



UBA
United Bank for Africa

Receive money worldwide at any UBA Branch and get exciting back to school gift items. Your child also stands a chance to win SLE 25,000 scholarship when you open a UBA Kiddies or Teens account for him/her.

Western Union | MoneyGram | Ria | Africash

Kiddies Teens

For more information, contact us on: +23278200200 | +23275142718 | +23231224488 | +23280419943



Excellence & Objectivity

Follow us: Concord Times Newspaper | @Concordtimes | sl_concord_times

CONCORD TIMES
NEWSPAPER

Vol. 17, No 140250965 Tuesday, August 29, 2023 Price: Le 2

SAY NO TO DRUGS



UNION TRUST BANK LIMITED
...Empowering Sierra Leone Commerce

SCAN N PAY

- Easy to use merchant payment.
- Person to person (P2P) or person to business (P2B) payment.
- Make payment using mobile phone.
- Total visibility of your transaction

Head Office: 2 Howe Street, Freetown, PMB 1237, Freetown, Sierra Leone
Mobile: 077 713533, 077630832, 088 635750




Billion Gate: ACC investigates SLBC Director-General

Colonel Bangura: Military personnel have no justification to stage a coup



Colonel Issa Bangura, Director of Public Relations and Informations

By Alusine Sesay & Alhaji Haruna Sani

The Director-General of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC), Joseph Kapuwa, has confirmed to Concord Times that his institution is currently being investigated by both the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) and the board of the corporation for alleged corruption, hinging on the misuse of public funds to the tune of over two billion Old Leones.



D.G. Kapuwa is facing the storm of his stewardship

The over Two Billion Old Leones was disbursed by the Financial Secretary under a project titled 'SLBC 2023 Elections Coverage,' the Director General confirmed.

Cont. Page 3

Six discharged during judicial week



Chief Minister leading the charge to maintain clean working environment

Chief Minister champions cleaning exercises

ECOBANK SAVE AND WIN PROMO!

The more you Save the Greater Your Chances of Winning

ecobank.com

Terms and Conditions Apply

Save NLE 5,000, NLE 10,000, NLE 20,000 or more and enter the draw



Ecobank
The Pan African Bank

FEATURE

By Aminata Benk-Sankoh

After taking my second-year final exams at the university and tired of being left at home to take care of my younger brother and his friend who are on holidays, I got accepted as an intern at Campaign for Good Governance (CGG), a non-governmental organization that promotes transparency, accountability, and good governance. Founded in 1996, after Sierra Leone's first multi-party democratic elections, CGG continues to play a significant role in advocating for political and social reforms. And when the opportunity came to intern with them, I grabbed it with both hands.

I quickly googled the institution and realized that quite a number of prominent figures had darkened the doors of CGG, including one of its founders, Madam Zainab Hawa Bangura, who currently serves as Director-General of the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON) at the level of an Under-Secretary-General.

Our country's Vice President, Dr Mohamed Juldeh Jalloh, also worked with CGG, and so were one-time Anti-Corruption Commission Commissioner, Mr Abdul Tejan Cole, Madam Olayinka Creighton-Randall, a public sector professional with over twenty years of project, program, human resource and administrative management experience and Madam Valnora Edwin, Director/Chairperson of the African Women Leaders Network-Sierra Leone Chapter.

Embarking on my first week as an intern was like stepping into a new universe. The excitement, nervousness, and eagerness to learn created a roller-coaster of emotions that defined those initial days.

On my first day of work, I wore a white shirt, long navy blue trousers, glasses and black heels. I felt so established. At around 8:19 a.m., I left to meet my dad,

Navigating New Waters: A Glimpse into my first week as an Intern at CGG

who was giving me a ride to the office when my new boss, Mr. Sahr Kendema e- mailed me my first task. Excitedly, I rushed to share the news with my dad, not reading the invitation properly. My dad dropped me off at the office located at 16 Clark Street Tengbeh Town, Freetown, at 8:45 am.

The building is at the apex of a narrow hill, and getting to our destination was a struggle because the road was small and damaged cars parked on both sides of the road.

On my arrival, still, without reading the invitation properly, I immediately told my mum I would attend that meeting the next day. I was excited to attend my first UN meeting, an organization I had always dreamt of working with. She then called my attention to the date, and all the excitement I felt faded.

The meeting was due that same day at 9:00 a.m. and had already passed 9:00 a.m. Doubts crept in, but I reminded myself that challenges were opportunities in disguise. I arrived at the venue a bit nervous because it was already 9:34 a.m., and I thought the meeting had commenced. It had not, and I felt a bit at ease.

I sat at a round table with a bunch of beautiful and hardworking women, and at that point, I felt very proud to be in that room. The meeting started at 9:55 a.m. We discussed coordination in the area of Women's Political Participation (WPP) and other related topics. At the end, lunch was served. I took mine back to the office because I was eager to write a report for my boss afterwards. He found it impressive.

My second day, however, was quite different. It wasn't as chaotic as my first. I arrived very early that Wednesday morning and was

given an entire office, which I liked because it had a fascinating collection of books, was cold, and I got to be there all by myself. I didn't have much to do. So, I set up my desk and checked out the books.

Eat breakfast before Leaving your house guys! After all that packing, I became hungry. I tried calling some restaurants to order breakfast, but to no avail. I almost cried, but I took solace in reading the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act to quench my hunger and as instructed by my mum, a Gender focal point in one of the offices at Tower Hill.

Finally, it was lunchtime. I quickly rushed to Chicken Town for lunch, which I also took to the office because I wanted to eat in peace without strangers moving all about. After lunch, I continued reading, and, at that moment, I reflected on my reasons for seeking the job in the first place and gave myself a pep talk to lighten up my mood and free my mind from all the anxiety I was feeling.

My day ended perfectly at 5:15 p.m. My dad picked me up. We had dinner together at the beach- a grilled fish served with crunchy french fries, some veggies and fried rice on the side prepared by a lady called Mariama. Daddy says she is the best at grilling fish, and I should not only take his words for it but ask Uncle Bunting, Unce Alpha Sesay, Uncle Samoura or Uncle Mahmoud. We discussed over drinks until it was time for us to return home.

On the third day, Mr. Kendema called to check on me. We chatted a bit. He gave me a brief history of the organization and explained its mission and values, which I already knew, but I appreciated that he took time out of his busy schedule to talk to me. After this discussion, he assigned me to attend two more meetings. This

time, I read the invitations carefully.

After the meetings, I left for lunch at Chicken Town because I was also to meet up with some friends. Afterwards, I returned to the office and wrote a piece for my boss on "What I would like to learn during my internship at CGG." I did so in less than an hour before my day ended.

