

Beijing's sweeping decision to eliminate import duties on goods from 53 African nations is the most consequential shift in China-Africa economic relations in a generation

Sino-Africa

China had already scrapped tariffs on 100 per cent of tariff lines for imports from 33 least developed countries in Africa:



Africa's Paint Titan:

Vantage Capital's \$45 Million Bet On Egypt's Industrial Champion Africa



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KfW Development Bank becomes an ATIDI Shareholder, Enhances German Investment Opportunities in Africa

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Mnangagwa's ZANU PF Leads Zimbabwe to Unprecedented Prosperity Zimbabwe



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Namibia's Debt Landscape in 2026 Between Fiscal Independence and External Exposure Africa

Africa

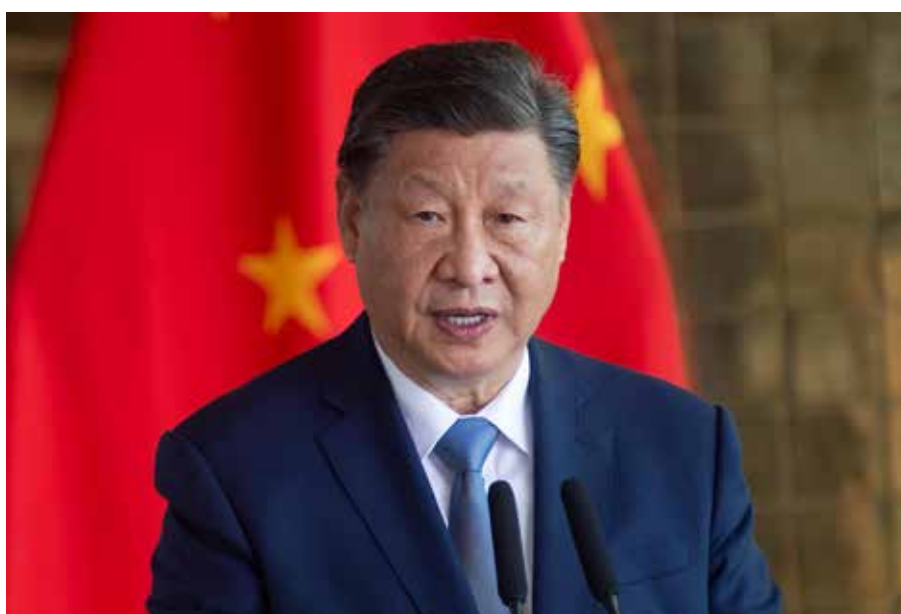


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The great opening: How china's Zero-tariff gambit is reshaping the future of african trade

By: Diaspora Times Team

On Valentine's Day 2026, Chinese President Xi Jinping sent African leaders a gift of extraordinary economic consequence. In a message to heads of state gathered at the African Union's 39th Summit in Addis Ababa, he announced that from 1 May 2026, China would implement zero-tariff treatment for all 53 African countries with which it maintains diplomatic relations — making China, in a single stroke, the first major global economy to offer unilateral, comprehensive tariff-free access to the entire African con-



Chinese President Xi Jinping

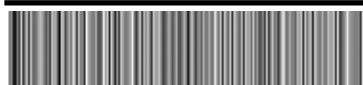
continent. The African media erupted. Chancelleries from Dakar to Nairobi issued welcoming statements. Beijing congratulated itself warmly. And economists, trade analysts, and geopolitical strategists across the world began studying the fine print of what may prove to be the defining trade policy development of this decade — one laden with both extraordinary promise and carefully calibrated complexity.

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Africa's Broken Promise: How Laws Are Failing Millions Of Girls At Risk Of Child Marriage And FGM

MASERU, Lesotho — On paper, most African nations have outlawed it. In practice, millions of girls remain trapped by it. A landmark report released last week lays bare one of the continent's most persistent and painful contradictions: that despite decades of legal reform, child

marriage and female genital mutilation continue to devastate the lives of girls from the Sahel to the Horn of Africa, from the Nile Valley to the southern savannahs. The Thematic Report on Harmful Practices Affecting Children in Africa, published by the African Com-

mittee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) with support from international human rights organisation Equality Now, does not mince words. Laws exist. Commitments have been made. Declarations have been signed. And yet, girls are still being cut, still being

married off before they reach adulthood, still being failed by the very systems designed to protect them.

"The law that cannot protect a girl

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When Death Has a Gender: Kenya's Selective Outrage and the Politics of 'Femicide'

By: Maina Wahome
xxxxxxxxxxxxx

Worth Noting:

- Men are assaulted, abused, poisoned, stabbed, and in some cases killed by intimate partners. Yet their suffering rarely receives systemic framing or sustained public attention.
- Instead, male victims are often greeted with ridicule.
- If a woman attacks a man, the public asks what he did to provoke her. If a wife kills her husband, jokes circulate before condolences do. If a boy is abused by a woman, some call him fortunate rather than violated.
- Male pain is not merely ignored; it is trivialized.
- This reflects a broader cultural assumption that men are natural perpetrators, not potential victims. But justice cannot be credible if it recognizes vulnerability only when it fits a preferred narrative.

In Kenya today, a woman's death can stop the nation; a man's death may barely interrupt Nairobi's oldest profession, whose clientele includes both bachelors and husbands with wedding rings still warm.

When a woman is killed, social media erupts, activists mobilize, politicians rush to microphones, and public institutions scramble to issue statements. When a man dies in similar circumstances, the response is often silence—if not outright mockery. The first question is not how he died, but what he must have done.

That disparity reveals a troubling truth: Kenya's public empathy has become selective, and fighting gender-based violence without confronting its root causes is like stitching the anus to cure diarrhoea—an exercise in dramatic futility.

This is not an argument against concern for women. It is an argument against the dangerous habit of caring selectively.

Is Every Murder of a Woman Femicide?

Femicide has a specific meaning. It refers to the killing of women because they are women. These are murders rooted in misogyny, gender hatred, or systematic domination.

However, in Kenya, the term is increasingly applied with little regard for context.

A woman killed in a robbery? Femicide.

A woman killed in a domestic quarrel? Femicide.

A woman killed in a business or land dispute? Femicide.

By this logic, every homicide involving a female victim becomes gender ideology by default.

That is not precision. It is semantic laziness.

Words matter because they shape diagnosis. And diag-



nosis determines remedy. If every killing of a woman is called femicide regardless of motive, the term loses precision and public discourse loses discipline.

A word made to explain everything eventually explains nothing.

The Male Victim and the Empathy Gap

Male suffering remains one of Kenya's least acknowledged social realities.

Men are assaulted, abused, poisoned, stabbed, and in some cases killed by intimate partners. Yet their suffering rarely receives systemic framing or sustained public attention.

Instead, male victims are often greeted with ridicule.

If a woman attacks a man, the public asks what he did to provoke her.

If a wife kills her husband, jokes circulate before condolences do.

If a boy is abused by a woman, some call him fortunate rather than violated.

Male pain is not merely ignored; it is trivialized.

This reflects a broader cultural assumption that men are natural perpetrators, not potential victims. But justice cannot be credible if

it recognizes vulnerability only when it fits a preferred narrative.

Politics Has Turned Gender into Performance

Kenyan politicians have learnt that some causes generate more applause than others, and they increasingly align themselves with issues that promise visibility, approval, and political mileage rather than those that demand genuine accountability.

Even mediocrity in leadership today is often repackaged as altruism, with public performance doing the work that competence should have done.

Championing women's issues has become politically rewarding. It provides moral credibility, media visibility, and electoral optics. Consequently, every tragedy involving a woman becomes an opportunity for public performance.

Meanwhile, the boy child has become a rhetorical afterthought.

He is invoked in speeches, but rarely prioritized in policy.

He is told to lead, but given little guidance.

He is expected to succeed,

but receives dwindling institutional support.

A nation that has healed the man has gone a long way in curing its social problems, because society ultimately rises or falls on the stability of its men and the homes they build.

When Families Fracture, Institutions Falter

No society can discuss violence honestly without confronting the family.

Killers are not produced in isolation. Many emerge from homes defined by instability, abuse, neglect, absent parents, addiction, and untreated trauma.

However, Kenya prefers to discuss violence only after blood has been spilled.

Kenyans march after murders.

Kenyans trend hashtags before and after funerals.

Kenyans debate outcomes while ignoring origins.

The law, too, is losing public confidence. A justice system that ought to stand above public emotion and ideological fashion often appears inconsistent and reactive.

Cases rise or fall in public significance depending on media pressure,

political utility, or narrative

alignment. Loopholes, delays, selective enforcement, and procedural technicalities continue to erode trust. A legal system perceived as inconsistent ceases to inspire respect. It inspires cynicism.

Religion, once a moral anchor of Kenyan society, has not escaped decline either.

Where spiritual leaders should preach discipline, some sell prosperity. Where they should strengthen families, some exploit desperation.

A compromised pulpit cannot produce a disciplined society. At the same time, Kenya is increasingly consumed by materialism and performance culture.

Worth is measured by brands, lifestyle, and visible consumption. Character has been displaced by display; restraint by spectacle.

Young people are taught not merely to become successful, but to look successful. To live modestly is to be mocked. To lack visible wealth is to be dismissed.

The family is society's first school of discipline, empathy, and restraint. When it collapses, the streets inherit its failures.

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Uzbekistan

Alisher Navoi – The Sultan of the Realm of Words

By: Oromova Dildora Khayrulla
xxxxxxxxxxxx

This article provides an overview of the life and creative activity of Alisher Navoi, one of the greatest representatives of Uzbek literature. It examines his literary heritage, analyzes his most famous works, and discusses their content and significance. The article also highlights the role of his works in shaping moral and philosophical thought.

Keywords: **creativity, work, genre, epic, poem, thinker, scholar**

Introduction:

Alisher Navoi holds an incomparable and significant place in Uzbek literature. He was not only a poet but also a great thinker and scholar who left an everlasting mark on history. His name is widely known, and information about his life and works is included in almost all literature textbooks. Moreover, Navoi's творчество is not limited to artistic value; he also made important contributions to linguistics.

Main Part:

Alisher Navoi, whose full name was Nizamiddin Mir Alisher, was born on February 9, 1441, in Herat. From an early age, he showed great interest in literature. As a child, he memorized Farididdin Attar's Mantiq ut-tayr. Throughout his life, Navoi faced many difficulties, mainly due to political instability among the Timurids in 1469, which forced him to move toward Khurasan.

Navoi created works in vari-



Alisher Navoi

ous genres and wrote in two languages: Turkic (under the pen name "Navoi") and Persian (under the pen name "Foni"). His Turkic poetic heritage is mainly collected in the divan Xazoyin ul-ma'oni, which consists of four parts: G'aroyib us-sig'ar, Navodir ush-shabob, Badoye ul-vasat, and Favoyid ul-kibar. These works reflect deep philosophical thoughts and a wide range of human emotions. Another of his most famous works is Xamsa, written between 1483 and 1485. It consists of five epics: Hayrat ul-abror, Farhod and Shirin, Layli and Majnun, Sabai Sayyor, and Saddi Iskandariy. These epics explore themes such as love, morality, human life, and governance. In particular, Farhod and Shirin and Hayrat ul-abror express Sufi ideas, while Layli and Majnun focuses on the theme of love.

horiston, stating that no one had written as much and as beautifully in the Turkic language as Navoi. The orientalist Armin Vambéry also described him as a great and well-known Uzbek poet. Navoi's works remain highly relevant today, as they promote moral values such as love, loyalty, justice, and human dignity.

Conclusion:
The title "Sultan of the Realm of Words" given to Alisher Navoi is well deserved. Through his works, he not only created beautiful poetry but also conveyed

important ideas about morality, unity, and kindness. His literary heritage continues to inspire younger generations and remains a priceless treasure of spiritual and cultural value.

Author Information:

I am Oromova Dildora Khayrulla qizi, born in 2007 in the Yangi Hayot neighborhood of Qarshi district, Kashkadarya region, Republic of Uzbekistan. I am currently a first-year student at Karshi State University, Faculty of Pedagogy, majoring in Primary Education.

Worth Noting:

• Navoi created works in various genres and wrote in two languages: Turkic (under the pen name "Navoi") and Persian (under the pen name "Foni"). His Turkic poetic heritage is mainly collected in the divan Xazoyin ul-ma'oni, which consists of four parts: G'aroyib us-sig'ar, Navodir ush-shabob, Badoye ul-vasat, and Favoyid ul-kibar. These works reflect deep philosophical thoughts and a wide range of human emotions.

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The subconscious influence: The Hidden force behind career choice



By: Diaspora Times Team
xxxxxxxxxxxxx

Today, choosing a career is often perceived as a conscious decision. One thinks, “This is what I want,” or “This suits me.” However, the reality is that behind these decisions often lie experiences, beliefs, and influences accumulated silently within the subconscious.

