

NATIONAL



Chikwawa DC Nardin Kamba welcomes Vice President.

Chikwawa DC commended for punctuality

By Leah Malimbasa

Vice President, Dr. Micheal Usi recently, made a surprise visit to Chikwawa District Council offices to observe the efforts being made to improve services for Malawians and the officers' punctuality.

He arrived before 8 am at the Council and was impressed to find District Commissioner,

Nardin Kamba in his office.

Usi commended Kamba for leading by example.

During his visit to the hospital, the Vice President expressed his appreciation for the services provided.

"I'm here for time management; so, I have to respect time too and allow you to proceed with your assignments for the day," he said.

Usi enquired from the Director

of Health Services, Dr. Grace Momba about challenges being faced at the hospital and the sector in general

In her response, she mentioned infrastructure development and outreach services being implemented through Health Surveillance Assistants (HSAs).

The Vice President visited

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NATIONAL

Chakwera for sacrificial Change

By Sheminah Nkhoma and Lesnat Kenan

PRESIDENT LAZARUS CHAKWERA has emphasised the need for leaders to embrace making sacrifices for the country to achieve its goals.

The president made the remarks during the opening of the 7th annual conference of the Dynamic Leaders and Gatekeepers Forum (DLGF) at the Bingu International Conference Centre in Lilongwe.

Chakwera highlighted the need for Malawians to not give up on the fight for change, since giving up may slow the quest to improve things in the country.

"As a nation we need to endure challenges we may encounter in the course of wanting change and we should not walk away from things when they get overwhelmingly tough.

"The roles of leaders and gatekeepers include training the people we lead to endure and

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Picture by: Kondwani Magombo

Chakwera makes keynote address at the Dynamic Leaders and Gatekeepers Forum held at BICC, Lilongwe

Comment

by Malawi Today

CHAKWERA ENTICES LEADERS AND THE NATION AT LARGE TO SACRIFICE FOR CHANGE

Leaders play a crucial role in enduring challenges to bring about desired change. They must not only address existing challenges facing their institutions but also spearhead the process of generating innovative ideas and solutions. Effective leaders are those who take the initiative to tackle problems head-on and drive the change necessary for progress.

One of the key ways leaders can achieve this is by sacrificing their time and resources. This dedication is essential for transforming systems and practices for the benefit of all citizens. Innovative leaders go a step further by embracing and investing in the digital economy, recognizing its potential to revolutionize sectors and contribute to national development.

At Malawi Today, we believe that leaders should exemplify the willingness to sacrifice for the greater good. Their commitment can inspire citizens to also engage actively in the process of overcoming challenges. By working together, both leaders and citizens can achieve meaningful change that benefits everyone in the country.

We encourage leaders to take a proactive stance in this transformative journey, demonstrating through their actions that change is possible with dedication and innovation. Equally, we urge Malawians to follow their leaders' example, actively participating in efforts to address challenges and drive progress for the nation. Together, through collective effort and shared vision, Malawi can achieve the desired change for a better future.

Ministry committed to the realization of Malawi Vision 2063

By Priscilla Phiri

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE has pledged to complete pending projects in the country in the upcoming year to bolster the agricultural sector, following the Malawi 2063 First 10-Year Implementation Plan (MIP-1) 2023/2024 Annual Progress report released by the National Planning Commission in July, 2024.

The MIP-1 2023/24 annual progress report highlights that in the past year, the Ministry of Agriculture achieved 9% completion of its plans, with 41% being implemented according to the original schedule. However, 15% experienced delays, 20% veered off track, and 15% have not yet commenced.

According to a post on social media, Minister of Agriculture, Sam Dalitso Kawale, acknowledged the meaningful progress made toward fulfilling the country's vision and emphasized the need to accelerate efforts in areas where progress is lagging.

Kawale stated, "Next year, we will ensure the implementation of pending plans and finalize ongoing initiatives to promote agriculture."

Kawale also recognized that external factors, such as rainfall patterns and collaboration with other



Picture by: Priscilla Phiri

Kawale- MW Vision 2063 is possible

ministries (including finance, trade, and local governments), could impact implementation progress.

He also expressed confidence that with divine assistance, Malawi can achieve its Vision 2063.

Speaking at the presentation of the report, Board Chairperson for National Planning Commission, Prof. Richard Mkandawire, said the progress report is meant to provide a platform to accelerate successes achieved so far and trouble shoot areas which are lacking.

He said: "Time waits for no one, we need to act now. It is for this reason that NPC is committed to work with

all players to achieve Malawi 2063. NPC does not implement rather collaborates with state and non state actors to ensure that plans are implemented effectively and timely.

"Coordinated efforts towards a common milestone is essential, without which we risk missing years of implementation. We have a chance to accelerate what is working and improve where we are not doing better."

Malawi 2063, succeeding Vision 2020, was launched in January 2021. It outlines three pillars and seven enablers, aiming for an inclusive, prosperous, and self-reliant nation.

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Chakwera challenges the nation to sacrifice for change

making sure that ourselves are examples of endurance," Chakwera said.

Executive Chairperson for DLGF Revered Dr. Zacc Kawalala stressed the need for Malawians to be patriotic enough to achieve the needed change and development that the country requires.

He said: "Rebuilding Malawi will need people who will sacrifice and unite for the greater good of the nation, that

can happen if we look at what we have and where we are now."

Kawalala further said Malawians must be brave enough to take part in the rebuilding process as it cost and needs more effort from patriotic citizens.

Malawi Communication Regulatory Authority (MACRA) Director General, Daud Suleman said we need to build a digital nation to rebuild the country.

"The country needs to build its digital infrastructure by investing in the broadband internet and data centers to allow more people have easy access to internet. The digital transformation can help in the economic growth," Suleman said.

The conference was held under the theme 'The rising of patriots for change in Malawi: Counting the cost and rebuilding the nation'.



Picture by: Kondwani Magonbo

A cross-section of participants at the Dynamic Leaders and Gatekeepers Forum at the BICC in Lilongwe

Chikwawa DC commended for punctuality

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the Pediatric Ward, where he interacted with patients and inspected ongoing rehabilitation work at the district hospital.

On the challenges, Usi advised the officers that they should not rely on government alone, but write proposals to address some of the challenges.

Commenting on the visit, Kamba said he was happy to host the Vice President in

Chikwawa District.

He said that, “His presence at our district council and hospital has encouraged us to continue working hard and providing health care and other related services in the district.

“It provided us with a valuable opportunity to showcase our achievements and discuss future initiatives aimed at improving the well-being of our

communities.”

On the need to source development funds through proposals, Kamba said the Council has taken that route and currently they have won € 1 million grant from European Union (EU).

After leaving the hospital, Usi stopped at Thabwa and interacted with the market vendors.



Dr Usi on a tour of Chikwawa

Picture by: Leah Malimbasa



President Dr Lazarus Chakwera presents a gift to Rev. Salimoni.

Chakwera hails Lingadzi CCAP church

By Elia Chibwe & Gift Chiponde

PRESIDENT DR LAZARUS CHAKWERA has commended the Lingadzi Church of Central African Presibeterian (CCAP) for its unwavering commitment and dedication in praying for the country’s progress.

Speaking during a service of worship at Lingadzi CCAP Church, Area 12 in Lilongwe, Chakwera hailed the church for its support highlighting the importance of seeking God for the country to develop and embrace the brother’s keeper mentality.

In his sermon, Resident Minister for Lingadzi CCAP Church, Davie Franklin Salimon, emphasized the need for unity among people in reference of 1 Samuel 20:1-23 and John 13:34.

“As brother’s keeper Jonathan was spokesperson

for David. He expressed unity as they were not divided even in difficult times. Let’s show the same spirit of love, peace and unity to build a good Malawi. Our mouth should not scorn others.

“The covenant Jonathan made to David ensured that David was safe. Brother’s keeping brings unity when love is the foundation,” Salimon said.

He hailed President Chakwera for leading prayers on Independence Day, saying he always gives them hope as he keeps on remembering God during hardships the country is going through.

In his remarks, Session Clerk for Lingadzi CCAP Church, Professor Sam Phiri, hailed Chakwera for putting other activities aside to honour God through prayers.

Picture by: Kondwani Magonbo

Machinga residents embrace digital financial transactions

By Martin Chiwanda

PEOPLE in Machinga have realized that digital banking and payment channels provide rural populations with access to formal financial services that may not be readily available in their respective communities.

The residents made the observation in an interview with Malawi News Agency (Mana) as government through the Reserve Bank of Malawi conducted an awareness campaign in the district encouraging people to embrace electronic transaction platforms.