I left the office and headed straight to church- A MUST on Wednesday! And mummy doesn't joke about it. Her dad, my grandpa, was a Reverend of the United Methodist Church (UMC), and it seems my mum must have had a calling to take over from her departed dad. I was tired but stayed throughout the sermon, which ended at 7:30 p.m., and we headed home.

As the days progressed, I realized that adaptability was key. New people- new environment. It was all very new to me. The initial unease was replaced with a sense of purpose and belonging, and I was open to accepting it.

As I look back to that week, I've realized that the internship was not just about my contribution to the organization but also the organization's contribution to my personal and professional growth. I found myself looking ahead with a mix of enthusiasm and anticipation. The projects I had just scratched the surface of avenues for skill enhancement and personal growth. The journey had just begun, and I was eager to see where the subsequent weeks would take me.

The coming weeks held the promise of refining my technical abilities, enhancing my problem-solving skills, and gaining insights into the intricacies of the industry. Beyond these tangible gains, I looked forward to nurturing relationships with my colleagues, learning from their experiences, and contributing meaningfully to the organization's goals.



Travel light with **UBA Cards**



[f @UBASierraLeone](#)
[@ubasierra_leone](#)
[@UBA_SierraLeone](#)
[@uba-sl](#)
[@ubasierra_leone](#)

For more information, contact us on:

+23275142718 | +23231224488 | +23280419943 | +232 90 200 200 | +232 78 200 200

[@uba_sierraleone](#)

Africa's Global Bank | www.ubasierraleone.com

LOCAL NEWS

From Cover

Billion Gate: ACC investigates SLBC Director-General

An anonymous letter addressed to the Commissioner of the ACC, claimed that, "The said funds were stolen between May and July 2023 which were meant for the June 24th elections to the tune of around a billion old Leones or more."

The author of the letter states that, "I have seen a letter addressed to the Financial Secretary dated 23rd May 2023 captioned: Disbursement of Second tranche for SLBC Elections Coverage. It requests for release of the said funds totaling One Billion Old Leones One Hundred and Sixty-Two Million Five Hundred Thousand Old Leone. These funds, both first and second Tranche, came under the project titled SLBC 2023 Elections Coverage that was addressed to the Financial Secretary in May 2022."

While the Director General couldn't deny receiving the money, he told Concord Times that, the said disbursement was made a month to the elections, and that they used part of it to buy equipment and provide some incentives to staff.

He said the first tranche, which is One Billion Leones that was transferred into the institution's account was used with the consensus of senior management staff in a meeting.

He said the institution was yet to receive its substantive subvention of Four Billion Leones and that part of the two billion Leones received for the elections coverage was used to furnish administrative cost.

Aside from the two billion Leones allegedly stolen at the institution, claims are that other funds were also stolen between September 2022 and February 2023 running to or above one Billion Old Leones.

"The majestic sofa chair you see at the SLBC reception is an instrument for hiding stolen wealth," the letter claims.

Other issue raised in the anonymous letter is the unfair payment of salary in which junior staff members received equal pay as their bosses.



D.G Kapuwa is facing the storm of his stewardship

said..

"Mr. Commissioner, what is never hidden at SLBC is payment of director/consultant salary to junior staff. Every staff at SLBC knows this. It is not hidden. Nancy Sesay is a Commercial Officer receiving a director salary, and carries a consultant pin code. Papanie Conteh is Finance Manager that receives the same salary as his boss, the director," the letter claims.

But the Director-General told Concord Times that he is not the one that determines the salaries of staff, and that even his own salary is determined by the Secretary to the President and the Financial Secretary at the Ministry of Finance.

"My brothers, about 80% of our staff are school leavers and to advocate for their salaries to increase can be difficult. Most of them are aggrieved that people who are graduates with less experience, compared to them who have been here for years, are receiving more pay. To be honest, they are very good on the job but the problem is their qualification. Even as that, I have made some moves and gotten approval for 50% salary increment which is going to be effective come October," he

As if the corruption allegations are not enough, workers of the broadcasting house are aggrieved with the leadership of the corporation, as many complained that their condition of service is so appalling.

In a letter addressed to the new Minister of Information and Civic Education, Chernor Bah, staff requested for an immediate inquiry into the alleged embezzlement and deep animosity at the Broadcasting House.

"Your Auradicals Brotherhood relationship with the DG – Joseph Egbenda Kapuwa and his sycophantic actions/moves as evidenced in his July 31 2023 03:14 PM Facebook post are sufficient for anyone to suspect as reasons for such lethargy," the letter reads.

The staff drew the attention of the minister to the appalling condition of the main studios (television precisely), in spite of how much has been spent on it by particularly the BBC Media Action and the government (under the leadership of your immediate predecessor), to transform the

broadcast activities that should bring the institution up to speed with even newly established broadcast entities.

It was also alleged in the letter that huge sums of taxpayers monies (about seven billion or so) which had been remitted by the state to set up two new television studios to substitute the one and only studio that has been painstakingly used for decades till date or be alternatives, but that work had long stopped before some forms of understanding were reached with Africell which had also stopped work on same for some time now.

It was further claimed in the letter that many staff that had left the institution would have loved to stay and work for the SLBC if all was going on well, especially improvement and facelift to the output of the institution they so dearly loved.

According to the staff, besides the upward salary review which has been a major cause for concern and distress in recent months amidst high cost of living, the institution, until mid-August 2023, was without internet since around November-December of 2022.

Computers and other important gears in the newsroom and other essential units are in broken/shabby conditions.

There is also the issue of forgery as claimed by the Engineering Department of the Corporation.

In a letter dated 23rd August 2023, the Director of Engineering also complained that his signature was scanned and presented to the finance office, requesting for monies to do some maintenance of transmitters in the regions, studio maintenance, purchase of software, among several more.

He also requested that for the period of 2019 to 2023, finance department provides him with all the documents and vouchers that have been used for financial transaction so that he can verify that his signature was never been used in those documents for financial transactions.

LOCAL NEWS Chief Minister champions cleaning exercises

By: Abubakarr Tarawally (Intern)

As a way of providing a clean and enabling environment and adequate parking space for vehicles, Chief Minister, David Moinina Sengh, together with other ministers, on Saturday embarked on a cleaning exercise at the Youyi Building premise, which houses most of the government ministries in Freetown. During the exercise, Sengh explained that the cleaning was part of President Bio's Big Five (5) Agenda, adding that item four (4) of the agenda speaks about public sector reform and service delivery.

