

The Villager

wherever you are

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African countries must protect their fish stocks from the European Union - here's how

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Macron expected to announce French withdrawal from Mali

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Mbappe scores late winner for PSG against Real after Messi has penalty saved

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Two New Columns

We have introduced two new Columns on page 6 and page 8 for Saturday editions only.

The Ghost of Mass Housing

Power Oyeno Claims Govt Owes N\$23m

■ Kelvin Chiringa

The urban and rural development ministry is being accused of failing to honour a whopping N\$23 million payment to Power Oyeno Construction for work carried out during the mass housing project.

Both parties are tied down in a legal battle that has seen a flurry of consultations involving the Attorney General to find an amicable solution.

The court wrangle also finds the urban and rural development ministry facing a potential budget cut as communicated by the National Planning Commission. According to correspondence seen by eagle FM, Power Oyeno is one of the companies that completed the houses allocated.

However, the company, represented by Albert Antonisays, was made to believe that the settlement amount was final.

During this time, most companies are said to have lost their retention because it was not part of the settlement agreement.

Correspondence between the parties involved shows that retention is mostly 10% of the completed work. The client retains until the retention period is over, between six to 12 months.

According to the communication for Power Oyeno, the retention was never paid, and some of the outstanding amounts were also never paid by the ministry on time.

This resulted in most contractors charging interest as provided in their contracts. According to a source close to the matter, "The late/delayed payment caused severe financial problems to contractors. They were referred to the Attorney General every time they inquired, but the AG did not understand the contract conditions." Power Oyeno Construction is now in a tug of war with officials at the ministry of urban and rural development who have allegedly refused to pay the company its outstanding interest payments.

A letter from the Office of the Attorney General, signed by deputy government attorney Matthias Kashindi, shows that Power Oyeno was presented with a settlement offer of N\$11 063 196.08 excluding VAT.

Power Oyeno was appointed in 2014 for the Swakopmund Housing Project, which meant constructing 2034 units. In a presentation by the company, work progressed successfully from February 2014 until November 2014,

Continued on P2



Russia-Ukraine Crisis

Nam Ambassador to Russia Says No Need for Concern

■ Justicia Shipena

Namibian ambassador to Russia Clemens Kashuupulwa says there is no need for Namibian students studying in Ukraine to be concerned about their safety.

Kashuupulwa gave this remark on Wednesday as the reports amid fears that Russia might attack Ukraine.

He said he informed the students that he was monitoring the situation and that they should focus on their studies.

"They should be calm, nothing is happening, and they have reported that there are no attacks in their areas. Some of them are in the sixth or fifth year, and they should not be worried about this propaganda being spread," he said.

Kashuupulwa also informed the parents and the Namibian nation that the reports on the war between the two countries are not what is happening on the ground.

"Let the parents leave the student to

continue their studies and not scare them with the reports. The situation here on the ground is normal. It's business as usual. There is no war," he expressed.

According to him, the latest information he got indicates that Russian troops are withdrawing along the borders of Russia and Ukraine. "They also told me that their troops are just in their country for the security of their people, and they are not there to attack," he stated.

Thus, he said that the host government assured him that they had no intention to attack Ukraine.

"When I spoke to the students, I gave them the assurance that there is no plan for Russia to invade Ukraine." Kashuupulwa further said that what is happening is mere propaganda by the western countries and the US alliance.

Continued on P2



Power Oyeno

with an approx. average monthly turnover of N\$20million. However, the company says it was affected by the non-payment of invoices for work completed from December 2014 to March 2015. Power Oyeno also said work had to be suspended on 4 June 2015 until further notice, while a new contract got signed on 8 February 2016. The company has disclosed that the total outstanding claims were N\$6,185,597.21, which was meant to be paid to consultants. It claimed N\$11,144,256.79 charged for the second part of suspension from Oct 2015 to Feb 2016 plus another N\$5,781,295.20 (for material on-site/or outstanding May - June 2015 Payment Certificate). Power Oyeno claims that the urban and rural development ministry owed it some N\$23 111 158.20. "The one-million-dollar question is Power Oyeno was done building the houses, and yet they are in court fighting for the outstanding balance of their money dating 2015?" said a source within the company who declined to be named. However, deputy minister Natalia Goagoses has indicated that she could not comment much on the matter as it was now before courts. However, she expressed that Power Oyeno benefited millions of dollars from the ministry, suggesting that its demands were not rational. "What I know about this matter is that up to two consultations took place with the Attorney General's office and this client.

What we have been told is that this matter is before the courts. It's sub judice. "It is difficult now to say anything about this matter and the client, honestly Namibians, my people, to say they have not received money? My heart as a person, not as a deputy minister, is bleeding. What I have seen on record is that hundreds of millions of dollars were paid out to this company," she said. The standoff between both parties resulted in the urban and rural development ministry seeking a legal opinion from the Attorney General's office. Chriss Nghaamwa at the AG office has been accused of failing to render a legal opinion for nearly three years. "Chriss Nghaamwa is a Senior Legal officer at the Attorney General's office. He is the spin director making sure that he backs his friends legally using his office to frustrate anyone who has it in his hand playing delaying tactics," said the source. Nghaamwa has denied this. "No, no, no, I am not even working on their matter. I am aware of it. We have two departments. I am in the legal advice, the matter is with a government attorney, so it is not with me. You have to speak with the head of that directorate. Whoever gave you that information gave you wrong information," he said. Nghaamwa has also denied accusations that he is part of a cabal linked to individuals at the ministry who allegedly have black-listed Power Oyeno. "What do you want me to say? That's a false allegation. Why don't you put your question in writing, and I will respond in writing?" he

said. Olavi Iita, responsible for finances during the time at the ministry, has, however, confirmed that Power Oyeno is indeed owed interest payments. "I was at the ministry a long time ago. What they have said looks correct. The issue of interest has to be handled differently. If it's paid or not paid, I cannot confirm. Yes, interest is payable. Some of it comes from late payments, but those issues were handled during the negotiation," he said. He, however, referred questions to the ministry's executive director, Nghidinau Daniel.

His phone was unreachable while minister Erastus Utoni said he had a death in his family and thus could not take questions. Lawrence Ndumba, who played the agent's role in the project, refused to say the matter was before the court. William Laubscher, responsible for Power Oyeno's finances, has said the company is on its knees due to unpaid monies. "From our side, the houses were completed, and the people are happy. We are all waiting to see what will happen. We do not want to incur any more costs at the moment," he said. Another source within the company also said, "The bank is about to repossess our properties because we cannot afford to honour our contractual obligation because for seven years we were being pinned down slowly with delays until such a time that we cannot stand on our feet anymore."

Russia

"They are scaring people, but there is nothing like that in reality. I don't know why they spread such propaganda throughout the world. They came up with rumours that scare people, including our students in Ukraine," said Kashuupulwa. A first-year medical student Opoili Kavala told The Villager that he is worried and does not know what to do. Kavala resides in the capital of Ukraine, Kyiv. "Should I fly back home, or should I stay here? Because at this point, I don't know if the conflict will turn into a war," he said, adding that nothing is happening to the foreigners in Ukraine. "Here, life is carrying on, and no one is panicking even the locals are going to work and school, shops are still open, everything is okay." However, Kavala said some foreigners left the country a few days ago. Namibia has no embassy in Ukraine, but students report to the office in Russia. Kavala claims that he hasn't heard any news from the embassy addressing the situation. "We are lost, we have no direction, we are trying not to panic because panicking makes the situation worse". He expressed that the Ukrainian people are showing unity. "The crisis has affected my studies badly. Right now, the school has moved all our lectures online, and it's very difficult to study medicine online and partake in the lectures online because so many things have been happening, such as the Internet connection."

Another student in Russia said the media is exaggerating. "There is no war, but Russia has sent troops to the borders. Maybe this is why the media thinks Russia wants to fight," she said. On Wednesday, international relations executive director Penda Naanda also said Namibia is monitoring and following developments closely. "We take courage in the fact that Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation, emphasised that Russia would not invade Ukraine on several occasions. This was confirmed in a diplomatic briefing in Moscow," he said. Naanda said Namibia's Embassy in Moscow is collaborating with the Embassy of South Africa in Ukraine and other SADC missions in Russia. "The South African ambassador ensured his Namibian counterpart that the situation in Kyiv remains calm and that South Africa has no plans to evacuate its citizens from Ukraine yet." According to him, the embassy is close to the Namibian students studying in Ukraine. On Monday, the UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, said that there were no alternatives to diplomacy amidst the rising tensions in eastern Europe. "I am deeply worried by the heightened tensions and increased speculation about a potential military conflict in Europe," he had said. While US president Joe Biden said, there is still a possible evasion by Russia despite initiating the withdrawal of troops at its borders.

Valentine's N\$18,4m Chocolates and Flowers Import Fever

Nghiinomenwa Erastus

The Namibia Statistics Agency imports data for the first quarters of the past five years (2017-21) show that the Valentines Day fever influenced chocolate and flower expenditure. On average, Namibians spent between N\$13,1m and N\$4,4m every February importing chocolates and flowers. For chocolate import, the country imported N\$65,7 million worth of chocolate in February only in the past five years, highlighting how the deemed month of romance influenced the country's spending and consumption of chocolate. For every first quarter, the import of chocolate increases from January to February. It maintains a weak upward movement or decreases- except for one year when it maintained its increase from January till March. In 2017, chocolate imports increased by N\$3,7 million in February from January and decreased by N\$3,9 million in March 2021. For 2018, Namibian increased their chocolate import by N\$3,5 million in February, and in March, they just increased it with N\$1,1 million. In 2019, the country increased its expenditure import by N\$915 645 from January to February but increased by less than that for March. In the Covid-19 engulfed 2020, the country still managed to keep up with their trend of importing more chocolate in February, importing N\$1,9 million more than January. The chocolate import reached its highest level for the period under review in February 2021 when N\$16,7 million left the country to procure the cocoa made products, after N\$14,5 million worth of chocolate were imported in February 2020.

ROSES ARE RED. VIOLETS ARE BLUE During the same period, the import data shows that Namibia import for flowers jumps in February for the first quarter of the years observed. Five years, aggregate flower import during the February month amount to N\$22 million, as the country spends roughly N\$4,4 million a month importing all kinds of flowers in February. For 2017, the country importers increased their flower import from January to February by N\$1,5 million, and in March, they just increased by N\$541 900. In 2018 February, flower imports were increased by N\$2,3 million, and the import got reduced for March by N\$1,3 million. Keeping up with the trend in 2019, the importers have increased their expenditure on flowers for February, bringing in more than N\$2,9 million worth of flowers compared to January. However, in March 2019, they have decreased their flower import by N\$1,3 million. The same importing pattern was also observed in the 2020 quarter when it came to flower import for February- increasing the import by N\$2,1 million and reducing it in March. Last year, the same pattern was observed as romance deemed February induced a high import of flowers. However, 2021 is the only year Namibia has spent less than N\$4 million in flower imports for the past five years. NSA did not offer an explanation why. The country imports flowers such as fresh-cut flowers and buds, roses, dried, dyed, bleached flowers, and buds. Plus chrysanthemums, fresh lilies (*Lilium spp*), and parts of plants for ornamental purposes. Email: erastus@thevillager.com.na



Kavango East teenage pregnancies nearly double

...among them an 11-year-old



■ Annakleta Haikera

An 11-year-old girl is one of 860 schoolchildren who fell pregnant in the Kavango East region in 2021.

