility from 20 percent to 15 percent, while capping lending to productive sectors under the facility at an all-inclusive rate of 25 percent.

However, the RBZ said some financial institutions had not reduced their lending rates sufficiently following the policy adjustment.

The central bank warned that the widening difference between its policy rate and commercial lending rates was keeping businesses—particularly small and medium-sized enterprises—outside the formal credit market.

The challenge now facing Zimbabwe is therefore no longer limited to stabilising the ZiG, but ensuring that the improved monetary environment produces affordable capital for businesses seeking to finance machinery, stock, agricultural inputs and working capital.

Banks appear well positioned to increase productive lending. Non-performing loans stood at 3.19 percent in June, below the five percent benchmark cited by the RBZ, while the sector's capital adequacy ratio reached 24.13 percent—more than double the 12 percent regulatory benchmark.

ZiG deposits also rose from ZiG18.31 billion in December 2025 to ZiG26.87 billion in June 2026. Broad money increased by 31.4 percent to ZiG142.01 billion during the same period.

The figures point to a well-capitalised banking sector with relatively low levels of distressed loans and a growing deposit base. However, the RBZ believes those strengths must now be reflected in increased lending to productive enterprises.

Zimbabwe's external position has also strengthened, providing additional support for the ZiG.

Foreign currency receipts increased by 47.8 percent to US10.72billionduringthefirsthalfof2026,againstforeign-paymentsofUS7.30 billion. The country recorded an estimated current-account surplus of US$1.3 billion, supported mainly by mineral exports and diaspora remittances.

The RBZ has used part of the inflows to build reserves and improve foreign currency availability. Reserves reached US$1.7 billion by the end of July, equivalent to approximately 1.7 months of import cover.

Although the improvement represents an important buffer for the domestic currency, reserve cover remains below the minimum three months required before Zimbabwe can consider moving towards exclusive use of the ZiG.

The local currency currently accounts for about 40 percent of transactions processed through the National Payment System, against a medium-term target of 60 percent.

Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe Governor Dr John Mushayavanhu joins President Emmerson Mnangagwa during the official unveiling of the Zimbabwe Gold (ZiG) currency, introduced as part of efforts to strengthen monetary stability and restore confidence in the country's local currency. — Picture: File

The central bank's mono-currency barometer places the country's progress towards satisfying the eight conditions required for a single-currency system at 50.1 percent. The RBZ has stressed that this does not trigger an immediate transition, saying the process will remain market-driven and dependent on sustained economic stability.

The Government and the RBZ must consequently preserve tight monetary and fiscal discipline while encouraging banks to play a more active role in financing national production.

A ZiG1.2 billion Targeted Finance Facility has already been established to support productive sectors, although uptake has remained subdued. The latest reduction in borrowing costs will test whether high interest rates were the principal factor discouraging businesses from seeking loans.

If uptake remains weak, authorities and banks may have to examine other obstacles, including collateral demands, short loan periods, business confidence and uncertainty over future earnings.

Zimbabwe has made measurable progress in controlling inflation, managing liquidity and stabilising the exchange rate. The next decisive test is whether that stability can leave central bank statistics and reach factories, farms, mines and growing enterprises.

For ordinary Zimbabweans, the real dividend will be realised when stable money supports increased production, new investment, employment creation and improved household incomes.

Mercedes-Benz Puts Zimbabwe on Global Map

ZTA says German delegation's Victoria Falls tour endorses destination ahead of Sanganai Expo

Abel Karowangoro

Zimbabwe's campaign to attract more international tourists has received a major boost after global motoring brand Mercedes-Benz included Victoria Falls in a visit involving senior executives and influencers from Germany.

Zimbabwe Tourism Authority chief executive Dr George Munyaradzi Manyaya said the brand's decision to visit the country represented an endorsement of Zimbabwe as a competitive international tourism destination.

"Mercedes-Benz is a known global brand with a lot of followers," Manyaya said.

"For them to choose us is actually an endorsement of our destination."

The delegation visited some of Victoria Falls' leading attractions, including the Victoria Falls Bridge, the Big Tree and the historic Victoria Falls Hotel. Participants were also exposed to Zimbabwean culture and hospitality.

Manyaya said the visit's principal value was the international exposure generated for Zimbabwe through the experiences and personal accounts shared by members of the delegation.

"The most important aspect is the marketing of our destination," he said.

Some of the German executives and influencers were visiting Zimbabwe for the first time and expressed satisfaction with the country's attractions, culture and people.

"They really loved the Zimbabwean tourist attractions and also our people," Manyaya said.

"They really commented that one of the biggest assets that Zimbabwe has is the culture and the people."

The visit is expected to strengthen Zimbabwe's visibility in Germany, one of the country's most important international tourism source markets.

According to Manyaya, Germany ranked third among Zimbabwe's leading source markets last year, behind the United States and the United Kingdom. He said the country was recording growing interest from German travellers.

