

## WORLD BRIEFS

### KENYA TIMES FINED \$130,000 FOR DEFAMATION

NAIROBI, Kenya (PANA)-The Kenya Times Media Trust, publishers of Kenya Times newspaper, owned by the ruling KANU Party, last week was fined 10 million shillings (about 130,000) by a Nairobi High Court, for defaming a local law firm. The court ruled that the paper defamed Waruhiu K'Owade and Ng'ang'a Advocates, in a front-page article it published May 3, 1990, entitled "Muite's Group Owes Me One Million Shillings." "This action has no doubt put the plaintiff to anxiety and uncertainty," the court ruled. The fine was for aggravated and general damages to the law firm. The court heard that the newspaper was duly supplied with information, which could have corrected the wrongful impression, and that no apology was offered despite demands. The company sued Kenya Times and its former editor-in-chief, Philip Ochieng, for defamation.

### WOMEN MOSTLY HIT BY HIV/AIDS IN MALI

BAMAKO, Mali (PANA)-There are more Malian women infected with HIV than men, said a Counseling, Care and Assistance Center (CESAC) study released in Bamako. Out of 1,324 cases in 2000, the CESAC listed 772 women and 552 men, saying 423 of the women infected are between 25 and 39 years old. Related to the marital status of people infected in 2000, the center screened 369 married women, 208 singles, 159 widows and 26 divorcees. Concerning the analysis of the professional situation of the AIDS victims, the CESAC said there were 508 housewives, 217 from the informal sector, 31 wage earners and 16 students in 2000. The CESAC explained this "higher vulnerability" among women to HIV/AIDS due to their great mucus surface exposed during sexual intercourse. "The sensitivity of the vaginal mucous related to the young age of women, early sexual intercourse or some traditional practices, including infibulations, favor women's infections," said Dr. Dembele, one of the authors of the study. Levirate (wife inheritance), which is another bad practice, also plays a role in the spread of HIV/AIDS in Mali, said Dembele, who gave the case of a young woman of 36, mother of four children, who was forced to marry her late husband's cousin after he died of AIDS. "AIDS among women jeopardizes all the good results in the field of reproductive health and contributes to weakening the balance of our households and of the whole community," concludes the study.

### SOUTH AFRICAN POWER CO. TO REVISE LANGUAGE POLICY

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (PANA)-South Africa's national electricity supplier, Eskom, has agreed to revise the rigid use of English as its means of communication after the Mine Workers Union Solidarity demanded a change. Eskom has conceded to MWU Solidarity's demand that the electricity giant's language policy, which rigidly prescribes the use of English only, should be revised. South Africa has 11 official languages including Afrikaans, Zulu, Ndebele and Xhosa. The power supplier says a consultation process in that regard will shortly commence. Eskom also undertook to replace a rigid language rule, which prescribe to Eskom employees that even messages left on telephones should be delivered exclusively in English, with a new language directive that allows for more flexibility.

### LAWYER BECOMES OPPOSITION LEADER IN BOTSWANA

GABORONE, Botswana (PANA)-Private attorney Otsweletse Moupou has won the presidency of the opposition Botswana National Front (BNF) to become the new official leader of the opposition in Botswana. Moupou garnered 711 votes against his closest rival and outgoing Deputy President Peter Woto's 487 in a hotly contested election. The other contender, John Modise, who got no votes, claimed that the election was rigged in Moupou's favor because his name was initially left out of the list of contenders. The elections, which were conducted in Kanye, 100 km west of Gaborone, the Botswana capital. Moupou's victory ended the influence of the outgoing party president, Kenneth Koma who had led the party like his personal fiefdom.

## INTERNATIONAL

# Apartheid-era foes enter alliance

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (AP) - Once sworn enemies over apartheid, two South African political parties announced an alliance Tuesday that would have been unthinkable under whites-only rule.

The New National Party, heir to the party that instituted apartheid, has joined forces with the ruling African National Congress, which came to power in 1994 after waging an armed struggle to overthrow the racist apartheid regime.

The parties said Tuesday their agreement paved the way for reconciliation among South Africans of all colors.

The coalition lays the groundwork for the predominantly white NNP to gain seats in national, provincial and local governments.

The NNP has 28 seats in the 400-member parliament, and its influence has been waning.

The new coalition may also be able to take control of the council that rules Cape Town, the country's second largest city.

"This is a historic agreement and is based on trust, said Martinus van Schalkwyk, the NNP leader. "It provides us

with a key to reshaping the political landscape and ... breaking down the old racial divisions."

The NNP had been allied with the Democratic Party in the Democratic Alliance, but the merger fell apart.

The Democratic Alliance criticized the merger, saying it simply meant the New National Party had been swallowed by the ANC.

"What the NNP has done can only be described as a monumental betrayal of its mandate and its voters," Democratic Alliance chairman Joe Seremane said in a statement.