He said nobody can be inspired if their environment is dirty or not organised, adding that as a part of that reform, he, with other ministers, were ensuring that they perform that task.

He said the motivation was that they should take responsibility for their transformation.

The minister said collaboration is very important, especially when they want to achieve something, emphasising that cleanliness is necessary.

He noted that over the years, the Youyi Building premise has been like a garage, with scrapped vehicles packed all about the place.

David Sengh said it should be they who should take responsibility for cleaning the Youyi Building, which shows that the transformation should continue not only there but also in Bo, and other places.

"To fix Sierra Leone, you do not need to sit in your office or your comfort chair. I hope this will motivate a lot of people. Today, over 20 ministers and deputy ministers, hundreds (100) of staff at

various government entities, and many more youth volunteers showed up to clean the Youyi Building, which houses the largest number of public servants. Staff say for 30+ years, they have never seen the compound this clean," he said.

He said the Sierra Leone Roads Safety Authority (SLRSA) towed all the scrap vehicles that were parked in the compound since he had given them two weeks' notice.

According to the Minister of Works and Public Assets, Dennis Sandi, the cleaning was a government initiative, and that they did it in consultation with the Chief Minister, which was why they were all there to make sure they clean the Youyi Building premise.

Dr. Sandi said all government structures and buildings of whatever kind, are under their direct supervision as a ministry, which was why it's their duty to maintain those buildings, clean them, and make all of them attractive, as their mandate is to endure that all government structures across the country are properly taken care of.

He said what they did on Saturday sent a strong message that as people, maintaining and cleaning the environment, where one lives, is very important as cleanliness is next to Godliness.

He said they had started it for others to follow hence the Chief Minister, Minister of Local Government, Minister of Social Welfare, Sports, Water Resources, Fisheries, Finance, Attorney-General and plenty more, were all part of the exercise.

"That was to tell the seriousness of the



Chief Minister leading the charge to maintain clean working environment

cleaning exercises. I intend to collaborate with other line ministries, to maintain other government buildings. It's not a one-man business, we are here hoping to collaborate with other ministers to make sure other people are motivated and to see the environment clean," he said.

He said the president had laid a solid foundation with at least 30% of young people in his cabinet, which was why they were encouraging all youth to work hard as so someday, they can be like any of the ministers or even the president, who was once a youth.

He said the ministry's next move will be to embark on extensive rehabilitation of government buildings and painting government structures right across the country.

He said by next week, they shall be moving to New England Ville since

there are a lot of government structures there, followed by Sierra Leone Police Headquarters and finally, they shall find time to go to the province and do the same.

He encouraged other ministers to embrace the initiative, to clean government buildings, and that they should continue to work together to ensure that their office environments are kept clean.

He said cleanliness can attract investors and other personalities hence they should continue to put the country first above all else.

Deputy Minister of Youth Affairs, Patrick M. Gibrilla, said as young ministers, they decided to come together and put into practice what they intend to do.

He said they would embark on the exercise from time to time.

The Legal Aid Board (LAB) has assigned twenty one (21) Legal Aid Counsels, including two contract lawyers, to provide representation to a total of 802 indigent inmates whose matters have been listed for hearing during the two weeks nationwide judicial exercise. The allotment of the lawyers came following final discussions with the Chief Justice, His Lordship Justice Desmond Babatunde Edwards and other key stakeholders on the planning of the two weeks exercise which commences today Monday 28 August 2023 and ends on Friday 8 September 2023. The exercise is the third the judiciary has organized; the first and second were held in 2021 and 2022 respectively.

Of the 802 cases that have been listed for hearing during the two weeks, 441 will be heard by different judges in Freetown while

Legal Aid Board assigns 21 lawyers to handle 802 cases

the remaining 361 will be heard in various courts in the provinces.

In all, a total of twenty three judges have been assigned by the judiciary for the two weeks long exercise. Offences include: murder; sexual offences; manslaughter; robbery with aggravation; house breaking; shop breaking; wounding; burglary; larceny; malicious damage; assault; fraudulent conversion; child stealing, etc.

During this exercise, inmates who have been in correctional centers for long periods, such as prolonged adjournments; inmates on remand without bail; those on bail but have not met their bail conditions; inmates awaiting indictments; those on summary review, etc will have their cases heard by judges already identified for purposes of

the Judicial Week.

The move according to the judiciary is "to increase access to justice, reduce backlog of cases not completed and to further decongest correctional centres across the country."

Speaking on the Board's readiness, the Executive Director, Ms Fatmata Claire Carlton-Hanciles drew references to the various applications already prepared by Legal Aid Counsels ahead of the session which include: applications for habeas corpus, bail, summary review, etc.

Ms Carlton-Hanciles also spoke about the recruitment of two private lawyers as contract staff by the Board to assist the Board's defence team in ensuring that all

those whose matters have been listed for hearing around the country have access to legal representation.

The lawyers she said will be deployed in courts that are yet to have LAB counsels for the session both in the western area and the provinces.

She appealed to LAB counsels to remain committed to their work and to continue to uphold the Board's good spirit in ensuring that indigent persons are well represented.

She thanked the Chief Justice and the entire judiciary for the initiative and the magnanimity of the judges in setting free innocent inmates. She also thanked the government and partners including United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for their continued support to the Board.



Live the
Good Life
With our



FLEXIBLE LOAN!

- Zenith offers fast and easy loan
- Interest rate is very attractive
- Payment tenor is up to 36 months(3years)

HEAD OFFICE
18-20 Rawdon
Street Freetown

KENEMA
27 Kaisamba Terrace
Off Hanga Road

BO
54 Tikonko
Road Bo

WELLINGTON
282 Bai Bureh Road,
Wellington Industrial Estate

CLINE TOWN
155 Fourabay Road
Freetown

LUMLEY
15 Freetown Road
Lumley Freetown

LUNGI
F/T International
Airport, Lungi

MAKENI CASH CENTER
Ernest Bai Koroma University
of Science and Technology
Makeni Campus

....in your best interest

LOCAL NEWS

By Yusufu S. Bangura

The Director of Defense, Public Relations and Information, Ministry of Defense, Colonel Issa Bangura, has noted that military personnel do not have any justification to stage a coup because their mandate is to protect the constitution.

Colonel Bangura made the above statement when he was hosted at the popular Radio Democracy 'Gud Morning Salone' program where he was speaking about a symposium they organised for military personnel to educate them about military professionalism in democracy.

Director Issa said during the meeting various speakers educated military personnel about what they should do in order to promote democracy in the country because they had found out that security situation within the West African sub regions is changing rapidly.