The exposure comes as Zimbabwe prepares to host the 19th edition of the Sanganai/Hlanganani/Dzimbahwe Tourism Expo in Masvingo from September 9 to 12.

The annual tourism trade fair will bring together local operators, international buyers, investors and other industry stakeholders to market Zimbabwe's attractions and negotiate commercial partnerships.

Manyaya said a delegation of German buyers was expected to attend the expo, offering local tourism businesses an opportunity to convert growing interest

into bookings and long-term partnerships.

International buyers from established and emerging source markets are also expected to participate in the event.

Some delegates will undertake familiarisation tours before and after the expo, including visits to attractions in Chiredzi and surrounding areas. The tours are intended to introduce buyers to destinations beyond the traditional Victoria Falls circuit.

The programme will include business-to-business meetings, investment discussions and activities focused on the development of the tourism industry.

Hosting the expo in Masvingo is also expected to spread tourism activity and international exposure to other parts of Zimbabwe. The province is home to major destinations such as the Great Zimbabwe World Heritage Site, Lake Mutirikwi and several wildlife and cultural attractions.

The Victoria Falls visit and the forthcoming Sanganai Expo form part of a wider strategy to use international experiences and trade engagements to promote Zimbabwe.

While the Mercedes-Benz visit provides global brand visibility, Sanganai is expected to connect that exposure with buyers capable of packaging and selling Zimbabwean destinations in foreign markets.

"For Zimbabwe, we should take every opportunity to showcase our destination to the world," Manyaya said.

The country will now be seeking to translate the growing international attention into increased tourist arrivals, higher visitor spending, investment and stronger business for hotels, tour operators and surrounding communities.


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Dr Nyakabau Takes Cancer Care to Karanda, Says Early Detection Can Save Lives

By Tsitsi Ndabambi

CancerSave founder and oncologist Dr Anna Mary Nyakabau has called for greater investment in cancer prevention, screening and early detection as she led an oncology outreach programme to Karanda Mission Hospital on Friday, bringing specialist services closer to communities in need.

The CancerSave and partners oncology outreach brought together medical specialists, cancer survivors and organisations supporting healthcare delivery in an effort to raise awareness, promote early diagnosis and improve access to services for patients in rural communities.

The outreach comes as Zimbabwe continues to face a significant cancer burden, with medical practitioners expressing concern over the large number of patients who present for treatment when the disease has already reached an advanced stage.

Clinical oncologist Dr Kudzai Makova, who participated in the outreach, said cervical cancer remains the most common cancer in Zimbabwe, followed by prostate cancer among men and breast cancer, which affects both women and men.

He said persistent human papillomavirus (HPV) infection remains the most important risk factor for cervical cancer, making vaccination and screening critical tools in the fight against the disease.

Zimbabwe has a population-based HPV vaccination programme targeting girls between the ages of 10 and 13, while cervical cancer screening provides another opportunity to detect pre-cancerous changes before they develop into invasive disease.

Dr Makova said cancer prevention also requires attention to other risk factors, including smoking, alcohol consumption, physical inactivity, advancing age, family history and occupational exposure to chemicals.

He stressed that cancer should not automatically be viewed as a death sentence, particularly when it is detected early.

"The beauty of oncology is we learn the natural history of cancers, and there are so many opportunities to institute interventions to detect these cancers early," Dr Makova said.

He explained that screening can identify abnormalities before some cancers become invasive, allowing relatively simple interventions to prevent the disease from progressing.

His message was reinforced by the experience of cancer survivor **Gladys Fainoza**, 58, who has survived breast cancer for 20 years.

Fainoza said she first felt a lump in her breast in 2003 but initially ignored it because she did not want it to interfere with her studies.

After completing her studies, she began feeling unwell and eventually sought medical attention. A biopsy was conducted in 2006, and the lump later grew and became sore before she was informed that she had breast cancer.

She was referred to specialists in Harare, underwent surgery and subsequently received chemotherapy before

travelling to Pretoria, South Africa, for radiotherapy.

Fainoza said the financial burden of treatment was significant, although her family shielded her from much of the cost at the time.

She said she remained determined to overcome the disease and adopted a positive mindset.

"I just developed a positive mindset because I accepted the condition, and I said the condition is on me, so I have to fix it," she said.

Twenty years after her diagnosis, Fainoza continues to undergo annual medical examinations and says her children remain one of her greatest motivations.

"I want to see my children growing, which is keeping me going," she said.

She urged people not to ignore changes in their bodies and stressed the importance of early diagnosis.

"Early diagnosis is better because it's less expensive," Fainoza said, warning that treatment becomes more difficult and costly when cancer is detected at an advanced stage.

Another breast cancer survivor, Anastasia Rutendo, 59, shared her own difficult journey after being diagnosed in 2019.

Balzam requested a mastectomy before beginning chemotherapy, saying she did not want to keep the affected breast because she associated it with the cancer.

She began chemotherapy in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic and underwent six cycles.