Safety and Security Minister Steve Tshwete, a senior ANC member, defended the alliance, saying his party had a "closer affinity" with the NNP than with any other party in the country's parliament.

The ANC and the National Party, the NNP's predecessor, worked together once before in a constitutionally mandated government of national unity after 1994 - an uneasy partnership that aimed at smoothing the country's transition toward democracy. The National Party withdrew from the government after a new constitution was enacted.

# Young African immigrants flocking to France

PARIS, France (PANA)-French immigration authorities have said that hundreds of unaccompanied children enter France each year, 60 percent of them from Africa, to seek shelter and safety from war.

There were 313 unaccompanied children under 18 in 1998, 843 in 1999 and 904 between January and September 2000. The figures have reached 3,000 and half of the children came from Black Africa.

The scope of the problem is worrying the public authorities because, according to human rights activists, the figures are only for Paris and do include unaccompanied children who come by road, train or sea.

The activists said that out of the 3,000 children listed, "about two thirds are not taken care of or simply disappear."

On their arrival at the airport, mainly in the Paris area, and pending a legal decision

on their stay in France, the children detained in "waiting areas."

The detention cells are said to be filthy, and the children are brutalized by police and abused by adults. Some children are often kept there for as long as three weeks at a time.

The situation of these children, said to be fleeing wars and "encouraged by families who are no longer able to ensure their future and who hope to get them out of misery by boarding them on a plane," is worrying the French authorities, according to the immigration authorities.

Within the framework of the "law on the parental authority," the French Senate will look into a government amendment on "isolated foreigners under 18," meaning those who came unaccompanied.

According to the text, any unaccompanied child arriv-

ing at the airport will be "put without delay under the protection of an ad hoc administrator chosen by the state prosecutor."

The administrator will represent him in all the processes related to his detention, to his entry in France, to the sorting out of his administrative situation, and his integration into French society.

Human rights activists condemned the continued detention of the children as they awaited their fate from the authorities.

"By keeping the detentions in the amendment, the government has legalized the depriving of these children under 18 of their freedom while preparing for their repatriation," the activists said.

While admitting that the "amendment is heading in the right direction," activist Claire Brisset believed also that "we have to go further. Children must be once for all kept out of the detentions."

She proposed that the immigration officers should "keep them in special areas, away from the adults, for a maximum of 48 hours. During this period, the state prosecutor might refer to the judge dealing with cases involving minors."

She added that if the "youth does not want or cannot go back to his country, he should be put under the care of the state until he is over 18" when this responsibility should be transferred to the guardianship of associations or government bodies.

In addition, the child should be provided with a lawyer and should have access to vocational training, she said.

Like other human rights activists, Brisset said that a sustainable solution to the issue of the detention centers should be found. "These detention areas are a shame for France, a land of human rights and freedom," she added.

# HIV/AIDS drugs too costly for wide use in Africa

NEW YORK (GIN)-A new study by the International Monetary Fund concludes that few southern Africans will receive antiretroviral treatment for HIV/AIDS because the pharmaceutical costs are still too high.

South Africa and Botswana are possible exceptions, but "only to a limited extent," says the study's author, Markus Haacker of the IMF's research department, in an analysis that highlights the quandary faced by South Africa's policy makers.

By 2010, Haacker estimates, the cost of providing highly antiretroviral treatment to less than a third of South Africans who need it would represent about 1.4 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

With just 10 percent of those needing the treatment receiving it, the cost of all HIV-related health services for South Africa would be close to 1 percent of GDP in 2010, equivalent to nearly a third of public health expenditure in 1997.

For South Africa's poorer neighbors, prospects for treating HIV/AIDS with advanced drugs are dimmer.

Providing one in ten HIV-infected Mozambicans with antiretrovirals right now would raise Mozambique's total HIV-related health expenditure to 3 percent of GDP, rising to

5.9 percent in 2010, according to available data.

This assumes an annual cost of \$1,500 a patient to administer the complex therapy, possible only if the combination of drugs involved can be obtained at about \$500.

This is well below current cost estimates for treating HIV-positive patients in the region.

A recent World Bank study put the annual per patient cost of the treatment in higher-income southern African countries at \$1,400 for the drugs and \$1,000 for supporting services.

This compared with \$698 for the clinical treatment of opportunistic infections associated with HIV, \$79 for the prevention of infections and \$28.50 for palliative care.

South African health officials, seeking to explain President Thabo Mbeki's opposition to giving patients antiretrovirals dependent on state-provided care, have argued South Africa cannot afford to administer the therapy on a sustainable basis.

Haacker concludes that even getting antiretrovirals to 10 percent of patients will be difficult. "Given the serious shortages in personnel and infrastructure the health sector is facing, the scope for alleviating the (effect) of HIV/AIDS on the health sector through financial aid is limited."