Ngulumia Village Development Committee Chairperson, Moses Mlanga, said apart from promoting access to formal financial services, it helps promote financial inclusion by giving people in the community the opportunity to save, borrow and manage their money more effectively.

Mlanga noted that using digital payment methods eliminates the need for rural populations to travel long distances to access traditional banking services as they can conveniently make payments, transfer money and conduct other transactions in the comfort of their home or local points of service.

He however, asked the government and other stakeholders to put more effort in sensitizing the local masses as this can benefit small businesses and farmers by enabling them to reach a broader customer base and

engage in e-commerce activities.

Another community member, Mathews Umali said communities stand to benefit greatly from embracing digital financial transactions as it can reduce fraud and theft.

On his part, Traditional Authority Mizinga urged chiefs in the district to be in the forefront in ensuring that people embrace the initiative.

“Community leaders are crucial in embracing digital finance transactions because they can build trust and understanding among community members. Like what I am doing in my community, we are mandated to educate people about the benefits and safety of digital financial services,” said Mizinga.

Even students see that transacting using digital financial service platforms is convenient, safe and efficient compared to traditional cash payments,

according to James Lysana, a student at Machinga Teachers Training College.

“We can easily pay for tuition, books and other expenses without carrying large amounts of cash. This reduces the risk of theft and allows for greater financial control. It also offers transparent transaction histories, making it easier to track expenses and manage budgets,” he said.

Digital Financial Services (DFS) Supervisor for Machinga, Andrew Chafwala said communities are patronizing the awareness campaign which is a positive indication towards people’s willingness to embrace digital finance transactions.

The DFS awareness campaign is taking place on a pilot phase in Machinga and Chikwawa in the southern region, Lilongwe and Kasungu in the central region and Karonga and Chitipa in the northern region.



Awareness campaign at Machinga TTC

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ABOUT US

This Newspaper is published by the Department of Information.

This Newspaper is produced by Origination and Publication Division within the Department.

Other publications are: Boma Lathu (a chichewa newspaper distributed for free), This is Malawi (a magazine), Malawi Lero Poster and other Information and Education Communication (IEC) materials.

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P.O. Box 31622,
Lilongwe,
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MACRA intensifies consumer rights awareness

By Fostina Mkandawire

MA L A W I Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA) has warned the public against using unregistered courier companies when sending and receiving goods saying this was one way of safeguarding them from theft.

Speaking in Salima district, during an awareness campaign on consumer rights, obligations and the phasing out of physical scratch cards, Consumer Affairs Manager at MACRA, Hudson Mkwapatira warned that once parcels get lost, it would be difficult to trace such courier companies.

He expressed worry over the increase of unregistered courier companies plying their businesses across the country which he described as illegal.

"As a regulator, it is our role to legally register every courier company that wants to be conducting courier businesses. This is the case because we want to protect consumers and their goods since entertaining such



Consumers being entertained while learning.

companies puts the customer at risk of losing their goods," Mkwapatira said.

He said it was MACRA's responsibility to safeguard consumer rights and obligations, therefore they have intensified sensitization campaigns across the country to ensure that the public is aware of emerging issues in the Information Communication Technology (ICT) industry.

The Manager mentioned the phasing out of physical

scratch cards on December 31, 2024 as one of the issues that consumers need to be aware of and that they would be using digital means for purchasing airtime or data bundles.

"Consumers need to know how they will continue purchasing airtime when the scratch cards phase out, we are therefore working hand in hand with telecommunications service operators so that the transition should be smooth," he said.

Picture by: Fostina Mkandawire

One of the consumers plying his Airtel money business at Kamuzu Road in the district, Davison Amidu commended MACRA for the awareness saying it was important for customers to be educated on their rights and reporting channels when they meet challenges.

"It is good that they have provided us with means of reporting our grievances to them because we do face different challenges, therefore we are now aware of how to protect ourselves from scammers online and also in our everyday activities," he said.

Senior Chief Kalonga said bringing such campaigns to the people shows how seriously MACRA takes the welfare of the public and requested if the campaign could be extended to remote areas so that there could be a wider reach of the audience.

MACRA is conducting a nationwide mass campaign on ICT consumer rights and obligations as well as the phasing out of physical scratch cards.

TNM Civil Servants Bundles to ease civil service operations

By Priscilla Phiri and Hastings Yobe

CORPORATE AFFAIRS MANAGER FOR TELECOM NETWORKS MALAWI (TNM), LIMBANI NSAPATO, SAYS THE Newly introduced Civil Servants' bundles will ease communication and bring efficiency within the civil service management of operations.

Speaking in an interview recently, Nsapato said the civil servants bundle falls under the Yathu bundle category which incorporates data, SMS and voice bundles that are affordable to help the operations of the civil servants.

"This bundle will only be accessed by civil servants recognized by the Malawi government, we have engaged the civil servants' data base which we will be using for their registration and enrollment for them to be able to buy the bundles," he said.



Nsapato- The bundle is affordable

He further highlighted that the bundle is now in operation and it is a permanent initiative that will be serviced by its agents across the country.

"Subscription is done by the civil servants registering with TNM and once registered that is

when they will be able to buy the bundles at their own discretion when the need arises," stated Nsapato.

According to a comment made on social media, one of the civil servants said the company's initiative is a move in the right

direction saying it will help the civil servants minimize excessive spending on data bundles.

"To me this is a good move by TNM because if you can calculate the amount of money we spend every month on internet and voice bundles you will see that it is very huge and buying in advance will drastically reduce weekly bundle purchases," said the comment.

On the other hand, some civil servants have expressed concern that the bundles are still inaccessible despite its enrollment upon dialing *656# or through the TNM App.

The TNM Yathu bundles for civil servants will be offered through a partnership between TNM and the government of Malawi with the subscription fees deducted directly from the civil servant's salary

Picture by: Priscilla Phiri



TEXTING CAN WAIT, SAFETY CANNOT

| Keep your eyes
on the road

Using your phone while driving
increases your risk of a collision by **10 TIMES**

Environmentalism condemns continued production of thin Plastics

By Hastings Yobe



Environmental activist Mathews Malata

RENOWNED ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST IN MALAWI, MATHEWS MALATA, has lambasted companies producing thin plastic bags despite government efforts to ban their production.

Malata singled out foreign-owned firms, accusing them of disregarding the country's laws and prioritizing profits over environmental and public health concerns.

Writing on his Facebook page, Malata urged Malawians to shun plastic bags and opt for eco-friendly alternatives.

"We don't need irresponsible investors who pollute our environment and put our health at risk. Our wealth lies in our soil, and we must protect it," he emphasized.

Principal Secretary for Natural Resources and Climate Change, Dr. Yusuf Mkungula, echoed Malata's sentiments, warning that thin plastic bags pose a significant threat to human health and the environment if not disposed of properly.

He reiterated that companies producing or using plastic bags with less than 60 microns are operating illegally and will face legal consequences.

"As per court ruling, we will start enforcement on July 8, 2024 to ensure that the initiative is properly and effectively implemented.

"This is aligned well with Malawi 2063 Vision, specifically Enabler 7 on environmental sustainability which provides that Malawi shall have a safe, clean, secure and sustainable environment," Mkungula said.

Dr. Mkungula encouraged Malawians to embrace reusable and recycled materials for carrying groceries and other items.



Picture by: Thom Ali

Sendeza interacting with persons with disabilities

Government committed to improve welfare of persons with disabilities

By Thom Ali

MINISTER OF GENDER, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL WELFARE, JEAN SENDEZA, says government is committed to improving the welfare for persons with disabilities in the country.

The minister made the remarks during the official opening of the Global Disability Forum hosted by World Vision Malawi at Bingu International Convention Centre (BICC) in Lilongwe.

Sendeza said that government is making efforts in implementing policies to provide a conducive environment for persons with disabilities.

She called upon various stakeholders to support the implementation of disability programs and services in the country.

World Vision Director of Operations, Charles Chimombo indicated that the Global Disability Forum will provide a platform to discuss and reflect on challenges being faced by people with disabilities in the country.

The forum has brought together foreign dignitaries from 11 countries, representatives from the public and private sectors, and the academia among others.



Plastic bags creating unhealthy environment for Malawians

Tikonze Apapa geared to transform lives of hearing impairment youth

By Blessings Memena

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR MALAWI HEALTH EQUITY NETWORK (MHEN), George Jobe has urged government and other stakeholders to encourage people to continue observing preventive measures of Cholera.

According to Jobe, it was good news to know that Cholera outbreak which started in March 2022 has now been declared to have ended however he has warned against laxity.

