

PRESIDENT ED'S HUMANITY TEST

'I AM THE PRESIDENT, BUT HE WAS MY FRIEND'



President Emmerson Mnangagwa speaks with members of the Chivayo family and mourners during his condolence visit to their Gletwin home in Harare on October 2, following the helicopter crash that claimed the lives of Wicknell Chivayo, his wife Lucy Muteke and three others. Picture: Hurumende News Hub

By Abel Karowangoro

President's personal grief, family anguish and regional tributes bring compassion into focus as Zimbabwe confronts a painful loss and a contested legacy. President Emmerson Mnangagwa's visit to the grieving Chivayo family has brought a deeply personal dimension to his response to the helicopter crash that killed businessman Wicknell Chivayo, his wife Lucy Muteke and three others. At the family's Gletwin home on Friday, the President acknowledged the pain of losing someone he regarded as a

friend. His presence alongside relatives and mourners followed his tribute at ZANU PF's Central Committee meeting and a formal condolence message recognising Chivayo's charitable work. The tragedy presents a test of humanity in public life: how leaders and citizens respond to bereavement when the person who has died inspired both admiration and criticism. For the families, however, the immediate reality is simpler and more devastating. Five people lost their lives in Wednesday's crash in rural Marondera. Police subsequently corrected the initial death toll of six. Alongside Chivayo and Muteke, the oth-

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er victims were identified as Muteke's aide, Senelisiwe Magagula, and pilots Captain Kelvin T. Soda and Captain Courage Mutavirwa. Their families are also mourning, and their losses deserve recognition alongside those of the prominent couple. The cause remains under investigation.

Mnangagwa addressed the tragedy at the outset of the 132nd Ordinary Session of ZANU PF's Central Committee in Harare on October 1.

"His philanthropic works and impactful life touched many across our nation and beyond," the President said, according to the party's published address.

He extended condolences to bereaved families and friends, and called for the memory of departed compatriots to encourage greater service, dedication and selflessness. The published speech also invited members to observe a minute of silence.

The address reflected the early account of six fatalities. The later police correction establishes five as the figure to use in subsequent reporting.

A day later, the President's visit moved the response from the formal setting of party proceedings into the family home.

"I am hurt. I am the President, but he was my friend," Mnangagwa said, according to The Herald's account. The statement acknowledged personal grief behind public office.

Reports of the visit showed him consoling Chivayo's children and their mother, Sonja Madzikanda, his former wife. Such moments give the tragedy a human dimension beyond political connections, wealth and public reputation. Family spokesperson Herbert Chivayo expressed the shock facing relatives when he confirmed the deaths.

"We are at a loss for words after the tragic news," Deutsche Welle said. His words place the family's experience at the centre of the story. Whatever views people hold about Chivayo's



President Emmerson Mnangagwa speaks with members of the Chivayo family and mourners during his condolence visit to their Gletwin home in Harare on October 2, following the helicopter crash that claimed the lives of Wicknell Chivayo, his wife Lucy Muteke and three others. Picture: Hurumende News Hub

public life, relatives must confront the sudden loss of people they knew in the intimate roles of husband, wife, father and family member.

Government's response has included the conferment of Provincial Hero status.

Youth Empowerment, Development and Vocational Training Minister Tino Machakaire announced the decision on October 2, citing Chivayo's contribution to society.

"This is a big loss for us. It is not a small loss; it is a very big loss," Machakaire said.

The minister linked the recognition to Chivayo's contributions through initiatives in different parts of Zimbabwe. The designation is Provincial Hero status; reporting should preserve that distinction.

Tributes have also crossed Zimbabwe's

borders.

Kenyan President William Ruto mourned Chivayo as a friend, recalling his warmth, energy and belief in Africa's potential.

"Their sudden departure is a painful loss to their families, friends and all who knew them," Ruto said.

He extended condolences to the victims' families, President Mnangagwa and Zimbabweans mourning the crash. The message demonstrated the personal relationship Chivayo had developed with the Kenyan leader.

Tanzanian President Samia Suluhu Hassan also sent condolences, according to HararePost. She described Chivayo as a young, visionary entrepreneur and expressed sympathy to Zimbabwe's President, the Chivayo family and the families of all the victims.

These verified responses demonstrate

grief beyond Zimbabwe. They do not establish that every regional government has issued a tribute or that public opinion across the region is uniform. A balanced account must also acknowledge Chivayo's contested public reputation.

Supporters remember conspicuous generosity towards churches, musicians, sports personalities and individuals. Critics questioned his proximity to political power and government-linked business dealings. He denied wrongdoing. Deutsche Welle reported that a case concerning alleged misuse of a solar-project advance was dismissed in 2023, citing prosecutorial delays. Allegations should therefore be distinguished from proven findings.

