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ECONOMY

OILY SLUDGE SPILLED INTO ROVUMA BASIN

The American hydrocarbon company Anadarko, which is exploring for oil and natural gas in the Rovuma Basin, off the coast of the northern Mozambican province of Cabo Delgado, has accidentally spilled about 30,000 litres of oily sludge, resulting from drilling operations, into the sea.

According to a communication from Anadarko to the Environment Ministry (MICOA), cited in the 22 May issue of the Maputo daily *Notícias*, the incident occurred on 10 May during the drilling of a well about 46 kilometres from the coast of Mocimboa da Praia district.

Anadarko says it responded to the spill by immediately closing the well, and moving the drilling platform to avoid any further spillage of the oily sludge onto the sea bed. The company then dispatched a helicopter to survey the surrounding area. No oil slicks or other detritus could be detected anywhere near the well.

“So far, clean-up operations on the sea surface are not necessary”, the Anadarko note said, “since no mud slicks are visible in the water. However, overflights will continue to detect any possible signs of the muds”. [Read more...](#)

MEASURES BEING TAKEN AGAINST SPREAD OF PANAMA DISEASE

The Mozambican Ministry of Agriculture announced on 21 May that it has introduced restrictive measures in all areas where bananas are cultivated, following the discovery in September last year of an outbreak of Panama disease in the northern province of Nampula.

This is a fungal disease that affects the roots of banana plants. The fungus, *Fusarium oxysporum*, is resistant to fungicide, and so far no way of controlling the fungus chemically has been discovered.

Panama disease was detected in one of the banana fields of the company Matanuska, in the Nampula district of Monapo. According to Serafina Mangana, head of the plant health department in the Ministry of Agriculture, so far 12,000 banana plants in an area of 60 hectares have been destroyed. Matanuska cultivates a total area of 1,400 hectares of banana. Mangana denied reports in some of the foreign media that 3,600 hectares had been contaminated, leading to the destruction of seven million banana plants.

Among the measures taken, she told AIM, are strict restrictions on the entry of people into banana farms, and the disinfection of vehicles and people so as to prevent them from transporting the fungus to other areas. [Read more...](#)

CFM TO BUY 70 NEW CARRIAGES

Mozambique's publicly owned port and rail company, CFM, has announced that it intends to purchase a further 70 passenger carriages this year due to an unexpected surge in demand for rail transport, reports the 21 May issue of the independent daily *O Pais*.

“We were really taken by surprise this year, due to the great demand in Maputo central station”, said the rail

director of CFM's southern division, Augusto Abudo.

An international tender has been launched to acquire 70 carriages for the central and southern rail networks. Abudo said the carriages should arrive at the end of this year, or in early 2015, to meet the demand for passenger trains.

Half the new carriages will go to the southern region. This will bring to 65 the total number of carriages that can be used on the lines from Maputo to South Africa, Zimbabwe and Swaziland. [Read more...](#)

MINERS RETURN TO CLOSED MINE

Artisanal miners are returning to an illegal gold mine in Memba district, in the northern Mozambican province of Nampula despite the order given on 17 May by the Minister of Mineral Resources, Esperanca Bias, that the mine must be closed definitively.

The mine, at Namajuba, was the scene of a tragedy when it collapsed on 12 May, killing at least ten of the miners. The death toll will be much higher since a further 15 miners were unaccounted for by the time that the operations to retrieve the bodies ended.

Despite the warnings by the authorities that the mine is "extremely dangerous", the miners are returning, claiming that digging for gold is their only means of subsistence, reports the 22 May issue of the Maputo daily *Noticias*.

Nampula provincial governor Cidalia Chauque visited Namajuba on 19 May and told the miners "I came to state once again that this place is closed".

Chauque said that the government is not opposed to artisanal mining, but insists that mining must be undertaken only when conditions are safe. She thought it essential that the artisanal miners should set up an association so that mining could be done in an organised manner. [Read more...](#)

ELECTRONIC SINGLE COUNTERS TO SPEED UP LICENSING

Mozambique's Minister of Industry and Trade, Armando Inroga, on 19 May promised a dramatic reduction in the time taken to issue licences, once the electronic Single Attendance Counter (e-BAU) is launched.