In an interview with Malawi News Agency (Mana) in Mzuzu, he said laxity could lead to another Cholera outbreak as the

rainy season was approaching.

"Health Surveillance Assistants (HSAs) together with other council officials should ensure there is good sanitation and hygiene in our markets.

"There is need for government and different stakeholders to emphasize through media and community leaders that people should continue to observe preventive measures like washing hands with soap, good sanitation and hygienic practices and avoiding handshakes," he said.

Jobe asked government to continue with water and

sanitation projects aimed at providing safe water to the public.

"Potable water is key in the fight against Cholera hence government should continue projects that provide safe water to people like sinking boreholes and provision of piped water by our water boards," he said.

Ministry of Health declared in a Press Statement on July 12, 2024 that Cholera outbreak that started in 2022 has ended.

The Outbreak had been declared a public health emergency on December 5, 2022 by President, Dr. Lazarus Chakwera.



Jobe - No laxity

Malawi government to hire 4,200 auxiliary teachers

By Hastings Yobe

THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION HAS ANNOUNCED PLANS TO RECRUIT 4,200 AUXILIARY TEACHERS to support the implementation of the Malawi Primary School Improvement Programme (MPSIP). The part-time instructors will be selected and employed to assist in improving education performance in primary schools across the country.

According to a press release issued in July 2024, qualified individuals with a Teacher's Certificate from recognized Teacher Training

Colleges (TTCs) within Malawi are invited to apply for the positions. The auxiliary teachers will be employed from September 1st to April 14th annually, with the possibility of extension depending on funding availability and program needs.

A total of K100 million kwacha has been allocated to each implementing district, with an additional disbursement schedule planned for next year. The Ministry has instructed all Head teachers and District Education Managers to oversee the initiative until September 2025.

Secretary for Education Mangani Katundu stated that the investment in quality



Picture by Steve Chirombo

Pupils are going to benefit from the auxiliary teachers

education is part of efforts to democratize access to teaching resources across all levels.

Teachers Union secretary general Charles Kumchenga has welcomed the government's decision to increase the monthly honoraria for auxiliary teachers from K80,000 to K120,000,

representing a 50% increase but has urged the government to consider full employment for these teachers, citing the need for job security.

"if we were consulted, we would have told the ministry that the serving auxiliary teachers should be recruited on

a permanent basis first before new ones are engaged," he said.

The recruitment of auxiliary teachers is part of the government's efforts to improve the quality of education in primary schools across the country.

President in eastern region to fulfil several engagements

By Bishop Witmos

AS A WAY OF INTERACTING WITH THE PEOPLE IN THE COUNTRY, PRESIDENT DR LAZARUS CHAKWERA is in Mangochi where he is scheduled to carry out several official duties in Eastern Region.

Addressing thousands of people gathered at Mangochi Boma to welcome him, the President expressed excitement to interact with the community and inspect development projects.

"I am thrilled to see so many of you here and I am eager to engage with you on various development projects," he said.

The President emphasized the importance of maintaining peace and harmony among Malawians.

"We are a people who love and respect one another. Let us continue to show appreciation for each other and unite in our

diversity," he added.

Chakwera expressed gratitude to religious leaders for their role in bringing harmony among people.

Deputy Secretary General for the Malawi Congress Party (MCP), Gerald Kazembe praised the President for the various development projects underway across the country.

"We have seen the completion of several projects, including the Mangochi-Cape Maclear Road and the Nkhudzi-Bay Water Supply project," he said.

Kazembe mentioned the upcoming rehabilitation of the Balaka-Zomba Road, saying it has been long overdue.

Senior Chief Chowe welcomed the President to Mangochi, saying it demonstrates that he loves and care for the people of the district and the whole eastern region in general.



NAC's initiative to illuminate HIV proves positive impact

By Isabel K Banda

NATIONAL AIDS COMMISSION (NAC) says its initiatives of forming groups to get an aids free nation by 2030 in the coming generation is proving to be successful.

Speaking with Malawi News agency, Acting HIV Protection and Prevention Officer for NAC Francis Mabedi, said that the main aim for these groups is to give access to the youth with information about HIV and its preventive measures.

"These groups have been put in place so that they can help youths have access to all the HIV services and information that the country offers,

the groups are special for youths living with HIV and AIDS and they provide support

by looking at issues concerning stigma, discrimination among peers and also providing awareness to the masses so as to curb the spread of the virus as we are working on 95:95:95 project which is targeting the elimination of HIV as a public health by 2030," said Mabedi.

Mabedi further added that in the past many young people have been contracting the virus because they were not aware of the ways they could catch the virus but because of these groups many of them now are aware of the preventive measures and the dangers that the virus can cause to the human body.

"The other challenge that these groups were facing was lack of drug adhering among youth

which led to increase in numbers of high viral load in hospitals and also high number of deaths due to HIV and AIDS," he further added.

One of the group members that has benefitted from this initiative Eliana Chitsamba (not her real name) said, the group has helped her a lot when it comes to getting her lost self esteem back.

"The group has been like a second home to me in a way that I feel free to meet my friends in the same group and encourage each other on how we can improve our lives and be like any other person,

this initiative has helped me to be more self-confident and now I am able to join my fellow youths in doing things that I was unable to do due to low self-esteem," said Chitsamba.



Francis Mabedi

The 95:95:95 strategy was launched in 2014 by the joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS. The aim is to diagnose 95% of all HIV positive

individuals, provide antiretroviral therapy (ART) For 95% of those diagnosed and achieve viral suppression for 95% of those treated by 2030.

Kalichero set to finalize new planting hoe innovation

By Isabel K Banda

A 22-YEAR-OLD innovator George Kalichero who continues to amaze Malawians with his wonderful innovations by bringing his ideas into reality, is currently working on a planting hoe which will speed up the planting process for farmers.

Speaking in an interview, Kalichero stated that the planting hoe will help farmers by reducing the time that farmers spend when planting their seeds, and it will also help in improving the agricultural sector.

"This hoe is different from the local ones because it has a bottle attached to store seeds and the handle has a button which releases the seed into the planting holes, hence reducing the time the farmer spends when planting with the traditional hoe," he said.

According to Kalichero, the new innovation will take him about a month to be finalized and be made available for use.

He also revealed that the planting hoe is one among some of his innovations that he has invented since he started in 2017.

"My first innovation was done in 2020 and it was a windmill which generates electricity and powers my grandmother's house and 10 of her neighbors in Mulanje, but most people know much about the electric bike which I invented during the fuel crisis period in 2023," he said.

Kalichero says he gets his inspiration from William Kamkwamba among other local innovators as well as some of the international innovators that are shown on television.

He however, lamented over lack resources, financial support

and mockery that he constantly faces in his innovation journey and urged government and different stakeholders to support and promote innovators for meaningful development.

Recently, Research Manager for National Planning Commission, Dr. Andrew Jamali stated that there is hope for the innovation sector in Malawi as more youths are emerging with solution-based innovations in the country.

He said: "It is very exciting as you know Malawi vision 2063 is centered on the youths and we just launched the vision a bout 3 years ago and already we see young people running with the vision by identifying problems and making innovations like these hence this brings hope to the country."

Kalichero's brilliance hit the headlines on social media in the past years and drew attention of many in the country. In 2021 he was among innovators that were selected at the Institute of Industrial Research and Innovations at Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST).



The new planting hoe



The electric windmill



Electric Bicycle

Picture by: Isabel K Banda



Picture by: Robert Nayeja

DIOs, PROs are key in public sector reforms implementation

By Rose Cross Mahorya

PUBLIC SECTOR REFORMS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT (PSRMD) has underscored the need for District Information Officers (DIOs) and Public Relations Officers (PROs) to understand the public sector reforms programme which government was implementing.

PSRMD's Director of Reforms responsible for Information, Education and Communication, Suzgo Khunga made the remarks in Mzuzu during an orientation workshop for DIOs and PROs in the northern region.

She said the work of DIOs and PROs was very important in ensuring that activities under public sector reforms are bringing positive impact.

Khunga highlighted a number of positive developments that

have been implemented by institutions which she said both DIOs and PROs need to get familiar with.

"For reforms implementation to bear positive impact, there is need for proper two-way communication between implementing institutions and the public which are receiving agents.

"However, in all this, DIOs' and PROs' job of communicating is at the centre stage, hence the need for them to understand these reforms," the Director said.

During the meeting, participants were presented with the Department's Communication Strategy under review for them to appreciate and share their views on the same.

One of the participants,

District Information Officer (DIO) and Spokesperson for Likoma District Council, Ireen Mseteka said engaging them in the reforms implementation process was very important because as officers who speak on behalf of the institutions, they need to be aware of reforms being implemented by their institutions.