In 2020, Kavango East had 554 teenage pregnancies.

The Kavango East is second to the Ohangwena region regarding teenage pregnancy, which recorded over 1200 cases.

The highest number of learner pregnancies were recorded in Rundu, Mukwe, Sambyu, Ndiyona, Shinyugwe, and Kambimba. The Kavango East director of education, Fanuel Kapapero, said adolescent pregnancies are a global problem but often occur in poorer and marginalised communities. Kapapero said many girls face considerable pressure to marry early and become mothers.

According to the figures, the Rundu district recorded the most pregnancies among learners (366), most reported in the first and second semesters.

He also said teenage pregnancies increase when girls are denied the right to decide their sexual and reproductive health and well-being.

"Girls must be able to make their own decisions about their bodies and futures and have access to appropriate healthcare services and education.

"Some parents don't even want to talk about sex in their homes. Children have a lot of energy compared to grownups, and they want to experience everything," Kapapero said.

"We sent a girl to Rukonga Vision School. She fell pregnant; apparently, there's a boyfriend at home waiting for her to go for the holidays. She now has three kids, but she is brilliant. She has now completed her school."

He added that schools have the advantage of counsellors and life skills teachers.

"We also have a lot of programmes. We train teachers to be counsellors. Unfortunately, it is not making any dent in the sta-

tistics we are getting.

"I want to clear message that all teachers should be counsellors. Maybe this way, we will reduce teenage pregnancy."

He said the situation got worse during the Covid-19 lockdowns.

Kapapero further advised parents to do their best in educating young girls at home and helping them to understand the danger of society and teenage pregnancy.

"I saw it during the holidays. If you drive during the night, you find children in bars and on the street. It's like they are on their own. If you bring a child on earth, you are responsible for the child, including protecting from being exposed to men. Because if we don't support our kids financially while in school, the others are there."

Martha Kahonzo, who became a mother at 14, said being a teenage mother was not easy as she faced criticism from both her family members and her peers at school since she had great potential.

Kahonzo, now 18, is training to be a teacher.

"My friends influenced me. I also wanted a good life back then because my friends had money. My parents could not afford anything, so I was sent to the hostel with little guidance from my parents. I wanted to be financially supported. I was pregnant early."

"The man who impregnated me was married. I still remember how I suffered from my baby, no father and not even parent support, because they told me they wanted what was best for me, but I turned out to be pregnant. I want to advise all teenagers to choose their friends wisely and don't be a victim of peer pressure. When you need help, talk to your teachers or maybe a pastor to get help."

According to Kavango East activist Frans Moyo, analysis to determine the cause of the high rate of pregnancies among pupils revealed that many young people have changed their social lives.

He said that teenage pregnancy was not a concern in the old days as it is now.

The number of teenage pregnancies in Kavango East rises every year.

"It's more of influencing each other. They spend less time at their homes and more time in streets or clubs or just being at music shows. Alcohol has become their daily routine. Even at schools, girls smoke dagga at a younger age, and they don't care what will happen to their bodies when under the influence," Moyo said.

He further said that many teenagers want to experience everything early and easily become prey to older men who want "sweet 16s."

"Then these men give them a lot of money that parents don't give them at home. The next thing you will see is she's expecting a baby, and then this baby will be blamed to be from a young boy, while it's not true. "The reality is that some male teachers are involved in these teenage pregnancies, and these are some of the things that the community is trying to run away from and hide. This type of mentality must end and be put to display."

Hendrina Nujoma, an activist in Kavango West, said that the two Kavango regions do not have enough recreation centres for children.

"If these kids can go off the streets and start doing something for themselves, fewer teenage pregnancies will be recorded. We still have parents who believe that children should start making babies at a very young age."

She added, "Some teenagers do not have enough support from both parents. A single mother tends to send this young girl to look for money when something is needed. I feel schools are not doing enough to help these kids. They talk and leave everything to the life skills teachers. Some of these life skills teachers tell these kids not to fall pregnant. They don't get involved. They are not active enough in these programs. Only a few schools put teenage pregnancy into action. They don't help prevent teenage pregnancy."

Rehoboth businesswoman burns to death in her home



■ Marshallino Beukes

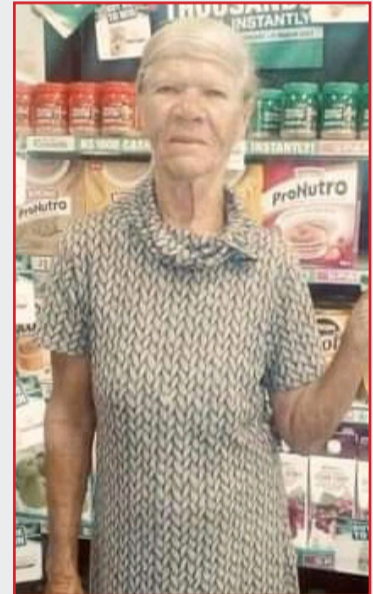
Tragedy has struck the Rehoboth community following the death of a well-known businesswoman in a house fire.

Mrs Sara Sabina Beukes (79) died when her home in Rehoboth's Block A residential area caught fire in the early morning hours of Wednesday.

According to the official police report, the incident occurred at around 02h30.

As per the report, neighbours of the elderly deceased, who stayed alone at her house, were awakened by smoke and fire. "The police and Fire Brigade were summoned, and after the fire was brought under control, they found that the elderly lady has burnt to death," the report states.

The cause of the fire is still unknown at this stage, and investigations continue. Police said her next of kin had been informed.



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Who Will You Trust About Vaccines?

■ Jessica Long

The United States Government (USG) has been a partner in health with the Namibian Government for nearly two decades. We have been incredibly successful in our joint efforts related to HIV and TB. These efforts have revealed our commitment and reliability on issues of health. Fifteen years ago, people in Namibia were dying every day from HIV/AIDS.

Families were losing loved ones; children were losing parents. But the Government has the vision and determination to find a way forward and fight the epidemic. HIV is now a chronic disease that can be managed with medication. A person living with HIV in Namibia can live a long and healthy life. The partnership between the US and Namibian governments on health has proven to be trustworthy and life-saving.

Our partnership has expanded in the age of Covid-19. The Government of Namibia is demonstrating the same determination and commitment to protect people and the economy from Covid-19 and the United States of America continues to be a committed partner. A turning point in the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic came with the availability of vaccines. To date, more than 10 billion doses of Covid-19 vaccines have been administered across the world. The United States has donated 224,620 doses of Pfizer BioNTech, and 168,000 doses of Johnson and Johnson Covid-19 vaccines are scheduled to arrive in Namibia soon.

Covid-19 vaccines are the most monitored vaccines in history, and global authorities such as the U.S. Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) agree without question that these vaccines are both safe and effective. Just as the GRN scaled-up the life-saving impact Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART) has for people living with HIV, the government has also facilitated access to hundreds of thousands of Covid-19 vaccines for Namibians. Despite progress in fully vaccinating more than 350,000 Namibians, the unvaccinated remain at risk, as well as a risk to others. And low vaccination rates make tourists more hesitant to visit Namibia. Vaccines save lives and protect the economy.

Despite the unanimous view from scientists and public health experts around the world that Covid-19 vaccines are safe and effective, some people who have no proven track record on health issues have used social media to spread false information. The push of false information is such a dangerous threat that the world uses a new term, infodemic, to describe it. This is because the volume and intensity of the false information circulating in the era we are living in can cause almost as much harm as a disease.

With all the noise, information, and falsehoods about vaccines, the question comes down to who you will trust. The accomplishments of the health partnership between the United States and Namibia should offer confidence that Covid-19 vaccines are safe and effective. The data tells us this. Please get vaccinated today to protect yourself and those around you.

*Jessica Lang is US Chargé d'Affaires to Namibia



High Court Postpones Namoloh, 6 Others' Case

■ Ludorf Iyambo

The Windhoek High Court postponed the case in which Eliphaz /Gomeb is suing the former safety minister Charles Namoloh and others for N\$2m in damages.

/Gomeb, who is serving a 21-year jail term, wants N\$1m for ill-treatment and torture. He also wants N\$600 000 for Constitutional damage and N\$400 000 for emotional stress or post-traumatic stress disorder.

He is suing Namoloh, Commissioner-General of the Namibia Correctional Services, Raphael Hamunyela, the officer in charge of inmates Manfred Jatamuine, a nurse Barnabas Kaihoua, acting correctional officer Toivo Frans and correctional officer Junias Ndeutala Hendrick.

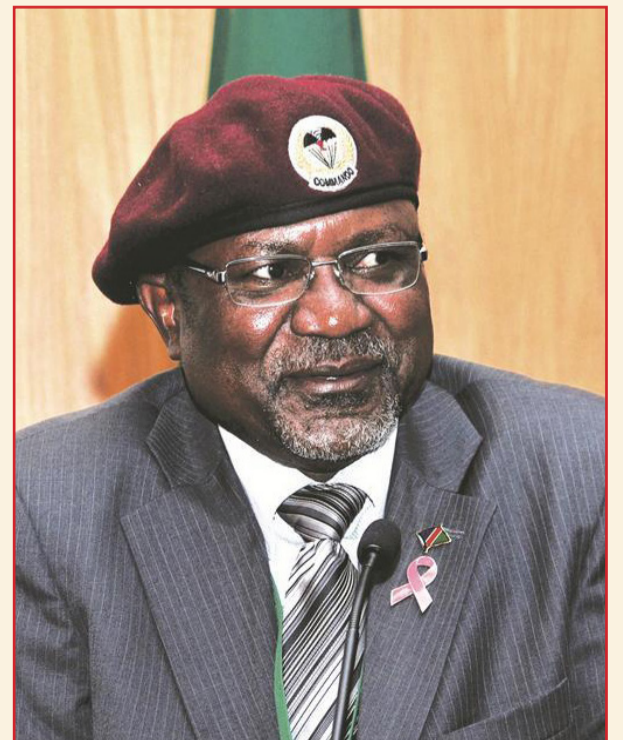
The case was postponed to 25 February 2022 at 10h00 for delivery of judgment

hearing because the judgement is not ready.

/Gomeb, an inmate at the Windhoek correctional, serving 21 years, claimed that he was not taken for medical treatment by the defendants for days.

On 17 August 2018, /Gomeb says he complained to correctional officer Hendrick defendant about his medical condition. He complained of blood issuing from him and vomiting blood and body pain. He stated that he was not assisted and stayed with that condition throughout the weekend of 18-19 August 2018.

/Gomeb, the plaintiff in the case, claimed that he was only attended to on the 22 August 2018 and was admitted at Katutura Intermediate Hospital, and he stayed there for three days. He also claimed that he was diagnosed with Helicobacter Pylori.