The subconscious is a human’s invisible yet powerful control system. It begins to take shape in childhood through the family environment, parental opinions, societal views, and experiences of success or failure. As an individual grows, they may believe they are making a free choice, while in reality, they are operating under the influence of sub-

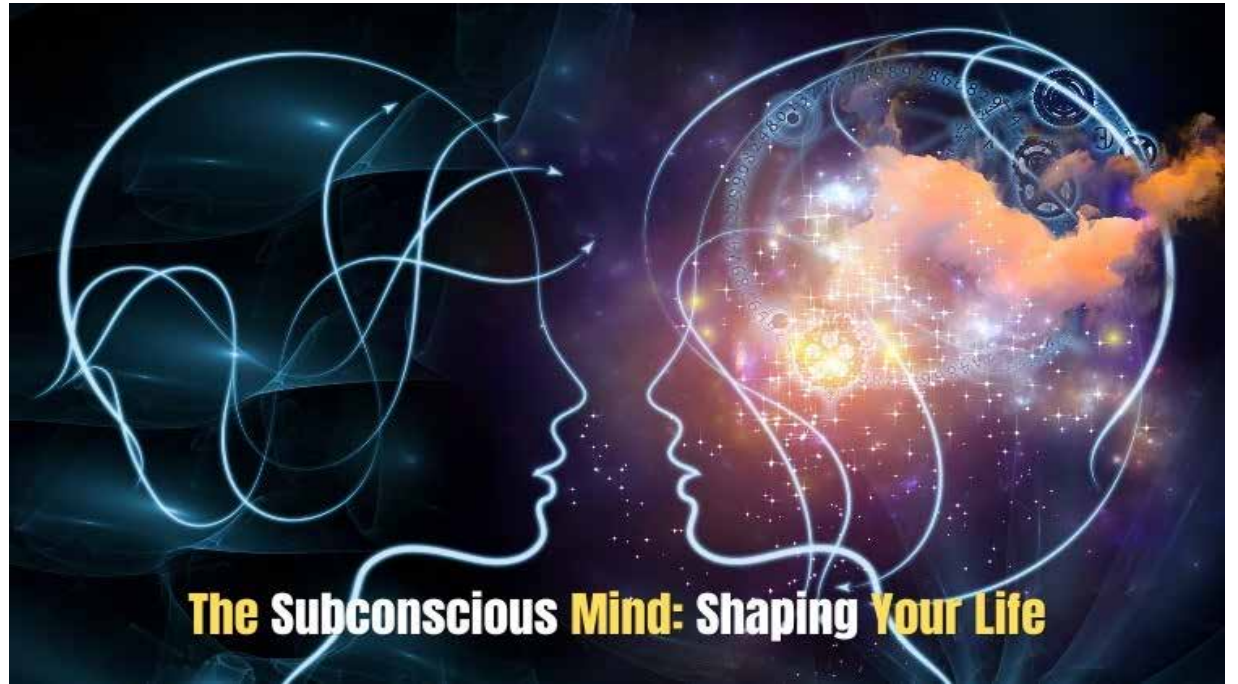
conscious programming.

This influence is particularly evident in career selection. For instance, someone who frequently heard the phrase “you must choose a stable profession” during childhood might opt for a field perceived as “safe,” regardless of their true interests. Conversely, if the belief “I cannot handle this” is rooted in the subconscious, the individual may make a decision that falls below their actual potential.

Subconscious influence is not exclusively negative. If an individual has formed beliefs such as “I am capable,” “I can learn,” or “I will find my way,” they will choose their profession with freedom and confidence. Therefore, the issue is not the existence of the subconscious, but rather how it has been programmed.

At this point, a critical question arises: Is a person truly choosing their own career, or is the subconscious directing them?

To find the answer, one must observe oneself. Which decisions stem from fear? Which ones arise from genuine interest? Which voice belongs to society, and which is their own inner voice?



Working with the subconscious is a process of self-rediscovery. When a person realizes their limiting beliefs, they gain the power to change them. Through this, the process of choosing a career transforms into a conscious and free decision. In today’s society, success is linked not only to choosing the right profession but

also to self-awareness. If a person does not understand themselves, a sense of dissatisfaction will remain, regardless of the path they choose. The subconscious is the most powerful yet invisible factor in career selection. It should not be ignored but understood. Only when an individual understands their subcon-

scious do they gain the true freedom of choice.

*Author: Ziyadullayeva Sitora Nurilla
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Culture

ORUN and 1xBET Partner to Support a Dynamic Creative Africa

By: Diaspora Times Team
xxxxxxxxxxxxx

ABIDJAN, Côte d’Ivoire — In the heart of one of West Africa’s most vibrant cultural capitals, a quiet but consequential shift is taking place. Against the backdrop of the prestigious Palais de la Culture in Abidjan, a new partnership is signalling that Africa’s creative industries are no longer simply a cultural conversation — they are fast becoming a continental economic strategy.

ORUN, the pan-African platform dedicated to structuring and internationalising African creative industries, has announced a landmark partnership with global sports betting and entertainment giant 1xBET. The announcement was made during the Innovation Village, a co-initiative organised alongside MASA — the Marché des Arts du Spectacle Africain — which ran from 14 to 18 April, drawing policymakers, creatives, entrepreneurs, and cultural institutions from across the continent.

The Innovation Village was far more than a showcase. Designed as a convergence space between heritage, innovation, and knowledge transmission, it featured scenography crafted entirely by Ivorian artisans, a rich programme of panels and masterclasses focused on the business

architecture of creative industries, and an immersive cultural experience produced by Orun Studios. The centrepiece was a major institutional event on 17 April, bringing together stakeholders committed to advancing Africa’s creative economy.

The initiative is built around three foundational pillars: memory, structure, and transmission — a framework that reflects ORUN’s conviction that sustainable creative industries must be rooted in cultural identity, organised through professional systems, and scaled through strategic knowledge transfer.

At the core of the partnership announcement is a shared ambition to move African creative ecosystems beyond the informal and the fragmented, toward something more durable and globally competitive. For ORUN, the alliance with 1xBET represents exactly the kind of long-term, commercially grounded support that Africa’s creative sector has long needed but rarely secured.

“The Innovation Village was conceived as an act of construction,” said Habyba Thiero, CEO of Africa Currency Network and President of ORUN. “By partnering with organisations such as 1xBET, we aim to demonstrate that it is possible to support African talent, narratives, and creative ecosystems over the long term, with ambition and consistency.”

That language — ambition and con-



Group photo

sistency — speaks directly to the chronic challenge facing Africa’s creative industries: the gap between abundant talent and sustained institutional investment. From film and music to fashion, gaming, and live performance, African creatives have long operated in ecosystems defined by scarcity of infrastructure, limited access to capital, and insufficient platforms for international reach. ORUN’s model seeks to address all three simultaneously.

The partnership with 1xBET adds commercial weight and international visibility to that mission, potentially opening new distribution channels and revenue streams for African content creators and cultural entrepreneurs operating under ORUN’s expanding umbrella. The broader significance of this week in Abidjan should not be underestimated. By embedding a business and innovation agenda within the cultural theatre of MASA — it-

self one of Africa’s most established performing arts markets — ORUN has made a deliberate statement: that culture and commerce are not in tension on this continent. They are, increasingly, the same conversation.

Africa’s creative industries are structuring themselves. Abidjan just showed the world what that looks like.

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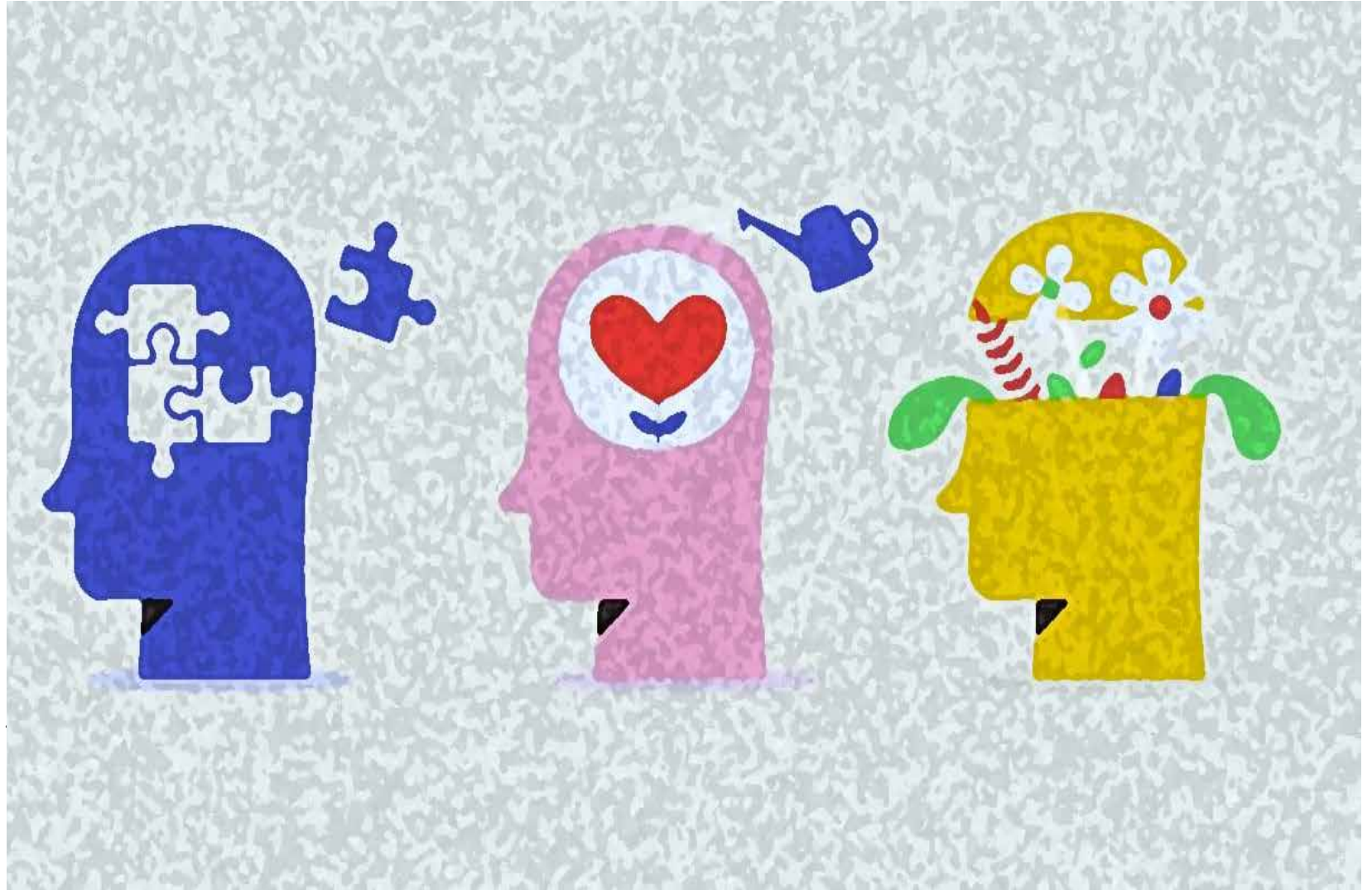
Dopamine, Desire & Detachment: A Psychological Insight



By: Shelly Sharma
xxxxxxxxxxxx

Worth Noting:

- Have you ever noticed! Sometimes we haven't finished one reel and instantly swipes to another. sometimes we aren't even enjoying it anymore, but our thumb keeps moving. It's the pull of "maybe the next one will be better." That "maybe" is dopamine at work. It is an anticipation, not satisfaction. It keeps the mind chasing what might feel good. It is for seeking satisfaction from other objects that last one failed to deliver. Finding balance in the age of indulgence, all pleasurable behaviour – from doing a puzzle or spending time with a good friend to eating an entire bag of potato chips or spending hours at the gambling table – release dopamine in the brain, and dopamine makes you feel good. Now we are not choosing anymore—we are reacting
- After binge-watching for hours, you feel drained. Yet the next day, you repeat it.



Dopamine keeps whispering, "Just one more..."

Desire keeps saying, "Then you'll be complete."

But awareness quietly asks,

"Is this really true?"

And in that question, a new way of living begins.

Dopamine - Pull for "Next" & A Silent Habit Builder
Have you ever noticed! Sometimes we haven't finished one reel and instantly swipes to another. sometimes we aren't even enjoying it anymore, but our thumb keeps moving. It's the pull of "maybe the next one will be better." That "maybe" is dopamine at work. It is an anticipation, not satisfaction. It keeps the mind chasing what might feel good. It is for seeking satisfaction from other objects that last one failed to deliver. Finding balance in the age of indulgence, all pleasurable behaviour – from doing a puzzle or spending time with a good friend to eating an entire bag of potato chips or spending hours at the gambling table – release dopamine in the brain, and dopamine makes you feel good. Now we are not choosing anymore—we are reacting

After binge-watching for hours, you feel drained. Yet the next day, you repeat it. Why? The mind remembers "fun," not the fatigue. Never before in human his-

tory have we has such access to extreme reward (stimulus for brain) be it through our phones, food options , entertainment sources or any other readily available options for instant gratification that come with no surprise for high rate of anxiety , lack of patience and empathetic behaviour.

Desire Begins with a Subtle Sense of Incompleteness

Desire is rooted in perceived lack—"I am not enough yet." This sense of lack is often an illusion created by the restless mind.

Awareness: The First Crack in the Cycle

Psychological Insight: Observing an urge activates metacognition—thinking about thinking.

Spiritual Insight: Awareness is the doorway to detachment.

One evening, MS.A pauses before opening Instagram. She asks, "Why now?" There's no clear reason—just restlessness.

For the first time, she sees the urge instead of obeying it. That pause is powerful.

Detachment is Not Suppression—It is Clear Seeing

Psychological Insight: Suppression increases rebound urges; observation reduces them.

Spiritual Insight: Detachment means not being controlled, not running away. You feel like checking your phone during study time. Instead of forcing yourself

harshly, you simply notice: "This is an urge, not a command." The intensity begins to fade.