"As communicators, we need to be aware of our roles in enforcement of the reforms our institutions are working in because access to information is very key in ensuring that the reforms become successful.

"The orientation has been an eye opener as I am now able to understand my role as DIO in as far as implementation of reforms is concerned," she added.

Khunga - Alot has happened

CS-EPWP a game changer to natural disasters

By Petro Mkandawire

PROJECT FACILITATOR FOR CLIMATE SMART ENHANCED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME (CS-EPWP) in Blantyre, Aubrey Jazza has urged community members to adopt and embrace climate smart project as a way of addressing the interlinked challenges of food security and climate change.

Jazza said this during a supervision of Lenjemesi Catchment area in Traditional Authority Makata which was aimed at assessing technical guidelines, watershed logistics and assessing if all sub projects are being implemented in line with agricultural seasonality.

He said the increase in flooding has resulted in communities having less water available for food production as such community members should be optimistic in CS-EPWP to improve their economic well-

being and treat run-off to reduce pollutants.

"CS-EPWP helps to keep soils from eroding, preserve land fertility and save local plants, smart water management conserves water supplies by lowering unnecessary consumption and respond to adverse climate change situations; hence, community members have to invest and take the programme seriously," said Jazza.

He however, expressed gratitude over community's active participation in various interventions under CS-EPWP sub catchments. He also called upon people to work closely together in conserving the environment, noting that it helps to boost the economy of the country.

The tour of Lenjemesi Catchment was also meant to assess the number of beneficiaries, quality of assets,

programme achievements and implementation of works in line with CS-EPWP mandate.

In a separate interview, secretary for Lenjemesi Catchment Management, Shadrack Batamus said the catchment area covers 377.5 hectares with almost 1876 families benefiting economically from the programme.

Batamus said through various CS-EPWP developments, participants earn money which is paid after completing a 24 day cycle and the project has greatly reduced risks of natural disasters and improve water conservation in their farms.

"Check dams and swales have enhanced the availability of irrigation water and helped in the slow running of water that prevents our crops from floods, as such we are happy with the programme since we are now able to feed our families, buy clothes, buy farm inputs and as



Community members taking part on Climate smart



Project Facilitator for (CS-EPWP) in Blantyre Aubrey Jazza pointing how swales should be like

we are talking, I have bought yellow solar through wages from CS-EPWP," said Batamus.

CS-EPWP in Blantyre has 17, 107 participants in 15 catchment areas whereby 10 areas are model

catchments with 500 hundred participants and currently with funds from the World Bank over K130 million has been utilized on the implementation of CS-EPWP.

Picture by: Petro Mkandawire

Cameroon, Nigeria agree to end border dispute

/VoA



Picture from: BBC

Cross River near Mamfe Town, Cameroon, Nigeria

NIGERIA AND CAMEROON said Thursday they would no longer seek a court ruling to settle their disputed border.

Rather, the two nations said, joint delegations will validate a demarcation plan on site and put an end to long-standing territorial disputes.

The nations share about 2,100 kilometers (1,300 miles) of border, from Lake Chad in the north of the Gulf of Guinea to the Atlantic Ocean coast.

Leonardo Santos Simao, chairperson of the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission set up by the United Nations to solve the countries' territorial disputes, said he is delighted the two countries decided to resolve their disputes without long and expensive processes at the International Court of Justice.

The agreement to peacefully resolve border disputes before the end of 2025 was made at a meeting of the Mixed Commission on Wednesday and Thursday in Yaounde. Simao called it a milestone.

The two countries agreed to visit disputed territories in Rumsiki and Tourou in northern Cameroon and Koche in eastern Nigeria before the end of 2024.

Nigerian Justice Minister Lateef Olasunkanmi Fagbemi, who is the leader of the West African state's delegation to the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission, confirmed that the countries have agreed to complete the project within 12 months.

"It's a consensus between Cameroon and Nigeria. By the end of 2025, this project should

be concluded," he said. "We have so admirably and maturely handled the situation in such a way that there is hardly any dissent. We are satisfied with the outcome of the two-day meeting, and we are hopeful that there is light at the end of the tunnel."

Cameroon and Nigeria say the border demarcation was slowed by Boko Haram terrorism in both countries. They say that the Boko Haram group's firepower is drastically reduced now and that the demarcation can continue.

The two states say they will move past existing differences over the precise location of the border in about 30 villages.

The Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission was established in 2002 at the request of President Paul Biya of Cameroon and the then-Nigerian leader Olusegun Obasanjo to facilitate the implementation of an October 10, 2002, International Court of Justice ruling that ceded Bakassi, an oil-rich border peninsula, to Cameroon.

Nigeria initially rejected the verdict, with its senate arguing that the ruling, based on a colonial era agreement, was unfair and should be appealed. But Nigerian officials said the verdict should be respected.

No More Visa Free Entry for Botswana and South Africa to Ireland

/One Africa News Today

THE IRISH MINISTER FOR JUSTICE, Helen McEntee, announced today that, effective from Wednesday, July 10, 2024, nationals of Botswana and South Africa will be required to obtain a visa before travelling to Ireland. Additionally, a transit visa will be required for those intending to transit through Ireland en route to another destination.

Minister McEntee explained that this decision aligns Ireland more closely with the Schengen Area concerning these countries and with the UK regarding South Africa. She emphasised the importance of maintaining effective immigration controls while facilitating legitimate travel for visits, work, study, or family reunions.

To manage the new visa requirements, the Dublin Visa Office will establish a dedicated "South Africa desk" to process

applications from South African nationals. Furthermore, three Visa Application Centres (VACs) will be set up throughout South Africa in collaboration with visa service provider VFS Global.

The Irish Department of Justice has introduced several measures to address the increase in asylum applications and improve immigration control. These include suspending visa-free travel for refugees with EU-issued travel documents, funding for Garda Airline Liaison Officers, enhanced checks at Dublin Airport, and increased deportations and voluntary returns. The accelerated processing of International Protection applications, especially from safe countries of origin and those with the highest number of applications, has also been prioritised.



Trump survives an attempted assassination

/BBC News,

FORMER President Donald Trump survived an assassination attempt on July 13, 2024, during a campaign rally at the Butler Farm Show in Butler, Pennsylvania.

The rally, part of Trump's bid for the Republican presidential nomination, turned chaotic when multiple shots were fired towards the stage. The assailant, who was quickly neutralized by law enforcement, managed to graze Trump with a bullet,

leaving him with visible blood on his face but no severe injuries.

The incident, which also resulted in the tragic death of one of Trump's supporters, has intensified security measures around his campaign events.

Secret Service agents swiftly covered Trump and escorted him offstage immediately after the shooting began, ensuring his safety amidst the pandemonium. The rally was abruptly halted, and attendees were evacuated from the scene.

In the aftermath, Trump's campaign issued a statement confirming that the former president was "fine" and thanking the Secret Service and law enforcement for their prompt response.

Trump himself later addressed the incident on social media, expressing his condolences to the family of the deceased supporter and reaffirming his commitment to his campaign despite the attack.



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Haunted by the Road: The Silent Struggle of Malawian Road Traffic Accident Survivors

By Priscilla Phiri and Hastings Yobe

IMAGINE the sound of screeching tires, crunch of metal, and shattering glasses still echoing in your mind long after a road accident. Imagine reliving the same horrific moment every time you get behind the wheel, or even just hearing the sound of a car driving by.

This is the reality of many road users in Malawi, behind closed doors, a hidden battle rages. This battle is not fought with swords or guns but with memories that refuse to fade.

Road traffic accidents, a common occurrence on Malawi's roads, leave scars that run deeper than a broken bone. For those who survive the twisted metal and shattered glass, a different kind of trauma awaits, one that lingers long after the sirens fade.

In this feature, Malawi News Agency explores the often-hidden aftermaths of road accidents, the struggles of living with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and the bravery of those who are fighting to reclaim their lives as they find ways to heal.

Alice Banda, aged 27, is a resident in the city of Lilongwe. She is a survivor of a devastating road accident which took place within the town of Lilongwe in 2021 and this is her life. The physical scars healed, but the emotional ones still remain raw and unrelenting.

"I am always afraid to travel



Take heed of road traffic signs and regulations

FAST FACTS

» EMOTIONAL IMPACT OF ROAD ACCIDENTS

- Road traffic accidents in Malawi leave lasting emotional scars.
- Survivors often suffer from PTSD, affecting their daily lives long after physical injuries heal.

long distances because every time I travel by car, I get flashbacks of a car accident that I was involved in two years ago, I am even afraid to drive because I fear that I may end up in an accident," revealed Alice.