Public responses to his death have been divided. Associated Press reported both hostile online reactions

and objections to celebrating the tragedy. Opposition lawmaker Chalton Hwende challenged such celebrations, asking: "What kind of people are we who celebrate someone's death? It's un-African."

That intervention widens the humanity test beyond the President. Compassion for bereaved families can coexist with scrutiny of a public figure's record. Mnangagwa has expressed his grief publicly and visited the family personally. The broader responsibility now is to recognise all five victims, allow relatives space to mourn and await credible findings about the crash.

The children and families left behind must live with a loss that no political argument can undo. Their dignity should remain central as Zimbabwe remembers Chivayo and considers the complicated legacy he leaves.



Chivayo burial thrown open to the public

The funeral of businessman and philanthropist Wicknell Chivayo (pictured) and his wife, Lucy Muteke, will be open to the public, family spokesperson Mr Herbert Chivayo has confirmed.

Mr Chivayo said the burial, scheduled for Thursday at Glen Forest Cemetery, "will not be a private affair," adding that "all members of the public are welcome to attend."

The decision marks a departure from the tight security and privacy that often surrounds the funerals of high-profile figures in Zimbabwe, and signals the family's intent to allow the public — many of whom benefited from Chivayo's philanthropy — to pay their final respects.

Chivayo, 43, and his wife were among those killed on September 30 when their helicopter crashed at Kudenga Farm near Marondera, about 70km east of Harare. The aircraft went down shortly after taking off from Gandami in Chikomba, where the couple was developing a rural home. All five people on board died, including two pilots and a security aide.

Government spokesman Nick Mangwana confirmed there were no survivors. Preliminary findings indicated fuel spilled on impact, followed by a fire, though investigators have stressed this does not establish the cause of the crash.



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HAVE WE HEARD THE CATCHPHRASES - AND MISSED THE MESSAGE?

A question of spiritual gifting, public perception and discernment around Prophet Passion Java

By Shyline Majaji

When a preacher becomes known for humour, does the public stop listening when he speaks seriously? That question sits at the centre of renewed discussion about Prophet Passion Java. For audiences familiar with “nyeee” and “kopo,” his public identity can seem inseparable from entertainment. The catchphrases attract attention, circulate widely and shape how viewers approach everything else he says.

But can a familiar public persona become a barrier to considering a spiritual claim fairly? Speaking to Hurumende News Hub, Java said the visions he communicates come from God. He also affirmed that he would continue praying for Zimbabwe as mourners remembered Wicknell Chivayo and his wife, Lucy “Lulu” Muteke.

Java said Chivayo’s presence would continue to be felt through the many people whose lives he had changed. His remarks placed prayer and remembrance alongside the debate about his prophetic ministry.

They also raise a question larger than one preacher: how should society assess claims of spiritual gifting without allowing either admiration or ridicule to decide the answer beforehand? The current discussion follows the

September 30 helicopter crash that killed Chivayo, Muteke and three others in rural Marondera. Police corrected the initial death toll from six to five. The other victims were identified as aide Senelisiwe Magagula and pilots Captain Kelvin T. Soda and Captain Courage Mutavirwa. The cause remained under investigation.

After the tragedy, a video attributed to Java resurfaced online. According to iHarare’s October 1 report, the recording was said to date from December 28, 2025, during a discussion of predictions for 2026.

The account describes Java referring to an unidentified person falling and something travelling through the air, which he associated with an aeroplane or helicopter. It also records his acknowledgement that some visions were not completely clear.

The reported passage did not name Chivayo. Viewers connected it with the businessman after the crash. That distinction does not make the discussion meaningless. It identifies what needs examination. Was the statement sufficiently specific to anticipate this event, or did the event give previously uncertain words a new meaning? The original full recording and its publication history have not been independently authenticated for this feature. It would therefore go beyond the available evidence to declare the prediction conclusively fulfilled.

Yet dismissing the claim simply be-

cause its speaker uses humour would also avoid the real question. Interest in Java’s predictions had already surfaced around the 2026 FIFA World Cup. H-Metro reported in July that a video reportedly posted in March appeared to refer to Spain winning, before broadening the prediction to a European winner. Its account also described a reference to a number-seven player becoming a match winner. FIFA confirms that Spain defeated Argentina 1–0 in the final, with Ferran Torres scoring the decisive goal in extra time.

The reported correspondence explains the interest. But the result alone cannot establish whether an earlier statement arose from spiritual revelation, football judgement or another explanation. Those are separate questions requiring different kinds of evidence.

This is where the conversation can become more thoughtful. For Christians who recognise contemporary prophecy, spiritual gifting is a serious religious conviction. It cannot be adequately understood through jokes about a preacher’s delivery. Neither can it be assessed solely by counting striking predictions.

First Corinthians 14:3 connects prophecy with strengthening, encouragement and comfort. First Thessalonians 5:20–21 places respect for prophecy alongside the responsibility to examine it.