The Mind Seeks Escape, Not Just Pleasure

Psychological Insight: Many desires are actually avoidance of discomfort (boredom, anxiety, loneliness).

Spiritual Insight: Facing discomfort dissolves its power.

Arjun realizes he doesn't open YouTube because he loves videos—he opens it to escape study stress.

When he sits with that discomfort for a few minutes, it slowly reduces.

The need to escape weakens.

Detachment is Inner Freedom, Not Outer Withdrawal

& Freedom Lies in the Gap Between Impulse behaviour and an aware Action

Psychological Insight: Even a few seconds of pause can rewire behaviour.

Spiritual Insight: That pause is where consciousness enters.

Notification pops up. Instead of instantly tapping, you wait 5 seconds.

In those 5 seconds, you choose—not react. You Can Use Things Without Being Used by Them

Psychological Insight: Healthy engagement vs compulsive behaviour.

Spiritual Insight: True detachment allows participation without dependence.

To complete the narrative of "The Gap Between Impulse and Awareness" in both a

scientific and creative manner, we must look at how the brain transitions from the "seeking" loop of dopamine to the "seeing" state of metacognition.

Inner Freedom through Intentionality

The ultimate goal is not to withdraw from the world, but to achieve Inner Freedom. By setting a timer for social media or sitting with the discomfort of study stress, we move from being "used by things" to "using things". This creates a life of intentional use rather than endless scrolling. We find that we are already "enough," and the dopamine-driven search for "more" is replaced by a conscious participation in life where we are no longer controlled by the next hit of "maybe".

The core of our struggle lies in a deep-seated "sense of incompleteness"—the ego's belief that it is "not enough yet". This is the trap of "becoming": the mind constantly chases external objects, believing that the next achievement or the next "reel" will finally provide fulfilment.

The Illusion of "Next"

Dopamine acts as the physiological fuel for this spiritual ignorance. It is not about satisfaction, but the anticipation of "maybe". As the sources highlight, the mind remembers the "fun" but ignores the "fatigue," leading to a cycle where we are no

longer choosing, but merely reacting. It is S as being a slave to the object—whether it is a phone, food, or recognition, we use them to escape the discomfort of our own restlessness.

The Power of the Witness

The breakthrough occurs when we move from being the "actor" to being the "observer".

Clear Seeing: Detachment is not running away or harsh suppression; it is "clear seeing". When you notice an urge and tell yourself, "This is an urge, not a command," you stop identifying with the impulse. Freedom exists in the five-second pause between a notification and your response. In this gap, the "I" that is usually driven by habit is replaced by Consciousness.

True Detachment

True freedom is not about withdrawing from the world but "using things without being used by them". By facing the inner boredom or anxiety that drives us to distraction, we dissolve their power. We then move from compulsive consumption to intentional use, participating in the world without being dependent on it for our sense of self.

Assistant professor
Shelly Sharma

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Sino-African News

The great opening: How china's Zero-tariff gambit is reshaping the future of african trade

Beijing's sweeping decision to eliminate import duties on goods from 53 African nations is the most consequential shift in China-Africa economic relations in a generation — but behind the historic headline lie urgent questions about who truly benefits, and at what cost

By: Diaspora Times Team
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The Architecture of the Policy

The announcement did not emerge from a vacuum. China had already scrapped tariffs on 100 per cent of tariff lines for imports from 33 least developed countries in Africa since 1 December 2024. The May 2026 expansion extended that privilege to the remaining 20 non-least-developed African nations — countries including Zimbabwe, South Africa, Egypt, Morocco, and Nigeria — through a preferential tariff framework initially set to run until April 2028.

This constitutes a major step for China to unswervingly expand high-level opening and pursue voluntary opening. It is an innovative measure to deliver on the outcomes of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation and consolidate the All-Weather China-Africa Community with a Shared Future for the New Era, setting a benchmark for cooperation among developing countries worldwide.

Du Xiaohui, director-general of the Department of African Affairs at China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, called the arrangement a "golden hallmark" for China-Africa cooperation — poised to become an enduring engine for the high-quality development of bilateral relations.

The numbers underpinning this moment are striking. China-Africa trade has expanded 27.5-fold over the past two decades, rising from 87.38 billion yuan in 2000 to 2.49 trillion yuan in 2025. China-Africa trade hit a record high of \$348 billion in 2025, while China's imports from Africa amounted to \$123 billion, up 5.4 per cent year on year. In the first quarter of 2026, bilateral trade witnessed an increase of 23.7 per cent year on year, with Chinese imports growing by 14.6 per cent. China has remained Africa's largest trading partner for 17 consecutive years.

What Zero Tariffs Actually Mean for African Exporters

For African exporters of agricultural goods — long disadvantaged by tariff walls that penalised processed products more heavily than raw commodities — the policy shift carries real and immediate significance. The zero-tariff policy will remove the tariff disadvantage of processed goods compared with raw materials, encouraging local primary and deep processing in Africa, while also strengthening supply and production links in sectors such as machinery and electronics, textiles, and minerals. Quality consumer goods such as Namibian lobsters and Tan-

zania mud crabs are already entering southern Chinese markets at a faster pace, according to trade officials in the region.

The early data from the 2024 LDC measure provides a compelling preview. Between December 2024 and March 2025, China's imports from those least developed countries surged by 15.2 per cent to reach \$21.42 billion. African coffee imports into China rose by 70 per cent in the first quarter of 2025, a figure Chinese official media attributes in part to the tariff signal, though also to upgraded customs processes and expanded marketing campaigns for African products on Chinese digital platforms.

Zimbabwe, Africa's top lithium producer, became the first country on the continent to export locally processed lithium sulfate, with trade between China and Zimbabwe expanding by 14.7 per cent in 2025. Zimbabwe ended the year with a \$720 million trade surplus with China.

For many African economists, the transformation in agricultural trade is where the policy's human impact will be most keenly felt. For low-income African countries, which are highly susceptible to economic and environmental shocks, tariff-free market access to a stable, predictable demand from the Chinese market offers the opportunity to accelerate economic diversification, unlock value-addition potential, modernise agriculture, and foster industrialisation.

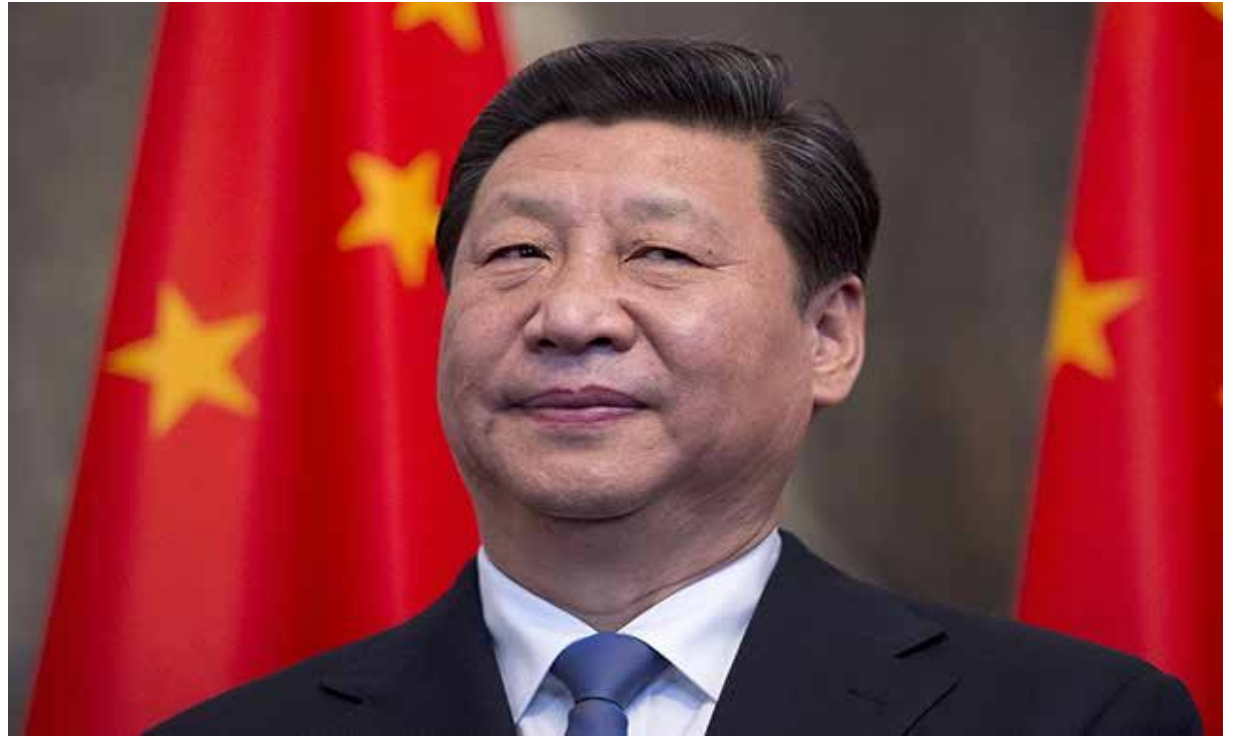
The Geopolitical Dimension: An Unmistakable Signal

It would be naive to read the zero-tariff announcement purely through an economic lens. The timing and framing of Beijing's decision are inseparable from the wider context of a fracturing global trade order.

While the US tightens its market and imposes restrictions, China is opening its market and creating a new preferential trade framework for African nations. China positions itself as a "trade liberaliser" in contrast to Western protectionist policies, enhancing its soft power across developing economies. The policy also supports yuan internationalisation by increasing trade settlements in Chinese currency, reducing reliance on the US dollar in Africa-linked transactions.

As protectionism and unilateralism are on the rise, and continents near the Middle East are hit by spillovers of conflict there, China shares opportunities and pursues common development with Africa through the zero-tariff policy, contributing to global peace and development with greater stability in China-Africa ties.

There is, however, a conspicuous exception in the policy's otherwise



Chinese President Xi Jinping

sweeping continental embrace. Eswatini remains the only African nation excluded, because of its diplomatic ties with Taiwan. This clearly demonstrates how China directly links trade access with political alignment, reinforcing its "one-China" foreign policy doctrine. It is a reminder that in Beijing's trade architecture, economics and geopolitics are never fully separable.

Reasons for Measured Optimism: What the Fine Print Reveals

Independent analysts have urged African governments and exporters to temper their enthusiasm with a careful reading of what zero tariffs will — and will not — change in practice.

For minerals and metals, the tariff is already zero. Iron ore enters China duty-free regardless of origin. The same applies to copper ore, refined copper, non-monetary gold, and iron and steel scrap, which make up the bulk of exports from the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Africa, and Zambia to China. These products were already duty-free. They will remain so after 1 May 2026. The zero-tariff change will not affect them. Crude oil — the dominant export from Angola, Nigeria, and Congo-Brazzaville — also already attracted a zero most-favoured-nation rate for WTO members.

The genuine tariff reductions fall most significantly on agricultural products and processed goods. Green coffee previously attracted an eight per cent duty; roasted coffee fifteen per cent. Moving both to zero is a meaningful competitive advantage in a fiercely contested market. While trade volumes may rise, structural economic transformation remains limited without industrial upgrading. Industrialised nations such as South Africa and Morocco are better positioned to capitalise on this policy due to stronger manufacturing bases. Less developed econo-

mies may remain dependent on raw commodity exports, limiting long-term value creation.

The deeper structural risk is one Africa's trade economists have long identified: that increased market access to China, without a parallel push for domestic industrialisation and value-addition capacity on the African side, may simply intensify the continent's role as a supplier of primary goods rather than manufactured products — reinforcing rather than transforming the terms of trade.

The CADEPA Framework and What Comes Next

The zero-tariff measure also serves as an early-harvest outcome of the ongoing China-Africa Economic Partnership Agreement negotiations. CADEPA is a free-trade-oriented framework built on four pillars: trade, supply chains, green development, and the digital economy. China has signalled it will continue signing bilateral economic partnership agreements with individual African nations, alongside upgrading the "green lanes" that facilitate faster customs clearance for African agricultural and food products.

Supported by initiatives such as the green channel, Belt and Road Initiative, African Continental Free Trade Area, and the China-Africa Economic and Trade Expo, the expanded zero-tariff policy could further integrate African value chains into the Chinese market and unlock new growth opportunities for both parties.

China will continue to sign agreements on economic partnership for shared development with African countries and upgrade the green lanes for import of African agricultural and food products to China, so as to further improve China-Africa trade facilitation.

For African governments, the strate-

gic imperative is clear. The window of preferential access runs initially until April 2028. Whether the continent's exporters, manufacturers, and agribusinesses can build the logistics, quality standards, and production capacity needed to fully exploit that window in two years is perhaps the most consequential question in African trade today.

A Verdict Written in Trade Flows

The zero-tariff policy is historic by any reasonable measure — a gesture of market opening from the world's second-largest economy toward a continent that has long sought fairer terms of engagement in global trade. Its economic logic is sound, its political timing acute, and its potential to reshape African export industries genuinely transformative, particularly in agriculture and light manufacturing.

But transformation is not automatic. It requires African governments to invest in infrastructure, standards compliance, processing capacity, and the logistics chains needed to turn preferential access into enduring prosperity. It requires that the benefits of increased trade reach smallholder farmers and factory workers, not merely trading intermediaries.