Although Alice has on several occasions shared her experiences with her loved ones, she still feels alone and helpless as those that she trusts the most do not realise the damage that the accident she was once involved in made.

"It is depressing because I do not know what to do to get my life back. The hardest part

is that those that are around me take it lightly and they do not understand the severity of the psychological trauma that the accident left me with," she laments.

Alice is not alone. Thousands like her in Malawi grapple with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) with lives altered by the merciless roads.

Madalitso Banda, a young man aged 23, living in Mzuzu city, also fights the same battle silently.

"I did not know that this was a psychological condition, but ever since I was hit by a motorcycle, my life has never

been the same, I panic every time I cross the road and I do not like walking around town to hang out with friends because I cannot stop myself from recalling the accident.

The condition has affected my social life as I prefer staying home after school,” he says.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is characterised by failure to recover after experiencing or witnessing a terrifying event.

The condition may last months or years, with triggers that can bring back memories of the trauma accompanied by intense emotional and physical reactions.

According to research, a staggering 954 people were estimated to have been affected by road trauma in Ntcheu district alone in 2018, with 173 lives lost.

Yet, shockingly, official records vastly underreport these numbers, with police data capturing only 11% of cases and hospital records accounting for a mere 14%.

This means that hundreds of survivors, like Alice and Madalitso, are silently struggling with the emotional scars of their ordeal, including the debilitating symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

According to Henry Jones Mwale, a Psychologist at Harmony Wellness Solutions, PTSD affects a person’s thinking, feelings and behaviour making it difficult for patients to fully function in their day to day lives.

“The most common symptoms that most road traffic accident victims come with are flashbacks, they may think that they are reliving the whole trauma or have intrusive thoughts like they are going through the whole accident again,

Some may have troubling

- » **UNDER-REPORTING OF CASES**
- **The true extent of road trauma is likely much higher than official statistics suggest.**
 - **In Ntcheu district in 2018, 954 people were estimated to be affected by road trauma, with 173 lives lost.**
 - **Official records captured only 11% of cases, and hospital records only 14%**

- » **SYMPTOMS OF PTSD**
- **PTSD symptoms include flashbacks, intrusive thoughts, troubling dreams, and avoidance of places or activities that remind individuals of the trauma.**
 - **Symptoms may appear immediately or months after the accident.**

- » **IMPORTANCE OF THERAPY**
- **Therapy is crucial for managing PTSD, helping to restructure thoughts and beliefs.**
 - **It prevents individuals from turning to harmful coping mechanisms like substance abuse**

dreams and find it difficult sleeping others may also develop avoidance of the things that remind them of the trauma for example they may avoid the places that the accident happened or the activities that remind them of the accident like driving or conversations that may remind them of such incidents.

He further emphasised that victims develop PTSD symptoms at different time frames after the accident.

“It is important to note that people develop PTSD symptoms at different time periods, some may develop the symptoms immediately after the traffic accident, while others may do so three months after the accident,

So it is important to come for assessment so that we see how they are coping and start the interventions once diagnosis has been done because such patients feel like they are not safe all because they are failing to process what happened hence therapy is important as it helps to restructure their thoughts and beliefs,” he says.

He advises victims of road traffic accidents with PTSD condition to be open and talk about their experiences because distressful experiences open a door to addictions as victims try to find coping mechanism that are harmful to their wellbeing.

He also encourages health workers to refer road traffic accident victims to therapy for their mental wellness.

“Do not overlook PTSD, because the condition is real and no one is immune to it, people need to know that their reactions are normal to abnormal events, so whenever they go through traumatic situations they should go for check up to see if they have PTSD and get helped professionally,” says Mwale.

Georgina Kanyanda, a Mental Health expert, concurs with Mwale by saying there is need for more awareness from the medical profession to keep Malawians informed on issues to do with disorders for them to be properly addressed.

In a bid to curb road accidents in the country, government together with stakeholders are taking action in creating awareness on the relevance of road safety in saving lives and property.

According to Senior Road and Transport Officer for South Directorate of Road Traffic on Safety Services (DRTSS), Edwin Chikamba, the topic of road accidents should be taken seriously.

“It is a high time that people start realising the graveness of the situation and take action, road safety should be one of the most talked about topics amongst people to raise awareness.

It is sad to note that people think adhering to road safety information is only for those working for road traffic and drivers on the contrary, every person regardless of their status in society is a road user and should take full responsibility when using the road,” he said.

All in all, no one ought to live their lives in despair and fear of what may happen to them on the road. It is high time Malawians took road safety seriously bearing in mind that their safety is also the safety of other road users. The silent struggle against PTSD and haunting memories underscores the true cost of road trauma.

As the country seek ways to heal and reclaim lives, Malawians have a responsibility to drive with caution and empathy making the country’s roads safer for everyone to arrive alive.

ADVERTISING RATES

Item	(MK)
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Quarter Page	107,500.00
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Full page	330,750.00
Column rate per CM	300,000.00
Colour	
Quarter Page	162,400.00
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Full Page	420,000.00
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Inside Strip (5cm x 6cm)	121,900.00
Column Rate per CM	750.00
Customer Specified	
Double spread Colour	828,800.00
Double spread Black and White	659,750.00
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Rate per word	116.00
Minimum of 10 words	1,120.00
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Picture (3cm x 1 column)	3,150.00
Inserts	
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A4 insert per copy	18

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**Malawian traditional
engagement
ceremonies:
A Fashion
Extravaganza**

GETTING TO KNOW MERCHAH

**Merchah to
release a
new single**

P16



Picture courtesy of Jetu

GETTING TO KNOW MERCHAH

By Hastings Yobe

WHEN it comes to urban music, one can hardly skip the “Najitolera” hitmaker, Merchah. It’s of no argument to say that he is currently becoming a household name as far as afro music is concerned, and he sure has a following. Malawi Today journalist sat down with the star to get to know more about him, outside music and inside his squared circle where he beats bars and lines.

The 22-year-old artist is currently in his third year at the University of Livingstonia, Kaning’ina campus, where he is studying Journalism and Development Communication. Merchah, whose real name is Uchizi Salala Msowoya, comes from Rumphi district, where his parents originally reside, but they are currently located in Mzuzu. He has three siblings, and he is the second born.

Merchah’s musical journey started in 2016, by the time he was in Form 2 at Chaminade Secondary School, but it later accelerated in 2018, where the artist took a turn and took singing seriously as a career. Like most parents would do, Merchah’s parents were not in support of the path their son had taken at first. “My parents weren’t in support of it at that time, as they saw it as a waste of time and wanted me to focus on school,” said Merchah.

But how does he manage to make music whilst also making his parents proud in school? “Well, I try to make time for both, though it’s hard, but I have to push both at the same time. Both things need consistency, though it’s hard, but I try to balance them and make time to study. Also, I try to record as much as I can during holidays, so that during school, I don’t face that hustle,” he added.

Merchah is not just a regular artist; he is a visionary, and one could agree with the way he makes his music that one day he will go and make the motherland proud. The artist himself said that he sees himself winning a Grammy and crossing borders to represent the country.

Many people wonder why the artist mixes Tumbuka and English in his music. He says he’s just following the path of greats like Wambali and George Mkandawire. “I used to do my music in English back in the days, but I realized



that the originators of Afrobeats include their native languages, so why shouldn’t I? And also, Tumbuka music has been selling from way back through legends like the fore-mentioned Wambali and George Mkandawire; I am just continuing from where they left,” said Merchah.

The artist shared plans for a 2024 initiative to visit prisons, providing basic necessities lacking there. Additionally, he aims to launch a project teaching aspiring and established artists about music business, songwriting, and composition. As if that wasn’t enough, he is also involved in farming.

Of the greater things he has done, the artist says he has helped in writing songs for prominent Nigerian artists lately, but under a non-disclosure contract. He has also worked on a song with a Nigerian legend, and it is yet to be released.

To sharpen his musical buds, the artist says he loves traveling, recording, and listening to music on his free time, and said consistency is key to achieving these goals. “I have multiple projects lined up for release.”

Dwelling on relationships, the artist said he is not a fan of relationships but rather situationships, and he is currently in a couple of them.

His favorite artists are Chronixx and Octavian, but locally, he loves Prince Chitz and Ethan Music, some artists that the country should look forward to.

Merchah has said he has lined up a number of projects coming up, both locally and internationally, and has asked his fans to be on the lookout. Some of the famous songs the artist has done are “Najitolera,” “Handede,” and the just-released hit song “Vyapachalo.”