Frequencies

Frequency	Location
107.2 FM	Ruacana
93.6 FM	Outapi
100.1 FM	Eenhana
96.8 FM	Oshakati
90.5 FM	Omuthiya
106.3 FM	Rundu
93.1 FM	Katima Mulilo
105.9 FM	Otjiwarongo
105.9 FM	Grootfontein
104.0 FM	Okahandja
105.8 FM	Rehoboth
101.2 FM	Mariental
88.3 FM	Swakopmund
91.2 FM	Luderitz
107.3 FM	Keetmanshoop
107.7 FM	Oranjemund

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Nomad and Vanilla Dave to release new EP this month

Marshallino Beukes

Afrikaans Hip Hop stalwart Nomad, also known as LY The Nomad Poet, is about to release his latest work, titled "Los Enchies" EP. Written, recorded, mixed and mastered at Nautilus Studios in Swakopmund. Born in Rehoboth, Namibia, on 7 July 1985, the story goes that Lorenzo Beukes was in a hurry to enter this world. It happened that his birth took place on the front porch of The Rhenish Mission Hospital in Rehoboth. From that moment, he was meant to be curious and adventurous. Lorenzo spent his early childhood years growing up in Rehoboth, and it was only in his late teens that he moved to Walvis Bay. When moving to the coastal town, his love for poetry evolved into Hip Hop. Nomad has always been passionate about Afrikaans, and even though he started out rapping in English, it wasn't long before he fully immersed himself into purely writing in Afrikaans. He has been a member of various Hip Hop groups, and his willingness to



collaborate is once again witnessed with his latest project. Nomad is currently employed at Nautilus Studios Namibia as Social Media Manager and content creator. Meanwhile, David Jonathan de Beer was born and grew up in the coastal town of Swakopmund. Born into a mixed-race family, he got to experience two culturally different worlds while growing up, which is recognisable in the music he creates. David, known through his pseudonym Vanilla Dave is a multifaceted artist who, as a producer, pushes himself to create new fusions of sound and genres. His musical influences are deeply rooted in Hip Hop, sighting artists such as The Notorious BIG and Kanye West as inspiration. Growing up in the Trap era, he listens to many Lil Uzi Vert, Travis Scott and 21 Savage. Still, his Punk sound influenced by Green Day, Blink 182 and Billie Talent makes him a different breed of Hip Hop producer. Dave says he creates to escape due to the ability of creativity to allow him to take his emotions and translate them into something palpable. "The best part is I forget the reasons I had for running in the first place after the creative process," according to the man himself. Vanilla Dave is currently employed as a Junior Sound Engineer and Hip Hop/Trap producer at Nautilus Studios. The Los Enchies EP by Nomad will be released on Friday, 25 February. Los Enchies translates to Loose Cigarettes and is a metaphor for the day to day struggle faced by Namibian musicians. In a country where most people do not recognise the music industry, Nomad has been slaving away at creating sustainable art that can be seen as a vehicle to life as a Namibian. It is also because the songs are a loose collection of songs that have their addictiveness in common and portray a very grungy view of Hip Hop in Namibia and Southern Africa. The EP is best described as a collection of 5 Old School Cypher style Hip Hop / Rock tracks. The EP is laced with clever lyricism and out-of-the-box guitar playing. The song combines Nomad's punchline orientated raps with Vanilla Dave's "rockfish" guitar riffs. Using clever wordplay, metaphors and well known Afrikaans phrases, Nomad paints a gritty picture to transport the listener to specific periods in time. They are focusing on current affairs as well as historically relevant events and instances to create a first of its kind Namibian Hip Hop EP.

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"The EP is best described as a collection of 5 Old School Cypher style Hip Hop / Rock tracks."



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Big Lips

Da Fonseca's Tall Order is Not Fake Pastors, but Broken Society

What chief inspector Christina Van-Dunem Da Fonseca is doing to hold churches accountable is commendable. She is also a hardworking officer who has the general public at heart.

Her work, however, might not yield much because she has to deal with the symptoms of a broken society that needs healing. There are reasons why people end up being lied to and conned. There is a whole background to this movement of con-pastors.

Most of the con-pastors may not have gone to Unam or the Namibia University of Science and Technology. They may also never have been to the International University of Management. But they understand the ways of the people. They know how people think. They know the people's aspirations and desires.

Among the con-pastors are adulterers who formed churches to lure neglected wives. By starting churches, the adulterous con-pastor always have uncared for and abused women who would eventually come to the church for help and a shoulder to cry on.

Some con-pastors have realised that people want to get-rich-quick. Indeed, such churches exist to give hope and belief that those who hunger for wealth come to try their luck. The teachings will be about prosperity, with the pastor promising heaven on earth. The miracles will be designed such that congregants will believe that all the gold King Solomon owned will be delivered to their doorstep the following day.

Con-pastors are psychologists and sociologists who understand human nature. They do not just form churches for the sake of starting churches. They have a business plan for their churches. They have missions and visions for their churches.

Those who remember the Malawian pastor Shepherd Bushiri know how he, one day, told his followers that he had good and bad news. Then he asked them which news they wanted him to say first.

Bushiri did not talk about Jesus coming back to carry his disciples to heaven. Instead, he told them that he had organised money for building a church. He said R500 000 for a new church. While the people were still yelling in delight, Bushiri came back with the bad news - the R500 000 was still in their pockets!

His followers did not see the simple trick he had played them. It was such a simple psychological game he used, but it threw his people into a frenzy. I am sure his followers did not realise that he was blackmailing them into contributing to the church.

In most cases, con-pastors use emotional and spiritual blackmail to get what they want from their people. One of the most common blackmail technique is when the con-pastor tells you that God will take away what he would have given you if you do not provide.

This is what Da Fonseca is trying to stop, and she needs help. Her success does not depend on whether she will weed out the unwanted elements now but on whether the nation will have plans of providing the people what they are looking for in churches.

Although it might sound monotonous, developed countries did not achieve so much by praying or reading the Bible. They are where they are today because of hard work and proper planning. Those countries are rich today not so much because their citizens are devout or too religious.

Most developed countries' citizens do not attend church, but they live comfortable lives. The people in most developed countries do not need religious hopes or wealth from the churches.

Their societies might not be as traditional as African societies, but there is some comfort the citizens get from having the necessary materials to improve their lives.

Da Fonseca's task is not easy because she is doing it as a police officer. All she does is stop the rot now, but the rot's causes remain untouched. This is where the nation is needed to chip in.

African countries must protect their fish stocks from the European Union - here's how

■ Ifesinachi Okafor - Yarwood

Fisheries serve as a source of employment for millions of people in the small scale sector on the coastline of Africa. Their fishing activities, in turn, provide food security to over 200 million Africans.

To regulate the fishing industry, African countries have signed numerous agreements with trading blocs such as the European Union (EU). The EU has two forms of Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements with African states: the tuna agreement and the mixed agreement.

The tuna agreement allows EU vessels to pursue migrating tuna stocks as they move along the shores of Africa and through the Indian ocean. The mixed agreement allows EU vessels access to a wide range of fish stocks in the coastal state's exclusive economic zones.

There are currently 11 agreements in force -- seven tuna and four mixed agreements. Ten of these agreements are with countries in Africa, six of which are in West Africa.

While these agreements contribute revenue to coastal states, who cannot extract the resources themselves, they are not all that they seem.

Exploitative agreements

First, the value negotiated for these agreements does not commensurate with the value of species removed, as such favours the EU economically than African states.

For example, when looking at the access fees paid versus what's extracted, the access value of catches by EU fleets in Senegal (between 2000 and 2010) was US\$11.9 million, while the value of reported catch in the same period was US\$19.2 million. In Guinea-Bissau, the access value of catches by EU fleets in the same period was US\$5.7 million, while the value of the reported catch was US\$8.6 million.

Second, depleted or overexploited species -- such as bigeye and yellowfin tuna, hake and sardinella -- are targeted. This exacerbates the rate of depletion and undermines food and economic security for local fishers. Local fishers can't compete with the speed at which European vessels catch fish.

Third, some vessels that benefit from these agreements use the access to then engage in illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing activities. For instance, the landed value of the legal catches caught by EU fleet in Senegal was US\$50.9 million between 2000 and 2010, while the landed value of illegal catch was US\$10 million.

There are other forms of illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing perpetrated by EU vessels. For example, in 2017 it was reported that vessels from four EU countries -- Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain -- unlawfully authorised vessels to fish in The Gambia and Equatorial Guinea's waters. This was in breach of the exclusivity clause in the Agreements which prevent individual operators from making private agreements with coastal States with which the EU has established a fisheries agreement.

Nineteen ships from these countries fished with permits granted unlawfully for more than 31,000 hours in the exclusive economic zones of The Gambia and Equatorial Guinea.

Recent events suggest that there's a lack of willingness by the EU to penalise implicated vessels. Specifically, in 2019 the Coalition for Fairer Fisheries Agreement, alongside other NGOs, sent a complaint to the European Commission asking them to initiate infringement proceedings against Italy.

They argued that Italian fisheries authorities had failed to comply with their obligations, under the Common Fisheries Policy, to sanction the illegal activities of Italian trawlers in the Inclusive Economic Zone of Sierra Leone. The implicated vessels had been making incursions in the inshore areas reserved for artisanal fishers, catching species that they were not allowed to catch, infringing rules on shark finning, using the wrong fishing gear in The Gambia and transshipment -- the transfer of catch from one vessel to another without authorisation.

Despite a long history of illegal activity, the Directorate General of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries responded by noting, "no illegal activities of the operators can be proven in this instance". Their reason:

the lack of exact nautical maps for the delimitation of Sierra Leone the Inclusive Economic Zone creates difficulties in identifying the actual illegal activities from those being carried out outside...

This position is problematic because many countries on the continent do not have delineated maritime boundaries. Protecting resources

African governments must not allow this to continue.



They must act to secure livelihoods for their people, even when attracting foreign direct investment. The opportunity cost and cost of regenerating fish stocks (depleted by all fisheries) in Africa between 1980 and 2016 was estimated at US\$326 billion dollars.

Income accrued by small-scale fishers in Africa has reduced by up to 40% over the last decade. This is because less fish are available. It's a huge food security challenge in places where fish are the only source of protein.

The reduced catch is also associated with rises in unemployment. In Senegal, for example, many blame fisheries agreements with the EU for destroying their livelihoods. This in turn pushes scores of young people to make the difficult and illegal journey to Europe.

Here's how governments can address the situation.

First, subsidies paid by EU members states to their fishing industries must be denied to repeat offenders of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. This was recently put forward by the European Commission to members of the EU parliament. But the parliamentarians voted against it.

Other countries, such as China, are already taking action against fishing vessels involved in illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. For example, the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture cancelled subsidies and withdrew permits for three fishing Chinese companies in West Africa.

Second, African countries should prioritise investment in their industrial fishing sector. This would allow the fisheries to be exploited by national vessels and sold as exports. Higher revenue would be generated and jobs created for the continent's growing youth population.

Third, African governments must do far more to ensure that future and renewed fishing agreements are negotiated more robustly. This includes more clarity on how some of the revenue accrued can be invested in coastal communities most affected by foreign fishing vessels.

Fourth, African states should consider building collaborative initiatives that safeguard the social, economic, and environmental contributions of their fisheries. Perhaps there is a lesson to be learnt from the Pacific Tuna Forum Fisheries Agency. It has formed alliances to negotiate access as a bloc to balance power over agreements with distant fishing fleets.

Fifth, all suspected illegal activities must be subject to a thorough investigation. Deterrent sanctions must be imposed where violations are found. This should be done regardless of whether cases are settled in or out of court.

Sixth, for transparent and accountable decision-making, the following information must be publicly available:

- Licence fees paid for access to fisheries resources and conditions of access
- Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing infringements and sanctions imposed or paid
- Numbers of fishing days allocated to each licensed vessel
- Total catches of all fishing sub-sectors, including by-catch
- Make vessel-monitoring data publicly available. This could be done through the publication of unedited vessel monitoring system data and
- the introduction of mandatory, functioning automatic identification systems for all industrial vessels.

