The New Examiner
Southern Africa at home and abroad



Cover image · AI-created photographic illustration

BOTH SIDES / LONDON AND BULAWAYO

Who packed your suitcase?

On the journey from London to Bulawayo, a pair of school shoes can take up more room than the traveller's own clothes.

FROM THE EDITORS

If you live far from home, there are at least two places you check when you open the news. Sometimes the story you need sits somewhere between them. A decision in Pretoria can change the price a trader pays in Lusaka. A play in London can give a child their first chance to hear a story their grandparents know by heart.

That in-between is where The New Examiner begins. In our first weekly edition, we start with a suitcase, compare two ways to send £100 home, and spend a little time with a football club that Bulawayo has loved for a century. Our world desk also follows the climate talks in Antalya and a fatal factory fire in Indonesia. Welcome to the first issue.

BOTH SIDES / AN ESSAY

Who packed your suitcase?

London and Bulawayo

A pair of school shoes is an awkward thing to take from London to Bulawayo. Keep the box and you lose a corner of your suitcase. Throw it away and the shoes arrive looking less like a present. And there is always the possibility that the child whose size you wrote down in August has spent September and October quietly growing.

Imagine being the auntie at the London end. You took a photograph of the label before you left the shop. Somebody back home replied with a thumbs-up. The receipt is still in your coat pocket, where it will be of very little use if those shoes pinch in Zimbabwe. Now you are sitting on the floor trying to decide whether you need two pairs of your own.

At the other end, the child may have quite a different concern. Do they look like the ones the other children wear? An adult has crossed a continent with these shoes. It takes some nerve to admit you don’t like the toes.

There’s a particular courtesy in these exchanges. The traveller plays down the trouble. The family admires the shoes before anyone asks the child to stand up and walk. It is possible for everybody in the room to mean well and for one small person to spend the afternoon curling their toes.

And what does the traveller want? Perhaps an ordinary Tuesday. A chair in the kitchen, a trip into town with a sister, the right to be mildly irritated about something without anybody reminding you how short the visit is. Buying the shoes was easy compared with asking for that.

On the return journey, the traffic goes the other way. An aunt has found an old photograph. Someone has written the names on the back because the cousins in London won’t recognise all the faces. The photograph fits inside a book. It may be the one thing in either suitcase that nobody could replace.

Here is a question worth asking before the next visit, while there is still time to change the shopping list. What would you like us to do together while I’m home? The answer might take a whole afternoon. There is room for it even if the suitcase is full.

WORLD DESK / 24 NOVEMBER

The world this week

ANTALYA

Two weeks of climate talks end without an overall deal

Governments left COP31 in Türkiye on 22 November without agreeing on an overarching pact. Negotiators split over fossil fuels and money. The UN climate chief said countries had made progress on a fair transition for communities and workers. For a town that depends on a coal mine, the difference matters. Governments can agree that workers deserve help while still disagreeing over how quickly to move away from coal and who should pay.

UN Climate Change, closing remarks · BBC News on YouTube

SERANG

Indonesian factory fire leaves families waiting for eight workers

Indonesian authorities confirmed on 24 November that 26 workers had died after a fire at a confectionery factory west of Jakarta. Eight others were still missing when the Associated Press filed its Tuesday morning report. Rescuers found many of the victims on the second floor near a route to an emergency staircase. Debris and renewed flare-ups hampered the search.

Associated Press via ABC News, 24 November

CENTURION

Bangladesh faces another 150 from South Africa’s Marques Ackerman

Bangladesh’s bowlers had already seen Marques Ackerman score 157 in Johannesburg. On Tuesday in Centurion he made them do it all again, hitting 150 off 138 balls. South Africa reached lunch on day two at 228 for three against Bangladesh’s first-innings 91.

Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha, day-two report · The Citizen, 24 November

MEXICO CITY

A Mexican flag, two touchdowns and a 49ers win

San Francisco tight end George Kittle carried a Mexican flag out of the tunnel in Mexico City on Sunday. Then he caught two touchdown passes in the first half. The 49ers beat Minnesota 35–10 at Estadio Banorte on 22 November. Kittle had scored both touchdowns by early in the second quarter.

San Francisco 49ers, game report · San Francisco Chronicle on Bluesky

ON SOCIAL / SOUTH AFRICA

At noon South African time on 24 November, Snaplytics’ South Africa chart for X placed “Ackerman” first and #SAvBAN ninth. Compare that snapshot with the day-two match thread on Reddit, where supporters were already discussing the opener’s rapid start to his Test career.

Snaplytics, South Africa X chart at 10:00 UTC · r/Cricket, day-two match thread

THIS WEEK / THE REGIONAL BRIEFING

Across the region and abroad

SOUTH AFRICA AND ZAMBIA

Customs paperwork gets a head start

On 23 November, the South African Revenue Service announced an agreement with its Zambian counterpart to share customs declarations electronically before goods arrive at the border. South Africa signed a similar arrangement with Malawi in July. Zimbabwe was still in discussions when the announcement appeared.