He recalled that after independence, Africa experienced coups in Ghana, Nigeria, Togo among others, but after some time when they had democratic institutions to support democracy in the sub regions, coup reduced.

He cited that, recently they have seen that coup have started again in countries like Mali, Guinea, Burkina Faso and Niger.

He emphasised that it against that

Colonel Bangura: Military personnel have no justification to stage a coup



Colonel Issa Bangura, Director of Public Relations and Information

backdrop the senior management thought it necessary for them to have a seminar to reiterate the importance of the loyalty of armed forces.

"So, we want military men and women to know that we don't have any justification to stage a coup in this country because our mandate is to protect the constitution, he noted.

"The lecture from of the presenters

helped us a lot because he was able to point out that we don't have any justification to stage a coup in this country. According to the Constitution of Sierra Leone, our roles and responsibilities are clearly spelt out, so it should not be an excuse for somebody to wake up one morning and want to stage a coup, which has many implications. Some of the implications are destruction of life and property, extensive human rights abuse, extra judicial killings, bad blood and hatred military rivalry and mistrust within the population and wrong international condemnation. International partners will withdraw from the country which is not a positive sign for us as a nation," he stated.

He reiterated that some members of the armed forces failed to understand that their mandate is to protect the constitution, adding that if the military takes up arms against the state, the first thing they do is to suspend the constitution, that's why the various topics coined for the seminar were very important.

He added during the seminar, they were able to get experience, learnt and shared lessons learnt because the various speakers, who delivered the lecture, are people, who had served the military.

Responding to alleged coup plot,

Bangura said based on lessons learnt from other countries like Mali, Niger, and Guinea within few weeks, the government of Sierra Leone foiled a planned coup and the culprits are under investigation.

Going further, Bangura said that the leadership of the Ministry of Defence has been embarking on regular trainings, but yet they needed to bring personnel together, and reiterate to them the importance of the military.

Responding to burning issues faced by military personnel, Colonel Issa Bangura said the symposium will be of help to them because in the military they have internal and external communications through which personnel can express their grievances freely without them being reprimanded.

He further disclosed that the seminar covered a topic on civil military cooperation, adding that the topic was a very important as a result of their current operations.

"As military personnel, we need to have professional relationship with civilians, otherwise we will have duplication of effort. But the presenter told us that while deploying in other countries as members of the armed forces, we should be able to undertake meaningful project that will benefit both civilians and the military," he said.

Six discharged during judicial week

By Ibrahim Kabba Turay

Six accused have been discharged during the judicial week that was organised by the Judiciary of Sierra Leone to review 802 cases in an exercise aimed at decongesting the prisons nationwide.

Mohamed Bangura, Alusine Kanu, Yusuf Sesay, Molie Conteh, Foday Musa and Abu Friday, were charged with various offenses ranging from shop breaking, house breaking, wounding, and larceny.

Justice Sesay said he discharged the accused persons because

since their matter was brought before the court, no witness has testified.

He said the state cannot continue to keep the accused persons in detention.

The Chief Justice has assigned 23 judges across the country to look into 802 cases. Out of that number, 441 are in Freetown and 361 cases in the provinces.

The release which was issued by the judiciary stated that part of the total number of cases to be handled include 189 cases for which the accused persons and victims have not been traced.

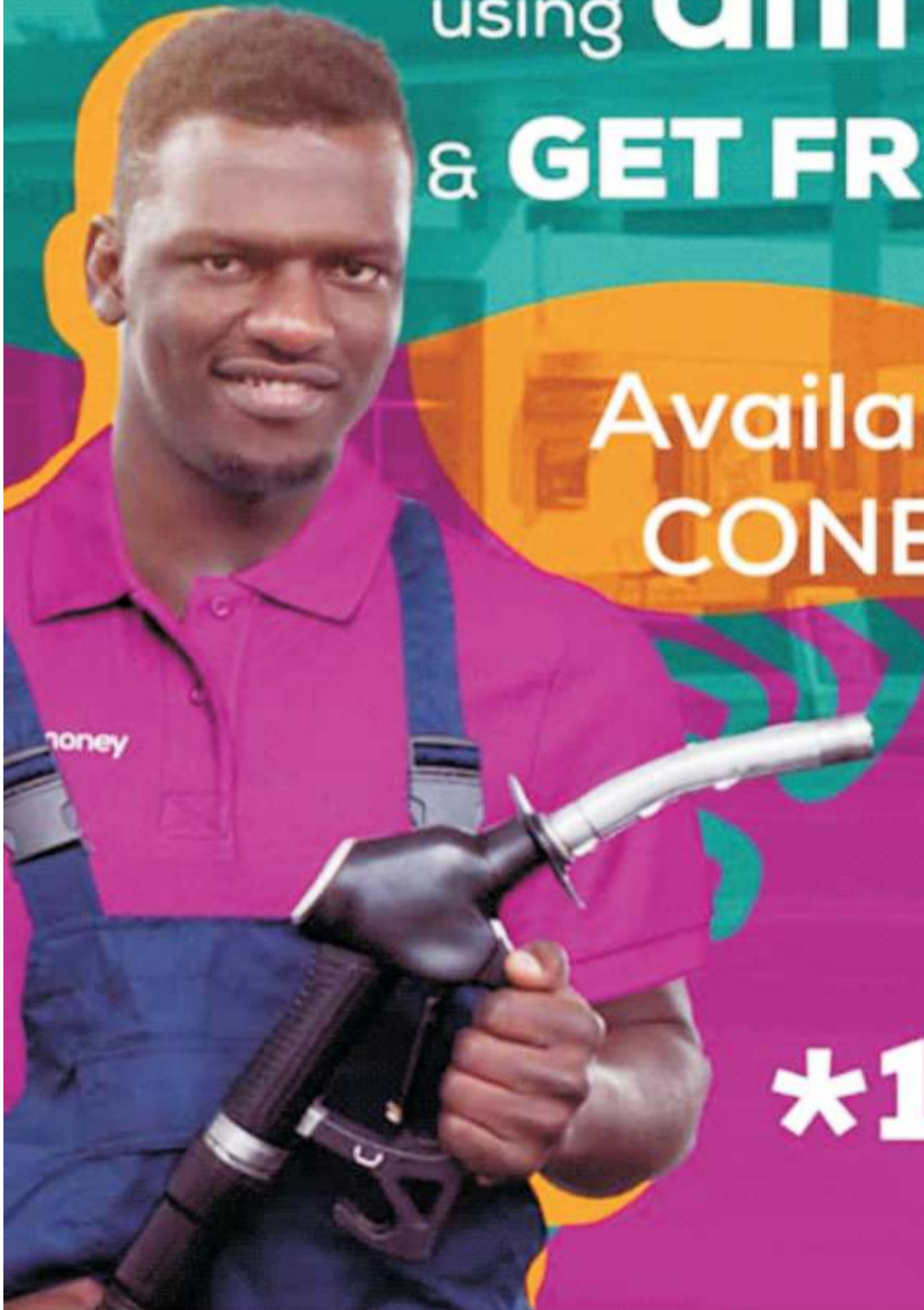


BUY FUEL

using afrimoney
& **GET FREE DATA**

Available at any
CONEX Station

Dial
***161*4#**



NEWS AROUND AFRICA COMPILED BY GABRIEL BENJAMIN

Zimbabwe: Residents of Harare react to results of contested vote

Zimbabwe's opposition leader Nelson Chamisa challenged the re-election of outgoing President Emmerson Mnangagwa on Sunday officially announced the day before, and claimed victory in a flawed election whose legality has been called into question.