Finally African government must recognise the EU's actions in safeguarding their respective national interests. It is time for African states to also prioritise and protect the interests of their people.

Ifesinachi Okafor-Yarwood

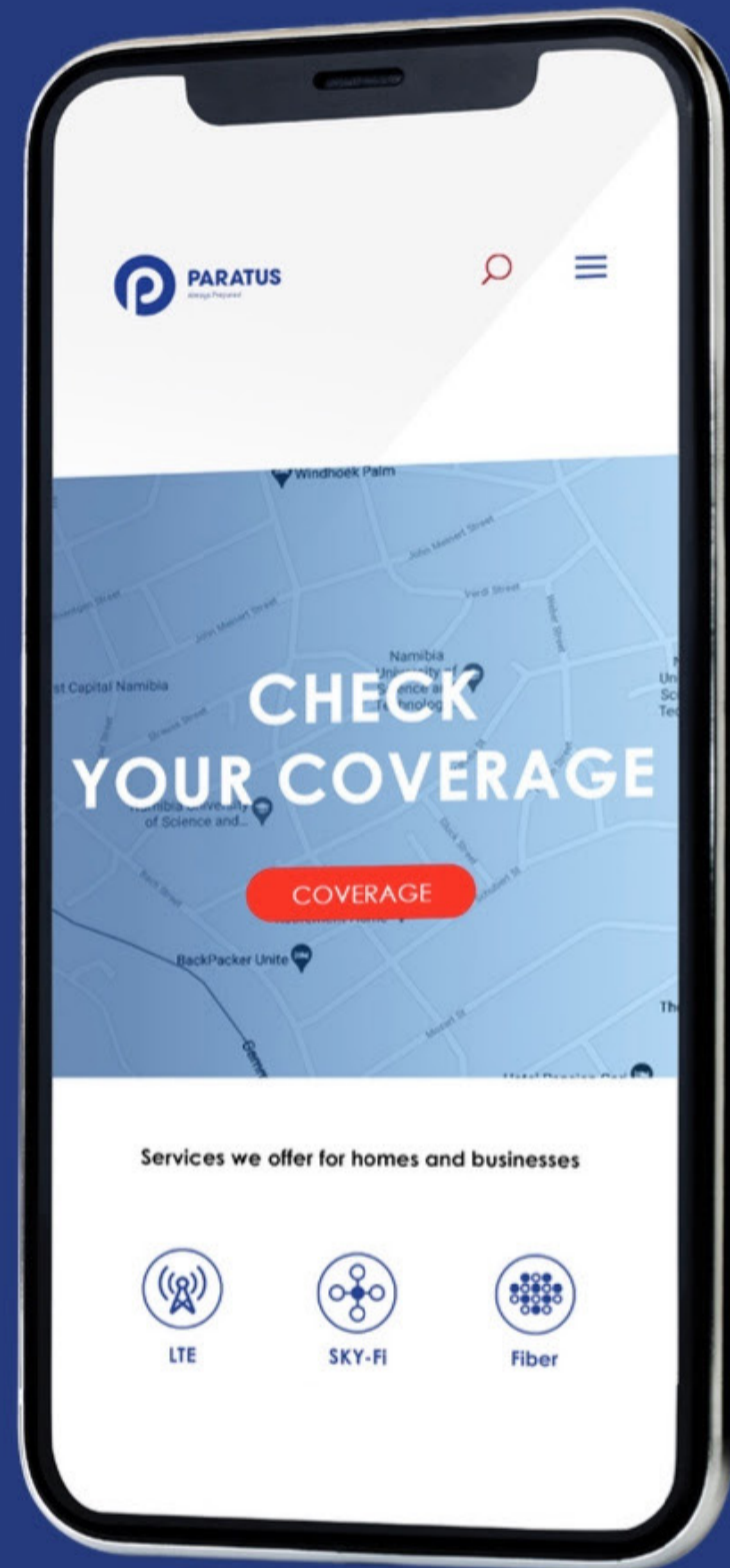
Lecturer, University of St Andrews

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Two glasses of wine enough to hit daily sugar limit

Analysis of more than 30 bottles of wine has found two glasses could be enough to reach the recommended daily sugar limit for adults.

Research by Alcohol Health Alliance UK found some bottles had up to 59g of sugar - more than a glazed doughnut.

An independent laboratory analysed bottles of red, white, rosé, fruit and sparkling wine from popular UK brands.

None of the bottles featured nutritional information on labels as this is currently not required by law.

Calorie content was only displayed on a fifth of the bottles analysed by the lab.

Campaigners are calling for change, to better inform wine drinkers about how many calories and how much sugar they are consuming.

The NHS recommends adults consume a maximum of 30g of "free sugars" per day, which includes sugar in fruit juices and smoothies, or sugar added to food or drink.

Analysis shows that it's possible to reach an adult's daily sugar limit by drinking two medium-sized glasses of some wines.

It also found lower-strength wines were among those containing the most sugar, meaning they were not necessarily a healthy choice, despite their lower alcohol content.

In the UK, alcoholic drinks are required to display volume and strength in units of alcohol by volume (ABV).

Labelling must also identify any common allergens, but there are no requirements for ingredients, health warnings or nutritional value as found on many other food and drink food products.

A YouGov survey of more than 12,000 people last year found that 61% wanted

calorie information on wine labels - and more than 50% of those surveyed wanted the amount of sugar listed.

In 2020, the UK government held a consultation on whether calories should be listed on alcoholic drinks - but there was no consultation on whether sugar content should be listed.

Professor Sir Ian Gilmore, chair of the Alcohol Health Alliance UK, called the current rules "absurd".

"Shoppers who buy milk or orange juice have sugar content and nutritional information right at their fingertips," he said.

"But this information is not required when it comes to alcohol - a product not just fuelling obesity, but with widespread health harms and linked to seven types of cancer."

Miles Beale, who heads up the Wine and Spirit Trade Association, says members of the group want people to have access to nutritional information for all alcoholic drinks, but suggested the information should be carried online.

"[We] have been pushing for greater information to be provided online," said Mr Beale. "The alcohol industry can provide consumers with a far greater variety of information that is more relevant to consumers and which would not fit on a label," he added.

"There is significant variation in the number of calories in different alcoholic drinks and in different servings of drinks. Online is the best way to provide the volume and variety of information that consumers need to make quick and easy informed decisions.

"It would also cost less to deliver."

-BBC



Xi tells Hong Kong to control Omicron-fuelled outbreak

China's President Xi Jinping has told Hong Kong's government to take "all necessary measures" to bring the territory's Omicron-fuelled outbreak of COVID-19 under control, according to reports published in pro-Beijing Chinese language media on Wednesday.

The directive increases pressure on authorities who are struggling to contain an outbreak that has overwhelmed some hospitals.

Broadcaster TVB says the territory is set to report a daily record of at least 4,285 new cases on Wednesday.

"The Hong Kong government must take up the main responsibility, to stabilise and control the pandemic as soon as possible as the current overriding priority, to mobilise every resource that can be mobilised, to take all necessary measures," Xi was quoted as saying in a report by the Wen Wei Po newspaper, which is controlled by the Chinese government.

Xi ordered Vice Premier Han Zheng to relay his "concern about the pandemic situation" to Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam, according to the front page story, which also appeared in the pro-Beijing Ta Kung Pao newspaper.

The newspapers said Xi made the remarks recently, but did not specify when or where.

Hong Kong has been pursuing a "Zero COVID" policy, locking down buildings and implementing mandatory testing and stringent quarantines in a bid to reopen its long-closed borders with the mainland, which has also resorted to tough measures to stamp out the virus whenever it appeared. Lam, who this week admitted the "scale and speed" of the virus's spread had "overwhelmed" the territory's efforts to deal with it, said in a statement that the territory was at a "critical juncture" and that her government had submitted "concrete requests for the timely assistance" of the authorities on the mainland.

Support would focus on five areas including Hong Kong's capacity for nucleic acid testing, the construction of community isolation and treatment facilities, and the provision of medical supplies, she said.

"We are determined to work as a team and spare no effort in fighting this epidemic in order for the people of Hong Kong to resume their normal lives early," Lam said in the statement.

Zeng Guang, a former chief epidemiologist of the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), earlier told the state-run Global Times newspaper that Hong Kong had to step up its coronavirus measures and build temporary hospitals to

cope with the spike in cases.

Another CDC official, who declined to be named, told the paper Hong Kong must achieve the "same level of pandemic control as the mainland".

COVID cases have surged 20 times on a daily basis since the start of February and Lam has said authorities can no longer keep up with testing and isolation mandates.

Dozens of patients were being treated in makeshift open-air spaces outside medical centres on Tuesday with several hospitals operating at more than 100 percent capacity. Health authorities reported 1,619 confirmed infections on Tuesday — a daily record — and a further 5,400 preliminary positive cases.

Xi also urged Hong Kong officials "to ensure the safety and health of all Hong Kong residents, to ensure the stability of Hong Kong's society" the Wen Wei Po reported.

Hong Kong has recorded about 26,000 cases since the start of the pandemic, including just over 200 deaths, far fewer than other similar-sized major cities.

However, medical experts have warned cases could surge to as many as 28,000 a day by the end of March amid worries over high levels of vaccine hesitancy among the territory's elderly.

-Al Jazeera



Ukraine crisis: How much Russian money is there in the UK?

The UK has been considering sanctions against Russia over Ukraine but Foreign Secretary Liz Truss has told the BBC "there have been issues in the past with illicit finance in London, which we are clearing up". Why is it difficult to tackle the issue?

Many wealthy individuals and companies from Russia and around the world invest legitimately in UK financial and property markets.

But the anti-corruption organisation Transparency International has identified more than £5bn of property bought in the UK with what it says is "suspicious wealth", one-fifth of which has come from Russia.

A Home Office report says the UK has seen "a significant volume of Russian, or Russian-linked illicit finance", which is spent on things like luxury property, cars and school fees, and sometimes as donations to cultural institutions, which allow individuals to "launder their reputation".

When it comes to property, which can be owned through companies rather than in the names of individuals, information sometimes does not come easily. The Overseas Company Ownership database for England and Wales says only four of 94,000 properties where the registered legal owner is an overseas company, are listed as being owned by Russian companies.

But it's possible that many more property purchases could ultimately be owned by Russian individuals, using companies based overseas in places such as the British Virgin Islands (BVI).

The scale of the use of these companies was revealed in a major leak of almost 12 million documents known as the Pandora

Papers in October 2021.

It exposed hidden wealth, tax avoidance and, in some cases, money laundering by some of the world's rich and powerful people.

Researchers identified more than 700 offshore companies which owned UK properties, and found that 5% of them were owned by Russian citizens.

One example was Alexei Chepa, a Russian politician and businessman, who used a BVI company to buy a 10-bedroom mansion in Holland Park in 2011 - it was sold last year for £25m. His representatives said the purchase "would have followed absolutely the proper processes as advised at the time".

Why is the UK attractive to Russian investors?

London has long been a popular destination for wealthy Russians to settle in, or to purchase property and investments.

The UK's "golden visa" - Tier 1 (Investor) visa scheme - offers residency to those rich enough to invest £2m or more in the UK, and allows their families to join them.

Holders of these visas can then apply for permanent residency in the UK. How quickly they can apply depends on the size of their investment:

- Two years with £10m
- Three years with £5m
- Five years with a £2m investment

The Home Office has issued 14,516 investor visas to Russian citizens since the scheme was introduced in 2008.