Balzam said the treatment was physically and financially demanding, leaving her extremely weak.

"During the chemotherapy, I went down. I couldn't walk. I couldn't talk," she recalled.

She spent almost a year away from work as she recovered from the treatment, describing the experience as one of the most difficult periods of her life.

Her experience highlighted the physical, psychological and economic challenges that cancer patients and their families can face during treatment.

Dr Nyakabau also spoke about the relationship between HIV and cancer, pointing to Kaposi sarcoma as an example of how effective public-health interventions can reduce the burden of cancer-related disease.

She said Kaposi sarcoma was once much more prevalent among people living with HIV, particularly before the widespread availability of antiretroviral therapy, resulting in many deaths.

However, the expansion of antiretroviral treatment has dramatically reduced the prevalence of Kaposi sarcoma, which Dr Nyakabau said demonstrates Zimbabwe's ability to successfully control disease through coordinated health interventions.

For her, the experience provides hope that the country can similarly make progress in tackling the wider cancer burden.

Turning to childhood cancers, Dr Makova said cancers among children were relatively uncommon, with the national cancer registry recording fewer than 300 cases annually.

He said genetic factors were among the important contributors to childhood cancers, making prevention more difficult than with some adult cancers.

He highlighted cancers such as brain tumours, kidney tumours, eye tumours, lymphomas and acute leukaemias as conditions requiring early recognition and treatment.

He said Zimbabwe's cancer-control programme includes initiatives aimed at identifying childhood cancers at an early stage, including retinoblastoma, an eye cancer that can affect children.

Dr Makova said healthcare workers conducting routine growth-monitoring visits should examine children's eyes for signs that could indicate the development of the disease.

The oncologist also expressed concern over late presentation, saying figures from the Zimbabwe National Cancer Registry indicated that between 80 and 90 percent of patients present with locally advanced or stage-four disease.

He said this was one of the reasons communities often associate cancer with death.

"When 80 to 90 percent of our patients are coming with either locally advanced or stage IV disease, it actually becomes very difficult," he said.

Dr Makova said cancer treatment required a multidisciplinary approach involving oncologists, surgeons, radiologists, pathologists and other healthcare professionals.

He said increased awareness and the testimonies of cancer survivors could help dispel fears surrounding chemotherapy, radiotherapy, surgery and diagnostic procedures such as biopsies.

Dr Nyakabau said Karanda Mission Hospital was an important location for the outreach because it serves communities far from Harare and sees significant numbers of patients, including people affected by cancer.

She said the initiative was also aligned with the Ministry of Health and Child Care's decentralisation agenda, which seeks to bring services closer to patients so they only have to travel to referral centres when specialist services are not available locally.

Zimbabwe's major cancer referral centres include Parirenyatwa Hospital in Harare and Mpilo Hospital in Bulawayo.

Karanda has an oncology nurse, while an oncologist assists with chemotherapy services, allowing some patients to receive treatment locally instead of

travelling long distances.

Dr Nyakabau said establishing clear referral pathways was equally important so that patients identified at local facilities could be transferred to specialist centres without becoming lost in the healthcare system.

She said the growing cancer burden required collaboration between government and other stakeholders because the Ministry of Health alone could not meet every need.

Dr Nyakabau and Dr Makova have also worked together in developing Zimbabwe's National Cancer Control Plan, which was subsequently handed over to the Ministry of Health and launched as part of the country's efforts to strengthen cancer management.

CancerSave has also supported patients receiving treatment at Parirenyatwa Radiotherapy Centre through a number of initiatives.

Among them is a Tamoxifen access project providing the medicine to women with hormone-sensitive breast cancer at no cost under a compassionate-access programme.

The organisation has also supported the availability of Cisplatin for cervical cancer treatment, donated chemotherapy chairs and provided food hampers to patients facing difficult circumstances.

CancerSave has further supported social-work services at the referral centre as part of efforts to improve the overall experience of cancer patients.

The Karanda outreach also extended beyond oncology, with Charity Bosha of Specsavers Opticians, representing the Rotary Club of Zimbabwe, providing eye screening and reading glasses to community members.

Bosha said the team hoped to distribute at least 600 reading glasses during the outreach.

She said the Karanda programme was the eighth outreach undertaken by the initiative, with a broader target of providing 2,000 pairs of spectacles by the end of November.

The inclusion of eye-care services demonstrated the wider role of partnerships in taking essential healthcare services closer to communities.

Dr Nyakabau said the aim was for the oncology outreach to become an annual initiative while encouraging other organisations and medical professionals to undertake similar programmes.

For the doctors involved, the message to the public was clear: prevention, screening and early diagnosis remain critical in reducing cancer deaths.

For survivors such as Fainoza and Balzam, however, the message carries a deeply personal meaning.

Fainoza has lived for two decades after her breast cancer diagnosis, while Balzam endured surgery, six cycles of chemotherapy and almost a year away from work before rebuilding her life.

