

MOZAMBIQUE News reports & clippings

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Journalist Tom Bowker to be expelled Saturday

Tom Bowker, journalist and editor of the respected *Zitamar* newsletter, has been ordered to leave the country by Saturday. The expulsion is entirely unofficial - there is nothing in writing. Tom is British and has been a journalist in Mozambique for seven years; *Zitamar* is a company registered in the UK.

Bowker was called into the Migration Services with his lawyer on Monday (25 Jan) and told verbally that he had to leave by Saturday, based on a complaint from Gabinfo, the government information office. Mendes Mutenda, communications director of Gabino, told the new daily newspaper *Ponto por Ponto* (28 Jan <http://bit.ly/MozEdExpell>) that it has withdrawn Bowker's press card because he "failed to provide documents that prove that *Zitamar* exists."

Bowker had provided *Zitamar*'s UK company registration (which is publicly available on the web) which proves it exists, and specifies "Nature of business: News agency activities." But Gabinfo demanded a press registration, and refused to accept the explanation from Bowker and British diplomats that the UK does not have any form of press registration.

In December, Egidio Vaz, a social media blogger who lauds President Filipe Nyusi, called for Bowker's expulsion because of his reporting of the Cabo Delgado war. But this is apparently the first expulsion of a foreign journalist in more than 30 years.

The real reason for the expulsion is not clear. But it will be widely argued outside that it is because *Zitamar* has been one of best and most accurate reporters on the war in Cabo Delgado. *Zitamar* and *MediaFax* have a good network of correspondents there and with Aclad last year set up *Cabo Ligado* which is now the best weekly report on the war. The government has consistently been trying to prevent reporting of the war, and expelling Bowker may be seen as a way to stop *Cabo Ligado* and reporting of the war.

Zitamar is still mainly a business newsletter, and most major businesses have Frelimo links, so his investigations may have gotten too close to one of the oligarchs. And Frelimo is closing in on the press. Last August, the offices of *Canal de Moçambique* were firebombed, and journalists are increasingly threatened.

But it remains unclear whether Bowker really must leave, as he has been given no formal written notice. Hopefully he will be told that he and his lawyer misunderstood and it was merely a threat of what will happen if he keeps reporting on the war.

French navy already patrolling Mozambique Channel

The French frigate *Nivôse* is already patrolling the Mozambique coast and on 24 January captured a dhow with 417 kg of methamphetamine and 27 kg of heroin, according to press in France, Reunion and Mayotte (26 Jan). The frigate carries a Panther helicopter which was used to stop the dhow.



Frigate *Nivôse*. Photo FAZOI (French forces in the south of the Indian Ocean)

Last October (this newsletter 504, 22 Oct) we reported that crystal meth is now being produced in Afghanistan and shipped via Mozambique along with the heroin. A common shrub known locally as oman that grows abundantly across northern and central Afghanistan contains a naturally occurring form of ephedrine, a key precursor required to produce methamphetamine. This lowered production costs, allowed local production of high quality crystal meth, and provides an important new income for Afghan peasant farmers.

Could Total move offshore?

Africa Intelligence (26 Jan) says Total could move part of its operation from Cabo Delgado to Mayotte, an island 500 km east of Pemba. Mayotte is formally part of France, has a deep water port, a naval base, and a French foreign legion detachment, although the airstrip is not as long as the one at Afungi.

This is clearly a leak or briefing intended to put pressure on President Nyusi but also, perhaps on Total. But does it come from part of the Portuguese government, Total, or the Portuguese military? Unclear.

The natural gas liquification trains will still have to be built on Afungi and have heavy military protections. *Africa Intelligence* claims that the plan is to shift the base for logistics and staff from Palma and Pemba to Mayotte. It also claims that Total has already asked some subcontractors to assess the costs of moving to Mayotte. A range of French companies are involved in the Mozambican gas mega-project, and the newsletter says "French authorities for their part are fully in favour of the Mayotte option, which they see as the 'patriotic' choice." The French government is also promoting the development of Mayotte, which is one of the poorest departments of France.

Total told AIM today (28 Jan) that it was transferring some of its logistic chain and planning to Mayotte, but said that its main base would remain in Pemba and that it would continue to meet its Mozambican local content objectives.

Eloise flood waters going down slowly

Flood waters are going down slowly and the worst problems remain in Buzi. Evacuations to Guara-Guara not far upstream and slightly higher started before Eloise when the area was already flooded. It is intended that people will be resettled there. But the only way out of Buzi is by boat, and the fuel for the boats has run out. Hundreds of people who have lost everything are just waiting. (*O Pais* 27 Jan)

On Wednesday morning, the Buzi river had fallen below flood alert level while the Save and Pungue rivers remained high. Water from heavy rain in South Africa is now passing down the Limpopo river and should reach Xai Xai Friday; flooding is above alert level but not serious.

Unitar has posted three good flood maps: <https://www.unitar.org/maps/latest-maps> The latest from Tuesday (26 Jan) show the extensive flooding around Buzi and that Guara-Guara, just 20 km upstream, is not flooded. It also shows extensive flooding on the Pungue near Mafambisse, but that the main road to Beira remains open. Water levels are declining only slightly.

MercyAir has posted a series of Cyclone Eloise aerial photos 24-25 Jan: <https://bit.ly/2Y938hp> These are excellent photos with date and locations. Photo 61 shows the break in the temporary bridge over the river Save (the upper end of the bridge in the photo). Photos 24, 25, 29-41 are of Buzi town flooded.