FAST FACTS

- Stage Name:** Merchah
- Real Name:** Uchizi Salala Msowoya
- Age:** 22
- Current Education:** Third year at the University of Livingstonia, Kaning’ina campus
- Field of Study:** Journalism and Development Communication
- Home:** Rumphi district, currently located in Mzuzu
- Siblings:** Three (second born)
- Musical Career Start:** 2016 (Form 2 at Chaminade Secondary School) Parents’ Initial
- Musical Influences:** Wambali and George Mkandawire
- Language in Music:** Mixes Tumbuka and English
- Other Interests:** Farming, traveling, recording, and listening to music
- Favorite Artists:** Chronixx and Octavian (international), Prince Chitz and Ethan Music (local)
- Relationship Status:** Prefers situationships over relationships
- Notable Songs:** “Najitolera,” “Handede,” and “Vyapachalo”

Merchah to release a new single

By Hastings Yobe

The northern region musical sensation, Merchah is set to release yet another banger titled this month.

The Najitolela hit maker says his new project which is a single, is going to take his fun base by storm since he has compiled the piece in a way that many will love.

“In this project I have worked with a number of big names in the industry, I collaborated with the renowned Nigerian multi-platinum based in Los Angeles, Kidomenant, Driz beats, Delby who have produced big tunes in the game,” said Merchah.

The song titled “ZAMAWA” which he has featured Prince Chitz has been produced by Chawa beats in collaboration with a Ugandan Producer Classic beats earlier this year.

“I had fun creating this project, Zamawa song is talking about a guy who is going after a girl and has drawn the line that he has to win her heart before tomorrow comes,” said Merchah.

“The Zamawa song has the same vibe as my recent project “Obhebha” but has a more jovial beat which is digestable and more fitting for the Malawian Market,” Merchah added.

One of Merchah’s fans, Madalitso Mtukula says he is excited with the new project and expresses his joy that the artist is finally releasing the project.

“I’m very excited as a fan that Merchah is about to drop an EP and a song in which he featured Prince Chitz. Since he released, Wane in January, he has been making waves with his unique song.

And after that, he made a collabo with Namadingo in which the song blows everywhere and now hearing that he’s about to release an EP, I’m very excited and I hope it will carry our music flag to the world,” said Mtukula.

The artist says his aim for producing this new project is to tell stories about love, heartbreaks among others that people talk about in everyday life.

Meanwhile, Merchah is working on another EP titled Bongo, a project which he started in 2022 as he prepares for other activities lined up in the coming months.



FASHION BOOK

With Priscilla Phiri

Malawian traditional engagement ceremonies: A Fashion Extravaganza

MALAWI, well known for its culture is also known for hosting traditional engagement ceremonies locally known as Chinkhoswe. These are not only celebrations of love commitments but also a showcase of exquisite fashion.

From the bride's splendid attire to the guests' colorful outfits, Malawian weddings are a feast for the eyes.

The bride's attire takes centre stage, adorned in a breath-taking ensemble that reflects tradition, elegance, and personal style.

The Chitenje fabric, with its vibrant patterns, is the star of the show for the bride's first outfit. The bride's gown, often custom-made, reflects the culture of the bride whilst featuring intricate beadwork, lace, and embroidery. The Chitenje material is often times blended with other plain fabrics to accentuate the gown.

On the second look, the bride often time escorted by her in laws, leaves the ceremony briefly to change into another impeccable outfit presented by her in laws.

The dress has a luxurious fabric and design decorated with beads or glitter.

A beaded crown or a delicate headband graces the bride's head. Necklaces, bracelets, hand fan and earrings are all carefully selected to complement her look.

The groom stands tall in his tailored suit or shirt, a fusion of Western elegance and Malawian flair.

While the outfit remains classic, the groom adds a touch of chitenje accents. His collar, pocket, or even the lining of his shirt features the same fabric as the bride's gown. Its a subtle nod to tradition.

A carved wooden walking stick, intricately designed, accompanies the groom. It symbolizes strength, wisdom, and the journey ahead.

The dancing queens and kings complement the couple's style. The dancing queens wear chitenje dresses similar to the bride's fabric, each unique in pattern and style. They move gracefully, dancing to the rhythm of celebration.

Like the groom, the dancing kings are



Bride and her dancing Queens



Bride and Groom chitenje outfits

adorned in traditional tailored suits made from a plain fabric but patches of their shirts are made from chitenje fabric. It's a harmonious blend of formality and cultural pride.

Guests arrive in an array of chitenje outfits, turning the wedding venue into a vibrant canvas.

Women of all ages wear chitenje dresses which are colourfully coordinated with the bride's fabric known as Kalala. Men opt for chitenje shirts paired with trousers.

As guests twirl, laugh, and create



Zeze and Dorothy's traditional engagement outfits

memories, fashion becomes a bridge between the past and the future.

So, whether you're a bride, a guest, or an observer, let the vibrant chitenje weave its magic, reminding us that love knows no boundaries and neither does style.

WORD SEARCH

House

All the words are hidden vertically, horizontally or diagonally—in both directions. The letters that remain unused form a sentence from left to right.

S T U D I O L B A T H R O O M
C A N H O L L O W W A L L A T
P O T I E C L D A E T S D E B
E A L W I N D O W S I L L B C
T S N O I T A D N U O F D E H
S D E R N G U T T E R I I D I
R R O H C N A L L A W R S R M
O F F I C E A R C A D E A O N
O C R E T T I D A R A E S O E
D O C T A E B L E G L S T M Y
E R L A D R D E I R E C O T H
A R T I S R I N S N T A V A K
O I T A P U L L E D G P E C I
N D S I T T I N G A R E A T O
T O W O D N I W R E M R O D H
D R A I N P I P E E T F L O O
N E H C T I K R O A F A N A T
T R O O L F I S H U T T E R C

ARCANE
BATHROOM
BEDROOM

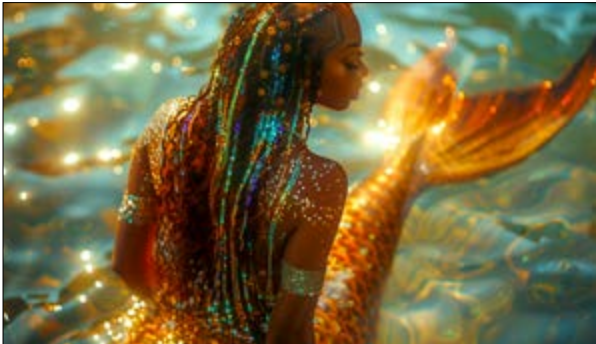
BEDSTEAD
CEILING
CHIMNEY

COLONNADE
CORRIDOR
DOORSTEP

DORMER WINDOW
DRAINPIPE
FIRE ESCAPE
FLOOR
FOUNDATIONS
GARAGE
GUTTER
HAT RACK
HOLLOW WALL
KITCHEN
OFFICE
PATIO
SHUTTER
SITTING AREA
STOVE
STUDIO
TURRET
WALL ANCHOR
WELL
WINDOWSILL

BIZZARE

The Enchanting Melody of Kasangazi River



IN the heart of Malawi, where the Kasangazi River flowed lazily through lush greenery in Dowa district, there existed a hidden world. It was a place where the ordinary mingled with the extraordinary, where the shimmering waters held secrets beyond human comprehension.

Young Nia, with her sun-kissed skin and curious eyes, often played by the river's edge. Her friends would join her, their laughter echoing across the water. But one fateful day, they abandoned her in a fit of childish anger, leaving her alone with the whispering reeds and the gentle lapping of waves.

As Nia wandered along the riverbank, she glimpsed a figure a girl, radiant as the morning sun. Her hair cascaded down her back like liquid gold, and her laughter danced in the air. Nia's breath caught; she had never seen anyone so beautiful.

But as she drew closer, the enchantment shattered. Scales adorned the girl's lower body, shimmering iridescent hues of turquoise and silver. A mermaid! Nia's heart raced, and terror gripped her. She remembered her mother's warnings: "Never linger by the river alone, child. The waters hold secrets both wondrous and perilous."

Nia hid behind a moss-covered rock, her pulse racing. The mermaid sang a haunting melody that seemed to unravel time itself. Nia's tears welled; the song spoke of forgotten love, of sunken cities, and of dreams lost to the depths.

Then, from the opposite bank, gruff voices intruded the fishermen returning from their night's work. Nia's fear intensified. Would they harm the mermaid? Would she retaliate? She held her breath, torn between revealing the secret and protecting the otherworldly being.

With a graceful dive, the mermaid vanished beneath the water, leaving ripples in her wake. The fishermen arrived, their nets heavy with silver-scaled fish, oblivious to the enchantment that had graced their river.