For a Lusaka shopkeeper waiting on goods ordered from South Africa, the test will be whether a delivery becomes easier to predict. The agreement gives officials an earlier look at the paperwork. The announcement gives the shopkeeper no new delivery time to put on the calendar.

South African Revenue Service, 23 November

ESWATINI

Child marriage is on the regional parliamentary agenda

Southern African parliamentarians are scheduled to meet in Eswatini from 20 to 27 November. The region’s Parliamentary Forum put ending child marriage at the centre of its 59th plenary. South Africa’s Parliament announced that National Assembly Speaker Thoko Didiza would lead its delegation.

The programme includes a public-accountability question for every delegation. Ten years after the forum adopted its model law on child marriage, what has each country done with it? A regional dashboard to track implementation is scheduled for launch at the assembly.

Parliament of South Africa, 19 November

LONDON

A Zimbabwean sound installation finds a second life onstage

On 7 November, Zimbabwean-born artist Shumba Maasai brought DARÉ to the Bernie Grant Arts Centre. The work had begun as a sound installation at Zimbabwe House in London. Onstage, the artist and collaborators drew music, poetry and scent into the same performance.

In a review published on 22 November, Tito Tobi-Lawal traces what changed between the two rooms. It’s a piece to pass on to someone who asks what Zimbabwean artists are making in Britain now.

Postcards From The Diaspora, 22 November

FIELD GUIDE / MONEY HOME

What does £100 buy at the other end?

If £100 is what you can spend, say so before you compare transfer services. Enter £100 as the total leaving your account, including fees. Select the same payout currency and collection method on both quotes, then look at the line that says how much the recipient gets.

Here’s a worked example for a UK sender and a family member collecting US dollars in Zimbabwe. The figures are illustrative. Both offers assume cash collection and no further charge at pickup.

Same £100 budget	Fee	Rate per £1	Family receives
Offer A	£0	US$1.25	US$125.00
Offer B	£2	US$1.31	US$128.38

The offer with the £2 fee delivers US$3.38 more. Its exchange rate makes up the difference. The World Bank lists transfer fees and exchange-rate margins separately in its UK–Zimbabwe comparison, which helps explain how a service can advertise a zero fee and still cost more.

Before sending, ask which pickup point the recipient can actually reach. If collecting the extra US$3.38 means paying US$4 more in bus fare, the family ends up with less. A good last question is a very local one. Which agent is near you?

World Bank, Remittance Prices Worldwide

BEFORE YOU SEND

Someone says they have a new number and need money. What now?

Call the person using a number you had before the message arrived. If they do not answer, reach someone who can check on them independently. Keep the payment on hold until you have spoken to someone you trust. If you have already paid, contact your bank or transfer service immediately, explain what happened and ask whether the payment can be stopped or recalled.

US Federal Trade Commission, family emergency scams

CULTURE & SPORT / FOOTBALL

Who took you to Barbourfields?



Matchday at a distance · AI-created photographic illustration

Ask a Highlanders supporter living abroad what they miss about Barbourfields and give them time to answer. A score is easy to send. It takes a little longer to explain why, of all the people in a stadium, there is one person you wish you could stand beside again.

Highlanders marks a hundred years in 2026. At the unveiling of the centenary kit in September, the club chairman paused before his prepared remarks to honour members of the club and supporters who had died. At an occasion built around a new shirt, one of the first things the club did was make room for the people missing from the gathering.

The chairman also spoke about the next generation, including ambitions for the women’s and youth programmes. That gives supporters abroad something to ask about long after the commemorative shirts have sold. Who is getting a chance to play in the black and white now?

One way to mark the hundredth year, wherever you are, is to ring the person who first took you to watch Bosso. Ask which match they remember taking you to. You might remember the result. They might remember having to lift you so you could see. Let them tell their version first.

Highlanders FC, chairman’s centenary address, 5 September

THE DIARY / 28–30 NOVEMBER

Three dates for the week ahead

SATURDAY 28 NOVEMBER

Bulawayo Arts Awards

The ninth edition recognises work from Bulawayo and Matabeleland, including artists born in the city who now practise abroad. The organisers list literary awards in both Ndebele and English. Browse the nominees before the ceremony and pick the artist you'll look up next.

Awards programme and nominees

SUNDAY 29 NOVEMBER

Cape Town switches on the festive lights

The free concert takes place on the Grand Parade in front of City Hall. The city says the event area opens at 13:00 local time. Nasty C and Dee Koala are among the billed performers. Travelling in? The city's event notice lists entry points and road restrictions.

City of Cape Town event and access details

MONDAY 30 NOVEMBER

Cape Town opens its Antarctic Rights Festival

At 18:00 local time the programme lists a gathering at the St James beach tidal pool. The wider festival runs through 4 December and brings scientists, artists and Indigenous representatives together over the future of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean.

Full programme and registration

PASS IT ON

What is the one thing you always make room for when you travel home? If someone sent you this issue, send them your answer. We suspect they have a suitcase story of their own.