Russian companies have also been able to raise large sums in share sales on the London Stock Exchange.

An energy firm (En+ Group) was one such beneficiary. At the time of its initial public offering, the company was controlled by

Oleg Deripaska, an associate of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

A House of Commons report in 2018 called on the government to close the gaps "in the sanctions regime that allowed a company such as En+ to float on the London Stock Exchange".

What action has the government taken so far?

In 2018, the UK government introduced a mechanism to confiscate property without first seeking a criminal conviction.

These Unexplained Wealth Orders (UWOs) put the onus on the individual to prove where the cash had come from to purchase the property.

However, UWOs have been used just four times, and only one has resulted in the confiscation of property.

The government said in 2016 that it had plans to fight money laundering through a comprehensive register of beneficial ownership for UK property.

Beneficial ownership refers to the person who ultimately owns or controls a property and benefits from it.

These plans were mentioned in the 2019 Queen's Speech, but the government has not yet announced when it plans to bring forward legislation.

The UK government has said its existing sanctions on Russia would be widened in the event of Russian action against Ukraine.

The Foreign Office says the new measures will allow the UK to act "in lockstep with the US and other allies to freeze assets and ban travel".

Individuals linked to the Kremlin would be targeted, their UK assets would be frozen, and they would be banned from entering the UK, and be unable to do business with any UK business or individual.

-BBC



Ericsson says employees may have bribed ISIL in Iraq

Swedish telecoms giant Ericsson suspects some of its employees in Iraq may have bribed members of the ISIL (ISIS) armed group to gain access to certain roads in the country, the company's chief executive has said.

Ericsson's share price tumbled by more than seven percent in opening trade on Wednesday on the Stockholm stock exchange after the news.

"What we see is that people have paid for road transport through areas controlled by terrorist organisations, including ISIL," Borje Ekholm told Swedish financial daily Dagens Industri.

"With the means we have, we haven't been able to determine the final recipients of these payments," he added.

Ekholm's comments came hours after the company released a statement late on Tuesday admitting "serious breaches of compliance rules and the company's code of business ethics" regarding Ericsson employees, vendors and suppliers in Iraq between 2011 and 2019.

It said an internal investigation conducted in 2019 had revealed "evidence of corruption-related misconduct".

It included "making a monetary donation without a clear beneficiary; paying a supplier for work without a defined scope and documentation; using suppliers to make cash payments; funding inappropriate travel and expenses; and improper use of sales agents and consultants".

In addition, it found violations of Ericsson's internal financial controls, conflicts of interest, non-compliance with tax laws and obstruction of the investigation.

Ericsson said payment schemes and cash transactions that "potentially created the risk of money laundering were also identified" but "the investigation could not identify that any Ericsson employee was directly involved in financing terrorist organisations".

Several employees left the company as a result of the probe, "and multiple other disciplinary and other remedial actions were taken", Ericsson said in the statement. The company said it had chosen to disclose details of the now two-year-old investigation due to "detailed media inquiries from Swedish and international news outlets".

Swedish public broadcaster SVT said its investigative news show Uppdrag granskning had put questions to Ericsson, in collaboration with the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ).

Further measures

Ekholm told Dagens Industri that Ericsson had shared the conclusions of its investigation with authorities in the United States.

In 2019, Ericsson had agreed with the US Department of Justice (DoJ) to pay more than \$1bn to resolve a separate series of probes into corruption, including the bribing of government officials that took place over many years in countries including China, Vietnam and Djibouti.

In October last year, it received correspondence from the DoJ stating that the company breached its obligations under a Deferred Prosecution Agreement (DPA) by failing to provide certain documents

and factual information.

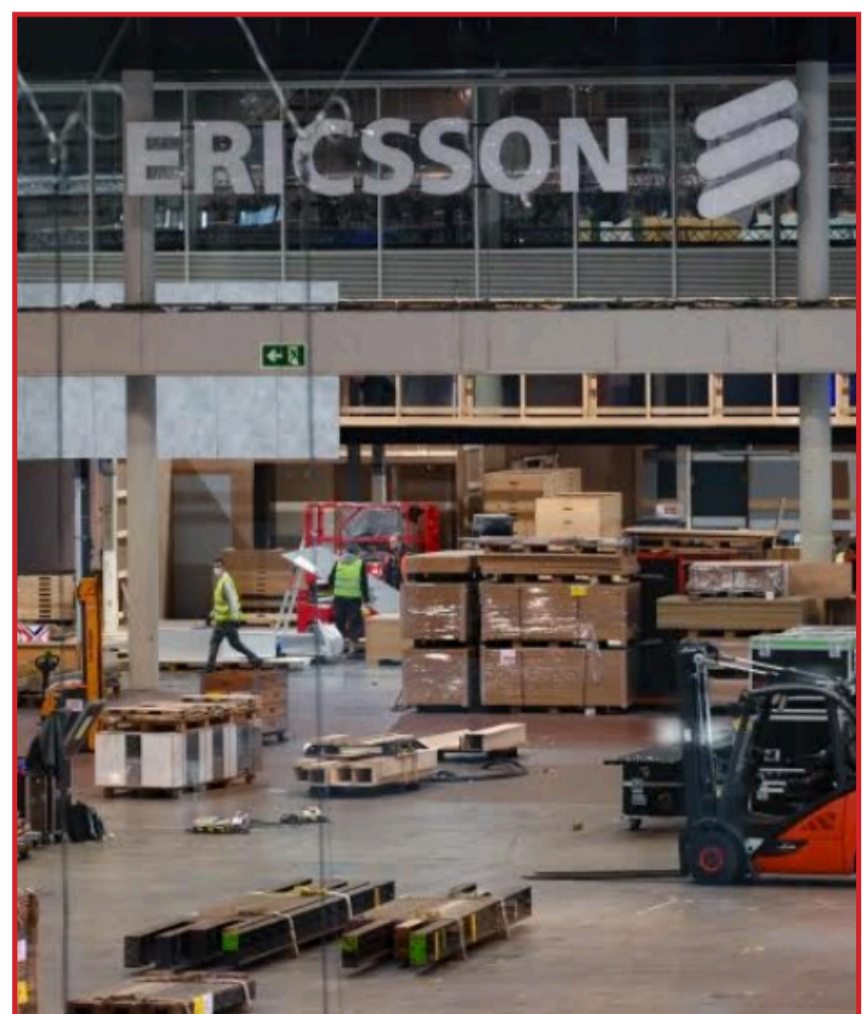
When asked by Reuters news agency if Ericsson had disclosed its 2019 internal investigation to the DoJ, Ekholm said: "We are under the DPA with the US authorities which limits our ability to comment on what is disclosed or not disclosed."

"If new facts come to light or new information, we will for sure reopen the investigation and run it full speed ahead to investigate those matters," Ekholm said. Ericsson said it was working with external counsel to review the findings resulting from the investigation to identify any additional measures that it should take.

"We invested significant resources to complete the investigation, but as a company we have limited powers to investigate," Ekholm said. "We tried to do the best we could, took guidance from external legal counsel and other external support."

-Al Jazeera

"With the means we have, we haven't been able to determine the final recipients of these payments."



In Cambodia's Siem Reap, \$990m airport faces hurdles to success



■ **Danielle Keeton-Olsen**

Siem Reap, Cambodia – Down a dirt road in Cambodia's Siem Reap province, behind homes and a few sundry shops, construction teams are busy working to transform an empty rice field into an international airport capable of handling 10 million travellers by 2030.

The Cambodian government has touted the Chinese-developed Angkor International Airport project as a boon for the province's tourism industry, which was suffering from declining numbers of visitors even before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Authorities have also promoted the \$900m airport, located about 50km (31 miles) from Siem Reap city, as a way of protecting the world-famous tourist attraction Angkor Wat, which suffers from noise pollution caused by the existing airport nearby.

The project's developer has promised to build a highway and commercial complex in addition to the airport, as part of a push to attract millions of visitors to the region each year.

The ambitious plan, however, faces an array of significant obstacles, from broken contracts to an uncertain post-pandemic recovery.

Though construction was slowed by pandemic-related logistics issues, Sinn Chanserey Vutha, spokesperson for Cambodia's Civil Aviation Secretariat, said the firm Angkor International Airport Investment was aiming to start airport operations by March 2023, with imminent plans to bring in a team to carry out advanced construction work and begin the transition away from the province's old airport.

"The Chinese [teams] are huge, the Chinese have a lot of resources, they're trying to add a lot of resources to the site," Chanserey Vutha told Al Jazeera.

Angkor International Airport Investment could not be reached for comment, but Chinese state-owned Yunnan Investment Group, which is backing the investment, in December urged its Cambodia-based counterparts to speed up the construction and meet the deadline to open the runway by March 2023.

Broken contracts
The Cambodian government allocated 700 hectares (1730 acres) for Yunnan Investment Group's \$880m airport plan in 2018, after earlier promising another company exclusive rights to operate the airport until 2040.

Cambodia Airports, a consortium that runs the airports in Cambodia, is 70 percent-owned by France's Vinci Airports and 30 percent-owned by Cambodian-Malaysian company Muhibbah Masteron.

It lost control of the existing airports in Siem Reap and Phnom Penh after the Cambodian government announced plans to build two new airports.

The Vinci Group spent 100 million euros (\$112.62m) on contract obligations for the existing airports in 2020 and the first half of 2021, according to its 2021 mid-year report. Chanserey Vutha said the three Vinci-controlled airports in Phnom Penh, Sihanoukville, and Siem Reap had separate operating terms.

The Siem Reap contract obliged the government to compensate Cambodia Airports for axing the deal, with a task force established to negotiate a payout for the existing airport's closure in the coming weeks.

The Phnom Penh airport, which is being constructed by local firm Overseas Cambodia Investment Company, with financing from the China Development Bank, doesn't have the same clause allowing another operator to step in before the end of the existing contract and so will be more complicated to negotiate, Chanserey Vutha said.

Asked about negotiations over ending the contracts for the Siem Reap and Phnom Penh airports, Cambodia Airports communications director Norinda Khek

did not directly comment on the new airport projects.

"We engage on many issues with Cambodian authorities and current key discussions with them focus on how to re-attract international visitors to the country and promote Cambodia as a safe destination after more than two and a half years of a uniquely challenging situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic," Khek told Al Jazeera.

Other Chinese state and private investment projects in Cambodia – including a luxury resort and airport project by the Chinese company Union Development Group in Koh Kong province – have been flagged by US officials and think-tanks for allegedly mistreating locals or having secret geopolitical or military purposes.

Last year, a report by the New York-based Asia Society Policy Institute noted that communities living on the land repurposed for the new Siem Reap airport had been offered compensation, but the amounts were low and residents had no option to stay put. The Chinese embassy met with local NGOs over the project – which hadn't happened in many other Chinese-funded projects – but embassy officials claimed developers were "reactive" in sharing information, only posting banners

after residents asked, according to the report.

Kaut Yi, who works as a cleaner at the airport construction site, told Al Jazeera she was considering forming a union because of past issues with receiving timely pay and poor conditions that include having to live in heavily guarded, crowded shacks without air conditioning.

"The reason we want to start a union is that we want the union to help us in case we get exploited," Yi said.

Lam Peat, another worker at the site, told Al Jazeera it was unfair that she made \$8 per day while her male colleagues earned \$10.

"We do the same tasks as they do, but we get different pay," Lam said.