Mr. Mnangagwa was re-elected for a second term with 52.6% of the votes cast, against 44% for Mr. Chamisa, according to the results announced late on Saturday by the electoral commission. The opposition immediately asserted that it had not ratified these "distorted" results.

"We won this election. We are the leaders. We are even surprised that Mnangagwa was declared the winner (...) We have the real results," declared Mr. Chamisa, a 45-year-old lawyer and pastor, at a press conference in Harare on Sunday.

Zimbabweans went to the polls on Wednesday and Thursday to choose their president and members of parliament. The battle was mainly between Zanu-PF, in power since independence in 1980, and Mr. Chamisa's Citizens' Coalition for Change (CCC), the largest opposition party.

"We knew we were going to take part in an election marred by irregularities. We have an incorrect electoral roll, a flawed constituency division. The ballot was marred by anomalies. The electoral environment was biased", listed the opponent.

Emmerson Mnangagwa, who spoke earlier in the day from the presidential palace in the capital, said that the electoral process had been flawed.

Emmerson Mnangagwa, who spoke earlier in the day from the presidential palace, challenged those contesting his re-election to go to court: "Those who feel that the race was not run properly should know where to go".

- A better life -

Failures during the vote, such as the lack of ballot papers at polling stations, were particularly common in Harare, an opposition stronghold. Voting, scheduled to end on Wednesday evening, had to be extended to the following day.

International observers highlighted "serious problems" and the violation of "numerous international standards" governing democratic elections, marring the "transparency" of the ballot.

According to observers from the European Union, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and Commonwealth countries, some voters could not be found on the lists. Others were intimidated at polling stations. Voting nevertheless

took place in a "calm and peaceful" context, they stressed.

Reaffirming Zimbabwe's "independence and sovereignty", Mr. Mnangagwa warned against criticism.

"As a sovereign state, we ask our guests to respect our national institutions", he said, preferring to draw attention to the "enormous turnout in the exercise of this sacred right of voting". Nearly 69% of registered voters turned out at the polls.

In a statement, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said he was "concerned by the arrests of observers and reports of voter intimidation". He called on the parties to "reject all forms of violence" and to settle disputes peacefully and "transparently" so that the outcome of the vote is "a true reflection of the will of the people".

In the streets of the capital, the day after the results were announced, some people were reading the newspapers, while others were expressing their disillusionment.

"The results are not good, there's something wrong somewhere", said Godwell Gonye, interviewed by AFP.

A little further on, another confessed he hadn't even looked closely at the results. "We accepted them as they are, it's the decision of the majority and we respect it," says this man fatalistically.

However, Tinashe Gunda is adamant that "here we expect change, development and economic stability".

To win the election, the opposition was counting on this hope for a better life, in the face of rampant corruption and shortages of petrol, bread and medicines, in an economy that has been stricken for some twenty years.

But already the campaign, in this country long ruled with an iron fist by liberation hero Robert Mugabe, ousted in 2017 by a coup d'état, had been marked by unmitigated repression.

The CCC denounced the banning of dozens of rallies and arrests of opponents, in a country already plagued by a long history of elections marred by irregularities.

In 2018, Mr. Mnangagwa, Mugabe's successor, was narrowly elected (50.8%). The army fired on demonstrators two days after the poll, killing six people.

Mr Chamisa, already his presidential opponent, unsuccessfully challenged the result in court.

Indian PM Modi proposes full G20 membership for African Union

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday called for the African Union (AU) to become a member of the G20, the club of the world's richest countries due to meet in India in September.

"We have invited the African Union with the idea of granting it permanent member status" of the G20, Narendra Modi said during the B20 business forum which was held ahead of the G20 summit on September 9 and 10.

In December, US President Joe Biden had already expressed the wish that the African Union join the G20 as a permanent member, assuring that "it was going to happen".

Only one African country, South Africa, is currently a member of the G20, which brings together 19 of the world's largest economies plus the European Union, representing 85% of world GDP and two-thirds of the world's population.

Based in Addis Ababa, capital of Ethiopia, the AU has 55 member countries, totaling three trillion dollars in GDP.

The Indian Prime Minister also affirmed that his



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaks at a special session of the Business 20 or B20 - Copyright © africanews Manish Swarup/ Copyright 2023 The AP. All rights reserved.

country, China's great rival, had the capacity to compensate for the supply problems caused by the Covid crisis.

India is the "solution" to create "a reliable global supply chain", because "the world has changed a lot after Covid-19", Mr Modi said.

Thursday at the BRICS summit (group of large emerging countries) in South Africa, Mr. Modi spoke one-on-one with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Niger: crowds rally in Niamey demanding French troops leave

Nigerien demonstrators demanded French troops leave the Sahelian nation just hours before time ran out for the French envoy to leave the country.

Among the thousands rallied near a base where

French military personnel are stationed in Niamey's outskirts on Sunday (Aug. 27), some could be heard singing 'Chiani', the name of the coup leader, or 'down with France'.

"I've come here to demand the departure of French

Kenya: controversy over the cause of a blackout

The longest nationwide power outage in Kenyans' memory remained a mystery Sunday as the government-owned power company blamed a failure at Africa's largest wind farm, which laid the responsibility on the power grid instead.

Some of Kenya's more than 50 million people, including in the capital, Nairobi, saw power return almost 24 hours after the massive outage occurred late Friday. It was an embarrassment to the East African economic hub that has sought to promote itself as a tech center on the continent but remains challenged by alleged mismanagement and poor infrastructure.

Hundreds of people were stranded in darkness for hours at Kenya's main international airport in Nairobi, leading to a rare public apology from a government minister in a country where tourism is a key part of the economy. "This situation WILL NOT happen again," transport minister, Kipchumba Murkomen, said.