The biblical framework therefore

leaves room for belief and discernment together. Asking careful questions need not express contempt for faith. It can express a determination to treat faith responsibly.

What exactly was said? Was it recorded before the event? Has the full context been preserved? Are unsuccessful or ambiguous predictions considered alongside apparent successes? These questions help prevent a compelling clip from carrying more meaning than its original words support. They also allow a credible claim to withstand scrutiny.

The same seriousness should extend to how a claimed gift is used. Does the message encourage people, offer guidance or deepen compassion? Does its speaker acknowledge uncertainty? When events involve death, does the response centre the bereaved? Java’s statement to Hurumende News Hub brings those concerns into focus. His pledge to pray for Zimbabwe presents his ministry as a continuing responsibility. His tribute to Chivayo directs attention towards the people whose lives he believes the businessman influenced.

The suggestion that Chivayo remains with others through lives changed is a statement about legacy. It gives remembrance a human meaning: influence can endure in opportunities created, assistance received and relationships formed.

But the families mourning this crash

should not become supporting characters in a debate about anyone’s spiritual reputation. Five lives were lost. Their dignity deserves attention independent of the fame of one victim or the claims of one preacher.

Perhaps the most challenging question is therefore directed at the audience as much as at Java. Are we listening to understand, or listening for something that confirms what we already think? Someone who admires a preacher may interpret uncertainty as profound insight. Someone who dislikes him may dismiss even a clearly documented statement. Both reactions can prevent an honest encounter with the evidence.

Prophet Passion Java’s catchphrases are part of his public identity. They need not determine the assessment of his ministry. His spiritual claims deserve careful attention to their wording, history and purpose.

The question of a gift from God belongs within religious conviction. The question of whether a particular prediction was fulfilled requires a reliable record. Respecting that distinction makes the conversation stronger.

Beyond “nyeee” and “kopo,” there is a serious discussion to be had—about what Java says he sees, what the evidence establishes and how his ministry serves people when public fascination meets private grief.





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ED’S HUMANITY TEST IS ALSO OUR OWN

“I am hurt. I am the President, but he was my friend.”

President Emmerson Mnangagwa’s words at the Chivayo family home deserve reflection. They acknowledge something that public life can obscure: political office does not place a person beyond grief.

His visit to the bereaved family, following his tribute at ZANU PF’s Central Committee meeting, was an appropriate act of compassion. Leadership includes the responsibility to be present when people suffer. In this instance, the President also acknowledged a personal loss.

Yet the humanity test raised by this tragedy extends beyond the Head of State. It concerns how all of us respond when a person whose public life divided opinion dies suddenly, leaving children, relatives and friends to confront an irreversible loss.

The helicopter crash claimed five lives: Wicknell Chivayo, his wife Lucy Muteke, aide Senelisiwe Magagula, Captain Kelvin T. Soda and Captain Courage Mutavirwa. Each leaves a grieving family. Public attention may concentrate on the most recognisable name, but the value of a life cannot be measured by prominence.

Our coverage, condolences and concern should reflect that equality.

For Chivayo’s children, the death of their father is a personal devastation. They should not have to carry the weight of public arguments about his

wealth, friendships or business dealings while trying to understand their loss. The same consideration belongs to the relatives of every person who died.

Hurumende News Hub believes that respect for bereaved families is a basic obligation of a humane society. It should survive political disagreement.

This does not require the suspension of public accountability. Chivayo’s business record, political connections and charitable activities formed part of his public life. They remain legitimate subjects for accurate reporting and considered debate.

But accountability requires evidence, careful attribution and a distinction between allegations and established findings. Celebrating a death contributes nothing to that work. It neither answers a question about public contracts nor repairs an institution. It deepens the suffering of people who may bear no responsibility for the conduct being criticised.

Compassion and scrutiny can coexist. A society confident in its principles should be capable of

both.

The President’s recognition of Chivayo’s philanthropy explains an important part of his tribute. People who received assistance are entitled to remember what that support meant to them. Their experiences should be heard, just as legitimate questions about a public figure’s record should be examined.

No single tribute can settle an entire legacy. Nor should a funeral be expected to do so.

The conferment of Provincial Hero status also belongs within public discussion. Citizens may reasonably consider the basis on which honours are awarded. Such discussion should address the decision and its justification with respect for the family’s grief.

The deeper challenge for leadership is consistency. A President’s compassion carries its greatest public meaning when the concern expressed for a friend also informs the treatment of citizens who have no access to powerful people.

Zimbabwean families experience sudden death, road accidents and other devastating losses far from cameras and official visits. They too deserve responsive institutions, dignified treatment and

reliable information. The empathy visible at the Chivayo home should reinforce that wider standard of public service.