Despite lofty predictions by the government, Chanserey Vutha, the Civil Aviation Secretariat official, said it was unlikely flights would return to pre-pandemic levels by the airport's scheduled opening next year.

Even before the pandemic, flights to Siem Reap were down 12.3 percent in 2019, compared with the previous year. In 2020, the World Bank warned the city's temples may no longer be sufficient to draw tourists without more offerings in the city.

'Contingency plan'

When Yunnan Investment Group promised to invest in the airport in 2017, local authorities expected air traffic to rise, Chanserey Vutha said, adding his department originally projected a 12 percent increase in passengers to Siem Reap even after arrivals plunged in 2019. "But now due to the pandemic, everything changes, so they have to prepare the contingency plan."

Brendan Sobie, an independent aviation analyst in Singapore, said he was optimistic about the airport's 2030 target of 30 million passengers, noting the old airport had netted 4.5 million passengers in 2018.

But the airport's future would depend heavily on China, Sobie said, which has halted most flights under a strict "Zero Covid" policy. Before the pandemic, the city's existing airport connected to two dozen locations in China.

Sobie said Siem Reap would need to diversify as a destination to pique the interest of more carriers, especially from other nations.

"No one knows when outbound China will reopen and when this happens, whether Siem Reap or Cambodia overall will be as popular with Chinese travellers as they were before the pandemic," he said.

-Al Jazeera





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 07h00-09h00
Unpacking the Day with Wonder
 09h00-10h00
Free Your Mind
 10h00-12h00
Tech Eagle with Frans
 12h00-13h00
Brand Conversation with Sally
 13h00-14h30
On the Radar with Dwight

14h30-16h30
Ookundana Dhangi with Helen
 16h30-18h30
The Home Run with Frans/ Fanus
 18h30-20h00
Business Segment with Gabriel
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Omutumwa pamuee naTate Fly
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Penge Omhito pamue na Leonard

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UN: Hunger crisis threatens half of Somalia's young children



Severe drought risks pushing nearly half of Somali children under five into acute malnutrition this year, with hundreds of thousands needing life-saving treatment, according to the United Nations, which called for urgent action.

"Malnutrition has reached crisis levels," Victor Chinyama, head of communications for the UN children's agency UNICEF's Somalia operations, said on Tuesday.

"The time to act is now," he told reporters in Geneva via video-link, cautioning that "if you wait until things get worse, or until famine is declared, it may be too late."

As the Horn of Africa region grapples with its worst drought in decades, Somalia has been hardest hit, with the UN warning that 4.1 million people – a quarter of the Somali population – need urgent food aid. Chinyama said children were paying the highest price in the hunger crisis, with 1.4 million of them, or nearly half of all those under the age of five, expected to suffer from acute malnutrition by the end of the year.

"Of these, 330,000 will need treatment for

severe acute malnutrition," which can lead to death, he said.

UNICEF, he said, urgently needs \$7m by March to buy the therapeutic foods needed to treat those children.

Without the additional supplies, "100,000 children with severe acute malnutrition will miss out on life-saving treatment," he warned.

Drought's effects

Severe acute malnutrition can cause stunting and wasting and leaves children so weak that they become far more vulnerable to diseases.

For "a severely acutely malnourished child, or severely wasted child ... the risk of them dying from diseases such as measles or diarrhoea is 11 times higher than for a well-nourished child," UNICEF spokeswoman Marixie Mercado said.

That is a particularly concerning statistic, since the drought has also brought on a severe water crisis in Somalia, and in turn more disease outbreaks.

Some 7,500 measles cases were registered in the country in 2021 – double the caseload for 2019 and 2020 combined,

while about 60,000 people are at risk of contracting diarrhoeal diseases, including cholera, UN figures show.

The drought is also spurring a migration crisis, Chinyama said.

Around 500,000 people have left their homes in search of food, water and pasture since November, adding to the 2.9 million who were already displaced inside the country.

Drought and displacement also increase other risks for children, including from armed groups in Somalia, where the al-Shabab armed group controls swaths of countryside.

In 2021, 1,200 children, including 45 girls, were recruited and used by armed groups, while another 1,000 children were abducted, according to UNICEF.

"In many instances, these children were victims of multiple violations," Chinyama said.

In all, UNICEF has said it needs \$48m to respond to the crisis in Somalia this year. So far, it has received only \$10m.

–Al Jazeera



Macron expected to announce French withdrawal from Mali



President Emmanuel Macron is expected to announce France will withdraw its forces from Mali, amid a breakdown in relations with the country's military leaders.

Macron is expected to announce the decision this week, the Reuters and AFP news agencies reported, citing diplomatic and security sources. Reuters said the decision could be announced as early as Wednesday following a top-level meeting on the Sahel region of Africa in Paris. AFP said it was likely to be announced to coincide with a European Union-African Union summit in Brussels on Thursday and Friday.

The pullout from Mali, with a redeployment of forces to other countries in the region, amounts to a major strategic shift by France, ending a nine-year mission that successive French presidents had argued was crucial for regional and European security.

"If the conditions are no longer in place for us to be able to act in Mali – which is clearly the case – we will continue to fight

terrorism side-by-side with Sahel countries who want it," French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said on Monday.

There have been two coups in Mali since 2020 and ties have worsened since the military reneged on an agreement to organise elections in February and proposed holding onto power until 2025. The regime has also developed closer ties with Russia, including turning to suspected mercenaries from Russia's private military contractor Wagner, and this month expelled the French ambassador.

"Tomorrow evening (Wednesday), there will be a meeting between the French president and the heads of the states of partner countries to our presence in the Sahel region in the fight against terrorism," French government spokesman Gabriel Attal told reporters.

He declined to say whether a decision had been made on withdrawing forces other than to say it would be taken in consultation with European and African partners.

A French withdrawal would mean the

European special forces Takuba task force would also leave.

A draft document of the plan seen by Reuters, distributed to countries involved in Mali, says that France and its Takuba partners had "decided to commence the coordinated withdrawal of their military resources from Malian territory".

"It's no longer a question of if they leave, but what happens with the troops, what happens to the UN peacekeeping force and what happens to the European Union missions," a senior European diplomat told the news agency.

Shift in focus

A French presidency official said the idea would be to reduce troops and cooperate exclusively with countries that wanted help.

France has already withdrawn some troops in the Sahel intending to reduce numbers from about 5,000 to 2,500-3,000 by 2023. About half of its forces are based in Mali. The Takuba mission has about 600 to 900 troops, of which 40 percent are French, and includes medical and logistical teams.

The draft document does not call on countries involved in the 14,000-strong UN peacekeeping mission (MINUSMA) or the EU's EUTM (European Union Training Mission) and EUCAP missions to withdraw. However, their future is in doubt given French forces provide medical, aerial and reassurance support.

Spanish Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Albares, whose country represents the largest contingent in the EUTM, said the reasons for Europe's engagement in the region still exist.

European governments fear that shifting relationships with the region's rulers risk leaving a vacuum for movements tied to al-Qaeda and ISIS/ISIL.

In addition to Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea Bissau have seen recent military coups.

"Spain will make its voice heard at the EU. We believe the reasons that brought us to Mali are still there – instability, jihadism," he said.

"It is desirable for us to maintain a mission."

- Al Jazeera

"It's no longer a question of if they leave, but what happens with the troops."



Disney appoints executive to oversee metaverse strategy

Disney has appointed an executive to specifically lead the entertainment giant's strategy for the metaverse. Mike White, who has been with the firm for more than 10 years, will oversee a team that includes senior leaders.

In a memo to staff, which has been seen by the BBC, chief executive Bob Chapek said the metaverse is "the next great storytelling frontier" to be explored.

Technology giants, including Facebook owner Meta and Microsoft, are pouring billions of dollars into the metaverse.

In the memo, Mr Chapek described the metaverse as a "perfect place to pursue our strategic pillars of storytelling excellence, innovation, and audience focus".

"Teams across the company are exploring this new canvas, and I have been blown away by what I've seen," he said.

Mr White will become Disney's senior vice president for Next Generation Storytelling and Consumer Experiences.

In the newly-created role he will allocate resources, explore partnerships and encourage knowledge sharing on the metaverse, the company said.

He will also lead a team with skills including technology, strategy and storytelling.

Disney said it sees the metaverse as the next evolution of its almost 100-year-old storytelling tradition.

"Today, we have an opportunity to connect

those universes and create an entirely new paradigm for how audiences experience and engage with our stories," Mr Chapek said in the memo.

Last week, Disney said sales at its theme parks in the US had climbed above pre-pandemic levels.

It also announced that its Disney+ streaming service had added 11.8 million subscribers in the last three months of 2021, taking the total to almost 130 million worldwide.

A metaverse is an online world where people can game, work and communicate in a virtual environment, often using VR headsets.

It is being touted by some of the world's biggest technology companies as a key development in the next generation of the internet.

The company formerly known as Facebook has made the biggest bet so far on the metaverse.

Last year, Facebook changed its corporate name to Meta Platforms and said it planned to spend more than \$10bn (£7.4bn) to develop virtual reality software and hardware.

Meanwhile, Microsoft has said it was adding 3D virtual avatars and environments to its Teams chat system, as part of its push towards the metaverse.

-BBC



Elon Musk's brain chip firm denies animal cruelty claims

Jane Wakefield

Neuralink, the firm set up by Tesla boss Elon Musk to develop a device which connects our brains to computers, has denied animal cruelty claims.

A complaint filed last week to the US Department of Agriculture alleged cruel treatment of macaque monkeys which are being used to test the technology.

In a blog, Neuralink said it worked with animals in the "most humane and ethical way possible".

The firm hopes to begin human trials of the device later this year.

In the blog - posted in response to recent criticism - Neuralink emphasises its commitment to animal welfare: "Our central mission is to design an animal care program prioritising the needs of the animals, rather than the typical strategy of building for human convenience alone."

"The use of every animal was extensively planned and considered to balance scientific discovery with the ethical use of animals," it stated.

'Seizures and trauma'

At the start of the research, Neuralink partnered with Davis National Primate Research Center - part of the University of California - but in 2020 built its own vivarium to house the monkeys, with the stated intention of "improving upon" current standards.

The complaint was filed last week by the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine against UC Davis, and related to "invasive and deadly brain experiments conducted on 23 monkeys".

It claims: "Most of the animals had portions of their skulls removed to implant

electrodes in their brains."

It also alleges that macaque monkeys used in the experiment were caged alone, suffered "facial trauma" and had seizures and infections local to the site of the implant.

Some were euthanised before they were used in experiments, it claims.

The Committee said it acquired the information from 600 pages of documents released after it filed a public records legal action last year.

It has now filed a second legal action to compel the university to release videos and photos of the monkeys.

The BBC has asked UC Davis for comment.

'Surgical complication'

In its rebuttal of the claims, Neuralink acknowledged that two animals were put to death "at planned end dates to gather important histological data".

Another six monkeys were euthanised on the medical advice of the veterinary team at UC Davis, it said.

"These reasons included one surgical complication involving the use of the FDA-approved product, BioGlue, one device failure and four suspected device-association infections," it said.

It added: "While the facilities and care at UC Davis did, and continue to meet, federally-mandated standards, we absolutely wanted to improve upon these standards as we transitioned animals to our in-house facilities.

In 2020, the firm opened a 6,000 square ft vivarium, housing farm animals and rhesus macaques. In the blog, it posted pictures of the unit, showing toys, food and what it called "enrichment devices" to

allow animals to forage.

Neuralink was set up in 2016 and is privately funded by Musk.