The head of the Kenya Airports Authority was fired after a generator serving the main international terminal had failed to start.

Shortly before midnight Saturday, Kenya Power offered the first detailed explanation of the outage, blaming it on a loss of power generation from the Lake Turkana Wind Power plant, Africa's largest wind farm, causing an imbalance that "tripped all other main generation units and stations, leading to a total outage on the grid."

But Lake Turkana Wind Power in a statement denied it was to blame. Instead, it said it had been forced to go offline by an "overvoltage situation in the national grid system which, to avoid extreme damage, causes the wind power plant to automatically switch off." The plant had been producing nearly 15% of the national output at the time.

Such an interruption should be immediately compensated by other power generators in the



A Kenyan sips a cup of tea as she sits in her sitting room with emergency light as - Copyright © africanews Abdul Azim Sayyid/ Copyright 2023 The AP. All rights reserved.

system, the company said, but the continuing outages in the national grid were preventing the wind plant from being brought back online.

Kenya Power said it couldn't even turn to importing power from neighboring Uganda, a relatively fast option that for some reason had been unavailable.

"We are jointly working on having the Uganda interconnector restored so as to enhance our grid recovery efforts," it said.

President William Ruto, whose own office told The Associated Press on Saturday it was still running on generator power hours after Kenya Power announced it had restored electricity to "critical areas" of the capital, did not comment publicly on the crisis. Instead, he again criticized opposition calls for anti-government protests over the rising cost of living, calling them a threat to investors.

"Shame of a nation," was the main headline of one of Kenya's leading newspapers, the Sunday Nation. It said the outage was costing businesses millions of dollars and leaving some major hospitals to run on generators.

Kenya gets almost all its electricity from renewable sources, a fact that the government will promote as it hosts the first Africa Climate Summit early next month.

Ghana forward Mohammed Kudus leaves Ajax to join West Ham in Premier League

Ghana forward Mohammed Kudus left Ajax to join West Ham in a deal worth a reported \$48 million on Sunday.

The 23-year-old Kudus joins holding midfielder Edson Alvarez in moving to the Olympic Stadium from Ajax in this summer's transfer window and has signed a five-year deal.

Kudus scored 19 goals and had seven assists in all competitions for Ajax last season, including goals against Liverpool and Napoli in the Champions League.

"I've been dreaming to play in a league like this since I was a kid," Kudus said. "I've been dreaming of this moment and I'm so happy to be here. But it doesn't stop here, I want to keep going."

"I try my best to entertain the fans as I think that's what football is all about. I'm just here to do my best and help the team. I'm really happy to be here. I will fight for the badge. I can't wait to get started."

Kudus has made 24 appearances for Ghana and played at the World Cup last year.

"He's a terrific young talent, who has already shone at the very highest level for Ajax in the



Ghana's Mohammed Kudus poses prior to the international friendly soccer match... - Copyright © africanews Christophe Ena/ Copyright 2022 The AP. All rights reserved

Champions League and made well over 150 senior appearances at the age of 23 — so it was no surprise to see so many top clubs chasing his signature this summer," West Ham manager David Moyes said.

West Ham has also signed center midfielder James Ward-Prowse this summer as the club spends the money collected for selling Declan Rice to Arsenal.

Credit: Rédaction africanews with AP



Supporters of the Niger's ruling (CNSP) wave a placard that reads "Long live Niger" as they demonstrate outside the Niger and French airbases in Niamey on Aug. 27, 2023. - Copyright © africanews -AFP or licensors

troops from Niger. That's what I've come to demonstrate today," a protester said.

"They have to hear us. I know they can hear us. Every day, people come here, people suffer, and all ECOWAS has to do is increase the sanctions. We're here, we're going to resist until death."

1,500 French troops are deployed in Niger to back Bazoum's regime in the fight against terrorism.

According to French media reports, most of France military capabilities in Niger are gathered in the Niamey airport. This includes fighter jets, drones Reaper, dozens of tanks and among tons of military materials.

"We don't want the French army in Niger. Let the French leave. Let them go back to France. We don't want them anymore. They killed our brothers, our fathers, our children. We don't want them anymore."

Following the July 26 coup that deposed president Mohamed Bazoum, France evacuated 1,079 people mainly French nationals by August 2nd.

France's envoy to Niger and its military personnel remained stationed in Niger.

In early August, the junta said it will scrap various military cooperation deals with France that were made under the ousted President. France however objected arguing the new authorities had no legitimacy to scrap the agreements.

■ Terms and Conditions Apply

ECOBANK SAVE AND WIN PROMO!



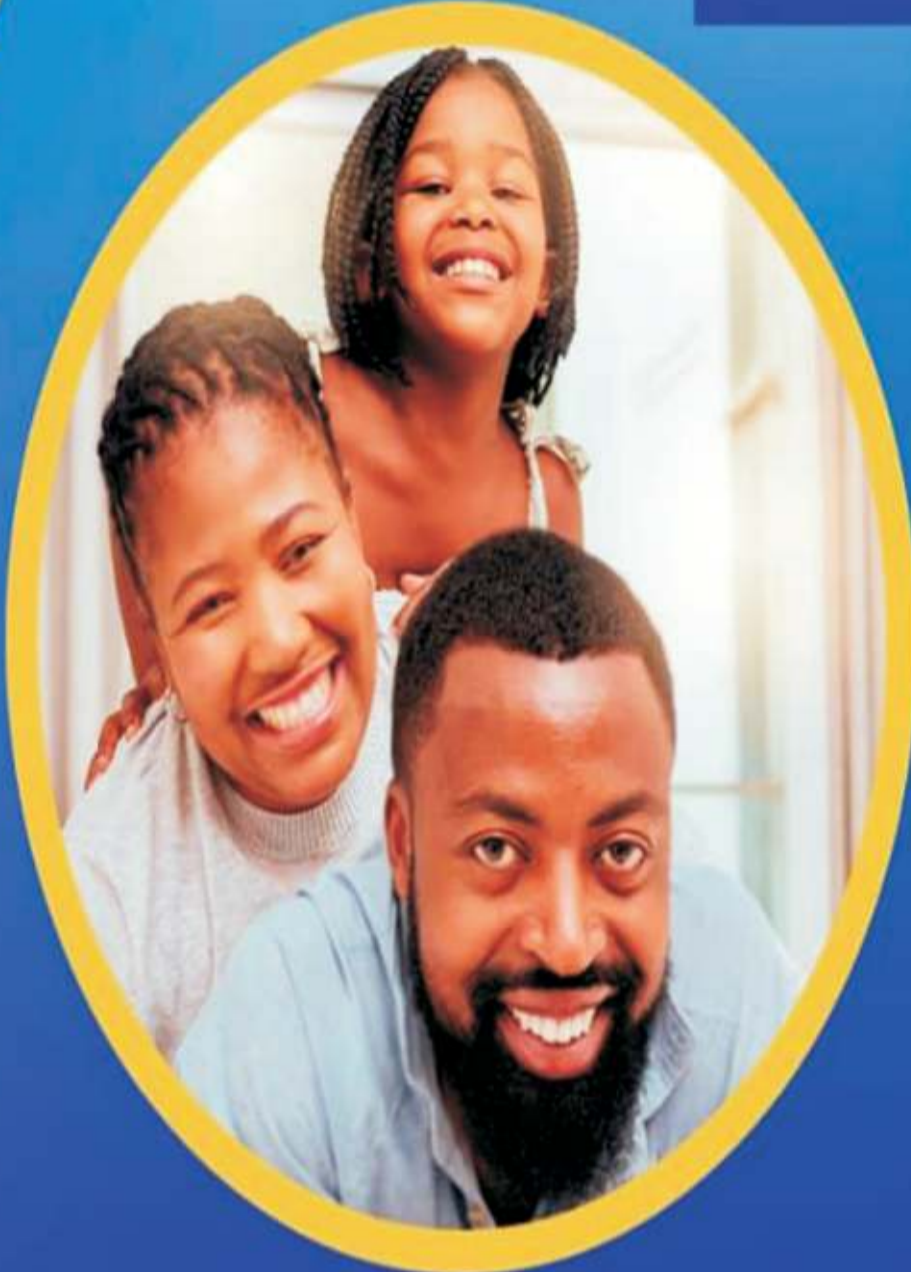
The more you **Save** the
Greater Your Chances
of **Winning**