Their stories stand as a powerful reminder that while cancer can bring fear, financial strain and difficult treatment, a diagnosis does not necessarily determine the outcome.

As Dr Makova put it, "Cancer is not a death sentence."

Malaika Mushandu stripped of Miss Cosmo Zimbabwe crown over alleged misconduct

By Hurumende News Desk

The Miss Cosmo Zimbabwe Organisation has confirmed that Malaika Mushandu was stripped of the Miss Cosmo Zimbabwe 2026 title over alleged misconduct and failure to meet eligibility and organisational requirements.

In a public statement dated August 22, 2026, the organisation said the withdrawal of the title took effect on June 23—just over two weeks after Mushandu was crowned at a national pageant held in Harare on June 7.

“The decision to withdraw and terminate the title was reached after due consideration of matters relating to misconduct and ineligibility, including failure to satisfy the applicable standards, requirements and obligations prescribed by the organisation and the international Miss Cosmo Organisation,” the statement said.

However, the organisation did not disclose the specific conduct, eligibility requirement or contractual obligation Mushandu allegedly breached. It also did not explain whether she had been subjected to a disciplinary hearing, given an opportunity to respond to the allegations or allowed to appeal the decision.

The absence of those details leaves significant questions surrounding one of the shortest title reigns in Zimbabwean pageantry.

According to the organisation, Mushandu ceased to be the recognised Miss Cosmo Zimbabwe 2026 titleholder on June 23 and was no longer authorised to present herself as the reigning queen or exercise any rights and privileges attached to the crown.

The statement effectively means that any appearances, endorsements, promotional engagements or representations made under the Miss Cosmo Zimbabwe 2026 title after that date were not sanctioned by the national organisation.

Mushandu had secured the crown during the Miss Universe Zimbabwe 2026 grand finale, where several contestants were selected to represent Zimbabwe at different international pageants. Her victory placed her in line to represent the country at the Miss Cosmo international competition.

The Miss Cosmo Zimbabwe Organisation did not state who would replace her or whether a runner-up would inherit the title and represent Zimbabwe at the international event. It also did not clarify why the formal public announcement was issued nearly two months after the decision reportedly took effect.

That delay is likely to raise concerns about governance and transparency because the public, sponsors, pageant followers and prospective partners may have continued to regard Mushandu as the legitimate titleholder during the intervening period.

Mushandu’s response to the allegations was not included in the organisation’s statement. The claims of misconduct and ineligibility therefore remain the organisation’s account and should not be treated as independently established findings until fuller details or Mushandu’s side are made public.

The controversy may also affect commercial arrangements connected to the crown, including sponsorships, appearances and promotional commitments. The organisation has not disclosed whether any prizes or benefits awarded to Mushandu will be withdrawn or recovered.

Mushandu is an experienced model, filmmaker and media entrepreneur who has previously represented Zimbabwe on major pageant platforms. Her removal is consequently expected to attract considerable attention within the local modelling and entertainment industries.

The organisation said its announcement served as an official clarification of the status of the 2026 title. Further communication is now expected on Mushandu’s replacement and Zimbabwe’s participation in the international Miss Cosmo competition.

Dynamos Hold Scottland as Title Race Tightens

DeMbare's improving form frustrates champions, but repeated draws remain a barrier to a serious championship challenge

Takudzwa Karowangoro

Dynamos underlined their recent improvement by fighting back to hold defending champions and league leaders Scottland FC to a 1-1 draw in a closely contested Castle Lager Premier Soccer League match at Rufaro Stadium.

Panashe Mutimbanyoka gave Scottland the lead in the second half after Emmanuel Jalai created the opening with an impressive run down the right. However, Dynamos refused to surrender and restored parity through Wisdom Mutasa to earn a point before an animated home crowd.

The result kept Scottland at the summit, but represented two points dropped at a critical stage of the championship race. With the chasing teams watching for any sign of weakness, the champions can no longer afford to treat draws as harmless results.

For Dynamos, the performance provided further evidence that a side which endured an uncertain start to the campaign is gradually recovering its confidence, competitive edge and identity.

DeMbare showing signs of revival

Dynamos entered the encounter as underdogs against a Scottland squad assembled to compete for major honours. Yet the Glamour Boys matched the leaders in intensity and responded strongly after falling behind.

Their reaction was particularly significant. Earlier in the season, conceding first could disrupt their structure and confidence. Against Scottland, however, they remained composed, continued competing for possession and found a route back into the match.

That resilience points to an improving mentality within the squad. Dynamos are becoming more difficult to defeat, defending with greater discipline and showing more purpose when moving forward.

Their recent performances suggest that confidence is returning, but the club must now turn encouraging displays into victories.

A strong unbeaten sequence can build momentum, but too many draws may ultimately leave Dynamos outside the title race. Championship-winning teams must convert balanced matches into narrow victories, particularly when playing at home.

The draw against Scottland was respectable. If Dynamos want to challenge seriously for the championship, however, respectable results will not be enough.