The device the firm is working on consists of a tiny probe made up of thousands of electrodes attached to flexible threads - thinner than a human hair - which can monitor the activity of neurons.

Initially, it is hoped any successful device can be used to help patients with severe neurological conditions, but Mr Musk also envisions a future of "superhuman cognition".

So far the firm has successfully implanted microchips into the brain of a pig called Gertrude and a monkey named Pager.

-BBC

"Most of the animals had portions of their skulls removed to implant electrodes in their brains."





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Russia's defence minister meets Syria's Assad for talks



Russia's Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu has visited Syria for talks with President Bashar al-Assad and to inspect a Russian airbase in the war-torn country, his ministry said, amid heightened tensions between the West and Moscow over Ukraine.

The trip comes as the Russian military deployed long-range nuclear-capable bombers and fighter jets carrying state-of-the-art hypersonic missiles to its airbase in Syria for massive naval drills in the region.

During a meeting in Damascus on Tuesday, Shoigu "informed the Syrian president about the exercises of the Russian navy in the eastern Mediterranean", Russia's defence ministry said in a statement.

The two discussed "military-technical cooperation as part of the joint fight" against international "terrorism" and Russian humanitarian assistance to the people of Syria "suffering from the prohibitive sanctions of the United States and Western countries".

The statement said Shoigu also inspected Russia's Hmeimim airbase in western Syria, which has served as Russia's main outpost in the Middle Eastern country. Moscow has also expanded and modified a naval base in the Syrian port of Tartus, the only such facility that Russia has outside the former Soviet Union.

It wasn't clear from the statement precisely when the meeting took place. The Defence Ministry said the exercise in the eastern Mediterranean that involves 15 warships and about 30 aircraft is part of a series of sweeping naval drills that started last month amid the standoff over Ukraine. It said the manoeuvres were intended to train for action to "protect national interests" and "fend off military threats against the Russian Federation".

Long-range, nuclear-capable Tu-22M3 bombers and MiG-31 fighter jets carrying the latest Kinzhal hypersonic cruise missiles landed at the Russian airbase in Syria's coastal

province of Latakia as part of the drills. The military says the Kinzhal has a range of up to 2,000km (about 1,250 miles) and flies at 10 times the speed of sound, making it hard to intercept.

The deployment of Kinzhal missiles to Syria appears to be intended to showcase the Russian military's capability to threaten the US carrier strike group in the Mediterranean.

The Defence Ministry said the Russian navy chief reported to Shoigu that the drills envisaged practice in targeting enemy warships.

Moscow has been a key ally of the Assad regime throughout the Syrian conflict that erupted in 2011 with the repression of anti-government protests.

Russia's military intervention in 2015 helped turn the tide of the war in Assad's favour and Moscow maintains military bases in the country.

Russia's political and military support for Syria has been a particular sticking

point in Moscow's relations with the West, which has imposed sanctions on Moscow for bolstering the Assad regime.

Tensions between Moscow and the West have soared recently, with the West accusing the Kremlin of amassing troops on its border with Ukraine in advance of a possible invasion.

On Tuesday, Russian President Vladimir Putin said Moscow does not want a war in Europe amid rising tensions over Ukraine but demanded that the issue of Kyiv's relationship with NATO be resolved in its entirety immediately.

Speaking at a joint news conference on Tuesday after talks with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Putin said Russia had been informed by Western powers that its neighbour would not join the transatlantic military alliance in the near future. But he warned that was not a satisfactory assurance.

-Al Jazeera

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The two discussed “military-technical cooperation as part of the joint fight” against international “terrorism”
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Karnataka hijab controversy is polarising its classrooms



■ Divya Arya

How do you sit in a classroom with people who shouted slogans against your right to wear a hijab?

That's the question troubling Saima, whose name has been changed on request. Last week, the 20-year-old was one of several hijab-clad Muslim women who watched anxiously as hundreds of Hindu students protested against Islamic headscarves. They were wearing saffron scarves and turbans, and yelling Jai Shri Ram or "victory to Lord Ram" - the chant and the colour are commonly associated with the Hindu right-wing.

Saima, the only Muslim woman in her class, says she saw many of her classmates among the protesters.

The hijab has become the subject of a fierce debate in India. It all began last month when six teenagers at a government-run college in Karnataka's Udupi district began protesting after they were barred from classes for wearing headscarves.

The issue quickly turned divisive with Hindu students turning up in colleges wearing saffron shawls, and right-wing groups on both sides making provocative

statements. Fearing violence, the state government shut down high schools and colleges.

The question of whether Muslim girls and women in Karnataka can wear the hijab in school and college will be decided by the state's high court which is currently hearing the matter.

As they prepare to return to classes on Wednesday, young people on both sides of the divide are struggling to understand their classmates and friends.

"I worry that this will obviously create an environment of hate in the class," says Saima.

"We will start thinking that he is a Hindu and that's why he stood against me, and they will think that she is a Muslim and that's why she was against me."

Aakanksha Hanchinamath, who goes to Saima's college, was one of the saffron-wearing protesters last week.

The protest was the result of a "collective decision" by Hindu students, Ms Hanchinamath said.

"We wanted to show them what will happen if you bring religion into it," she said.

This part of Karnataka has long seen

radicalisation among student groups - be it the student wing of the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which is currently in power in Karnataka, or the Campus Front of India (CFI), the student wing of the radical Islamic group, Popular Front of India.

In this case, the CFI supported the girls protesting in Udupi - and as the issue snowballed, the BJP's student wing led marches with students sporting saffron shawls.

"If communal organisations like the CFI support Muslim students, then why should we and our girls watch silently?" says Raghupathi Bhat, a BJP lawmaker from Udupi.

This isn't the first time the hijab has sparked protests in Karnataka's polarised coastal belt, where Hindu and Muslim right-wing groups have been established for decades.

But in the past such issues were quickly resolved, says Prof Phaniraj K, who belongs to a civil society group that tracks communal incidents in the state.

He points to a similar protest in Mangalore 15 years ago, where college authorities and students found a "middle ground" in five days.

"Sporadic incidents of questioning

hijab and skull caps inside educational institutions have continued but they never blew up like this," he says.

But increasing polarisation has led to differing rules around the hijab across colleges.

Many private colleges, like the one Saima attends, allow the hijab in classrooms.

Government-run colleges revise the rules every year. Decisions over uniforms rest with the Development Committee headed by a local legislator.

In the Udupi college, where protests first broke out, the man in charge was Mr Bhat, the BJP lawmaker. But talks between him, the protesting girls' parents and college authorities ended in a stalemate.

Rashmita Shetty, who studies at a private college in Udupi, says she and her Muslim friends watched in horror as the situation escalated in recent weeks.

Several Muslim students attend her college, which did not witness any counter-protests by Hindu students. Yet, she says things have certainly changed.

"We had never even noticed if a girl wore a hijab or not. Sometimes they would remove it because it was hot. This was never an issue," she adds.

"My Muslim friends have told me that

this will always remain in their minds, that they were denied their rights at such a young age and that they will be looked at differently now."

The situation, she says, was worsened by provocative comments by political leaders - while one BJP leader asked Muslim students to go to Pakistan if they wanted to wear a hijab, another said the hijab had to be opposed in colleges so that Karnataka wouldn't become a "Taliban state".

Ms Hanchinamath says she never looked at religion while making friends but is determined not to back down now.

"I know it will change things among us, because they think we are opposing them, but we are only asking for discipline and equality, that everyone should wear the same uniform," she says.

Ms Shetty, however, says she will support her Muslim friends as she feels their demand to wear headscarves is justified.

"It continues to bother me that I did not raise slogans with Muslim girls. But how do I do it in this atmosphere? It is such a dilemma," she says.

"I choose to stay silent and support my friends. That is my protest."

-BBC



How the Not-a-Land-Rover-Defender Ineos Grenadier Is Getting Off the Ground

■ Angus MacKenzie

Land Rover Defender enthusiast Jim Ratcliffe wasn't happy when JLR finally stopped production of the storied off-roader in 2016, ending a 68-year run that had seen more than two million of them made. He'd heard the all-new Defender, then under development, would be an expensive, slickly styled, high-tech 4x4 with a fully independent suspension. That wasn't going to be, he thought, his sort of Defender.

So Ratcliffe did what any self-respecting billionaire would do in that situation: He decided to make his own, the Ineos Grenadier.

"I got the call at the end of 2016," Ineos Automotive CEO Dirk Heilmann said. At the time, Heilmann had been with Ineos—the global chemical company founded in 1998 by Ratcliffe, who still owns two-thirds the business—for 15 years as an engineering and technology manager for one of its operations. "Jim was really sad that JLR was vacating the traditional Defender market," Heilmann said, "and wanted to know whether it would be possible for us to build a replacement. 'How can we do this?' he asked. 'Can this be done? I've been told it can't be done.'"

It can. Fast-forward to February 2022, and Heilmann has just overseen the first production trial build of the Ineos Grenadier at the Ineos Automotive factory in Hambach, France, a stone's throw from the German border.

The factory was originally completed in 1997 by Mercedes-Benz to build tiny Smart cars and had been the subject of a \$535 million upgrade in preparation for production of the Mercedes-EQ EQB compact electric SUV. Mercedes changed strategy, however, electing to build the EQB alongside its internal combustion cousin, the GLB, at its plant in Kecskemét, Hungary. And in late 2020, it agreed to sell the plant to Ineos, with the proviso the new owner continue to manufacture under contract the existing Smart ForTwo and ForFour models.

"It was a no-brainer," Ineos Automotive commercial director Mark Tennant said of the decision to buy the Hambach plant, which not only came complete with a new, fully automated body assembly hall with 250 robots and a new, state-of-the-art semi-automated paint shop, but also a 2000-strong workforce with 20 years' experience building automobiles. Ineos has since spent a further \$56 million on updating the factory to build the bigger and heavier Grenadier, but that process has taken a lot less time than building a factory from scratch.

"It took us eight months to do this," says manufacturing engineering manager Steven Wilkinson, as robots in the assembly hall are being readied to begin the second production trial build, which aims to emulate actual production cycles. "That's pretty rapid."

Official start of production, when vehicles that can be sold to customers are built in the factory, is scheduled for July. Operating on two shifts a day, Hambach will be able to build 32,000 Grenadiers a year. Given Ineos already has

15,000 expressions of interest for the car—the U.S. accounts for about a quarter of those—the factory's going to be busy from the get-go.

A lot of time and effort is being spent to ensure the plant has robust quality control systems. "We're building a car, but we're also building a car company," Tennant said. "As a new brand it is critical we are on top of things from the outset, because first impressions last."

First Grenadiers off the line will all be four-doors built on a 115.0-inch wheelbase. The volume seller is expected to be the five-seat Wagon, which is the main "civilian" variant. Two commercial versions will be available: the five-seat Utility, which has its rear seat moved forward to increase load space, and the two-seat Utility, which has no rear seating at all. Both Utility versions can be quickly identified by the steel panels in place of the Wagon's rear quarter windows.

All models will be available with either 281-hp gasoline or 245-hp diesel turbocharged 3.0-liter straight-sixes sourced from BMW that drive all four wheels through a ZF eight-speed automatic transmission and a Tremec two-speed transfer case. Available wheels are 17- and 18-inch in either steel or alloy, each of which can be fitted with either Bridgestone Dueller A/T or BF Goodrich KO2 tires.

