

African BUSINESS

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Nigeria: Seismic elections
South Africa: Locos get all clear
Ghana: Looking for divine help

Country Focus:
DR Congo

Industry Focus:
A Sustainable Africa?

Sector Focus:
Mining in Africa

BRIEFS

Compiled by Alexa Dalby



FOOD AND DRINK

Harvard grad seeks perfect tomato in Africa

Harvard Business School graduate Mira Mehta has been splitting her time between the US and Nigeria to get her tomato paste business, Tomato Jos, off the ground. She is launching a company that will harvest and tin locally grown fruit to make an all-natural tomato paste for Nigerian

consumers. They named it Tomato Jos, slang for a "cute girl".

Tomato Jos aims to produce a product with no additives so finding the perfect tomato is key. It has begun to transplant its tomatoes in Panda in the northeast with 40,000 seedlings over 4.5 acres. Mehta hopes at least 1,000 Nigerian farmers will take part in the programme.

"The market in Nigeria is half a billion dollars," she said. "Most tomato-based products are across West Africa so we see export to landlocked companies and building a regional brand."

\$1bn

South Africa's Grindrod will sink \$500m into the first phase of a Zambian Rail project worth \$1bn. The railway line will stretch from Chingola in Zambia's copper mining region to Angola, and is expected to create 1,000 jobs

DATA CENTRES

Data management expands Africa-wide

Nigeria: Nigeria's MainOne is opening its Tier III Lekki Data Centre to address the growing demand for Colocation, Cloud and Disaster Recovery Services. Purpose-built, designed to international TIA 942 standards, it will be managed under subsidiary MDX-i. The \$37.2m investment has capacity for 600 racks.

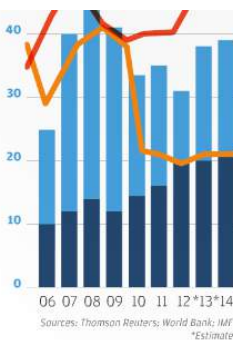
Mozambique: Athlone Investments subsidiary, Vaninga & Investimentos, is building its first data centre in Maputo. It signed with South African Group Telnetix for delivery of core components of a multi-hundred rack. Vaninga plans to add suites of virtual and bare metal servers and offer Cloud and Virtualisation services.

TECHNOLOGY

Award for fastest-growing tech firm

Pan-African integrated payments processing and transaction switching company Interswitch has been ranked the fastest growing technology company on the Deloitte Technology Africa Fast 50 2014, which ranks the 50 fastest-growing technology companies in Africa based on its percentage revenue growth of 1,226% over five years.

For richer, for poorer
 Foreign direct investment (all African countries)



Nigeria switches on first digital city

Calabar, the Cross River State capital, has become Nigeria's first digital city, following its completion of installation of its metropolitan dark fibre optic network infrastructure.

AUTO

New dealerships for electric cars

Four dealerships in South Africa will sell the BMW i3 electric city car and the i8 hybrid sports car when these vehicles go on sale in the domestic market in March. Prices will range from R525 000 (\$43,000) for the standard model to R1.76m. (\$150,000) for the i8.

AROUND AFRICA THIS MONTH

Nigeria

Africa's latest economic think-tank, the Africapitalism Institute, founded by **Tony Elumelu**, held its inaugural board meeting in Abuja, Nigeria. It aims to promote economic prosperity for the continent through long-term investments in

Mozambique

President **Armando Guebuza** (pictured) inaugurated a new international airport in the northern port city of Nacala, shortly to be Brazilian miner Vale's hub for coal exports. The cost of \$200m has been part financed by a loan from the Brazilian state bank, BNDES,



strategic sectors, led by Africa's private sector.



and Odebrecht handled construction.

Liberia

Former football star **George Weah** won a landslide victory in Liberia's senate elections, in polls disrupted by Ebola. Weah got 78% of the vote for the Montserrado county seat, which includes the capital Monrovia. He beat Robert Sirleaf, the son of President Ellen Johnson

Sirleaf, who took nearly 11%.

South Africa

Cape Town's **Hotel Verde** claims to be Africa's greenest hotel, built on eco-friendly principles, the first hotel in Africa offering a carbon-neutral stay, with wind turbines, eco pool, composting room, recycled water, rainwater harvesting and geothermal loop for heating. Building it green

cost about \$1.7m more than an ordinary hotel.

Cameroon

The government, together with mobile operators MTN and Orange, has launched a new tax service called **Mobile Tax**, intended to help taxpayers to pay their property taxes via mobile money. Cameroon has a population of 20m, and property tax collection is estimated to reach a mere

\$16m.