There is also a responsibility to establish what happened in Marondera. Investigators must be allowed to conduct their work, and families deserve clear communication about its progress. Speculation, political insinuation and unsupported claims should not substitute for credible findings.

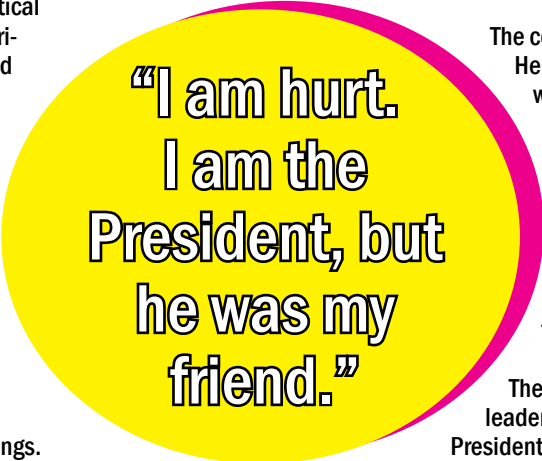
For the media, this is a test of discipline. We must correct inaccurate information, recognise all the victims and resist turning private anguish into spectacle. A compelling headline does not excuse careless reporting.

For citizens, it is a test of restraint. Social media makes a cruel remark easy to publish and difficult for a grieving family to escape. Before posting, we should remember that the people reading may include a child who has just lost a parent.

President Mnangagwa’s visit demonstrated the importance of showing up. His words acknowledged the vulnerability that accompanies friendship and loss. That response merits recognition.

The responsibility now is to carry the same humanity beyond one home and one prominent name: to remember all five victims, respect their families, examine public questions fairly and insist on an evidence-based investigation.

Zimbabwe’s humanity will be measured in how we treat people whose grief we share—and those whose grief we encounter across our differences.



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MOONCAKES, FRIENDSHIP AND SHARED PROSPERITY

■ Chinese Embassy's Mid-Autumn greeting highlights cultural ties alongside practical cooperation with Zimbabwe

By Abel Karowangoro

The Chinese Embassy in Zimbabwe has extended Mid-Autumn Festival greetings to Zimbabweans, using one of China's most cherished celebrations to underline the importance of family, harmony and friendship between the two countries.

In the message supplied from its social media account, @ChineseZimbabwe, the Embassy described traditions of admiring the moon, sharing mooncakes and wishing for peace, happiness and reunion.

"We deeply cherish the profound friendship and fruitful cooperation between China and Zimbabwe," the message said.

The greeting offers a cultural perspective on a relationship more frequently discussed through infrastructure, investment and diplomacy. Behind agreements between governments are exchanges involving students, researchers, medical professionals, businesses and communities.

This year's Mid-Autumn Festival fell on Friday, September 25, according to the Hong Kong Observatory. Its timing follows the Chinese lunar calendar, rather than a fixed date in the internationally used Gregorian calendar. The Observatory also distinguished the festival date from the precise astronomical full moon, which occurred later in the festival period.

The Embassy's greeting places reunion at the heart of the occasion. Sharing food and gathering with loved ones give the celebration a meaning that can be understood across cultures, even where customs differ.

For Zimbabwean readers, that creates an accessible introduction to Chinese traditions. The festival's association with family togetherness also provides a setting for discussing how international friendship develops through ordinary encounters, alongside formal diplomacy.

China and Zimbabwe established diplomatic relations on April 18, 1980, the day Zimbabwe achieved independence. An official Embassy account records the signing of the communiqué establishing relations on that date. The relationship therefore marks 46 years in 2026.

Recent cooperation provides concrete examples of how those ties extend into community services.

On June 12, Chinese Ambassador Zhou Ding attended the handover of a China-aided borehole project in Manicaland, alongside Local



academics and students, and experts from Wuhan Botanical Garden of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

According to the Embassy, China supplied equipment and technical expertise. The initiative aims to strengthen agricultural research, train specialists and connect research findings with practical applications and agricultural trade. A Zimbabwean ministry representative emphasised the importance of turning research into economic and development benefits.

The distinction between an institution's launch and its eventual results is important. The laboratory's impact will become clearer through research outputs, adoption of useful technologies and benefits reaching producers.

At a September reception marking China's National Day, Zhou outlined a broader programme of exchanges. He said more than 500 Zimbabwean officials and professionals had participated in over 80 capacity-building programmes in China during 2026.

He also reported that nearly 10,000 Zimbabweans travelled to China in the first eight months of the year, a 55 percent increase from the corresponding period in 2025. These are figures presented by the ambassador, rather than an independent assessment of their impact.

Zhou identified 2026 as the China-Africa Year of People-to-People Exchanges and highlighted cultural activities, professional training and the work of Chinese medical and agricultural teams.