China's zero-tariff policy is drawing more development resources to the African continent, materially advancing regional integration, and strengthening its capacity for self-driven development. Whether Africa seizes that moment with the urgency and strategic intelligence it demands will define not merely the next two years of trade statistics, but the economic trajectory of a continent of 1.5 billion people for a generation to come.

The door has been opened. The question is who walks through it, and how far they go.

African News

Its Time! Emirates' iconic A380 returns to Dubai with world-first Starlink Wi-Fi onboard

Emirates customers will soon enjoy a transformative leap in onboard connectivity with the ability to stream, game, browse, and work throughout their journey on personal devices

By: Diaspora Times Team
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Emirates' iconic A380

Worth Noting:

- The Emirates A380 was one of the first commercial aircraft in the world to offer internet to its customers, with first generation systems offering a total aircraft bandwidth of less than 1 Mbps. Emirates' installation of three Starlink antennas on each A380 will improve the Wi-Fi available onboard a thousand-fold - offering a 'better than at home' connectivity experience for customers, while flying at 40,000 feet.

- The first Emirates A380 aircraft equipped with Starlink made its return to Dubai this week, after its installation and certification was accomplished in Newquay, UK. With more A380s scheduled for accelerated installation throughout 2026, Emirates customers will soon enjoy a transformative leap in onboard connectivity with the ability to stream, game, browse, and work throughout their journey on personal devices. The service will be complimentary for all customers, across all cabins, with easy sign up and access. Future enhancements will include Live TV streaming over Starlink, initially on personal devices and later integrated into seatback screens.

Emirates' flagship A380, long celebrated as one of aviation's most iconic aircraft, is set to reach new heights as the first installation of next-generation Starlink Wi-Fi onboard has just been completed.

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From its celebrated Onboard Lounge to its signature First Class Shower Spa, the Emirates A380 has consistently redefined long-haul travel, beloved by customers from all corners of the globe. With the addition of Starlink's seamless connectivity across all cabin classes, the Emirates A380 experience evolves once more, delivering a fully connected journey in the sky.

A technical first for the world's largest passenger aircraft

As the world's largest passenger aircraft, the A380 presents unique engineering challenges and oppor-

tunities. This industry-first Starlink configuration is designed to meet the demands of the A380's 'double-decker' layout and high passenger capacity and is capable of delivering more than 2 Gbps of total aircraft bandwidth across the cabin. Compared with the Emirates Boeing 777, the Emirates A380 features additional wireless access points and a third antenna to deliver an enhanced connectivity experience for its higher passenger capacity. Optimised inter-deck integration supports a seamless Wi-Fi experience, with customers able to enjoy high speeds depending on usage and device capability.

Accelerated rollout across an industry-leading fleet

Starlink installations will soon begin at Emirates Engineering facilities in Dubai to accelerate deployment across the fleet. Emirates is committed to bringing the best possible connectivity to its entire fleet at the earliest opportunity, with 25 Boeing

777-300ER aircraft already equipped with Starlink and the first A380 now joining service.

So far, more than 650,000 Emirates customers have already flown on Starlink-equipped flights, experiencing the benefits of next-generation onboard connectivity firsthand.

Emirates continuous investment into elevating customer experience

The introduction of Starlink on the A380 builds on Emirates' ongoing investment into redefining the customer journey, including one of the most ambitious retrofit programmes in aviation history. To date, 93 Emirates aircraft have been fully refurbished (<https://apo-opa.co/4d9Ldyo>) featuring the installation of the widely acclaimed Premium Economy cabins, an enhanced Business Class, refreshed First Class suites, upgraded interiors and finishes in Economy Class and throughout all aspects of the cabin, and expanded and upgraded in-

flight systems that can offer more than 6,500 channels of entertainment.

To complement the significant upgrades across all hardware, Emirates also continues to invest in its training programmes and facilities that are instrumental to customer experience. In mid-2025, Emirates opened a US\$ 8 million facility - 'Centre of Hospitality Excellence' (<https://apo-opa.co/3QpE9VP>) to train its 25,000 cabin crew in the art of hospitality onboard - bringing together both the tangible and intangible elements of an outstanding travel experience.

Africa

Africa's Paint Titan: Vantage Capital's \$45 Million Bet On Egypt's Industrial Champion

In one of the largest mezzanine debt deals in Egyptian history, a South African fund manager backs a Alexandria-based coatings manufacturer with the reach of a global player and the grit of a family business

By: Omar Gharbawi
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CAIRO, Egypt — It began in 1979 as a modest workshop on the fringes of Alexandria. Nearly five decades later, the International Group for Modern Coatings — known across the industry simply as MIDO — sells its products in more than 50 countries, partners with Japanese and Chinese coatings giants, and has just secured one of the largest mezzanine debt transactions in Egyptian corporate history.

Vantage Capital, the Johannesburg-headquartered firm that holds the distinction of being Africa's largest mezzanine debt fund manager, announced this week that it has deployed \$45 million into MIDO, backing the Egyptian manufacturer's ambitions to unlock latent production capacity and accelerate growth across domestic and export markets. The deal marks Vantage Capital's third investment in Egypt and its 41st transaction overall across a portfolio now spanning 11 African countries.

For a continent that so often watches its industrial talent underfinanced and under-scaled, the transaction carries significance well beyond its headline figure.

From Workshop to Continental Powerhouse

The story of MIDO is, in many respects, the story of what Egyptian manufacturing can achieve when technical ambition is matched by commercial discipline. Founded by Dr. Aly Ghaly, the company has grown from its origins into one of Africa's leading specialty coatings manufacturers, producing a portfolio of over 1,200 stock-keeping units spanning automotive refinish paints, wood coatings, unsaturated and saturated polyester resins, adhesives, and a broad range of industrial products.

Its two manufacturing facilities in Alexandria, covering a combined area of 47,100 square metres, are fully vertically integrated — encompassing dedicated production lines, proprietary in-house resin manufacturing, and tin can packaging capabilities. Together, they command a combined production capacity exceeding 100,000 tonnes per annum.



The operation is, by any regional standard, formidable. MIDO's global credentials have been further burnished through private label and co-manufacturing partnerships with some of the world's most respected coatings players, including Japan's Nippon Paints and Kansai Paints, alongside China's Yatu Paints. Its export footprint stretches across Africa — its primary external market — as well as the GCC, Europe, Asia, and the United States.

Dr. Aly Ghaly, who guided the company's transformation from small local enterprise to fully integrated industrial platform, continues to serve as Chairman. His son-in-law Ramy Galal, a 20-year veteran of the business and member of the founding family, serves as Chief Executive Officer. Following the Vantage transaction, the management team will continue to lead the company — continuity that both sides regard as fundamental to MIDO's next chapter.

The Deal: Mezzanine Finance as a Growth Lever

The \$45 million in mezzanine debt funding will be deployed across two primary purposes: debt refinancing and working capital. Together, these applications are designed to free up MIDO's manufacturing infrastructure to operate closer to its full potential — a

significant opportunity in a company where capacity has outpaced the financial headroom available to fully exploit it.

Mezzanine finance, which sits between senior debt and equity in the capital structure, offers growing companies access to substantial funding without the dilution of ownership that equity investment requires. For family-founded businesses with long institutional memories and deep operational expertise, it is often the ideal instrument — and in MIDO's case, Vantage Capital concluded it was precisely the right fit.

"MIDO is a case in point of a successful, homegrown pan-African industrial platform," said Omar Gharbawi, Associate Partner at Vantage Capital. "Management has built the company from the ground up into one of Egypt's top three specialty coatings players, with products now sold in more than 50 countries. Through some of the most challenging macroeconomic and geopolitical headwinds, the business has demonstrated remarkable resilience, underpinned by strong fundamentals and deep industry expertise. We believe MIDO is only beginning to realise its full potential."

For Galal, the partnership represents access to not merely capital but credibility and execution capability. "Our key differentiators are

our manufacturing infrastructure, R&D capabilities, distribution relationships, and strong brand equity," he said. "Vantage Capital's funding now gives us the firepower to unlock substantial latent capacity in our facilities and accelerate both our local and export growth ambitions. We are proud to partner with a firm that understood our business, shared our long-term vision, and delivered on very tight execution timelines."

Economic Impact: Hard Currency, Skilled Jobs, Industrial Self-Sufficiency

The investment's significance extends beyond MIDO's balance sheet. Egypt, a nation of over 120 million people navigating a complex macroeconomic environment, stands to benefit directly from the transaction's downstream effects.

By unlocking MIDO's production capacity, Vantage Capital's investment is expected to generate meaningful hard currency inflows through expanded exports — a priority of acute national importance for an economy that has faced sustained foreign exchange pressure in recent years. At the same time, increased manufacturing activity will create skilled employment across production, research and development, sales, and logistics in Alexandria and surrounding areas. Perhaps equally significant

is the substitution effect. By replacing imported specialty coatings with high-quality, locally manufactured alternatives, the investment directly supports Egypt's industrial self-sufficiency agenda while reinforcing the country's position as a serious export-oriented manufacturer within Africa and beyond.

Warren van der Merwe, Managing Partner at Vantage Capital, left little doubt about the fund's conviction in the Egyptian market. "Egypt is one of the most important markets on the African continent — a nation of over 120 million people with a deep industrial base, a highly educated workforce, and a growing role in African trade," he said. "MIDO exemplifies precisely the type of company we seek to support: founder-led, technically sophisticated, internationally oriented, and with a clear and executable growth agenda."

Legal counsel for the transaction was provided by Matouk Bassiouny and Werkmans for Vantage Capital, and Adsero for MIDO, with PwC Middle East, Emerton, and SLR serving as additional advisors to the Vantage consortium.

In a continent still writing the rules of its own industrial renaissance, MIDO and Vantage Capital have just added a chapter worth reading.

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FGM

Africa's Broken Promise: How laws are failing millions of girls at risk of child marriage and FGM

By: Sphiwe Dlamini
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in her own home is not a law; it is a broken promise," said Sally Ncube, Equality Now's Regional Representative for Southern Africa, speaking at the report's launch during the 47th Ordinary Session of the ACERWC in Maseru, Lesotho, on 21 April. "Lack of implementation is not a failure of law alone. It is a failure of the ecosystem that should make the law protect children from marriage and FGM."

A Continent-Wide Crisis Hidden in Plain Sight

The report draws on case studies from ten countries — Chad, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Egypt, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, and Zimbabwe — painting a picture of entrenched harm that respects no single geography, religion, or ethnic group. Its findings are stark: fewer than half of African countries set the minimum marriage age at 18 without exception, leaving dangerous legal loopholes that permit child marriage under parental consent, judicial discretion, or customary and religious law.

Of the 27 African countries with national-level data on FGM, four — Liberia, Mali, Sierra Leone, and Somalia — still have no specific national legislation banning the practice outright. Even where bans exist, enforcement is inconsistent, cross-border transportation of girls for cutting remains largely unaddressed in law, and survivors continue to face severe obstacles in accessing justice and support services. The consequences for girls are profound and compounding. Child marriage dramatically increases a girl's likelihood of experiencing domestic violence, unwanted pregnancy, educational dropout, and lifelong poverty. FGM causes lasting physical and psychological harm. Together, these practices strip girls of agency, opportunity, and safety at the very moment they need protection most.

Climate Change: The Accelerant Nobody Planned For

Perhaps the report's most striking revelation is the degree to which climate shocks are amplifying the crisis in ways that existing protection frameworks were never designed to address.

UNICEF data cited in the report found that a 2022 drought in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia tripled the number of children at risk of dropping out of school — removing a critical line of defence, since schools are among the most important institutions for identifying and reporting abuse. Research also shows that a ten per cent decrease in rainfall is associated with a one per cent increase in child marriage rates, as families under acute economic pressure turn



to early marriage as a coping strategy, however mistaken.

In the worst-affected regions of Ethiopia, drought led to a doubling of child marriage rates within a single year. In Djibouti and Somalia, climate-related economic desperation has pushed families to subject girls to FGM at younger ages, reasoning that it increases their "marriageability" — a grotesque calculus driven by poverty and entrenched social norms.

In Somalia, both FGM and child marriage remain deeply rooted, particularly devastating communities in internally displaced persons camps where legal protections are weakest and social pressures most acute. In Sudan, FGM was criminalised in 2020, but the ongoing war and governance collapse have rendered enforcement virtually impossible, leaving girls exposed despite what the statute books say.

Political Regression and the Threat of Rollback

The report sounds an urgent alarm over a troubling political trend: the resurgence of efforts to weaken or even repeal existing protections for girls.

In The Gambia, the Supreme Court is currently considering repealing the country's ban on FGM — a case that has sent shockwaves through the regional human rights community. In Mali, proposed anti-FGM provisions were stripped from the 2024 Penal Code following sustained resistance from religious leaders, demonstrating how hard-won legislative progress can be dismantled with alarming speed when political will wavers.

More broadly, the report warns that rising authoritarianism and mili-

tary takeovers across parts of West Africa have stifled advocacy and reduced accountability. The withdrawal of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger from ECOWAS and other regional bodies has weakened the continent's collective mechanisms for holding governments to account on child rights — precisely when those mechanisms are most needed.

In Nigeria, laws criminalising FGM and setting the minimum marriage age at 18 are routinely undermined by inconsistent enforcement and the parallel operation of customary and religious legal systems that recognise no such protections. In Egypt and Cameroon, legal progress has been real but incomplete — FGM's growing medicalisation in Egypt, and legislative inconsistencies in Cameroon, continue to allow the practice to persist under new guises.