UN and government reports, including the government's excellent daily report on river levels, are posted on <http://bit.ly/Moz-flood21> and updated as soon as reports are received or discovered.

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Important external links

Covid-19 daily updated data <https://www.facebook.com/miguel.de.brito1> and <https://covid19.ins.gov.mz/documentos-em-pdf/boletins-diarios/>

Daily flood reports - <http://bit.ly/Moz-flood21>

Cyclone trackers, <https://www.cyclocane.com/> and <https://www.metoc.navy.mil/jtwc/jtwc.html>

Cabo Ligado weekly report on civil war <http://bit.ly/CaboLigado>

Previous editions of this newsletter: <http://bit.ly/MozNews2021> and bit.ly/MozNews2020

Downloadable books: <http://bit.ly/Hanlon-books> Election data: <http://bit.ly/MozEIData>

My Mozambique archive: <http://bit.ly/Mozamb>

Cabo Delgado

Archive with reports, detailed maps, and census data <https://bit.ly/Moz-CDg>

Special reports on the war

Evolution of the war: global vs local. 27 Feb 2020 <http://bit.ly/CDelgadoOrigins>

Religion is shaping Cabo Delgado civil war. 30 April 2020 <https://bit.ly/CDelgadoReligion>

Intensifying argument over roots of war. 28 June 2020 <https://bit.ly/Moz-492>

Are the drums of war silencing any hope of peace? 26 July 2020 <http://bit.ly/Moz-496>

A history of violence presages the insurgency. 13 August 2020 <http://bit.ly/Moz-498>

Military & economic intervention. 3 Sept 2020 <https://bit.ly/CDelgadoIntervene>

Mozambique heroin transit trade

English - LSE - 2018 - <http://bit.ly/Moz-heroin>

Portuguese - CIP- 2018 - <http://bit.ly/HeroinaPT>

2001 first article- *Metical* - English and Portuguese <https://bit.ly/MozHeroin2001>

Gas for development?

Gas_for_development_or_just_for_money?_2015 bit.ly/MozGasEng

Gás_para_desenvolvimento_ou_apenas_dinheiro?_2015 bit.ly/MozGasPt

Background reading

Special reports

Social protection report - 2017 Mozambique - <http://bit.ly/MozSocPro>

Special report on four poverty surveys: bit.ly/MozPoverty

Minimum wage and exchange rates 1996-2018 -- <http://bit.ly/MinWage18>

\$2bn secret debt - in English

Kroll - Full report on \$2bn debt - <http://bit.ly/Kroll-Moz>

Kroll report summary - <http://bit.ly/Kroll-sum>

Key points of Mozambique parliament report - Nov 2016 - <http://bit.ly/MozAR-debt-En>

Following the donor-designed path to Mozambique's \$2.2 bn debt - <http://bit.ly/3WQ-hanlon>

In Portuguese:

Parliamentary Report on the Secret Debt (complete) bit.ly/MozAR-debt

2018 Constitution - <http://bit.ly/2KF588T>

Election study collaboration: We have detailed election data from 1999 through 2014 and are inviting scholars to use this data collaboratively. <http://bit.ly/MozEIData>

Election newsletters are on <http://bit.ly/2H066Kg>

Nine books by Joseph Hanlon can be downloaded, free: <http://bit.ly/Hanlon-books>

Bangladesh confronts climate change (2016)

Chickens and beer: A recipe for agricultural growth in Mozambique (2014) is on <https://bit.ly/Chickens-Beer>

Há Mais Bicicletas – mas há desenvolvimento? (2008)

Moçambique e as grandes cheias de 2000 (2001)

Mozambique and the Great Flood of 2000 (2001)

Paz Sem Benefício: Como o FMI Bloqueia a Reconstrução (1997)

Peace Without Profit: How the IMF Blocks Rebuilding (1996)

Mozambique: Who Calls the Shots (1991)

Mozambique: The Revolution Under Fire (1984)

Apartheid's 2nd Front (1986) <available shortly>

These are still available for sale:

Galinhas e cerveja: uma receita para o crescimento (2014) (free in English)

Zimbabwe takes back its land (2013)

Just Give Money to the Poor: The Development Revolution from the Global South (2010)

Do bicycles equal development in Mozambique? (2008) (free in Portuguese)

Beggar Your Neighbours: Apartheid Power in Southern Africa (1986)

Mozambique media websites, English:

Club of Mozambique (free): <http://clubofmozambique.com/>

Zitamar (paywall): <http://zitamar.com/>

Mozambique media websites, Portuguese (all with partial paywall):

Notícias: www.jornalnoticias.co.mz

O País: www.opais.co.mz

@Verdade: <http://www.verdade.co.mz>

Carta de Moçambique <https://cartamz.com>

Mozambique think tanks and pressure groups, Portuguese:

Centro de Integridade Pública: CIP <https://cipmoz.org/>

Observatório do Meio Rural: OMR <https://omrmz.org/>

Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Económicos: IESE <https://www.iese.ac.mz/>

Centro Para Democracia e Desenvolvimento CDD <https://cddmoz.org/> (some CDD in English)

Fórum de Monitoria do Orçamento - FMO (the main group following the \$2 bn secret debt - now run by CDD) <http://www.fmo.org.mz>

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