

Congo DRC: Ceasefire and burials

The Rwandan-backed M23 rebels who took Goma have called a ceasefire and people rushed to bury some 2,000 victims of the fighting around the city last week, fearing the spread of disease. People in the city took stock of the bombed buildings and tried to clear the morgues. 5.02.2025

Niger: PTA fees prohibited

The Niger State Government has banned the charging of PTA (Parents Teacher Association) fees in all public primary and secondary schools in the state. The measure was intended to promote school enrolment and reduce the number of children not enrolled in school in the state. Governor Muhammed Umaru Bago also ordered that children in public schools be allowed to wear their home clothes instead of the prescribed uniforms.

Vision 2030 - new curriculum

The government is introducing a new curriculum designed to deliver the skills needed for 2030. This includes: 1. competency-based approach: The new curriculum introduces a competency-based approach to learning that focuses on improving students' skills and preparing them for global competitiveness. 2. Reorganisation of the educational levels. 3. secondary school: upper secondary education is now offered in grades 5 and 6, while normal secondary education has been shortened to four years (grades 1-4). 4. primary school: primary school is six years, from Grade 1 to Grade 6 5. school-based assessments (SBAs): SBAs would now be used alongside traditional examinations to better measure learning outcomes. The Education Department of the Zambia Conference of Catholic Bishops (ZCCB) has welcomed the implementation of the new curriculum framework for education in schools. It said the curriculum is a positive step forward as it emphasises competence and the practical application of skills and knowledge.

Freshwater aquifer threatened by mining

A vast underground water resource the size of Austria, the transboundary Stampriet Aquifer System, stretches across 87 000 km² through Namibia, South Africa and Botswana. It supplies 50 000 people in several towns with water that is pure enough to drink. However, the Namibian government has granted licences to several mining companies to explore uranium deposits in the entire aquifer system. Other mining companies already have the right to mine for rare earth metals in the aquifer. Large-scale irrigation projects in Namibia that draw water from the Stampriet aquifer can cause groundwater from the mining areas to flow into the freshwater zones of the aquifer system and potentially contaminate it. There is no alternative source of water for farmers, and if farmers pump, they can draw contaminated mine water for irrigation or livestock drinking without realising it. The consequences for livestock could include inflammation, anaemia and damage to DNA and organs. The combined extraction of oil and gas, uranium leaching and the mining of rare earth heavy metals can contaminate aquifers. This has happened in the boreal zone of Canada, where 80 % of the mining of ferrous metals, precious metals, base metals and rare earths takes place.

Cities with efficient traffic

Cities with minimised traffic congestion save time and fuel and reduce air pollution. Efficient traffic management

promotes urban productivity, reduces pollution and improves the mental well-being of citizens. According to Numbeo's latest traffic index, DURBAN in South Africa tops the list of African cities with efficient traffic, followed by WINDHOEK in Namibia. PORT ELIZABETH (South Africa), CASABLANCA in Morocco and JOHANNESBURG, another South African city.

Reorganisation of the waste management system

Following the tragic collapse of the Kiteezi landfill in Kampala, which claimed 35 lives and destroyed hundreds of homes, authorities are working to close the overburdened landfill and pursue sustainable solutions. Efforts include partnerships with global waste-to-energy developers such as Infinitum Energy Group, which is planning a \$500 million renewable diesel project, and Beeah Group, which could help build a power generation plant. While there are still challenges such as funding and community opposition to new landfill sites, these initiatives aim to turn Kampala's waste into resources, reduce environmental risks.

Rosewood overexploitation

Illegal logging in Africa costs the continent up to 17 billion US dollars a year. The high global demand for African hardwood is fuelling this environmental crime. By value and volume, rosewood is the world's most traded wildlife product. In 2022, an analysis by the Environmental Investigation Agency found that more than three million tonnes of rosewood worth more than USD 2 billion were illegally traded between West Africa and China over a five-year period. The Gambia, which is known for its rich biodiversity, is heavily affected by this trade. Although the country ratified the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in August 1977, most of the 1.6 million rosewood trees exported from The Gambia between 2012 and 2020 were in violation of the Convention. A former Senegalese rosewood trader says the trade takes place within a clandestine network in The Gambia and Senegal. Locals cut down trees and sell the logs to traders who bribe forestry officials to transport the illegally felled logs along back roads and through forests to the country's harbours. Traders in Senegal and The Gambia then smuggle the timber to China in mislabelled containers.

US air strikes on Somalia

US forces carried out airstrikes in Somalia on Saturday targeting a senior leader of Islamic State attacks and other members of the militant group, killing many of them. Saturday's attacks took place in the Golis Mountains and an initial assessment is that many militants were killed. The Somali presidential office announced that President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud had been informed of the airstrike. He wrote that he expressed his sincere thanks for 'the unwavering support of the United States in our joint fight against terrorism'.

More Info: <https://netzwerkafrika.de/>

Start-up transforms invasive plant into biodegradable packaging

Nigeria: Trading partner China

Malawi orders troops to prepare withdrawal from eastern Congo