Together, the examples give substance to the Embassy's language of friendship. They also suggest useful measures for assessing cooperation: reliable services, skills that find practical use, research that reaches communities and exchanges that deepen understanding.

Cultural goodwill cannot by itself establish the success of every development project. Each initiative requires assessment on its own terms, including delivery, sustainability and the experiences of those it is intended to serve.

The Mid-Autumn message nevertheless offers a moment to appreciate a different aspect of international relations. Mooncakes and moon watching introduce traditions shaped around reunion, while the greeting invites Zimbabweans into a shared wish for peace and household wellbeing.

For China and Zimbabwe, the strongest expression of that sentiment will be a relationship whose benefits are experienced in everyday life—and whose cultural exchanges allow the two peoples to understand one another more fully.



Government and Public Works Minister Daniel Garwe and other officials.

According to the Embassy's report, 300 boreholes were completed across four provinces over nearly two years. Zhou said the programme directly benefited 75,000 residents and responded to cyclone damage and prolonged drought.

Garwe welcomed the assistance and linked it to Zimbabwe's development priorities under the National Development Strategy 2 and Vision 2030.

The figures describe the project's reported reach. Its lasting value will depend on continued water availability, maintenance and local capacity to keep the facilities working. For communities, dependable access matters beyond the handover ceremony.

Education offers another practical dimension.

The Embassy hosted an award ceremony on August 26 for the 2026 Chinese Government Scholarship and China-Zimbabwe Friendship Scholarship programmes. Higher and Tertiary Education Minister Frederick Shava attended with education representatives and scholarship recipients.

The Embassy's account said Zhou encouraged recipients to pursue academic excellence and contribute to Zimbabwe's development. Shava credited educational cooperation with helping develop skilled human resources and supporting young Zimbabweans' innovative potential.

For students, such exchanges combine formal learning with exposure to another society. Their wider development contribution depends on opportunities to apply acquired skills through employment, research, entrepreneurship and public service.

Agricultural research has also featured in the relationship. A China-Zimbabwe Belt and Road Joint Laboratory on Agricultural Ecology and Cash Crops was commissioned on August 17. The event brought together Zimbabwean officials, University of Zimbabwe



The Chinese Embassy in Zimbabwe celebrates the Mid-Autumn Festival, sharing wishes for reunion, harmony and prosperity while reaffirming China-Zimbabwe friendship. Picture: Chinese Embassy in Zimbabwe

“Invest Back Home” - Min Garwe

Itai Mazire

Local Government and Public Works Minister Honourable Daniel Garwe has urged Zimbabweans abroad to plough their skills, experience and money back into the country, declaring the diaspora a vital resource for national growth.

"Your home is in Zimbabwe and your roots are in Zimbabwe, so you must continue to ensure that you invest back in Zimbabwe," Hon. Garwe told attendees at the close of the two-day UK-Zimbabwe Business Expo in Birmingham.

Earlier, Hon. Garwe led a high-level delegation, including Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Minister Monica Mutsvangwa and Zimbabwe's Ambassador to the United Kingdom, Colonel (Rtd) Christian Katsande, on a tour of the exhibition stands.

Officials interacted directly with UK-based Zimbabwean business leaders, diaspora entrepreneurs, property developers and

representatives from Zimbabwean local authorities.

Hon. Garwe expressed satisfaction with the expo, calling it a crucial platform for strengthening ties between government, local municipalities, the business sector and citizens abroad.

He reassured potential investors that government is fully committed to simplifying administrative processes and creating an enabling environment for projects in housing, infrastructure, property development and small-to-medium enterprises.

Backing the drive, Mutsvangwa said diaspora capital combined with the growth of local SMEs is essential for achieving sustainable economic growth.

The expo's close marks a strategic step forward in deepening bilateral investment relations between the UK and Zimbabwe, aimed at keeping the diaspora actively integrated into the national development agenda.



Zim delegates following proceedings at the two-day UK-Zimbabwe Business Expo in Birmingham.



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1 350 new schools by 2029

Itai Mazire

Government has unveiled an ambitious USD 600 million plan to eliminate the national school infrastructure deficit by 2029, targeting the construction of at least 1 350 new schools starting November 2026.

Primary and Secondary Education Minister Professor Torerai Moyo announced the massive rollout, saying the funding injection is designed to close a gap that has left thousands of learners in overcrowded or makeshift classrooms.

"We now have access to funding that exceeds USD 600 million, which we are going to spend on the construction of at least 1 350 schools starting in November. By the time we get to 2029, the deficit will be zero," said Prof Moyo

The announcement comes as Zim-

abwe's school infrastructure crisis remains acute. The deficit stood at approximately 3,000 schools three years ago before being reduced to around 1 800 through piecemeal construction efforts .

The current push represents the largest single investment in school infrastructure in recent memory.