It used to take 65 days for a company to be registered and begin its activities. When the Single Attendance Counters (BAUs) were introduced in 2007 they cut the time down to 25 days, and now Inroga expected that the electronic version will mean that registration takes less than a day.

There are 15 BAUs in the country, and since they were established they have licensed about 38,000 companies. They bring together in one place all the requirements needed for registration and licensing, thus eliminating the need for people trying to set up businesses to visit several offices dealing with a variety of forms.

The e-BAU is still being structured and should begin operating after it has been validated. Speaking at the opening in Maputo of a seminar to validate version zero of the e-BAU, Inroga said that implementation of the new system will reduce the time and the costs involved in licensing economic activities, particularly for small and medium companies. It will also reduce the opportunities for corruption. [Read more...](#)

PARTNERSHIP IN HYDROCARBON LOGISTICS WITH BONATTI

Mozambique's National Hydrocarbon Company (ENH) has announced that its subsidiary ENH Logistics (ENHL) has established a partnership with the Italian company Bonatti, intended to bring to Mozambique Bonatti's experience in the provision of services to the hydrocarbon industry.

According to an ENH press release, the partnership, known as ENHL-Bonatti Ltd, will provide services in the areas of procurement, construction, the operation and maintenance of infrastructures, electricity and automation. It also intends to explore other business opportunities that may arise from the investments by multinational companies in Mozambican hydrocarbons.

The partnership was formalised in Maputo on 20 May, when the executive director of ENHL, Eduardo Naiene, and the commercial director of Bonatti, Stefano Protogene, signed an expression of interest. The ceremony took place during the visit to Mozambique of a large delegation of Italian business people, headed by Carlo Calenda, the Italian Deputy Minister of Economic Development. [Read more...](#)

LAW AND ORDER

TANZANIAN DRUG TRAFFICKER ARRESTED

The Mozambican police arrested a 27 year old Tanzanian at Maputo International Airport last week for drug trafficking. At his weekly press briefing on 19 May, the spokesperson for the Maputo City Police Command, Orlando Mudumane, said that the Tanzanian had travelled from Brazil with 70 ampules of cocaine in his stomach. He was submitted to a medical procedure to expel the drug, and is currently under preventive detention in a Maputo police station.

Mudumane also announced that a suitcase was seized at the airport contained pieces sculpted from ivory and two rhinoceros horns, presumed to be the result of poaching. The suitcase was owned by a Vietnamese citizen who was taking it back to Vietnam. But when he realized the bag had been seized, he fled from the airport.

Mudumane said this was the second case of such seizures within a week, and the owners of the bags had all managed to escape. "Measures are under way to discover the whereabouts of these individuals, who are all Vietnamese", he said.

[Read more...](#)

NINI SATAR ACCUSED OF ORDERING KIDNAPPINGS

The General Commander of the Mozambican police force, Jorge Khalau, has claimed, in an interview published in the 19 May issue of the Maputo daily *Noticias*, that convicted murderer Momad Assife Abdul Satar ("Nini") is the mastermind behind most of the kidnappings that have shaken Mozambican cities since later 2011.

Satar is serving a jail sentence of 24 years and six months for ordering the assassination of the country's top investigative journalist, Carlos Cardoso, in 2000. Although he has been held in the Maputo top security prison, and, for a period, in the cells of the Maputo city police command, he has continued to use smuggled cell phones to maintain contact with the outside world.

There have been persistent claims that Satar, from behind prison bars, has ordered at least some of the kidnappings. When a group of kidnappers was brought to trial in September 2013, prosecutors argued that Satar too should be in the dock. Satar himself has claimed to be cooperating with the police, and the weekly paper *Canal de Mocambique* even published copies of letters supposedly sent by Satar to police officers.

Khalau indignantly denied these claims. "Nini is not helping the police identify the kidnappers as some of the press would have us believe", he said. [Read more...](#)

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