Scottland remain in control—but pressure is growing

Scottland remain the team to catch, and their position at the top is a product of consistency, defensive strength and the depth of their playing squad.

Under Norman Mapeza, the defending champions have demonstrated an ability to control matches and collect points even when they are not at their best.

Their goal at Rufaro reflected the quality available within the squad. Jalai's work down the flank created the opportunity for Mutimbanyoka, who supplied the finish to put Scottland ahead.

But the leaders were unable to protect their advantage.

That failure will concern Mapeza because championship races are often decided by game management. After taking the lead away from home, Scottland needed to control possession, slow Dynamos' momentum and deny their opponents space in dangerous areas.

BATTLE FOR CONTROL: Dynamos and Scottland FC players contest possession during their 1-1 Castle Lager Premier Soccer League draw at Rufaro Stadium. Panashe Mutimbanyoka opened the scoring for Scottland before Wisdom Mutasa equalised for DeMbare.

Instead, Dynamos were allowed to recover.

The champions still control their own destiny, but the draw showed that they are not untouchable. Every dropped point gives Hardrock and the other chasing teams encouragement as the campaign moves towards its decisive stage.

Scottland's challenge is therefore psychological as much as tactical. They must manage the pressure of being pursued while maintaining the discipline and consistency that carried them to the championship in their debut top-flight season.

What the result means for the title race

A draw between a league leader and an improving heavyweight can influence much more than the two teams involved.

Scottland gained a point, but their rivals will view the result as an opportunity to reduce the gap. Dynamos, meanwhile, demonstrated that the leaders can be challenged and prevented from playing entirely on their own terms.

The result also keeps alive DeMbare's outside hopes of forcing their way into the championship conversation. Their position remains complicated by the number of points lost through draws, but sustained winning form could change the picture.

Dynamos cannot depend on Scottland and other leading sides dropping points. They must develop the consistency required to win several matches in succession.

The championship will probably be decided by three factors: how Scottland respond to pressure, whether their closest challengers capitalise when they stumble, and whether Dynamos can transform their improving form into a sustained winning run.

Lessons for Dynamos

The first lesson is that Dynamos can compete with the strongest squads in the league. Their history and reputation alone do not win matches, but their performance against Scottland showed that they still possess the quality and resilience to trouble championship contenders.

The second lesson is the importance of responding to adversity. Dynamos did not collapse after conceding and were rewarded for remaining organised.

The third—and most important—lesson is that draws must become victories.

DeMbare have proved difficult to beat, but championship races reward teams that take risks intelligently and find late winners. Greater composure in the final third, quicker decision-making and more clinical finishing could turn their growing confidence into maximum points.

Dynamos must also reproduce the same intensity against teams outside the leading group. Raising performance levels for a high-profile fixture is easier than maintaining them throughout the league programme. Their revival will only be genuine if the same hunger is visible in every remaining match.

Lessons for Scottland

Scottland must learn to close matches after taking the lead. Their squad has the experience and technical quality to manage such situations, but Dynamos exposed moments of vulnerability.

The leaders must also avoid complacency. Their championship position makes them the team every opponent wants to defeat, meaning they are likely to face maximum effort in every fixture.

Finally, squad depth must be managed carefully. As pressure grows, Mapeza will need fresh players without disrupting the balance and understanding that have kept Scottland on top.

A result that may shape both seasons

For Scottland, the draw was a warning rather than a disaster. They remain in command of the race, but the margin for error is shrinking.

For Dynamos, it was another step towards recovery. They competed with the champions, came from behind and demonstrated growing belief.

The challenge now is to ensure that the performance becomes a platform rather than an isolated moment.

If Dynamos add ruthlessness to their resilience, they can influence the championship race and possibly enter it. If they continue sharing points, their revival may earn respect without delivering the honours expected by their supporters.

Scottland still have the advantage, but the battle at Rufaro delivered a clear message: the title race is not over, and Dynamos are finding their strength at precisely the moment when every point matters.

Harare Crowned 2026 National Youth Games Champions

Takudzwa Karowangoro

Harare Metropolitan Province emerged as the overall champion of the 2026 Zimbabwe National Youth Games after leading the final medal standings with 40 medals.

Harare collected 15 gold, 11 silver and 14 bronze medals during the national competition staged in Mashonaland East Province from August 12 to 18.

The province's 15 gold medals gave it a commanding advantage over the other nine participating provinces and reflected its strong performance across several sporting disciplines.

Mashonaland East finished second with 26 medals, comprising eight gold, 11 silver and seven bronze. Although the host province collected the same overall number of medals as Mashonaland West, it secured the higher position because it won more gold medals.

Manicaland placed third after collecting eight gold, five silver and six bronze medals for an overall total of 19.

Bulawayo and Midlands both finished with 18 medals, but Bulawayo claimed fourth position after winning eight gold medals compared with Midlands' seven.