Prof Moyo framed the initiative as more than just bricks and mortar, linking it to the government's broader development agenda.

"Through this Memorandum of Understanding, MAGCOR Consortium Group of Companies has made a landmark commitment to support Zimbabwe's education sector through a development package valued at USD 420 million," he said, referring to a private-sector partnership signed in July .

"This significant investment will facilitate the mobilisation of funding, technical expertise and project management capacity for the construction of up to 1 000 modern schools across all 10 provinces of Zimbabwe. "

Prof Moyo emphasised the equity dimension of the programme, noting that rural learners have long been disadvantaged by distance and dilapidated facilities.

"Every school that will be constructed under this Memorandum of Understanding represents far more than bricks and mortar. It represents hope for a child, opportunity for a community and an investment in Zimbabwe's future."

Despite the ambitious targets, skepticism persists. Teacher unions have



repeatedly warned that chronic underfunding with 87 percent of ministry infrastructure requests going unfunded and a deficit of over 50 000 teachers mean construction alone may not solve the crisis .

Communities like Kanyemba, where Mariga Government Secondary School has remained unfinished for over eight years despite full contractor payment, illustrate the implementation challenges ahead.

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TOGETHER-PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Zim’s airport ride revolution

Takudzwa Karowangoro

The black Toyota Fortuner pulls up to the arrivals curb at Robert Gabriel Mugabe International Airport. The driver's face matches the digital identity on the passenger's phone. The vehicle is tracked, the route is logged, and the fare was agreed before the door opened.

This is the new face of airport transport in Zimbabwe. And it is being driven by Tap and Go.

Where once travellers navigated a gauntlet of unregulated taxis, inflated fares, phantom fuel charges, and safety concerns after dark, a technology-driven system has quietly rewritten the rules.

Tap and Go, launched in 2025 by investment advisor Dr. Paul Tungwarara, has brought something Zimbabwe's international gateway has long lacked: predictability.

For tourists landing at RGM International, the difference is immediate. No

haggling. No fear of being overcharged. The service operates through a mobile app with real-time ride tracking, cashless payments, and Starlink-enabled connectivity that functions even in low-network zones. More than 60 vehicles were connected to the system at launch, with the fleet expanding to Bulawayo and beyond.

The security dimension is not incidental. Zimbabwe's roads between the airport and the city have historically carried risk, particularly for arrivals after dark.

Tap and Go's model, verified digital identities for drivers and passengers, continuous vehicle tracking, and traceable rides, directly addresses that vulnerability.

Tap and Go's platform features continuous vehicle tracking and verified digital identities for drivers and passengers, measures the company and council officials say will help curb crime associated with informal transport.

An official explained the system's

protective architecture in stark terms: "We have real-time tracking and digital identity verification, which means commuters can travel with greater peace of mind. Our rides are traceable, and verified rides are expected to reduce criminal activity linked to unregulated services".

That traceability matters most at an international airport, where a traveller's first encounter with a city shapes everything that follows.

A tourist stepping off a long-haul flight is vulnerable, unfamiliar with local rates, unable to distinguish legitimate operators from predators, often carrying valuables. The Tap and Go model removes that vulnerability by design. Every ride is logged. Every driver is verified. Every route is documented.

For ordinary Zimbabweans, the service has become a reliable alternative to a commuter system that has struggled for years.

Early users praised the app's seamless interface and rapid response times,

giving Tap and Go a competitive edge over established platforms. The platform has also created hundreds of local jobs, positioning itself as a contributor to the country's Vision 2030 agenda.

The service's reach now extends beyond the capital. In December 2025, Tap and Go officially rolled into Bulawayo, bringing the same technology, real-time tracking, digital verification, Starlink connectivity, to Zimbabwe's second city.

The company described the expansion as "a major step forward" and said it aligns with local efforts to transform Bulawayo into a tech-driven urban hub.

But the reliability extends beyond security. The Starlink-equipped fleet ensures uninterrupted communication between drivers, dispatch, and customers, even in areas where mobile networks are unreliable.

The system supports quicker pick-ups, more reliable routing, and continuous communication, meaning a passenger's scheduled destination is reached

without the detours, delays, or arguments that once characterised airport transport.

Government has recognised the shift. Cabinet recently granted e-hailing operators a five-month regulatory reprieve, allowing platforms including Tap and Go to continue operating while authorities develop a formal framework for driver conduct, passenger safety, and tax compliance. Information Minister Dr Zhemu Soda said the government acknowledged the role played by these services in providing "convenient, affordable and dignified transport".

For a country whose international airport was once a byword for transport uncertainty, the change is tangible. A tourist stepping off a long-haul flight no longer faces a chaotic curb. They face a vehicle whose driver is verified, whose route is tracked, and whose fare is transparent.

That is not just convenience. It is confidence. And at Zimbabwe's gateway to the world, that confidence is being delivered one tap at a time.