Where Hope Lives: Local Leadership and Legal Innovation

Amid the catalogue of failure, the report is careful to document the places where determined action has produced genuine change — and to draw lessons from what has worked. In Malawi, traditional leader Chief Theresa Kachindamoto has become a symbol of locally driven transformation, personally annulling thousands of child marriages across her chieftaincy and demonstrating that community leadership can shift norms even where state capacity is limited. In Zimbabwe, a constitutional court ruling — brought by two young women who had been forced into early marriage — led directly to the 2022 Marriage Act setting the minimum age of marriage at 18 with no exceptions whatsoever, a legislative landmark achieved through the courts when parliament

had stalled.

Ethiopia, meanwhile, has pioneered the use of technology in difficult circumstances. During COVID-19 lockdowns, mobile-based interactive voice recordings were deployed to reach out-of-school girls with FGM awareness content — a model that demonstrates how digital innovation can sustain advocacy even when physical access is impossible. "The study illustrates that change is possible and indeed already taking place," said the Honourable Hermine Kembo Takam Gatsing, Special Rapporteur on Child Marriage and Other Harmful Practices at ACERWC. "Progress is achievable when legislation is complemented by implementation and coordination among relevant stakeholders and the promotion within the community."

What Must Now Be Done

The report's recommendations are sweeping but specific. Governments across Africa must close legal loopholes by setting the minimum marriage age at 18 without any exceptions and aligning national, customary, and religious frameworks with regional child rights standards. They must fully incorporate international and regional human rights treaties into domestic law, ensuring those instruments are legally binding on the state rather than merely aspirational.

Strong political will must be matched by dedicated funding, robust accountability frameworks, and staffed child protection systems capable of reaching girls in rural and conflict-affected areas. Data systems must be strengthened — reliable, disaggregated data on child marriage and FGM is essential to de-

signing evidence-based responses, tracking progress, and holding institutions accountable.

Above all, the report insists, efforts must address the deep social and cultural norms that allow harmful practices to persist. Survivors and community leaders must be meaningfully included in designing responses. Girls must be empowered through education. Access to justice cannot remain the preserve of those fortunate enough to live near urban centres.

For Ncube, the stakes could not be plainer: "This report, and this moment, matter because millions of girls across Africa are waiting for the law to find them. Not for them to find the law."

She closed with a call to action as direct as any heard in Maseru's conference halls: "Equality Now and civil society organisations stand ready to continue working with ACERWC and States Parties to turn commitments into safety and justice. May this session be the turning point where Africa accelerates progress toward moving laws on paper into real-life protection in practice. Africa's girls are waiting."

The silence that greets continued inaction will not be a neutral one. It will be the sound of another girl failed — not by a missing law, but by the choice not to enforce it.

The Thematic Report on Harmful Practices Affecting Children in Africa was launched at the 47th Ordinary Session of the ACERWC in Maseru, Lesotho, on 21 April 2026. A recording of the session is available via the ACERWC.

Freedom

The expansion of freedom in poetic form and style: The emergence of new poetic models and aesthetic evolution



By: Muaydinova Muattarxon Sobirjon
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This article examines the intensification of freedom in poetic form and style in the poetry of the independence period, focusing on the emergence of new poetic models and aesthetic transformations. It analyzes the gradual breakdown of traditional poetic structures and the expansion of artistic expression. The study also explores the influence of global literary trends, particularly Japanese poetic forms such as haiku and tanka, on Uzbek poetry, and highlights the formation of new compact genres like “uchchanoq.”

Keywords: poetic freedom, aesthetic evolution, Uzbek poetry, haiku, tanka, uchchanoq, modernism, literary transformation

Introduction

One of the most significant aesthetic transformations observed in Uzbek poetry during the independence period is the relative breakdown of traditional poetic structures formed over centuries and the sharp expansion of artistic expression. In classical and Soviet-era literature, a poet’s mastery was often measured by strict adherence to aruz or syllabic meters, as well as the precise use of rhyme and refrain systems.

However, in contemporary poetry, creative priority has shifted from technical perfection to poetic freedom and the search for unique, original forms of expression. This transformation did not occur spontaneously but emerged as a result of various objective and subjective factors. Changes in the inner world of the lyrical hero and the complex attitudes toward social transformations could no longer be contained within traditional poetic frameworks.

Main Part

The poet began to move away from ready-made forms and instead sought to create new “garments” suited to individual emotional experiences. The need to capture momentary impressions and spontaneous associative thoughts in their natural state required greater artistic freedom.

At the same time, the influence of global literary movements, especially modernist trends from Western and



Japanese literature, enriched Uzbek poetry with formal diversity. Observations show that during the years of independence, tendencies toward structural brevity (laconicism) and genre syncretism (the blending of different genre features) became more prominent. As a result, poetry became more compact in form yet denser in meaning. The independence period in Uzbek poetry represents not only a return to historical roots but also a process of integrating advanced global aesthetic experiences into the national literary context. This process reflects a tendency similar to the Eastern Renaissance—creative assimilation of foreign cultural elements.

In particular, the adoption of Japanese poetic forms such as haiku (three lines) and tanka (five lines) should not be viewed as mere imitation but as a synthesis of national and universal thinking. The philosophical foundation of Japanese Zen aesthetics shares an inner affinity with the Sufi traditions of classical Uzbek literature. Both emphasize silence, contemplation, and the perception of harmony in nature. Therefore, Uzbek poets such

as Bahrom Ro‘zimuhammad, Faxriyor, Aziz Said, and Go‘zalbegim enriched the haiku tradition with national philosophical depth and Sufi symbolism. As a result, the Japanese form acquired a new didactic and philosophical dimension within Uzbek poetry. Classical Japanese haiku follows a strict 5–7–5 syllabic pattern and does not rely on rhyme. However, Uzbek poets adapted this structure to national prosodic traditions. While preserving the external structure of three lines, they often incorporated rhyme to meet the expectations of Uzbek readers. This phenomenon is referred to as “formal modification” or “creative transformation.”

Several factors contributed to this adaptation:

- the long-standing tradition of rhyme in Uzbek poetry;
- the need for musical harmony;
- the tendency to move from momentary imagery toward philosophical conclusion.

As a result, a unique literary symbiosis emerged: the form remained Japanese, while the spirit and worldview became distinctly Uzbek.

The influence of compact poetic forms led to the emergence of a new independent genre in Uzbek poetry—the “uchchanoq” (three-line poem). Unlike the classical musallas, which often functioned as part of a larger poetic structure, uchchanoq serves to capture sudden emotional or intellectual flashes rather than narrate events.

In the works of Bahrom Ro‘zimuhammad, uchchanoqs represent a high level of intellectual poetry. Through strict adherence to laconic expression, the poet avoids verbosity and encourages readers to actively participate in meaning-making. The intentional “logical gaps” in such poems are meant to be filled by the reader, aligning with the principles of reception aesthetics.

Conclusion

The independence period marked a turning point in Uzbek poetry, characterized by the expansion of poetic freedom and the emergence of new aesthetic forms. The shift from rigid traditional structures to flexible, innovative models allowed poets to express complex emotional and philosophical

ideas more effectively. The integration of global literary influences, particularly Japanese poetic forms, led to the creation of unique hybrid genres such as uchchanoq. This demonstrates the richness and diversity of modern Uzbek poetry and its ability to harmonize national identity with universal artistic trends.

Author Information

Muaydinova Muattarxon Sobirjon qizi was born on May 14, 1990, in Namangan district of Namangan region. She studied at a specialized boarding school for languages in Namangan city and later graduated from Namangan State University. Currently, she is a second-year master’s student in Uzbek language and literature at Namangan State Pedagogical Institute.

Throughout her career, she has worked in various sectors of education. Her articles on diverse topics are regularly published in mass media. She also organizes educational training sessions for teachers. Her goal is to become a highly qualified professional and contribute valuable knowledge to future generations.

Worth Noting:

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- The influence of compact poetic forms led to the emergence of a new independent genre in Uzbek poetry—the “uchchanoq” (three-line poem). Unlike the classical musallas, which often functioned as part of a larger poetic structure, uchchanoq serves to capture sudden emotional or intellectual flashes rather than narrate events.
- In the works of Bahrom Ro‘zimuhammad, uchchanoqs represent a high level of intellectual poetry. Through strict adherence to laconic expression, the poet avoids verbosity and encourages readers to actively participate in meaning-making. The intentional “logical gaps” in such poems are meant to be filled by the reader, aligning with the principles of reception aesthetics.

Business

KfW Development Bank becomes an ATIDI Shareholder, Enhances German Investment Opportunities in Africa

By: Mike Omuodo
xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Worth Noting:

- The official signing of the subscription agreement between the two organizations is being marked on the occasion of a meeting held today in Nairobi between ATIDI's CEO and the German Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, Reem Alabali Radovan. The new shareholding underscores Germany's commitment to strengthening its economic partnership with Africa and to supporting African institutions that facilitate trade and investment across the continent.
- Speaking at the signing ceremony, ATIDI CEO Manuel Moses said, "This milestone is iconic in many ways. First, it elevates our already dynamic bond with KfW and creates more opportunities for German investors looking to engage in Africa. It is also a recognition of ATIDI's earned status as Africa's top development insurer and the acknowledgement of the soundness of our business. Last, it underscores the power of partnerships in a global context increasingly marked by volatility and uncertainty. ATIDI will spare no effort to make this partnership a successful one."



Group photo

The German development bank KfW acting on behalf of and for the account of the Federal Republic of Germany has become the latest shareholder in the African Trade & Investment Development Insurance (ATIDI). KfW becomes the 13th Institutional shareholder in Africa's premier development insurer, further strengthening the organization's capital base and its capacity to support trade and investment across the continent.

The official signing of the subscription agreement between the two organizations is being marked on the occasion of a meeting held today in Nairobi between ATIDI's CEO and the German Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, Reem Alabali Radovan. The new shareholding underscores Germany's commitment to strengthening its economic partnership with Africa and to supporting African institutions that facilitate trade and investment across the continent.

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KfW invested USD 32 million to become a D2-class shareholder of ATIDI, a status dedicated to Export Credit Agencies and Non-African Public Entities. Of this amount, USD 18.4 million are funded from BMZ budget resources, with the remaining USD 13.6 million coming from KfW's own resources. As such, it will assume the obligations and benefits related to its new shareholding status, including representation in ATIDI Governance and decision-making structures and equally participating towards improving German trade and investments in Africa in alignment with the G20 Compact with Africa (CwA 2.0).

KfW's subscription in ATIDI is the culmination of a dynamic partnership between the two organiza-

tions. On behalf of the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), KfW has supported several countries' membership in ATIDI with over USD100 million financing, thus strengthening the organization's capital base and expanding its ability to mitigate risk and mobilize private investment across African markets. The new equity participation adds a direct shareholding to this long standing cooperation.

"Today we reconfirm our long-standing strategic partnership with ATIDI. Together, we intend to further enhance business opportunities for European and German investors in Africa to create prosperity and development for mutual benefit. Our membership is executed on behalf of the Federal Republic of Germany. It is only the latest culmination of a successful cooperation that has enabled the ATIDI membership of several African states and has created innovative insurance solutions to attract foreign investment on the continent." Said Christiane Laibach, Member of the Executive Board, KfW.

Established in 1948, KfW is Germany's state-owned

promotional and development bank and a key implementing partner of BMZ in international financial cooperation. It provides financing for projects in critical sectors including sustainability, infrastructure, renewable energy and small business growth in developing countries. Its shareholding in ATIDI is expected to stimulate up to \$500 million in trade and investment between German companies and African markets.

Over the past 25 years, ATIDI has grown to become Africa's premier provider of development insurance and one of its highest rated financial organizations. It leverages its partnerships with leading multilaterals and regional bodies - including the African Union, the World Bank Group, COMESA, the European Investment Bank (EIB), the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) - to offer innovative credit and investment insurance products that foster sustainable and transformational growth across the continent.

Beyond capital, this partnership represents a powerful bridge between European financial expertise and Africa's rapidly expanding

investment landscape. By combining KfW's global development finance experience with ATIDI's deep regional risk intelligence and market presence, the collaboration will help unlock new pathways for investment in strategic sectors thus supporting sustainable growth, strengthening trade corridors and enabling investors to participate more confidently in Africa's long-term economic transformation.

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Diaspora

Mnangagwa's ZANU PF Leads Zimbabwe to Unprecedented Prosperity

*President Mnangagwa's Transformational Leadership Sparks Economic Renaissance*By: Norman Mwale
[The PenPusher]
xxxxxxxxxxxx

Zimbabwe President Emmerson Mnangagwa

Worth Noting:

- Zimbabwe, April 2026

- Under President Emmerson Mnangagwa's visionary leadership, Zimbabwe is witnessing an extraordinary resurgence of hope, progress, and prosperity. Since taking office, Mnangagwa's ZANU PF government has implemented game-changing policies, catapulting the economy to new heights and improving the lives of Zimbabweans.

- "President Mnangagwa is a trailblazer, a champion of change, and a true leader of the people," said John Mangwiro, Governor of Masvingo Province. "His unwavering commitment to economic reform has created jobs, stimulated growth, and transformed our province into a hub of economic activity."