Ineos insiders remain tight-lipped about additional Grenadier models, but a crew-cab pickup is known to be under development. The wheelbase has reportedly been stretched to about 127 inches, and spy shots show a long rear overhang. The company is also working on a chassis-cab variant that will allow fitment of aftermarket aluminum beds or bodywork for camping or overlanding.

Insiders admit the company is, in response to requests from the U.S., looking at offering a third-row option for the Grenadier Wagon. And body engineers concede the Grenadier's two-piece bodyside makes a single-cab body easy to engineer.

What about a two-door, short-wheelbase Grenadier? The body-on-frame construction makes that a relatively simple engineering project, but that doesn't appear to be on the menu. Jeep's short-wheelbase Wrangler is a strong seller, mainly for historical reasons, but the short-wheelbase versions of the Land Rover Defender and Toyota Land Cruiser sell in relatively small numbers compared with their long-wheelbase counterparts.

Ineos Automotive might be a startup, but it's being run by experienced people—the CVs of the senior management team include stints at Mercedes-Benz, Bentley, and Finnish contract manufacturer Valmet Automotive, among others. They know how to run factories and build cars.

The only question to answer now is: How does the Ineos Grenadier drive? Well, we've had a brief stint behind the wheel, off-roading a prototype, so come back on February 22 to find out what we think.

-Motor Trend



Williams: 'Long way' to go for team to return to top of Formula 1



Andrew Benson

Williams said they still have a long way to go to return to the top of Formula 1 as they launched their new car at Silverstone on Tuesday.

The multiple champions finished eighth last season, the first time for three years the team has not been last.

New rules have been introduced in F1 this year to make the field more competitive.

"To get the team back to where we want to be, from where it was, is a long way," said team principal Jost Capito.

"It's not something we can fix in one year." The German - a former VW executive who was recruited by Williams' new owners a year ago to mastermind the team's recovery from a bleak period - said that Williams still lack resources compared with the top teams, and that it would take time for the effect of the new rules and budget cap to make a difference.

"Compared to the top teams, we still were lacking," Capito said. "We didn't have investment before the last year, and over the last year investment was limited by the cost cap.

"Progress will be [measured by] how we can improve compared to competition through the season, wherever we start the season."

Williams initially unveiled their new livery on Tuesday on a show car, before running the definitive new FW44 at Silverstone and releasing pictures of it.

The shakedown test was delayed by an electronics problem, but both drivers tried the car in wet conditions in the afternoon.

Williams have a new driver this year in Anglo-Thai Alexander Albon, a replacement for George Russell, who has moved to Mercedes. Canadian Nicholas Latifi continues in the other car.

Capito said he was confident Albon - who had two seasons with the Red Bull teams in 2019 and 2020 before being demoted to their reserve driver in 2021 - was a strong choice.

"I believe he grew a lot through this last year and that made him absolutely eager to come back," Capito said. "I believe he is still a way from his peak - he can be much better.

"I believe his values really fit with Williams. He seems to be a really happy guy. We talk openly and he feels at home, and I believe if he feels at home he will deliver great stuff on track as well."

Albon is highly rated by his contemporaries

among the younger generation of drivers, such as Russell and Ferrari's Charles Leclerc, having come through the junior categories with them since he was a boy.

"It feels like [I've had] a year out, a year itching to get going," Albon said. "It just makes you hungry to get back into the seat.

"I was trying to get as much experience as I could, see things from a different perspective, see how the team operates not just from the driving side. And hopefully I can use that experience from last year.

"The team is on the climb and it's exciting to be part of the journey. Hopefully with my experience I can bump them along a bit."

No more Senna 'S'

Williams have decided to stop using the Senna 'S' on their cars for the first time since 1995, the year after the three-time world champion Ayrton Senna was killed in one of their cars.

The 'S' is a symbol of Senna's foundation, which supports children in poverty in Brazil. Capito said the team would continue to donate to the foundation, and that a dedicated area of their museum had been put aside as a memorial to Senna.

"The decision was that we want to move

on in the future," he said.

"We have a new era, we have a new car. And we refurbished also our museum, where we have a special area to celebrate Ayrton."

Capito also said the decision had not been discussed with Senna's family.

"We are working with the foundation and we will increase our effort with the foundation and work on how we can to support the Senna foundation more," he added.

"More people benefit from this. If we can help people, especially through the foundation, I think that's a very good programme. But it has to be still finally defined."

Extra security for Latifi after threats

Latifi revealed he had felt the need for extra security in public this winter, after receiving death threats following the controversial season-ending Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.

Latifi's crash caused the safety-car period, during which race director Michael Masi failed to apply the rules correctly, leading to the championship's destiny changing hands from Lewis Hamilton to Max Verstappen.

"It sounds funny, it sounds silly, but we definitely did take the threats seriously," Latifi said.

"All it could take is one drunk fan at an airport or you bump into someone who's having a bad day, intoxicated or under the influence or something and has these really extreme opinions.

"I was back in London after the race and I had security with me when I went to Winter Wonderland with my girlfriend. You have to take the threats seriously because you don't know what might happen. All it takes is that one-in-a-million person."

He revealed Hamilton had sent him a message of support, although he declined to say what the seven-time champion said. "Lewis did send me a message just before I released the statement," Latifi added. "I did get some messages of support from other team members at Mercedes as well.

"Obviously, the whole outcry [of] support on social media from multiple drivers and teams across so many different disciplines was really nice to see, encouraging to see."

-BBC

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"Progress will be [measured by] how we can improve compared to competition through the season."
”



Ronaldo ends scoring drought as Man Utd move back into top four with win over Brighton

Simon Stone

Cristiano Ronaldo ended his six-game goal drought in sensational style as Manchester United beat 10-man Brighton at Old Trafford to move back into the Premier League's top-four.

Bruno Fernandes added a second as United broke from deep inside their own half in the final minute of injury-time.

After a tepid opening period, Ronaldo struck six minutes into the second half.

The Portuguese collected Scott McTominay's pass before edging right of the Brighton defence and, with barely any backlift, sent a low shot curling beyond a static Robert Sanchez.

Three minutes later, Brighton skipper Lewis Dunk was sent off after VAR sent referee Peter Bankes to review the defender's foul on Anthony Elanga.

Fernandes wasted a glorious chance when he failed to get past Sanchez with only the Brighton keeper to beat, before Ronaldo nodded an excellent chance wide of the far post.

It meant United breathed a sigh of relief when Jakub Moder's speculative effort from the corner of the box bounced back off the bar with David de Gea beaten.

Brighton were still trying to salvage something from the contest when Fernandes struck with virtually the final kick.

Jekyll and Hyde United

In his pre-match interviews, United's interim manager Ralf Rangnick spoke about his team needing to be more Dr Jekyll and less Mr Hyde. Sadly for the German, the first half had far more evidence of the latter, evil, side.

When United were pressed with any great intensity, they gave the ball away. Restored to the starting line-up ahead of Paul Pogba, Fred was one culprit when he delivered a straight pass intended for Ronaldo straight to Adam Webster, who was not much more than a couple of yards away.

But the Brazilian was not on his own. Indeed, as Ronaldo drove a free-kick in a promising situation at the end of that disappointing opening period into the wall, it was hard to think of a redeeming feature for the hosts.

They did create one decent chance, when Ronaldo's backheel sent Jadon Sancho running into the box. But once Brighton keeper Sanchez had turned the England man's shot away, the best bit of United play was De Gea's excellent save to deny Moder's header.

The boos that accompanied the half-time whistle were predictable and when Pogba emerged late after the break and missed the start of his warm-up, it appeared United's shambolic evening would continue.

Instead, the Frenchman was on the touchline to join the applause as Ronaldo struck the crucial 51st-minute opener.

Ronaldo knew he should have had more

goals, though, and kicked an advertising hoarding in frustration as a header from a corner went narrowly wide.

However, after an unsatisfactory period for both player and team as leads have been lost in three successive games, at least this time they were able to secure a much-needed victory.

Familiar losing feeling in Manchester for Brighton

Given they have now drawn two and lost 12 in 14 away games at Manchester United - and not won in 20 trips to face either City or United - the final outcome cannot have been a surprise to Brighton.

Yet, despite the scoreline and losing centre-back Dunk, there had to be an element of this being a missed opportunity for the visitors.

For long periods in the first half, they were by far the better side but, not for the first time, the lack of a potent finisher cost Graham Potter's men.

Moder could not have done much more with the header that De Gea turned away, nor the shot that hit the bar.

But Yves Bissouma fired wide before the break when placed to do much better. Danny Welbeck then came agonisingly close to snatching a draw against his former club when he sent his header over from eight yards after being picked out by fellow substitute Tariq Lamptey in the final minute.

-BBC



Mbappe scores late winner for PSG against Real after Messi has penalty saved

Kylian Mbappe scored a brilliant goal in stoppage time as Paris St-Germain beat 13-time Champions League winners Real Madrid in the first leg of their last-16 tie.

The France striker, linked with a move to Real in the summer, received the ball on the left from a clever backheel by Neymar, and got between two defenders inside the box before slotting through Thibaut Courtois' legs to send the Parc des Princes wild.

It was a dramatic finish to a game that had looked set to end in frustration for PSG, especially after Lionel Messi saw his penalty saved just after the hour mark.

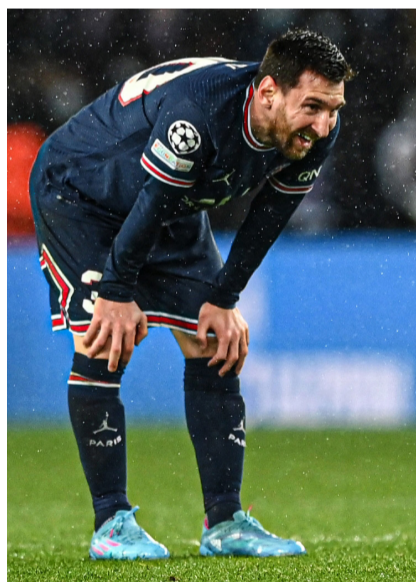
The hosts had dominated possession but struggled to break down a well-organised Real defence that had limited PSG to one shot on target in the first half, when Mbappe saw a shot denied by Courtois' legs.

But the introduction of Neymar, making his first appearance since November after recovering from injury, proved decisive. He caused Real a number of problems with his dangerous crosses and clever runs before providing the crucial pass for Mbappe to work his magic with seconds remaining.

The win will give PSG hope that they can head to Madrid on Wednesday, 9 March and get the result they need to keep alive their hopes of winning a first Champions League title.

A successful audition for Mbappe All the build-up to the game had centred on Mbappe and how the striker would perform in what appeared to be an audition against his future employers.

The 23-year-old is one of the best players in the world right now and has been in superb form this season, with his goalscoring prowess pulling PSG out of



difficult circumstances a number of times.

Just a few days ago, he scored in the 93rd minute to secure a 1-0 win at Rennes in Ligue 1 - and once again he had the decisive impact in this game.

Real, to their credit, had defended superbly for so long, with their doubling up on Mbappe having largely limited his impact. But the introduction of Neymar in the closing stages gave the visitors an additional threat to deal with and in turn more space for Mbappe to cause problems. There was relief for Real when Mbappe saw a shot from the edge of the area beat Courtois but bounce just wide of the far post late on but in the end he was not to be denied the match-winning moment.

The goal was Mbappe's 22nd in another incredible season for the youngster and his performance will surely have only served to enhance Real's desire for him to be leading their line next term.

-BBC