Salute!

The Princess of World Tourism

Itai Mazire

On a humid morning in Berlin, in a cavernous hall where the world's tourism powerbrokers gather to decide where the globe will travel next, a Zimbabwean woman stood at the center of a standing ovation. The room was not applauding a safari. It was not applauding a waterfall. It was applauding a leader.

Hon. Barbara Rwodzi, Zimbabwe's Minister of Tourism and Hospitality Industry, had just been named Tourism Minister of the Year for Africa at the ITB Berlin 2026 PATWA Awards. And in that same glittering moment, her country was crowned Destination of the Year, Natural Wonders. Two trophies. One night. A continent watching.

But to understand why this moment matters, you have to understand what came before it. For decades, Zimbabwe's story on the global stage was told by others, often through a lens of crisis and sanctions, of what the country lacked.

What Hon. Rwodzi has done, with a quiet relentlessness, is change the narrator.

The numbers tell one part of the story. Tourism has become the number one contributor to Zimbabwe's GDP growth, surpassing mining and agriculture for the first time. International arrivals surged to 1.78 million in 2025, generating USD 1.32 billion, exceeding pre-COVID levels and climbing. Forbes Magazine named Zimbabwe the world's best country to visit in 2025, citing its "mosaic of rugged wild

terrain and deep ancestral heritage." Twenty-three international airlines now fly into the country, a vote of confidence from global aviation.

But numbers do not capture the transformation Hon. Rwodzi has engineered beneath the surface.

Her 12-cluster diversification model has expanded Zimbabwe's tourism beyond wildlife to include gastronomy, culture, sports, medical and adventure tourism.

The inaugural UN Tourism Regional Forum on Gastronomy Tourism for Africa, hosted in Victoria Falls, drew delegates from 33 countries and positioned Zimbabwe as a continental leader in a sector that celebrates African food as a reason to travel.

And then there is the work that rarely makes headlines. Four community-based tourism pilot projects, implemented in partnership with the Japan International Cooperation Agency, have sustained livelihoods in rural Zimbabwe.

The Gastronomy Tourism Initiative, championed by First Lady Dr. Auxillia Mnangagwa, has empowered women, youth and persons with disabilities through nationwide culinary competitions.

"This recognition, together with the PATWA award, confirms deliberate government efforts to promote this beautiful destination," said Hon. Rwodzi after the Berlin triumph.

In November 2025, her peers across the continent elected her Vice-President of the UN Tourism General Assembly, representing Africa alongside Nigeria. It was a moment that placed Zimbabwe at the heart of global tourism diplomacy, not as a beneficiary, but as a shaper of policy.

President Dr Emmerson Mnangagwa's government later named her Zimbabwe's overall best-performing Cabinet Minister for 2025, placing her first out of 25 ministers.

Now, the world is being asked to recognize what Zimbabwe already knows. Hon. Rwodzi has been nominated for the Unstoppable Cabinet Minister of the Year 2026 Award, a continental honor celebrating "bold administrative reforms, transparent policy implementation and high-impact development initiatives." Voting closes on October 5.

For a continent long accustomed to having its story written from outside, the Princess of World Tourism represents something more than accolades. She represents the audacity of an African nation telling its own story and the world finally listening.

"This appointment places Zimbabwe at the heart of global tourism diplomacy," the Ministry said, "and enhances our capacity to promote the African tourism narrative on the world stage."

The narrative has shifted. And Zimbabwe is no longer waiting for permission to shine.

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A WEDDING SILENCED, A HOMECOMING INTERRUPTED

Sir Wicknell's sudden death leaves Jah Prayzah mourning and Mukanya's planned performances on hold

By Addlied Kumire

Zimbabwe's entertainment scene has been confronted with an abrupt shift from celebration to mourning after businessman Wicknell "Sir Wicknell" Chivayo's death prompted Jah Prayzah to postpone his wedding and disrupted Thomas "Mukanya" Mapfumo's eagerly anticipated performance engagements.

What was meant to bring wedding vows, music and prominent guests together instead became a moment of grief.

Jah Prayzah and Rufaro Mukombe's ceremony, scheduled for October 3, was put on hold following the September 30 helicopter crash that killed Chivayo, his wife Lucy Muteke and other occupants. President Emmerson Mnangagwa confirmed the businessman's death the following day.

The tragedy interrupted two closely connected occasions: Jah Prayzah's wedding and Chivayo's birthday celebrations, for which Mapfumo had returned from his United States base.

The Herald reported that the Chimurenga veteran arrived in Harare on September 29, shortly before the fatal crash.

For Jah Prayzah, the decision to postpone was rooted in a relationship that extended beyond sponsorship and public appearances.

"Wicknell was more than a friend to us. He was family, a brother," the musician said.