- The agriculture sector, the backbone of Zimbabwe's economy, has seen unprecedented growth. The government's Command Agriculture programme has boosted maize production, with yields increasing by 30% in the past two years (ZimStat, 2025). The programme has also supported over 200,000 farmers nationwide, injecting over \$500 million into the economy. "Mnangagwa's agricultural policies have revolutionised farming in Zimbabwe, making us a breadbasket once again," said Dr. Joyce Mujuru, former Vice President.

In a bold stride towards prosperity, Zimbabwe stands tall under the visionary leadership of President Emmerson Mnangagwa, the architect of a new era of economic renaissance and transformative growth. As the nation celebrates the remarkable achievements of the Mnangagwa administration, it is clear that ZANU PF's unwavering commitment to development has ignited a beacon of hope, empowering Zimbabweans and propelling the country towards unprecedented heights of success.

Zimbabwe, April 2026 - Under President Emmerson Mnangagwa's visionary leadership, Zimbabwe is witnessing an extraordinary resurgence of hope, progress, and prosperity. Since taking office, Mnangagwa's ZANU PF government has implemented game-changing policies, catapulting the economy to new heights and improving the lives of Zimbabweans.

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"Mnangagwa's policies have created a business-friendly environment, attracting significant foreign investment and driving growth," noted Tendai Biti, CEO of the Zimbabwe Chamber of Commerce. "Companies like ZCCM are investing over \$1 billion in local projects, creating thousands of jobs and stimulating economic activity."

The mining sector has also experienced a significant

boost, with the government's efforts to increase transparency and attract investment. "Zimbabwe's mining sector is poised for growth, with new investments in lithium, gold, and platinum," said Minister of Mines, Winston Chitondo. The government's initiatives have led to a 15% increase in mineral exports, generating over \$4 billion in revenue (Ministry of Mines, 2025).

"President Mnangagwa's focus on value addition and beneficiation will ensure that Zimbabwe maximises benefits from its natural resources," said Paul Titi, a mining industry expert. Infrastructure development has been a hallmark of Mnangagwa's presidency, with the expansion of the Robert Gabriel Mugabe International Airport, the construction of the new Beitbridge Border Post, and the upgrade of the Harare-Bulawayo Highway. The government has also completed the Victoria Falls International Airport upgrade, cementing Zimbabwe's position as a premier tourist destination. "These projects have transformed our country, making it a hub of regional commerce and trade," said

Minister of Transport, Felix Mhona.

The health sector has seen significant improvements, with the government's focus on healthcare infrastructure and service delivery. "President Mnangagwa's government has invested heavily in healthcare, with over \$300 million allocated to upgrade hospitals and clinics," said Minister of Health, Dr. Obadiah Moyo. The government's initiatives have led to a 25% reduction in maternal mortality rates and a 30% increase in access to antiretroviral therapy (Ministry of Health, 2025).

"Mnangagwa's healthcare policies have saved countless lives and improved the well-being of Zimbabweans," said Dr. Agnes Mahoro, a healthcare professional. The education sector has also seen significant improvements, with the government's focus on STEM education and infrastructure development. "President Mnangagwa's government has invested heavily in education, with over \$200 million allocated to upgrade schools and universities," said Professor Paul Mangwana, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Zimbabwe.

The government's initiatives have led to a 20% increase in pass rates in mathematics and science subjects (Ministry of Education, 2025). ZANU PF's focus on youth empowerment and women's development has yielded remarkable results. The government's Young Farmers' Programme has supported over 50,000 young farmers nationwide (Ministry of Agriculture, 2025). The Women's Bank initiative has provided over \$10 million in loans to women-led businesses, promoting entrepreneurship and economic empowerment. "Mnangagwa's leadership has empowered our women and youth, giving them a stake in the economy and a brighter future," said Hon. Sithembiso Nyoni, Minister of Women Affairs. As Zimbabwe continues on its upward trajectory, stakeholders and citizens alike praise Mnangagwa's visionary leadership and ZANU PF's dedication to development. "His Excellency President Mnangagwa is a true son of Zimbabwe, leading our nation to a brighter future," said ZANU PF Secretary-General, Kembo Mohamad.

YOUR OPINION IS INVALUABLE

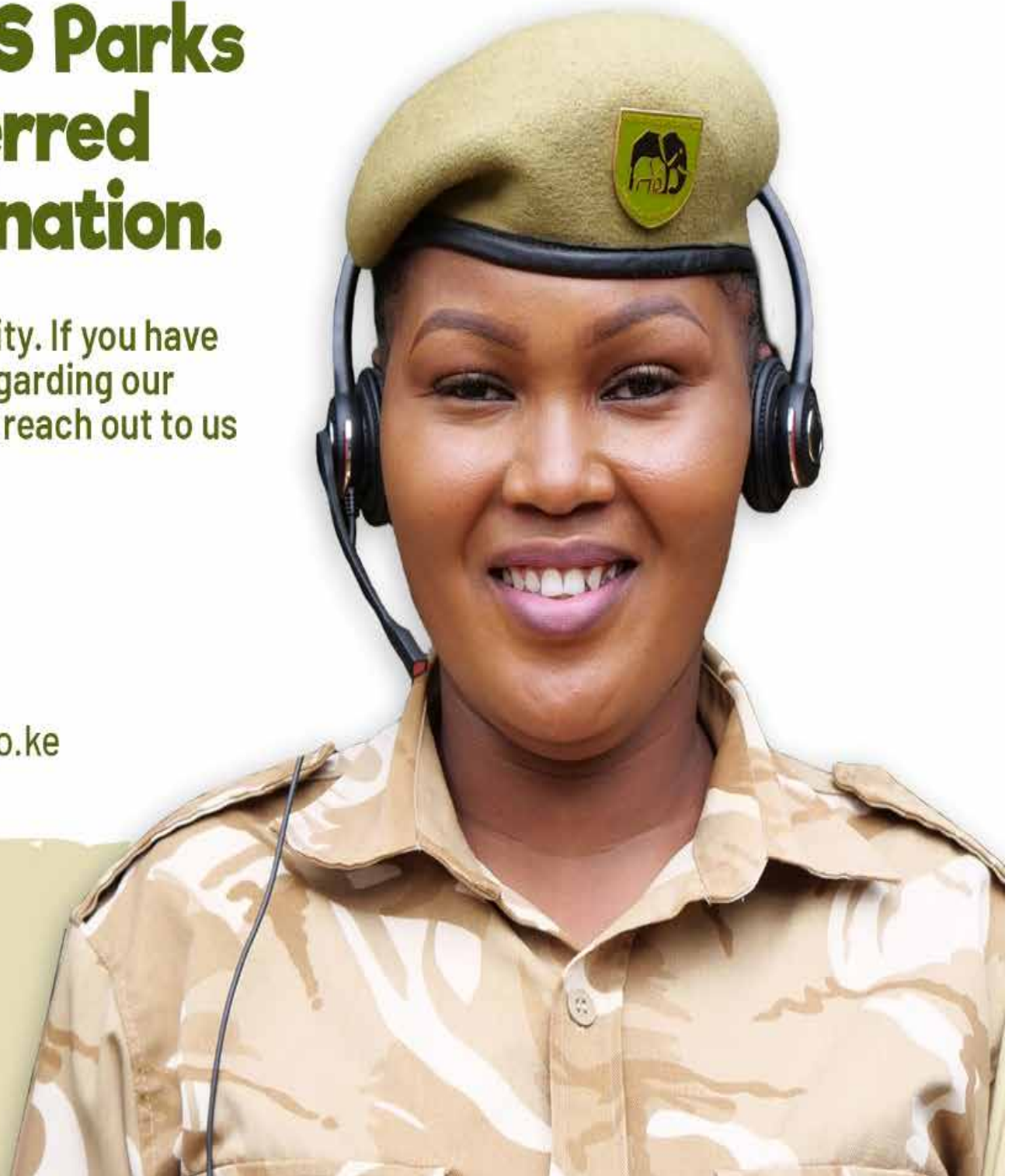
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Diaspora

Namibia's Debt Landscape in 2026: Between Fiscal Independence and External Exposure



By: **Silas Mwaudasheni Nande**
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Namibia stands out on Africa's debt map. In March 2026, the country cleared its last IMF obligation; just USD 23.9 million; and now owes the Fund nothing. This makes Namibia one of the few African nations free from IMF programs.

Namibia, a sparsely populated yet resource-rich country in Southern Africa, occupies a unique position in the continent's debt landscape. Unlike many of its peers, Namibia has no outstanding debt to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as of 2026. This independence from IMF programs distinguishes Namibia from countries such as Egypt, Kenya, and Ghana, which rely heavily on IMF financing to stabilize their economies. Yet, Namibia's debt profile is far from simple. While IMF obligations have been cleared, the country remains exposed to bilateral creditors, multilateral lenders, and private bondholders.

This article provides a deep analytical exploration of Namibia's debt structure, tracing its historical trajectory, examining its current composition, and evaluating the risks and opportunities that lie ahead. It situates Namibia within the broader African debt spectrum, highlighting both its strengths and vulnerabilities.

1. Namibia's Debt Position in Context

1.1 IMF Independence

In March 2026, Namibia repaid its remaining IMF obligations of USD 23.9 million, reducing its IMF exposure to zero. This repayment was symbolic: it marked Namibia's fiscal independence from IMF conditionalities, a rare achievement in Africa. Countries such as Egypt (USD 7.41 billion), Côte d'Ivoire (USD 3.6 billion), and Kenya (USD 2.93 billion) remain deeply entangled in IMF programs, often subject to stringent austerity measures. Namibia's exit from IMF debt thus signals a deliberate policy choice to rely on alternative financing mechanisms.

1.2 Overall Debt Metrics

- Total external debt: ~USD 2.5–3 billion ($\approx 7\%$ of GDP).
- Government debt-to-GDP ratio: ~70%, including domestic borrowing.

Domestic debt: Majority of obligations is managed through Treasury bills and bonds denominated in Namibian dollars.

These figures suggest that Namibia's external debt burden is relatively modest compared to regional peers. However, the high domestic debt ratio raises concerns about crowding out private sector credit and slowing economic growth.

2. Composition of Namibia's Debt

2.1 Bilateral Creditors

China: USD 500–700 million, primarily for infrastructure projects (roads, railways, energy).
Germany: USD 200–300 million, focused on renewable energy, water management, and development cooperation.

China's role reflects its broader footprint in Africa, financing large-scale infrastructure under the Belt and Road Initiative. Germany's involvement underscores Namibia's historical ties and shared interest in sustainable development.

2.2 Multilateral Lenders

World Bank (IBRD/IDA): USD 400–500 million, supporting education, health, and governance reforms.
African Development Bank (AfDB): USD 300–400 million, financing regional integration, transport, and energy projects.

These loans are concessional, often tied to development outcomes. They provide Namibia with technical expertise and relatively favorable terms compared with commercial borrowing.

2.3 Private Investors

Eurobond holders: ~USD 750 million. Namibia has issued international bonds to finance fiscal deficits.

Risks: Exposure to currency fluctuations (USD/NAD) and global interest rates.
Eurobonds represent Namibia's most volatile debt component. While they provide access to international capital markets, they also expose the country to external shocks.

3. Comparative Analysis: Namibia vs. African Peers

3.1 Zero IMF Debt Group

Namibia joins Botswana, Eswatini, and Mauritius in maintaining zero IMF debt. These countries rely on domestic financing and bilateral partnerships rather than IMF programs. Their independence reflects stronger fiscal discipline and diversified financing strategies.

3.2 Moderate IMF Debt Group

Countries such as Zambia (USD 1.13 billion) and Cameroon (USD 1.17 billion) carry moderate IMF obligations. Their reliance on IMF

support reflects structural vulnerabilities, particularly in commodity-dependent economies.

5. Opportunities and Strategic

Manage Currency Risk: Develop hedging mechanisms to mitigate exposure to exchange rate fluctuations.



Namibia President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah

support reflects structural vulnerabilities, particularly in commodity-dependent economies.

3.3 High IMF Debt Group

Ghana, Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire, and Egypt represent the high-debt spectrum. Their dependence on IMF financing underscores fiscal stress, currency instability, and infrastructure financing needs. Namibia's independence contrasts sharply with this group, highlighting its relative fiscal resilience.

4. Risks in Namibia's Debt Profile

4.1 Commodity Dependence

Namibia's debt sustainability is tied to exports of uranium, diamonds, and fisheries. Price shocks in these sectors can strain repayment capacity. For instance, a downturn in uranium prices could reduce export revenues, limiting the government's ability to service external debt.

4.2 Currency Risk

Eurobond obligations expose Namibia to exchange-rate fluctuations. A depreciation of the Namibian dollar against the US dollar increases the cost of servicing foreign-denominated debt.

4.3 Domestic Debt Burden

High domestic debt competes with private sector credit, potentially slowing investment and growth. This crowding-out effect is a struc-

Choices

5.1 Fiscal Consolidation

Namibia's government is pursuing fiscal consolidation, reducing reliance on external borrowing and strengthening domestic financing mechanisms. This strategy enhances sovereignty and reduces vulnerability to external shocks.

5.2 Diversification of Creditors

By balancing bilateral, multilateral, and private financing, Namibia avoids overdependence on any single creditor. This diversification provides flexibility in debt management.

5.3 Regional Integration

AfDB financing supports Namibia's role in regional integration. Improved transport and energy infrastructure can enhance trade competitiveness and reduce debt vulnerability.

6. Policy Recommendations

Strengthen Domestic Revenue Mobilization: Expand tax bases and improve collection efficiency to reduce reliance on external borrowing.
Enhance Debt Transparency: Publish detailed debt reports to build investor confidence and ensure accountability.