Mashonaland West accumulated 26 medals—five gold, five silver and 16 bronze—but finished sixth because medal tables are determined primarily by the number of gold medals rather than the overall total.

Masvingo finished seventh with 22 medals, followed by Mashonaland Central with 12. Matabeleland South collected 14 medals, while Matabeleland North completed the standings with seven.

The Sports and Recreation Commission congratulated Harare for its victory following the conclusion of the youth competition.

Harare Metropolitan Province's athletes and officials celebrate with their trophies after being crowned overall champions of the 2026 Zimbabwe National Youth Games in Mashonaland East

"The crown goes to Harare. Congratulations to Harare Metropolitan Province for being crowned the 2026 Zimbabwe National Youth Games champions," the SRC said.

The Games returned after a six-year absence, having last been staged in the Midlands in 2019. About 3,400 athletes were expected to participate in the revived national programme.

Young athletes competed in athletics, basketball, boxing, football, netball, table tennis, tennis and volleyball, while judo was included as an exhibition discipline.

The Games were held under the theme "Breaking the Silence Through Sport," which encouraged young people to use sport to confront social challenges including drug and substance abuse, gender-based violence, discrimination and online abuse.

The youth competition was followed by the Zimbabwe National Paralympic Games, scheduled for August 20 to 26 in Mashonaland East.

Beyond determining provincial champions, the Games provide a national platform for identifying and developing athletes who can progress to regional and international competitions.

FINAL MEDAL STANDINGS

Province	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1.Harare	15	11	14	40
2.Mashonaland East	8	11	7	26
3.Manicaland	8	5	6	19
4.Bulawayo	8	4	6	18
5.Midlands	7	6	5	18
6.Mashonaland West	5	5	16	26
7.Masvingo	4	4	14	22
8.Mashonaland Central	3	7	2	12
9.Matabeleland South	3	6	5	14
10.Matabeleland North	1	3	3	7

Govt Scraps Duty on Sports Infrastructure Imports

By Hurumende News Desk

HARARE – The Government has suspended customs duty on selected equipment imported for the construction or refurbishment of approved public sporting facilities, potentially reducing the cost of upgrading Zimbabwe's ageing stadiums.

The measure was introduced through Statutory Instrument 142 of 2026, cited as the Customs and Excise (Suspension) (Amendment) Regulations, 2026 (No. 286), published in the Government Gazette dated August 21, 2026.

"Subject to this section and such other conditions as the Commissioner may specify, customs duty is suspended on importation or removal from bond" of specialised sports equipment, turf systems, seats, electronic scoreboards and lighting equipment, the regulations state.

The listed goods must be "used in the construction or refurbishment of approved public sporting facilities certified by the Minister responsible for sport and approved by the Minister."

The intervention comes as Zimbabwe continues efforts to rehabilitate sporting facilities, several of which have struggled to meet the standards required to host major domestic and international competitions.

For years, the cost of importing specialised turf, floodlights, seating and other equipment has complicated efforts by the Government, local authorities and sporting organisations to modernise stadiums.

However, the concession is not automatic.

"A person or organisation wishing to claim a suspension of duty, in terms of this section, shall make an application, in writing, to the Commissioner for approval," the statutory instrument reads.

Applicants must submit details of the goods to be imported or removed from bond, together with a declaration that the equipment will be used only for the purpose for which the concession was granted.

They must also provide "proof of registration with the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority" and possess a valid tax clearance certificate.

The concession is restricted to established and recognised facilities.

"No suspension of duty shall be granted on importations for a sporting facility that is not registered with the Sports and Recreation Commission," the regulations state.

Even registered facilities will not qualify if they have been registered for less than one year when applying for the benefit.

The duty-free equipment cannot be freely resold after importation.

"Any goods on which suspension of duty has been granted in terms of this section shall not be sold or otherwise disposed of in Zimbabwe within five years of importation without the prior consent of the Commissioner," the regulations state.

Where permission is granted, the beneficiary may be required to pay the suspended duty or another amount determined by the Commissioner.

Beneficiaries are also required to maintain proper records showing the receipt and disposal of all equipment imported under the facility.

The safeguards appear intended to prevent businesses or individuals from using sports-development projects to import equipment duty-free before diverting it to private commercial use.

The concession could provide financial relief to the Government, councils and qualifying sporting organisations seeking to refurbish stadiums. Its full impact, however, will depend on access to project funding and the processing of applications.

While the measure reduces import-related costs, it does not directly allocate money for rehabilitation projects or guarantee approval for individual facilities.

The statutory instrument separately suspends duty on production equipment imported by qualifying business and knowledge-process outsourcing operators providing services for export.

Makanakaishe Nherera Carries Zimbabwe's Judo Hopes to Dakar

Teenage judoka earns Youth Olympic Games selection after steady rise through regional competition

By Hurumende Sport Desk

Seventeen-year-old judoka Makanakaishe Vanessa Nherera will represent Zimbabwe at the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games as one of the country's emerging prospects in the sport.