Nia never forgot that day. She became a storyteller, weaving tales of mermaids and rivers, of beauty and sacrifice. And sometimes, when the moon hung low, she would sit by the Shire River, listening for the echo of that haunting melody the mermaid's gift to those who dared to believe.

ACHIKUMBE

Peter Nyakhuwa



LITERARY CORNER

#ShortStory

From Rags to Riches

By Leonard Masauli

THAMUSONI DAVINALA trudged down the dusty paths of Mkanya town, his bare feet toughened by years of walking on the rough ground. His clothes were little more than rags, and his skeletal frame bore the marks of many nights spent with an empty stomach.

He lived in a makeshift house, a fragile structure barely keeping the elements at bay, with a dusty floor and an old, patchy blanket for warmth. The townspeople often laughed at him, mocking his poverty and the seeming hopelessness of his situation.

His children, driven by hunger and necessity, scoured the streets for discarded scraps of food. It was a life of hardship, yet Thamusoni never lost his dignity, even

as his children, Wilisoni and Chibeko, roamed the alleys and rummaged through bins to find something to eat.

One day, while the children were on their usual hunt for food, Wilisoni stumbled upon a tightly sealed wooden box wrapped in a plastic bag. Curious and determined, he tried to break it open but failed. Excitedly, he and Chibeko rushed home to show their father.

“Dad!” Wilisoni called out, his eyes wide with excitement. “Look what we found!”

Thamusoni eyed the box warily, cautioning his children to be careful. “Sometimes people throw out dangerous things. It could be a trap.”

Despite his fears, Thamusoni couldn’t ignore the sense of opportunity. He took a panga knife and, with a few

determined strikes, managed to cut through the wood. The box opened to reveal bundles of banknotes, carefully wrapped in plastic. The family stood in stunned silence, unable to believe their eyes.

Thamusoni reached out tentatively, touching the notes, and realized they were real. His hands shook as he began to count the money, his children assisting him. It totaled an astonishing 20 million kwacha. Fear mingled with their elation as Thamusoni quickly buried the money in their bedroom floor, afraid of being discovered and accused of theft.

Months passed without incident. Slowly, the Davinala family’s fortunes began to change. Thamusoni used the money wisely, starting a tailoring shop called Kutchena, which quickly became successful. He invested in property, becoming the landlord of 20 houses in Mkanya town.

His children, once street urchins, now received the best education. Wilisoni became a lawyer, and Chibeko a doctor. Both helped manage Chizizimutso Farm, a flourishing enterprise supplying fresh produce to the entire town.

The transformation was so remarkable that people could hardly believe it. From rags to riches, the Davinalas had become an example of miraculous fortune and the rewards of perseverance. Townsfolk who once mocked Thamusoni now shook their heads in wonder, offering praises to the Lord for the family’s incredible turnaround.



#POEMS

Hold Your Harvest Tight

By Leonard Masauli

In fields where golden grains once thrived,
A drought has left the land deprived.
Vendors come with silver tongues,
To coax your food while hungers sung.

Hold your harvest tight, dear friend,
For days of plenty may soon end.
The vendors’ coins may glisten bright,
But hunger shadows in the night.

The rains have faltered, yields are small,
Do not be tempted by their call.
Your little grains are worth much more,
When hunger knocks at your front door.

Think of the lean months up ahead,
When children cry for crumbs of bread.
A sack of maize, a jar of grain,
Can ward away the deepest pain.

Be wise and guard your precious store,
For times of need and hunger’s roar.
The vendor’s gold will come and go,
But food will keep you through the woe.

So let your heart and mind be clear,
Your family’s need is ever near.
Hold your harvest, keep it close,
Through drought and famine, you’ll oppose.



Manchester United are close to completing a £33.7m deal to sign Dutch striker Joshua Zirkzee from Bologna.

UNITED sources say the club are set to pay a slight premium on the £33.67m release clause in order to secure an extended payment period for the 23-year-old.

The Premier League club are determined to comply with Profit and Sustainability Rules (PSR) regards loss limits and accept their present situation is tight and will require discipline in their transfer dealings.

Long-serving forward Anthony Martial left Old Trafford at the end of last season when his contract expired.

The Frenchman's extended absence because of injury, in addition to Marcus Rashford's drop in form, left new signing Rasmus Hojlund to shoulder the striking burden.

Hojlund ended up losing his place in Ten Hag's starting line-

up for the FA Cup final win over Manchester City as the manager used Bruno Fernandes in a false nine role.

Zirkzee joined Bayern Munich from Feyenoord in 2017 before moving to Bologna for about £7.15m five years later after loan spells with Parma and Anderlecht.

He scored 12 goals in 37 appearances last season as Bologna claimed a surprise spot in this season's Champions League.

Zirkzee was named in Ronald Koeman's Euro 2024 squad but made just two substitute appearances for the Netherlands, totalling four minutes, plus injury time.

He was introduced into Wednesday's semi-final defeat by England immediately after Ollie Watkins' winner.



Joshua zirkzee expected to be signed by Manchester United

Picture by:

Footballer Darwin Núñez involved in clash with fans

BBC News



Núñez seen climbing the railings going into the crowd

LIVERPOOL footballer Darwin Núñez was involved in an altercation with spectators after his national team Uruguay were beaten on Wednesday evening.

The striker was seen physically confronting Colombia fans in the stands after the final whistle in the Copa America semi-final.

According to Uruguayan outlet El País, disorder broke out close to where friends and family members of the Uruguay team were located.

Núñez is yet to comment publicly on the incident.

TV cameras and fans captured images of Núñez climbing up railings and making his way into the crowded stands of the Bank of America Stadium in Charlotte, North Carolina.

He could then be seen confronting Colombia fans as

others tried to restrain him.

Other Uruguay players were reportedly involved in the incident.

Uruguay captain José María Giménez said the players were trying to defend their families, describing the situation in the crowd as a "disaster", Reuters reported.

He continued: "There was no police and we had to defend our families. This is the fault of two or three people who had a few too many drinks and don't know how to drink."

Núñez was seen hugging his son on the pitch after the altercation.

South American football's governing body Conmebol "strongly condemned" the incident and said it would launch an investigation.

"There is no place for

intolerance and violence on and off the field," it added.

The brawl happened after Uruguay slumped to a 1-0 defeat against Colombia in the last four match, denying them a place in Monday's Copa America final.

Shortly before the crowd disorder began, players and coaching staff had clashed on the pitch after the match ended.

Núñez started the game up front for Uruguay but could not convert one of his four attempts on goal.

Liverpool signed the forward for an initial £64m from Portuguese side Benfica in June 2022. He has scored 20 goals in 65 appearances for the club.

BBC News has contacted Núñez's representative for comment.

Colombia will play Argentina in Monday's final.

Argentina beat Colombia to win a record 16th Copa America but the game was marred by the kick-off being delayed by 80 minutes because of trouble outside the ground in Miami.

BBC Sport Journalist

LAUTARO MARTINEZ struck in the second half of extra time from Giovanni lo Celso's through ball to secure the win.

Captain Lionel Messi was left in tears when he had to be replaced midway through the second half after injuring himself while chasing for the ball – but was celebrating his country's third successive major tournament at the final whistle.

Kick-off was delayed because of chaos outside the Hard Rock Stadium.

Organisers said ticketless fans tried to get into the ground, leaving some fans waiting for hours in the Miami heat for the gates to open.

Fans and police officers and security clashed with several arrests made. Several supporters needed treatment from paramedics.

On top of that the half-time break lasted for 25 minutes because of a concert by Colombian popstar Shakira

on the pitch, a move that was criticised by Colombia boss Nestor Lorenzo beforehand.

It was a game of few clear chances in hot, humid conditions, with Colombia's Jhon Cordoba hitting the woodwork in the first half.

Argentina thought they had taken the lead with 15 minutes to go but Nicolas Tagliafico's effort was ruled out for offside.

Martinez would end up as the hero – and win the Golden Boot with five goals.



Lautaro Martinez struck in the second half to secure a win

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Mpico commended for supporting grass root netball

/ By Tione Andsen

GOVERNMENT has said it values the support private sector are playing in the development of different sporting codes in the country.

Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Sports, Isaac Katopola said this during the launch of K 40 million Gateway Central Region Netball League at Gateway Netball Court in Area 47, Lilongwe.

He said government alone cannot afford to meet all the requirements that are needed in the development of sporting codes hence the need for the private sector to play their role in complimenting the efforts.

He said the coming in of Mpico to the Central Region Netball League in 2016 was a welcomed and their involvement in the games has helped to raise the profile of the sport in the region.