Diversify the Economy: Reduce dependence on commodities by investing in manufacturing, services, and renewable energy.

Leverage Multilateral Partnerships: Continue engaging with the World Bank and AfDB for concessional financing tied to development outcomes.

7. Conclusion

Namibia's debt profile in 2026 reflects both resilience and vulnerability. Its independence from IMF obligations distinguishes it from many African peers, signaling fiscal discipline and strategic financing choices. Yet, exposure to bilateral creditors, multilateral lenders, and private bondholders underscores ongoing risks.

The challenge for Namibia lies in balancing fiscal independence with sustainable development financing. By consolidating domestic debt, diversifying its economy, and managing external exposures, Namibia can strengthen its fiscal position while advancing its national development goals.

Diaspora

The role and effectiveness of information technology in education in the context of digital transformation

This article examines the role of information technology (IT) in modern education systems and analyzes its impact on the quality and efficiency of the learning process.



By: Shayzoqova Ruxshona Inomjon
xxxxxxxxxxxx

Worth Noting:

Recent studies have extensively explored the application of IT in education. Research shows that digital learning platforms, multimedia resources, and interactive tools significantly increase student motivation and participation. For example, online learning environments enable students to access materials anytime and anywhere, making education more flexible and inclusive.

In addition, artificial intelligence-based systems are transforming education by enabling personalized learning experiences. These systems analyze student performance and adapt educational content according to individual needs, learning pace, and abilities. As a result, students receive more targeted support, which improves learning outcomes.

This study employs both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Data were collected through surveys, classroom observations, and statistical analysis. The sample consisted of 100 university students and 20 instructors, providing a balanced perspective on the effectiveness of IT tools in the educational process.



Information technology in education

This article examines the role of information technology (IT) in modern education systems and analyzes its impact on the quality and efficiency of the learning process. The study explores the integration of digital platforms, artificial intelligence, and distance learning tools, highlighting both opportunities and challenges. Particular attention is given to how digital transformation reshapes teaching methodologies and student engagement. The findings indicate that effective implementation of IT significantly enhances educational outcomes, while also emphasizing the need for continuous teacher training and infrastructure development.

Keywords: information technology, digital transformation, education, artificial intelligence, distance learning, e-learning, student engagement

Introduction

In the 21st century, education systems worldwide are undergoing rapid digital transformation. The widespread adoption of information technology has fundamentally changed teaching methods, learning environments, and access to knowledge. Traditional classroom-based instruction is increasingly complement-

ed—and in some cases replaced—by digital tools and virtual platforms.

For modern educational institutions, the integration of IT is no longer optional but essential. It plays a crucial role in improving accessibility, increasing student engagement, and enhancing the overall quality of education. Moreover, digital transformation aligns education with the demands of a globalized and technologically advanced society, preparing students for future careers.

Main Part

Recent studies have extensively explored the application of IT in education. Research shows that digital learning platforms, multimedia resources, and interactive tools significantly increase student motivation and participation. For example, online learning environments enable students to access materials anytime and anywhere, making education more flexible and inclusive.

In addition, artificial intelligence-based systems are transforming education by enabling personalized learning experiences. These systems analyze student performance and adapt educational content according to individual needs, learning pace, and abilities. As a re-

sult, students receive more targeted support, which improves learning outcomes.

This study employs both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Data were collected through surveys, classroom observations, and statistical analysis. The sample consisted of 100 university students and 20 instructors, providing a balanced perspective on the effectiveness of IT tools in the educational process.

The analysis revealed the following results:

78% of students consider learning with IT tools more effective and engaging;

65% of instructors believe digital platforms improve teaching quality and efficiency;

participation in distance learning increased by 30%, especially after the expansion of online education systems.

Furthermore, the use of interactive technologies—such as virtual simulations, online discussions, and multimedia presentations—significantly enhanced student engagement, critical thinking, and academic performance. Students became more active participants in the learning process rather than passive recipients of information.

However, despite these advantages, several challenges remain. Limited technical

infrastructure, lack of access to high-speed internet, and insufficient digital competencies among educators hinder the effective implementation of IT. In some cases, teachers struggle to adapt to new technologies, which reduces their potential impact.

Therefore, it is essential to invest not only in technological tools but also in professional development programs for teachers. Continuous training and support can help educators effectively integrate IT into their teaching practices and maximize its benefits.

Conclusion

The results of this study confirm that information technology plays a crucial role in modern education. Its integration improves learning efficiency, enhances student engagement, and creates new opportunities for both students and educators.

At the same time, addressing existing challenges—such as infrastructure limitations and insufficient digital skills—is necessary to ensure successful implementation. In the future, technologies such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and adaptive learning systems are expected to become integral components of education systems.

Thus, digital transforma-

tion in education should be considered a strategic priority, requiring coordinated efforts from policymakers, educational institutions, and teachers.

Author Information

Shayzoqova Ruxshona Inomjon qizi was born on July 11, 2008, in Bulung'ur district of Samarkand region. Since 2017, she has been living in Soboloq village, Qora Mo'yin neighborhood, Jomboy district, with her parents. She is currently an 11th-grade student at School No. 52 in Jomboy district.

From an early age, Ruxshona has shown a strong interest in journalism and writing. She studied at the Samarkand Regional School of Young Journalists, where some of her reports were broadcast. Later, her poems were published in "Jomboy Tongi" newspaper and in the "Uyg'ongan Umid" collection. Her articles have also appeared in independent newspapers such as "Muvozanat" and other media outlets.

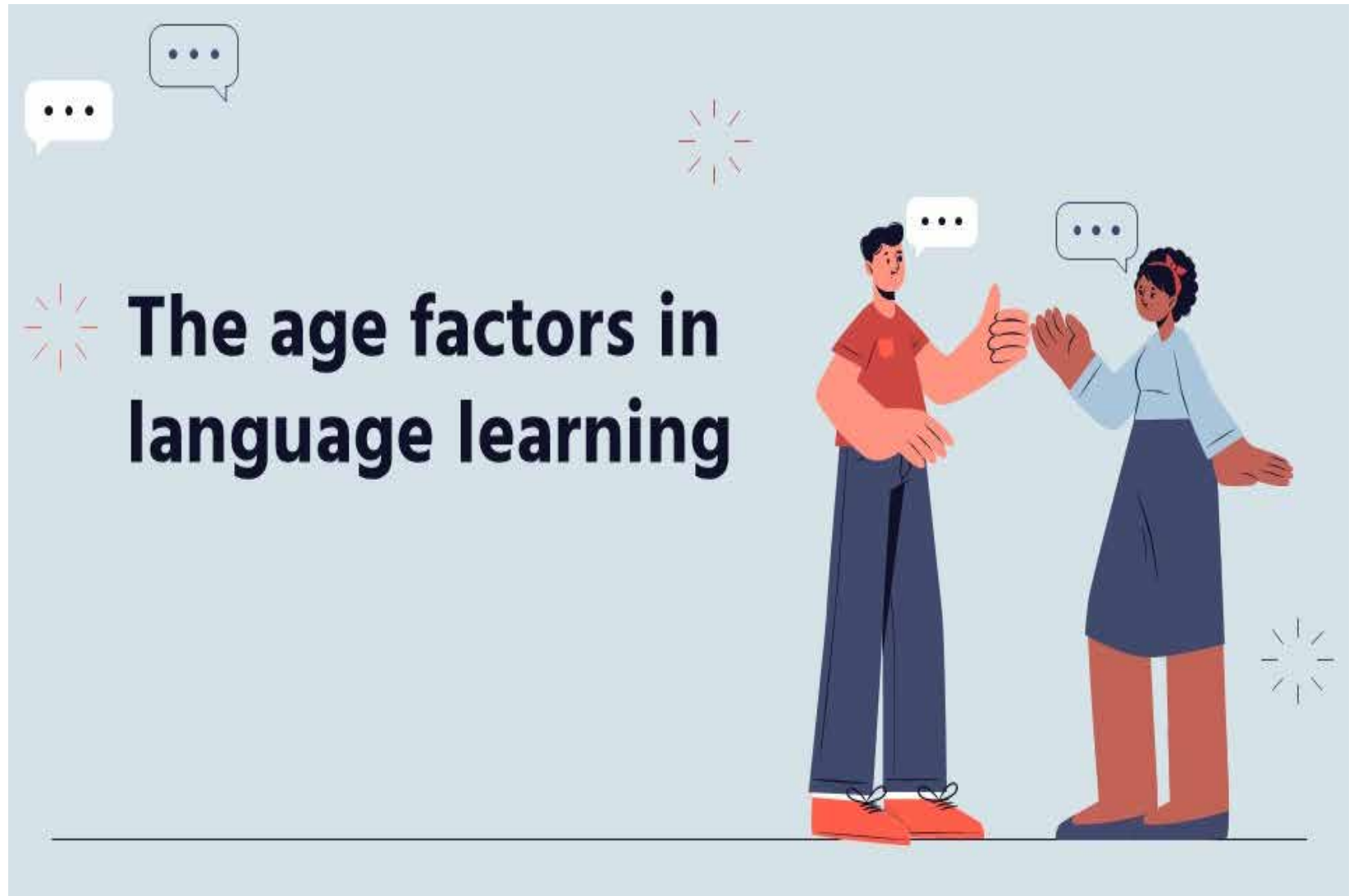
Her goal is to become a highly skilled journalist and share her knowledge and experience with future generations.

The age factor as a sociolinguistic force in the ecology of the Uzbek language

Language ecology studies the relations between a language and the speakers who keep it alive.



By: Suvonova Rukhsora
xxxxxxxxxxxxxx



Worth Noting:

- When linguists borrow the word “ecology” from the natural sciences, they do so for a reason. A language, much like a forest, is a layered organism whose health depends on the balance between its older roots and its younger growth. Cut the roots, and the tree falls; let the canopy stop renewing itself, and the forest ages and disappears.
- The Norwegian-American linguist Einar Haugen, who introduced the term “ecology of language” in 1972, insisted that a language cannot be studied apart from the human community that uses it. Half a century later, his insight is more relevant than ever for Uzbek, a language spoken by more than thirty-five million people but exposed to powerful global, regional and digital pressures.
- Among the many sociolinguistic variables that influence this ecology – social class, gender, region, education – the speaker’s age occupies a special place. Age is not simply a number.

Abstract. Language ecology studies the relations between a language and the speakers who keep it alive. Among the social variables that shape these relations, the age of the speaker is one of the most decisive yet least appreciated. This article examines how three age cohorts of Uzbek speakers – children and adolescents, working-age adults, and elderly speakers – contribute differently to the vitality, vulnerability and renewal of the Uzbek language. Observations drawn from family communication, school environments, urban service encounters and digital platforms suggest that each generation occupies a distinct ecological niche: the elderly act as custodians of dialectal and idiomatic wealth, adults serve as the working layer that exposes the language to professional and administrative pressure, and the young generation operates as the experimental zone where loss and innovation happen most rapidly. The article argues that healthy language ecology requires attention to all three layers simultaneously.

Keywords: language ecology, age factor, sociolinguistics, Uzbek language, generational variation, dialect, intergenerational transmission.

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word “ecology” from the natural sciences, they do so for a reason. A language, much like a forest, is a layered organism whose health depends on the balance between its older roots and its younger growth. Cut the roots, and the tree falls; let the canopy stop renewing itself, and the forest ages and disappears. The Norwegian-American linguist Einar Haugen, who introduced the term “ecology of language” in 1972, insisted that a language cannot be studied apart from the human community that uses it. Half a century later, his insight is more relevant than ever for Uzbek, a language spoken by more than thirty-five million people but exposed to powerful global, regional and digital pressures. Among the many sociolinguistic variables that influence this ecology – social class, gender, region, education – the speaker’s age occupies a special place. Age is not simply a number. It determines which media a person consumes, which institutions she belongs to, which words she heard from her grandparents, and which she will pass on to her grandchildren. In other words, age determines a person’s position in the chain of intergenerational transmission, the very mechanism by which a language stays alive. This article looks at the Uzbek language through

the lens of three broad age groups and asks a simple question: what does each generation contribute to, or take away from, the linguistic environment we all share? The first ecological layer is the speech of those above sixty. In Uzbek villages and mahallas, this generation is often the last reliable carrier of dialectal forms, archaic kinship terms, proverbs, riddles, lullabies, and the rich religious-ethical vocabulary that entered the language through centuries of cultural exchange. A grandmother in Khorezm may use words that no dictionary published after 1990 has recorded; a grandfather in Surkhandarya may casually pronounce vowels in a way that distinguishes his sub-dialect from a neighbouring one only ten kilometres away. From an ecological perspective, the elderly function as living archives. They store linguistic material that the standard literary language has either never adopted or has pushed to the margins. The danger is obvious: when an archive dies before being copied, what it contained is gone forever. Field linguists working on regional dialects – including Khorezm, Fergana and Kashkadarya speech – frequently report that informants under forty can no longer recognise vocabulary their own parents used routinely. This is not a

theoretical risk; it is a measurable, observable shrinkage of the lexicon. At the same time, elderly speakers tend to be the most conservative correctors of speech. They notice when a child mixes Russian particles into an Uzbek sentence and they comment on it. In a healthy ecology, this corrective function is invaluable. Where multi-generational households have given way to nuclear families living far from grandparents, this gentle daily editing is lost – and with it, one of the strongest natural defences of the language. The middle cohort, roughly between twenty-five and sixty, carries the heaviest functional load. These are the speakers who run offices, write contracts, present at conferences, raise children, fill out government forms, and translate between the worlds of work and home. Their language behaviour is shaped less by tradition and more by professional demand. Three pressures act on this group with particular force. The first is professional bilingualism: many fields – medicine, IT, finance, international business – still rely heavily on Russian or, increasingly, on English terminology. An accountant may know the Uzbek word for balans but reach automatically for the Russian one because that is what

her colleagues understand. The second is administrative formality: official Uzbek prose, with its long Soviet-era genealogy, often feels heavy and translated, which pushes adults to keep work language and home language in two separate compartments. The third is parental responsibility: adults decide which language their children watch cartoons in, which school they attend, and whether grandparents’ dialect is something to preserve or quietly discourage. Ecologically, adults are the working layer of the forest. They are neither the deepest roots nor the new shoots, but they are the trunk that connects the two. When this trunk is healthy – when adults consciously use Uzbek across all professional and family domains – the language thrives. When the trunk hollows out, when adults outsource serious thinking to another language and reserve Uzbek only for emotional or domestic use, the whole organism weakens, even if both the elderly and the young still speak the language fluently. The third layer is the most visible and the most discussed. Young Uzbek speakers, particularly those under

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Language ecology studies the relations between a language and the speakers who keep it alive.