Save **NLE 5,000, NLE 10,000, NLE 20,000**
or more and enter the draw

ecobank.com

Ecobank
The Pan African Bank



SHARE MY ACCOUNT

- ✔ One account several cards
- ✔ Personalized sub-card
- ✔ Manage cash limit for sub-cards
- ✔ Share your account by issuing sub-card to your friends and family
- ✔ Manage sub-cards from mobile app

Call us on

+232 77 301 732 / 73 911 449 / 31 687 289

Account for the Family



The ECSL Payment Call Center is contacting ad-hoc polling personnel to:

- 1 Confirm important information needed to process their payments.
- 2 Share essential details about the payment process and locations.

Call for more info:

090 077 108
or 090 077 109



Mon-Fri 8am - 5pm

MAKE SURE YOU HAVE A:

Valid ID & Phone Number



PAYMENT OF AD HOC POLLING STAFF Specific District Call Center Numbers are as follows:

1. Bo: 090077135; and 090077159
2. Bombali: 090077143; and 090077152
3. Bonthe: 090077138; and 090077139
4. Falaba: 090077162
5. Kailahun: 090077133; and 090077141
6. Kambia: 090077149; and 090077163
7. Karene: 090077158
8. Kenema: 090077142
9. Koinadugu: 090077148; and 090077144
10. Kono: 090077134; and 090077136
11. Moyamba: 090077153
12. Port Loko: 090077140; and 090077154
13. Pujehun: 090077137
14. Tonkolili: 090077147
15. Western Rural: 090077155; and 090077157
16. Western Urban: 090077132; 090077145; 090077146 and 090077156

MAKE SURE YOU HAVE A:

Valid ID & Phone Number



SAY NO TO DRUGS



FOLLOW US :  Concord Times Newspaper  @Concordtimes  www.slconcordtimes.com

MERCURY INTERNATIONAL X **DRIZILIK**

KAM JOIN WI PATNA PROGRAM!

Enji op to 30% bonya we yu kostoma win.

CONTACT US
📞 **080 732 720**

18+ PLEASE GAMBLE RESPONSIBLY

DRIZILIK
MERCURY INTERNATIONAL
AFFILIATE PROGRAM BRAND AMBASSADOR

Padi
Bake some festive treats this Christmas!

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen

Ready, Steady, Bake!

Padi

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen

"The fondest memories are made when gathered around the table."

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen

Spaghetti, you! You can use Padi items to cook it and it will taste delicious, promise!

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen

ARE YOU
TEAM KETCHUP OR TEAM MAYO

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen

Enriched with 7 Enrich Vitamin A & D

Proudly made in Sierra Leone

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen

Padi, sharing is caring

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen

Mama Mia!

Padi Spaghetti, strands of deliciousness!

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen

Daddy you are my best Padi!

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen

Spread the love!

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen

I followed my heart and it led me to the kitchen.

Padi

Truly Natural & Healthy

Padi
Premium Black Tea
Finest Ceylon Blend

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen

INT'L SPORT

Women's World Cup: Lauren Hemp says England 'wanted more' as Lionesses return home

England forward Lauren Hemp said the Lionesses "created history" but "wanted more" as the team arrived home from the Women's World Cup final in Australia.

The players landed at Heathrow airport on Tuesday morning following their 1-0 defeat by Spain on Sunday.

Fans waited in the terminal to greet the team but they left without going through the arrivals area.

BBC Sport understands this is the normal process for the men's and women's team to exit an airport.

Manchester City's Hemp, 23, wrote on X (formerly known as Twitter): "This tournament has brought some unbelievable highs but ultimately we fell just short."

"We created history but we wanted more. So much more."

"Thank you so much for the support back home and in Australia we felt you. It'll hurt for a while but we'll come back even stronger. Proud."

England reached their first Women's World Cup final by beating co-hosts

Australia in the semi-finals but suffered heartbreak in Sydney after Spain deservedly triumphed thanks to Olga Carmona's goal.

The world champions held their victory parade and trophy celebrations in Madrid on Monday.

Jess Carter said she had "nothing but absolute pride" as the Lionesses became the first England football team since 1966 to reach a senior final on the world stage.

"Couldn't have asked for a better group of staff and players to experience my first World Cup with," wrote the 25-year-old Chelsea defender on X.

"Thanks to everyone for the incredible support we have been given, we felt the love since game one."

England are next in action against Scotland in the group stages of the inaugural Women's Nations League on 22 September at 19:45 BST.

<https://www.bbc.com/sport/football>



Theo Walcott: Former Arsenal, Everton and Southampton winger retires from professional football



Newcastle transfer news: Lewis Hall completes move from Chelsea in deal worth up to £35m



Newcastle have completed the transfer of Lewis Hall from Chelsea on loan with an obligation to buy in deal worth up to £35m.