“The league acts a nursery for the netball players and they are graduating from the league and finding their way to the national team, the Queens. We cherish the contribution netball bring to the nation and we always say there are the pride of the country,” Katopola remarked

He commended Mpico for adjusting prize money from K 24 million to K40 million saying this would have a huge impact in the development of the game.

Head of Property Services for Mpico, Eliot Jambo assured the netball fraternity that they want the sport to remain top sport and most followed game in the country.

“We are complimenting government’s efforts to ensuring that the girl child has the ability to unlock the netball talent hence we have expanded the central region league to all central region districts,” he said.

Jambo called on netball followers to patronize the games in large numbers and that the hiking of the prize money should propel good and stiff competition among participating teams.

“We proud that the Central



Katopola- We call for private sector support in sports development



Picture by: Tione Andsen



Ligola receiving the trophy

Region Netball League has produced players that are not pillars of the national team, the Queens. We still that our efforts will culminate into having more of them in the national teams and playing professional netball abroad,” he viewed.

National Association of Malawi (NAM) Treasurer, Cecilia Mtukule Bondwe said

NAM was very happy with the coming back of Mpico sponsorship to the league.

She said this would motivate players to fight for more honours and be able to be spotted for big netball clubs and make it the national team call up.

Bondwe added that the league would help to develop

the grass root netball which was lacking sponsor for many years.

She said the value Mpico has brought to development of netball in the country has encourage most youngsters to opt to play netball.

Chairperson for Central Region Netball Committee (CRNC), Fernando Ligola said the league is expected to run for

18 weeks with over 50 netball teams participating.

“We are proud of Mpico because they are playing a big role in the development of netball in the region. We are thankful to them for their commitment. We ask them to continue supporting us in all aspects of the game,” he said.

Chang'anamuno Prepares to Make Waves at 2024 Olympics

/Twimepoki Mangani

TAYAMIKA CHANG'ANAMUNO, Malawi's promising swimmer, has expressed sheer excitement after securing her spot to represent Malawi at the 2024 Olympics in Paris, France.

In an interview with Malawi News Agency on Friday, Chang'anamuno described the opportunity as a profound honor and a culmination of years of dedication and resilience.

"I'm excited to be competing in the Paris Olympics this summer, it's always been my dream goal since I was a young athlete and over the years, I've remained dedicated and resilient and it's finally paid off," she explained.

As the games draw closer, Chang'anamuno emphasized her focus on training, anticipating intensified workouts with her dedicated team of coaches.

"I'm surrounded by the best coaches and team so I'm confident

that I'll be ready to compete at such a high level."

"During the games, I hope to break my personal best times as well as to break the national record on 50 meters freestyle. My training regimen has intensified to include more endurance and power sets, with speed workouts intensifying as we approach the competition," she said.

In a separate interview, National Swim Coach, Yona Walesi confirmed Chang'anamuno and Filipe Gomez as Malawi's representatives at the Olympics, expressing confidence in their abilities.

"Our swimmers will participate on solidarity as we did not meet the qualifying time. These two athletes, particularly in the 50-meter freestyle, have demonstrated exceptional skill and commitment."

"I expect them to deliver good



Picture by: Chang'anamuno

Chang'anamuno - Im excited to be competing in the Paris Olympics this summer

performances by reducing their entry times or achieving the qualifying time. They have trained rigorously for this opportunity, and I believe they will make Malawi proud," he noted.

Walesi further implored all others athletes to do the best they can to make Malawi proud.

While acknowledging potential

changes in swimming events at the Olympics, Chang'anamuno and Gomez are expected to compete in the 50 meters freestyle.

Chang'anamuno, aged 22, is currently training in Budapest, Hungary on a four-year scholarship, while 25-year-old Filipe Gomez is preparing with his club in Portugal under

a scholarship tailored for the Olympics.

The Olympics are scheduled from July 26 to August 11, with swimming events starting on July 27 at the Paris La Defense Arena. The men's 50 meters freestyle heat will begin on August 1, followed by the women's heat on August 3.

Defeat failing to elude Silver and are nine points clear on top

/By Tione Andsen

SECOND half display by TNM Super League leaders, Silver Strikers Sunday engineered them to forced 2-2 draw against Kamuzu Barracks before a sizeable crowd at Civo Stadium in Area 9, Lilongwe.

The Bankers have recorded their third draw after 1-1 against Premier Bet Dedza Dynamos away in Dedza, and last minute 2-2 draw at the hands of Mighty Kau-Kau Tigers at Kamuzu Stadium in Blantyre.

With the draw, the Bwandilo giants are now 30 points from 12 games, have created a nine-point gap and are yet to test a defeat this season while Kamuzu Barracks have 21 points from the same number of games.

The first half the Chiwoko Brigade amounted a very road block near the offices of the Central in City and their five-star display was marvel to watch which saw them managed to plant two quick goals through Gregory Nachipo 20 minutes

and Hope Namadzunda 22 minutes.

The second half substations brought life line to the out of form Bankers, they brought in Stain Davie and Atusaye Nyondo for Mark Fodya and Duncan Nyoni.

They pulled one back after two minutes through a flick on header by Davie before Chimwemwe Idana's magic touches outside the penalty box saw his volley flying into the roof of the net beating Kamuzu Barracks keeper, Hastings Banda to make it 2-2 after 73 minutes.

In Blantyre, the football gods are still not smiling to TNM Defending Champions FCB Nyasa Big Bullets when they too had to come from behind to hold Civil Service United to a 1-1 draw at Kamuzu Stadium.

It tough going for the reigning champions as they are still failing to put their acts together and have recorded their eighth defeat of the



Kamuzu Barracks stood firm against Silver

season.

The Visitors opened the flood gates after 53 minutes through Blessings Malinda and two minutes later, Bullets leveled the scores through Ernest Petro.

Civil Service United stood firm and managed to contain Bullets and they managed to secure a point and now have 15 points on position 11.

Bullets are now on sixth position with 17 points and have a 13-point gap to leaders, Silver and their poor run form continues for both home and away games

Experienced is the best teacher states one the idioms, is what Chitipa United has used to injure Baka City 4-1 at Karonga Stadium and the win they have nine points moved to position

14 from 16 and Baka have been pushed back to anchor the log with seven points.

Baka City took a lead after 15 minutes from Nelson Sikaona and Chitipa United leveled the scores after 42 minutes through Rajab Nyirenda.

Chitipa increase the score line to 2-1 when Francis Nyirenda scored before claiming his brace 11 minutes later while Rajab got his second goal after 70 minutes to make it 4-1.

Mzuzu City Hammers leave it late to collected maximum points after edging Premier Bet Dedza Dynamos 2-1 at Mzuzu Stadium and make them to have 21 points and are number four on the log table.

Dedza were first to knock the door through Promise Kamwendo after 35 minutes and the Hammers equalizer at the stock of half time through their captain, Isaac Msiska.

Hammers, Wongani Lungu got the winner four minutes to time to the disbelief of the travelling side.

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Chang'anamuno
Prepares to Make
Waves at 2024
Olympics

FAM to Provide New Video On Status of BNS

Picture by: Tione Andsen



By Tione Andsen

MINISTRY OF YOUTH AND SPORTS HAS SAID FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION OF MALAWI (FAM) would send new videos of the state of Bingu National Stadium (BNS) in Area 48 in Lilongwe.

Public Relations Officer (PRO) for the Ministry, MacMillan Mwale said that Confederation of African Football (CAF) had indicated that BNS was suspended for all CAF engagements due to poor state of the pitch.

“We understand an official from Senegal on CAF assignment during the world cup qualifiers between Kenya and Ivory Coast last month took some video of the pitch which were showing that the pitch was on poor state,” he said.

Mwale said that, “The Ministry has managed to install new substitute benches as recommended by CAF and the new seats are comfortable to seat on. We will no longer be required to be paying over K 9 million as fine for using those old seats when hosting CAF games.”

He said FAM would generate new video on the status of the pitch for CAF inspection team to see and review their decision to suspended the stadium as indicated.

The suspension of Bingu Stadium came to light when CAF had released names of the stadiums to host CSAF champions league in the 2024/2025 football season and BNS was not amongst them.

The news about the suspension of the stadium went wrong signals to FCB Nyasa

Bullets who are set to host Red Arrows of Zambia in the first leg of CAF Champions League preliminary round on August 16, 2024.

However, Acting Bullets Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Albert Chigoga has indicated that the club needs to have a plan B on the venue in case the decision remains the same from CAF.

“We will be exploring other avenues and option two will still remain key to us and we are still preparing to host Red Arrows of Zambia,” he added.