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Contd from Page 22

Worth Noting:

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• From an ecological perspective, the elderly function as living archives. They store linguistic material that the standard literary language has either never adopted or has pushed to the margins.



twenty-five, live in a linguistic environment that no previous generation has experienced. Their day moves seamlessly between Uzbek conversation at home, English vocabulary in video games, Russian phrases on social media, and Turkish expressions absorbed from streaming series. The result is a speech style that older listeners often describe with concern – mixed, fast, full of borrowings and abbreviated forms.

Yet a balanced ecological reading should resist the temptation to see only loss here. Young speakers are also the layer where genuine innovation happens. They invent new derivations from native roots, repurpose old words for new technological realities, create memes that travel from screen to street within days, and revive playful word-formation patterns that academic prose had forgotten. A teenage blogger writing a humorous post in Uzbek may produce, in a few minutes, more linguistic creativity than several pages of an official report.

The real ecological problem with youth speech is not innovation but uneven exposure. A young person who reads no Uzbek literature, watches little Uzbek-language content, and writes mostly in short digital messages will end up with a

thinner, flatter version of the language than her grandparents had. The vocabulary becomes narrower; subordinate clauses give way to short fragments; rich idioms are replaced by emoji and stock phrases borrowed from other languages. This is not corruption – every living language changes – but it is impoverishment, and impoverishment is an ecological category.

It is also worth noting that the young generation's relationship with dialect is paradoxical. Many urban young people feel slightly embarrassed by their grandparents' regional speech and try to neutralise it. At the same time, the same young people happily use the latest English slang. The hierarchy of prestige here is striking: a foreign borrowing feels modern, while a native dialectal word feels rural. From the standpoint of language ecology, this asymmetry is one of the quiet processes most worth reversing.

Treating the three age groups separately is a useful simplification, but the real life of the language happens at the boundaries between them. When a grandmother teaches her grandchild a counting rhyme, two layers touch. When an adult translates a workplace term back into Uzbek for an elderly relative, two layers negoti-

ate. When a teenager teaches a parent how to use a new app and the parent insists on doing it in Uzbek, all three layers cooperate.

Ecological balance, in this sense, is not a state but a continuous exchange. A society where the three generations communicate intensively in the same language is a society in which the language renews itself naturally. A society where each generation lives in a separate linguistic bubble – the elderly with their dialect, the adults with their work jargon, the young with their digital pidgin – is a society in which the shared language is silently eroding even if every individual still speaks it.

Recent decades have seen exactly this kind of fragmentation in many Uzbek-speaking communities, particularly in larger cities. Migration, screen-mediated leisure and the decline of multi-generational households have all reduced the number of hours per day that members of different age groups actually speak to one another. Restoring this contact is, perhaps surprisingly, one of the most effective forms of language protection – more effective than spelling reforms or lexicographical decrees.

If age is indeed an ecological factor and not a demographic curiosity, several practical

conclusions follow. For families, the simplest and strongest measure is to keep the elderly inside the daily conversation of children, in person whenever possible and by call when not. A weekly hour with a grandparent who tells stories in her own dialect contributes more to a child's linguistic depth than any textbook.

For schools, the implication is that Uzbek language teaching should not be limited to literary norms but should expose pupils to regional variation, oral genres and contemporary written styles in roughly equal measure. A graduate who can read a classical poem but cannot follow a village proverb has been only partly educated in her own language. For media and digital platforms, the priority is to produce content that works for all three age groups in the same language. Cartoons, popular science videos, educational games and serious journalism in modern, idiomatic Uzbek do more for the language than any ban on borrowings. Prohibitions move words; ecology moves through attraction, not prohibition.

Finally, for language planners and lexicographers, the age dimension means that dictionaries and reference works should treat dialectal vocabulary, professional

terminology and youth innovation as three legitimate registers, each documented before it is judged. A language whose archive grows faster than its living vocabulary shrinks is a language in good ecological health.

The ecology of the Uzbek language cannot be understood by looking only at vocabulary, grammar or official policy. It is, at its core, a relationship between generations. The elderly preserve what the language was; adults decide what it currently is; the young shape what it will become. Each layer has its own contribution and its own characteristic risk – the elderly risk taking their archive with them, adults risk hollowing the trunk, the young risk thinning the canopy.

Recognising the age factor as a sociolinguistic force, rather than a background variable, allows us to ask more precise questions and to design more effective interventions. The future of Uzbek will not be decided by linguists alone, nor by any single generation. It will be decided by the quality of conversation between grandparents, parents and children – the quietest, most ordinary, and most powerful ecology there is.

TuzeBwera: The Kitabi Seminary's Sons (KISOBA League) Return to War in Its Season V

"After six months of silence, TEJ and 20 old-boy armies march on Kololo to turn alumni football into a world movement, KISOBA League Season V: The Seminary's Sons Rise Again at City High Kololo



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The silence is dead. After six months of empty pitches and whispers in old boys' WhatsApp groups, the KISOBA League returns with a vengeance this Sunday, 3rd May 2026. Season V is not a fixture list. It is a reckoning. And at its heart stands Edward Twesigye Junior — TEJ to every man who bled for the badge — CEO of TEJ Bread and Pizzeria by profession, architect of resurrection by calling. He did not come to preside. He came to rebuild.

City High School, Kololo becomes sacred ground. Kufa Pitch and Bataka Pitch will host ten hours of war, brotherhood, and rebirth. Twenty teams. One league. A thousand reasons to believe again. This is not a comeback. This is a coronation of intent. #TuzeBwera.

Roots of the Brotherhood: What KISOBA League Is
KISOBA — the Kitabi Seminary Old Boys Association League — is where the soul of Kitabi Seminary refuses to die. Born in the red dust and dormitory dreams of the Seminary, the league started as barefoot kickabouts between classes and grew into Uganda's most intoxicating alumni obsession. It is the one place where time collapses, where a 45-year-old lawyer still chases a 22-year-old banker like his scholarship depends on it.

For over a decade, KISOBA has lived by an unwritten creed: protect the brotherhood, keep the fire burning, and turn 90 minutes into a lifetime. This is the only league where a crunching tackle in the first half leads to a contract in the second. Where half-time is for water, oranges, and seed funding. Where team names like Giants FC, Descendants of Klep FC, and Men of Men FC are not brands, they are bloodlines. Each jersey carries Seminary folklore, class feuds, and the kind of private jokes that only a Kitabi man understands.

The league is one of its kind, pulling masses of people every matchday not just for football, but because it is the easiest, truest way to associate with the big brands, the big names, and the big ideas. CEOs stand next to interns. Cabinet ministers queue for the same tea. In KISOBA, status is settled by the scoreboard.

The league paused in November 2025 after four seasons of chaos

and glory. Galaxy FC lifted Season IV, completing a ruthless campaign that broke hearts and ankles in equal measure. A year earlier, Season III belonged to Ghetto FC, whose street-smart football and cult following turned them into champions of the people. But the celebrations papered over cracks. The alumni demanded more than vibes. They demanded vision. Season V is that answer. The Last Dynasty: Counsel Martin Byamukama and the UECDL commercial lawyer

For the previous five terms, KISOBA's destiny was shaped by Counsel Martin Byamukama, a sharp commercial lawyer with Uganda Electricity Distribution Company Limited, UECDL. He was not a football man. He was a standards man. Under his stewardship, the league stopped being a reunion and started being an institution. Fixtures were published. Disciplinary codes were enforced. Sponsors were courted, not begged. He dragged KISOBA from the mud of informality to the concrete of credibility. He built the runway. Now TEJ must fly the plane. The TEJ Doctrine: A League Reborn

Edward Twesigye Junior (TEJ) did not win an election. He survived what he calls "the first truly theocratic selection process" in KISOBA history. And he understands the mandate: this cannot be business as usual. The brotherhood is strong, but the structure must be stronger. The digital revolution is no longer a slogan. A purpose-built website is rising as the league's new headquarters. A task force is already deep into the architecture of a KISOBA League Mobile App that will put live scores, player stats, and full match streams in every old boy's palm. TEJ is betting on cinematic match-day coverage that treats alumni football like Champions League. He is launching a weekly podcast that will turn post-match banter into national conversation. The target is brutal and clear: grow the league's social footprint by 25 percent, or try again. The second edition of the Omunagiro Kit will be unveiled not as apparel, but as armor. This is identity you wear.

The days of sporadic donations and favors from friends are buried. TEJ is installing a Strategic Tiered Sponsorship model designed to outlive presidents. The plan is one Anchor Partner and three Supporting Partners, with Chint and Guinness already circled as the first conquests. "We are not selling space on a sleeve," Junior said, and you believe him. "We are building alliances that will still be here when our sons play." Season V is already powered by Beer Monger, Tej, and FlexiPay — proof that the market believes.

He has declared war on the league's



oldest, laziest cliché: that KISOBA is for "networking." Under TEJ, networking will mean National ID drives that register hundreds in a morning. It will mean structured internship pipelines that take a third-year from the bench to the boardroom. It will mean a welfare system that pays school fees and hospital bills long after the boots are hung up. The new command is simple. Turn social capital into real-world prosperity. Make every matchday matter on Monday morning. "Networking must become tangible and transformative," he said, and the old boys nodded, because they are tired of empty talk.

The generational bridge is being rebuilt with stone, not speeches. The founding fathers — the men who started the football era back at the Seminary — are being formally enlisted as advisors and patrons. Their wisdom will sit in the boardroom, not just in stories. TEJ wants the youngest graduate to learn from the oldest legend, so the league's DNA is not diluted by time. "An institution is only as resilient as its roots," he said. He is planting deep.

The President's Charge
In his inaugural address, TEJ did not ask. He commanded. To the Association EXCO under Chairman Mr. Didas Oririkiriza who doubles as The National Private Educational Institutions Association — Uganda (NPEIA-UG) Executive Director, an

association that unites all private education investors in Uganda urged the new league exco to guard this league like it is your firstborn. To the outgoing League EXCO: your tour is over, but your duty is not. Stay close, because we cannot honor the future by dishonoring the past. To every KISOBA man: show up. "The lion cannot be king of the jungle without the ecosystem that supports him."

Matchday 1 – Sunday, 03 May 2026
Kufa Pitch

10:00 — Platinum FC vs Cheetahs FC

10:50 — Valiants FC vs Bello Gallico FC

11:40 — Giants FC vs Kasananga FC

12:30 — Lords FC vs Gong FC

13:20 — Millenium FC vs Erudite FC

14:10 — Elites FC vs Ghetto FC

15:00 — Eminent FC vs Team Heaven FC

15:50 — Galaxy FC vs Lykans FC

16:40 — Men of Men FC vs Jamaican Bees FC

17:30 — Navies FC vs Descendants of Klep FC

Bataka Pitch

10:00 — Lykans FC vs Lords FC

10:50 — Erudite FC vs Eminent FC

11:40 — Jamaican Bees FC vs Elites FC

12:30 — Men of Men FC vs Descendants of Klep FC

13:20 — Platinum FC vs Bello Gallico FC

14:10 — Navies FC vs Kasananga FC

15:00 — Giants FC vs Cheetahs FC

15:50 — Gong FC vs Valiants FC

16:40 — Ghetto FC vs Millenium FC

17:30 — Team Heaven FC vs Galaxy FC

Why Season V Matters

This is not sentiment in studs. This is strategy with shin pads. With the corporate weight of TEJ Bread and Pizzeria behind it, a digital arsenal being assembled, and a president who measures success in jobs created as much as goals scored, KISOBA League Season V is no longer just an alumni league. It is a movement. It is a mirror for what Uganda's social institutions can become when brotherhood meets blueprint.

The first whistle blows at 10:00 sharp. The Seminary's sons are home. Galaxy FC arrives with a crown to defend. Ghetto FC arrives with history in their lungs. Eighteen other teams arrive with nothing to lose and everything to prove.

After six months in exile, the only question that matters is not whether KISOBA is back. It is whether Uganda is ready for what KISOBA becomes next.

"The work has already begun," President TEJ said. "Together, let us make these next two seasons the defining era of KISOBA League."