The couple described their heartbreak and explained that they needed to mourn alongside the affected families. Their announcement left the ceremony without a replacement date.

Those comments give the postponement its human significance. A wedding is usually a declaration of hope shared with loved ones. Losing someone regarded as family days before the ceremony changes the emotional meaning of the occasion, regardless of how advanced the preparations may be.

Mapfumo, meanwhile, has made clear that the disruption has not ended his commitment to the wedding performance.

"I can confirm that I was paid in full for the work I was supposed to do and I will honour my contract," he told H-Metro, according to Pindula.

The veteran musician said he intended to return to America and come back when new arrangements were confirmed. His publicist, Cuthbert Chiromo, said discussions with Jah Prayzah's management were underway over new dates.

Mukanya's comments provide reassurance about his willingness to perform, while leaving the timing dependent on the organisers and the bereaved couple. They also distinguish a postponed engagement from a permanent cancellation. The reports reviewed do not establish what will happen to the



From left: Jah Prayzah and Rufaro Mukombe, whose wedding was postponed; the late Wicknell Chivayo and his wife Lucy Muteke; and Thomas Mapfumo, whose planned wedding performance was deferred following the couple's deaths.

Pictures: Supplied | Collage: AI-assisted
separate birthday performance.

Mapfumo and The Blacks Unlimited also conveyed condolences to the families of Chivayo, Lucy and the other crash victims. Their message widened the focus beyond the celebrity events, acknowledging that several families were dealing with devastating losses.

The episode raises a broader question for entertainment: how much can major occasions depend on one individual's support and personal relationships?

In this case, Chivayo's involvement connected a prominent musician's wed-

ding with performances by a veteran artiste. His death disrupted that shared programme. The practical lesson is that financial arrangements, however complete, cannot settle the personal decisions that follow bereavement.

It would nevertheless be premature to predict a wider collapse in entertainment sponsorship or to place a financial value on the disruption without statements from those involved. The clearest consequences so far are the postponed wedding, interrupted engagements and continuing discussions about rescheduling.

Investigations into the crash were continuing, Reuters reported. Its cause therefore remains a matter for the authorities rather than speculation surrounding the entertainment events.

For now, Jah Prayzah's wedding awaits a new chapter, while Mukanya's assurance leaves the door open for the performance to happen later. The celebration has been deferred, but the couple's statement and Mapfumo's commitment point towards its eventual return—after time has been allowed for mourning.

SHIDOLO SET TO MISS SCOTTLAND FC'S MUNHUMUTAPA CUP CLASH

Lerroy Wellie

Scotland FC midfielder Moses Shidolo is set to miss the club's Munhumutapa Challenge Cup quarter-final against Bulawayo Chiefs after featuring for Namibia in their international friendly against Russia.

Shidolo was part of the Brave Warriors squad that travelled to Russia for the friendly played on Saturday, with Scotland scheduled to face Bulawayo Chiefs in the cup quarter-final at Rufaro Stadium on Sunday.

The midfielder has been an important player for Scotland FC this season, making his absence a potential setback as the Mabvuku-based side continues its campaign in the competition.

Shidolo featured for Namibia as the Brave Warriors suffered a heavy 6-0 defeat to Russia, with the hosts scoring once before half-time before adding five more goals after the break.

The result means Shidolo will return from international duty after a difficult outing, with his availability for Scotland's quarter-final now in doubt due to the short turnaround between the two matches.

Scotland FC will be hoping to progress to the semi-finals, but may have to do so without one of their key players.





ZIFA Leadership Rally Behind Mighty Warriors Ahead of Malawi Olympic Qualifier

Leeroy Willie Zimbabwe Football Association (ZIFA) leadership has visited the Mighty Warriors camp in Harare as the national women's team intensifies preparations for their 2028 Olympic Games qualifying tie against Malawi. ZIFA president Nqobile Magwizi,	vice-president and Women's Football Committee chairperson Loveness Mukura, together with executive committee members Kudzai Kadzombe and Alice Zeure, met coach Stella Gotal and the players during the visit. The visit was aimed at encouraging the team ahead of a crucial two-legged second-round Olympic	qualifier against Malawi. Zimbabwe will travel to Lilongwe for the first leg at Bingu Stadium on October 9 before hosting the return leg at the National Sports Stadium in Harare on October 13. The tie will be Gotal's first major competitive assignment since taking charge of the Mighty Warriors, with	the coach overseeing a rebuilding process that has brought together experienced players and new faces. Gotal has previously stressed the importance of unity within the squad as Zimbabwe prepare for the two matches. The Mighty Warriors are seeking a return to the Olympic Games after	Zimbabwe's only previous appearance at the tournament came at the 2016 Games in Rio de Janeiro. The first leg in Malawi is scheduled for October 9, with the decisive return leg set for October 13 at the refurbished National Sports Stadium.
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