For businesses and community organisations

Advertising and sponsorship rates and enquiries

PLANTING SEASON · ZIMBABWE

Has it rained enough to plant in Matabeleland?



Checking the soil before sowing · AI-created photographic illustration

When someone at home says it rained, the next question is where. In Insindi, Matabeleland South, Gogo Mabhebhe farms near a wetland that usually lets her grow two crops a season. When ZBC visited in early November, she was still waiting for a second rain. Four years earlier, the broadcaster had found her maize already standing at the same point in the season.

Zimbabwe's Meteorological Services Department favours below-average November rainfall across most of the country. Its December outlook gives parts of Matabeleland South a better chance of normal or above-normal rain. A province can have a wet month and still leave one family's field too dry when the tractor arrives.

On 23 November, Agriculture.co.zw reported that Seed Co agronomists were advising farmers to stagger sowing and choose varieties suited to their rainfall and planting date. If you are helping pay for seed from abroad, ask which field is ready first and what the local extension officer recommends for that field. There is time for that conversation before anyone opens the bag.

ZBC's report from Insindi, 10 November · Zimbabwe Meteorological Services outlook · Agriculture.co.zw, 23 November

MASHONALAND EAST · IRRIGATION

Young growers get 30 hectares at Muchekeranwa Dam

At Muchekeranwa Dam, Marondera University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology has developed a further 30 hectares of irrigated land for young growers. Professor Lesley Macheka, the university's research and innovation director, told ZBC that another 30 hectares were already operating for community farmers.

ZBC's Kenias Chivuzhe reported on 20 November that the university was also supplying tractors to help with planting. One beneficiary described getting the land ready. For families watching the scheme from abroad, the next milestone is a crop in the ground on the newly developed plots.

Kenias Chivuzhe for ZBC News, 20 November

THE FARM CALL

Three questions before you pay for ploughing

Which field got rain, on what dates, and how far down is the soil damp? A voice note from the person who walked the field can tell you more than a video of rain on the roof in town.

What does the tractor quote cover? Ask for the area, the job, whether fuel is included and what happens to the booking if the field is too dry that day.

If only one field is ready, what would you plant there first? Let the person doing the planting talk through the choice, including what seed can stay sealed for later.

MARKET NOTEBOOK · NAMIBIA

A cabbage and a butternut face different rules at the border

Namibia’s November produce notice closes the border to ordinary imports of fresh green cabbage and onions, subject to the listed exclusions. Butternut and washed potatoes can come in under the country’s 47% market-share promotion requirement. The notice covers 1–30 November and can be revised.

For a grower pricing a delivery, that distinction matters before a truck is booked. Ask the buyer which crop and grade they will take, in what quantity, and who pays transport. Check the board’s current notice again if the load will arrive in December.

Namibian Agronomic Board, November notice (PDF) · Board’s current notices

MINING BRIEF · BOTSWANA

Khoemacau contractor advertises 40 jobs near Toteng

Huaye Botswana Mining listed 40 posts for underground work at the Khoemacau copper mine in Botswana’s DailyNews on 20 November. The contractor is seeking electricians, maintenance fitters, equipment operators and mine surveyors, among others, for the Zone 5N and Zeta sites.

The notice gives qualified Botswana citizens first preference and says applications stay open until the posts are filled. For a tradesperson abroad weighing a return, page 20 lists the experience required for each job and explains how to apply directly to the contractor.

DailyNews recruitment notice, page 20 (PDF) · MMG’s Khoemacau project profile

THE PUBLIC EYE

HARARE MAGISTRATES COURT · 24 NOVEMBER 2026

Harare court adjourns Uebert Angel’s bail hearing

Spirit Embassy founder Uebert Angel, whose legal name is Uebert Mudzanire, appeared in Harare Magistrates Court on Tuesday, 24 November, on a charge of aggravated indecent assault. Police arrested him during a church service in Harare on Sunday, 22 November.

Prosecutors opposed bail. The Herald’s court correspondent reported that Magistrate Francis Mapfumo adjourned the bail hearing until Wednesday, 25 November, and that Angel would remain in custody overnight. The charge has yet to be tried.

Angel’s lawyers challenged the way police carried out the arrest. In a statement dated 23 November, Spirit Embassy said its founder was cooperating with the authorities and would answer the allegation in court. ZBC reported that the magistrate granted an order protecting the names of the complainant and witnesses.

The Herald, bail proceedings · ZBC, court order and defence response · Spirit Embassy statement via Church Gist

CULTURE

HARARE · ARTS

Six restored paintings come out of storage in Harare

On 21 November the National Gallery of Zimbabwe opened an exhibition bringing Zimbabwean work together with six restored European paintings from its collection. Some of the paintings came to the gallery in 1971. Two conservators worked on the restoration through a project that the Italian Embassy in Harare began in 2019.

The opening coincided with the first African edition of the International Committee for Museums and Collections of Modern Art’s annual conference. For readers following from abroad, the gallery’s online programme includes a map of Zimbabwean artists and art spaces.

Italian Embassy in Harare, 23 November · National Gallery of Zimbabwe, programme and art map