The club will pay £28m to Chelsea on completion of the season-long loan, with potential £7m in add-ons.

Hall, a boyhood Newcastle fan, said: "I'm very proud. Me and my family are Newcastle fans, and for me and my brother growing up, it was drilled into us that we were Newcastle. It's a big club and I can't wait to get started."

"I got a lot of experience last year in some big fixtures and I was really proud of the way I progressed as a player and a person. To now be here at Newcastle, the club that I've supported since I was a kid, I'm honoured and very proud to wear this shirt."

"It's very exciting. When you look back on last season and the way the team performed - not just the results, but the performances the team were putting in - it was amazing."

"There's so many talented players and we've got the Champions League now as well so there's many different competitions that I know the team will be

wanting to do well in, and hopefully get a trophy or two as well."

The deferred payment allows Newcastle to comply with FFP restrictions this summer. Howe said last week that they would have to be creative to sign another player.

The 18-year-old recently agreed in principle a new long-term contract with the Blues. Hall, who has featured for England U21s, made his Premier League debut for Chelsea last season and went on to make nine appearances in the top flight.

Head coach Eddie Howe said: "I'm delighted to welcome Lewis to Newcastle United. He is a player we have tracked closely, as have a number of clubs, so it's very pleasing to secure him and to add a player of his quality, versatility and high potential to our squad."

"I'd like to thank everyone involved for their tireless work to bring in the players we have."

"A lot of time, effort and resource goes into a transfer window, but we have a real togetherness at all levels here and I appreciate that teamwork and support."

<https://www.skysports.com/football/news>

Theo Walcott has announced his retirement from professional football at the age of 34.

The ex-Arsenal, Everton and Southampton winger told Gary Neville on The Overlap podcast the decision is "scary" but he "wants to try new things".

Walcott hangs up his boots following a 23-year career in which he made 397 Premier League appearances.

"I'm officially going to be hanging up my boots. It's very scary, I can't lie," said Walcott.

"It's scary because football's all I've known from the age of 16 or even younger. I want to try new things I never experienced as a kid - I missed out on a lot."

"I just feel like I want to experience life - things [usually] revolve around football for me."

In his 13-year spell with the Gunners, Walcott won three FA Cups as well as two Community Shields.

He shot to fame in 2006 as a 17-year-old when he was surprisingly selected in Sven Goran Eriksson's England World Cup squad.

Walcott appeared 47 times for England, scoring eight times in a decade-long international career.

Walcott, who was a free agent but made 20 Premier League

appearances and scored three goals for Southampton last season as the club suffered relegation, says he received offers from various clubs to keep playing but his "heart isn't committed" to it.

"I've had offers abroad and from some very good Championship teams. There's been some Saudi offers but it's not where I see myself playing, to be honest," said Walcott.

"Nothing against the money or the league but if my heart isn't into playing football it's not fair on the clubs, not fair on me."

Walcott played for Newbury and Swindon Town as a youngster before being signed by Southampton in 2000.

He made his debut for the Saints in 2005 as a 16-year-old and soon became the club's youngest ever goal scorer when he found the net against Leeds United.

Walcott made 21 appearances and scored four goals for Saints before joining Arsene Wenger's Arsenal in 2006.

He played 397 games for the Gunners, scoring 108 goals, before departing for Everton in a £20m deal in 2019.

Walcott played 85 games for the Toffees, scoring 11 times, before re-joining Southampton two years later.

<https://www.bbc.com/sport/football>

ALL CREDIBLE INSTITUTIONS HAVE ADVERTISED IN
CONCORD TIMES

FOR ADVERT PLACEMENT CALL: +232 76 694292/+232 99 822587 E-mail: concordtimes100@yahoo.com

Follow us: Concord Times Newspaper @Concordtimes sl_concord_times

LEGAL AID BOARD **TRANSCO** **HIV/AIDS**
BRAC **ACCESS BANK** **MINISTRY OF YOUTHS AND SPORTS**
FAO **MBSSE** **GUMA VALLEY WATER COMPANY** **NACSA**
GTB **CARE INTERNATIONAL** **MTHIE** **ACTIONAID** **SAVE THE CHILDREN**
SIERRA LEONE RED CROSS **NASSIT** **SIERRA LEONE POLICE** **SLRA**
EPA **SIERRA LEONE BREWERY** **SLTC**
RMF **MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS** **NJALA UNIVERSITY** **MMCET CHAI**
SOS CHILDREN VILLAGE **ACC** **MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**
TRANSFAPAY **STAR TIMES**
CRS **ACTION AGAINST HUNGER** **WORLD VISION** **UBA**
MINISTRY OF FINANCE **ADB** **DSTV** **AUDIT SERVICES**
SEI **MINISTRY OF ENERGY** **NRA** **SLAJ**
SIERRA BAY HOTEL **MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE** **NEMMS**
MARIE STOPES **SEA COACH EXPRESS** **GIZ**
SLRSA **NATCOM** **OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT** **WATERAID**
SALCAB **ECOBANK** **LAPO MICRO FINANCE (SL) LTD**
HRC **NPPA** **BSL** **SOLTHIS** **OXFARM** **AHF**
MIC **UTB** **SLCB** **RCB**
MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT **ORANGE**
MERCURY SL **UNDP** **WHO** **M.R. DISTILLERIES** **IGR**
OFFICE OF THE FIRST LADY **AFRICELL** **MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY**
NMA **ZENITH BANK** **MINISTRY OF HEALTH**
NATIONAL TOURIST BOARD **KENEMA CITY COUNCIL** **EUROPEAN UNION** **SMEDA**
STATISTIC SIERRA LEONE **PPRC** **CHASL** **STANDARD BUREAU**
MARITIME **WORLD BANK** **AFRIGAS** **RADISSON BLU HOTEL**
NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES **PLAN INTERNATIONAL**
PRA **FAWAZ BUILDING MATERIALS** **ECOMED** **PARTNERS IN HEALTH**
PEE CEE & SONS **SMALL ARMS** **SLWREC**
KINGHO MINING COMPANY **PPRC** **MOTT MACDONALDS**
NEC **NATIONAL TOURIST BOARD** **NPPA** **EBK UNIVERSITY** **JUDICIARY OF SIERRA LEONE**

Published by Concord Times Communications, 44, Edwards Street, Freetown, Sierra Leone www.slconcordtimes.com

Editor: Alusine Sesay +232 78 385923; opinion@slconcordtimes.com Advertisement: +232 79 355725, +232 76 694 292 advert@slconcordtimes.com

Follow us: Concord Times Newspaper @Concordtimes sl_concord_times