Nherera, a student at Milestone College in Rusape, will compete in the women's 78kg category under the guidance of her coach, Sensei Lazarus Arufandika.

Her selection follows a series of promising performances at domestic and regional competitions.

According to information released by the Zimbabwe Olympic Committee, Nherera finished second at the Japanese Ambassador's Judo Cup and secured another second-place finish at the 2026 South Africa Open.

She also placed fourth at the 2025 HSA Championships, results which strengthened her standing among Zimbabwe's leading junior judokas.

Her progress demonstrates the importance of exposing young athletes to international competition before major global events. Competing against athletes from stronger judo systems gives developing judokas experience in match management, technique and the mental demands of elite competition.

Nherera will be part of a multi-sport Zimbabwean delegation selected for Dakar. The team includes athletes in athletics, cycling, equestrian sport, judo, swimming, rowing and triathlon.

The Youth Olympic Games will give her an opportunity to compete against some of the world's leading young judokas while gaining experience that could support a future transition into senior international competition.

Her selection also represents an important achievement for women's judo in Zimbabwe, where athletes frequently face limited funding, equipment and

access to high-level tournaments.

Although qualification is a significant milestone, expectations must remain realistic. The Youth Olympics will expose Nherera to opponents from countries with larger development programmes and more regular international competition.

The priority should therefore include both competitive performance and long-term development. Regardless of her final position in Dakar, the experience can provide technical lessons and confidence for future African championships, Olympic qualification events and senior competitions.

The Zimbabwe Olympic Committee described her as a dedicated and resilient athlete whose performances demonstrate considerable potential.

For Nherera to build on her selection, she will require consistent training, international exposure, sports-science support and assistance with the financial demands of preparing for a global event.

Her journey provides an example of how school sport, qualified coaching and regional competition can combine to create an international pathway for a young Zimbabwean athlete.

Picture caption: Zimbabwean judoka Makanakaishe Vanessa Nherera will compete in the women's 78kg category at the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games in Senegal.

Mashonaland East Crush Midlands to Win Youth Games Football Gold

By Hurumende Sports Desk

Hosts Mashonaland East Province produced a commanding performance to defeat Midlands 3-0 and win the football championship at the 2026 Zimbabwe National Youth Games.

Mashonaland East controlled the final and converted its superiority into three goals to complete a memorable campaign in front of its home supporters.

Midlands reached the deciding match after an impressive run through the tournament but could not contain an organised and determined Mashonaland East side.

The three-goal victory gave the hosts one of their biggest successes at the Games and provided a major boost to a province that finished second in the overall medal standings.

The Sports and Recreation Commission congratulated both teams and said the standard displayed during the competition offered encouragement for Zimbabwe's football development.

"History is written. Huge congratulations to Mashonaland East for a breathtaking performance in the Zimbabwe National Youth Games football final, defeating a brilliant Midlands side 3-0 to claim the ultimate crown," the SRC said.

The result highlighted the importance of organised provincial youth competitions in identifying players before they enter professional club structures.

Zimbabwe has no shortage of young football talent, but progression often depends on sustained coaching, regular competition, education and properly managed development pathways.

Players who distinguished themselves at the Games will require continued monitoring by provincial associations, ZIFA development coaches, academies and Premier Soccer League clubs.

The victory should therefore be treated as the beginning of a longer development process rather than the conclusion of one tournament.

For Mashonaland East, maintaining the group and providing the players with regular competitive football could create a strong pipeline into national junior teams.

Midlands, despite losing the final, also emerged with considerable credit. Reaching the championship match demonstrated the province's depth and ability to compete at national level.

The lesson for both finalists is that youth success must be followed by long-term investment. Young players need competent coaches, safe training environments, medical support and competitive opportunities if they are to fulfil their potential.

The football tournament formed part of the revived National Youth Games, which returned in 2026 after last being held in 2019.

Picture Mashonaland East's young footballers receive recognition after defeating Midlands 3-0 in the 2026 Zimbabwe National Youth Games final.

HURUMENDE SPORT on SUNDAY

FOOTBALL COMES HOME, BUT NATIONAL SPORTS STADIUM FACES A NEW TEST

CAF Category Three approval ends years of exile for the Warriors, although unfinished works and long-term maintenance will determine whether the breakthrough lasts

Kelvin Matore

HARARE — Zimbabwe's prolonged absence from hosting senior international football is set to end after the Confederation of African Football approved the National Sports Stadium as a Category Three venue.

The decision, announced by the Ministry of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture on Friday, follows a recent CAF technical inspection and progress on rehabilitation work at the country's largest stadium.

It clears the Harare venue to host Africa Cup of Nations and FIFA World Cup qualifiers, as well as CAF Champions League and Confederation Cup group-stage and quarter-final matches.

However, the approval is not an unrestricted clearance for every match or competition. The ministry said the use of the stadium would remain subject to the specific requirements of each tournament, while CAF has urged Zimbabwe to complete the remaining priority works.

That qualification means every proposed international fixture may still require competition-specific authorisation. Zimbabwe must also maintain the standards that earned the stadium its new status.

End of a costly football exile

The National Sports Stadium was barred from hosting senior international football after failing to satisfy CAF requirements, leaving the Warriors and Zimbabwean clubs without an approved home venue for major assignments.

Zimbabwe has consequently staged designated home matches in neighbouring countries, denying the national team a genuine home advantage and forcing supporters to follow crucial fixtures from a distance.

The arrangement also carried a substantial financial burden. ZIFA and participating clubs had to meet foreign stadium-hire charges and additional travel, accommodation, transport and administrative costs.

Local businesses that normally benefit from international matches—including hotels, transport operators, restaurants, vendors and security companies—also lost potential revenue.

CAF's latest decision therefore carries sporting, financial and symbolic significance. It brings the Warriors back before their supporters and allows the domestic football economy to benefit from major international fixtures.

FOOTBALL COMES HOME: Zimbabwean supporters are set to return to international football at the refurbished National Sports Stadium following its approval as a CAF Category Three venue. The stadium can now host selected AFCON, World Cup and continental club fixtures, subject to competition-specific requirements.

The stadium's return could come ahead of Zimbabwe's expected 2028 AFCON qualifying match against the Democratic Republic of Congo next month, although the venue for an individual fixture remains subject to the relevant competition procedures.

Rehabilitation delivers major breakthrough

Sport Minister Lieutenant-General (Retired) Ambassador Anselem Sanyatwe described the approval as the result of coordinated work by the Government, ZIFA, technical experts and private-sector partners.

"This milestone is a direct reflection of the concerted and deliberate efforts by the Government of Zimbabwe, through the Ministry of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture, to restore the National Sports Stadium to its rightful position as the country's premier footballing venue," Sanyatwe said.

The ministry credited Sakunda Holdings for supporting the rehabilitation and modernisation programme, particularly work on the playing surface and the installation of bucket seats.

Government said the partnership demonstrated how private capital could complement public investment in restoring national sporting infrastructure.

ZIFA was also acknowledged for providing technical guidance and cooperating with Government during the inspection and approval process.

CAF, according to the ministry, commended the association and Zimbabwean authorities for addressing observations raised by inspectors, but encouraged them to maintain the momentum and finish the outstanding work.

Approval is a milestone, not the finish line

While Category Three status represents a major recovery, it also places Zimbabwe under pressure to protect its investment.

International stadium approval depends on more than the condition of the pitch and seats. Match venues must continually meet requirements covering security, crowd control, player and match-official facilities, medical services, media operations, floodlighting, sanitation, access control and emergency procedures.

The National Sports Stadium's deterioration over previous years exposed weaknesses in maintenance and infrastructure management. Without a clear funding and maintenance system, the country risks returning to the same cycle of decline, emergency repairs and eventual disqualification.

Authorities have not yet publicly provided a detailed account of the total rehabilitation cost, the value of Sakunda Holdings' contribution, the list of outstanding works or the long-term stadium management model.

Those details will be important for public accountability and for assessing whether the rehabilitation can be sustained beyond the initial reopening.

Regular maintenance must now become a permanent responsibility rather than a short-term exercise undertaken when an inspection or major fixture approaches.

Supporters must also be protected

The return of large crowds will test security, access points, ticketing systems, sanitation and transport arrangements around the stadium.

Authorities will need to ensure that supporters can enter and leave safely, that facilities remain functional and that vandalism is prevented without compromising the match-day experience.

Transparent ticketing and effective crowd management will also be critical if ZIFA is to rebuild confidence among supporters and maximise revenue from international matches.

Sanyatwe called on Zimbabweans, the corporate sector, football organisations and the media to support the development and help preserve the facility.

"Let us fill our stadiums, support our Warriors and our clubs, protect and take pride in our sporting infrastructure, and collectively contribute to creating an environment in which international football can thrive in Zimbabwe," he said.

Major opportunity for ZIFA

For ZIFA, the approval provides an opportunity to rebuild the Warriors' relationship with their home supporters and improve the association's commercial position.

International matches at the National Sports Stadium can generate income through ticket sales, broadcasting, sponsorship, advertising, hospitality and merchandise. The association will, however, have to demonstrate strong financial and operational management to translate the approval into sustainable football development.

Playing at home should also strengthen the Warriors competitively. Familiar conditions, reduced travel and vocal home support can influence performances, particularly in tightly contested qualifying campaigns.

Domestic clubs involved in continental football will similarly benefit from avoiding the expense and disruption of staging home matches outside Zimbabwe.

The Category Three approval is therefore one of the most important infrastructure developments in Zimbabwean football in recent years. It ends an embarrassing period in which a country with a strong football following could not host its most important matches.

But the real measure of success will not be the announcement alone. It will be whether Zimbabwe completes the outstanding work, maintains the stadium consistently and ensures that international football remains at home for years to come.