1. ALGERIA

**Algerian army chief rejects role in presidential election**

Algeria's army chief, General Ahmed Gaid Salah, has told political parties to keep the military out of next year's presidential election, vigorously pushing back against calls for the army to oversee a transition period. Gaid Salah was responding to a call by the head of the moderate Islamist party, Abderrezak Makri, for the army to pilot a transitional period before an election. NEWS24

2. DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

**DR Congo: Bemba to ask for opposition leaders for 'joint candidate' mandate**

In his first in-depth public remarks since being acquitted in May on appeal for war crimes at The Hague, Bemba told a news conference in Brussels that standing for president was not an obsession but touted his experience and leadership qualities. Candidate registration opened on Wednesday. President Joseph Kabila, who has governed since 2001, is barred by term limits from running but has refused to commit publicly to not standing. That and rising militia violence in Democratic Republic of Congo’s eastern borderlands have raised fears the country could be dragged back to the civil wars of the turn of the century that killed millions, most from hunger and disease. Africa news

**US pressures Kabila to step aside in DRC vote**

With only five months to go before elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the United States on Thursday urged President Joseph Kabila to quickly declare that he will not seek re-election. The vote is to take place two years later than originally scheduled, and after dozens have died in protests against Kabila who has been in power since 2001. Addressing the UN Security Council, US Deputy Ambassador Jonathan Cohen said "the time for posturing is over" and that Kabila must now make clear his intentions for the December 23 vote. News 24

3. ERITREA
Eritrea in new bid to woo US investors

There has been a change of heart in regard to opening Eritrea to investment. Dr Woldai Futur, the director of Eritrean Investment Centre, told private-sector executives in Washington on Tuesday, that Eritrea is seeking to attract investments from the United States. sectors the Eritrean government sees as priorities for its new policy of enticing US capital include agriculture, mining, tourism, fishing and infrastructure. Eritrea has been excluded from African Growth and Opportunity Act (Agoa) in the last 15 years for political reasons. Eritrea growth had reduced to 2% for the last two decades because "economically and socially, everything went to defence. Before war erupted in 1998, the economy was growing at an average of 11 per cent, one of the highest rates in Africa, following its Independence in 1993. THE EAST AFRICAN

4. KENYA

Tenth rhino dead in Kenya after disastrous transfer

A tenth critically endangered black rhino has been reported dead after a botched operation to move the animals to a new reserve in southern Kenya, the country's tourism minister said on Thursday. The 11th rhino is in a critical condition and could also die after being attacked by lions. Tourism Minister Najib Balala, who had ordered detectives to investigate the fiasco, said at a briefing in Nairobi that several of the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) officials involved in the deadly operation had been suspended. Save the Rhinos estimates there are fewer than 5,500 black rhinos in the world, all of them in Africa, while Kenya's black rhino population stands at 750, according to the Worldwide Fund for Nature. THE EASTAFRICAN; AFP

Leaders vow to block land auction set to displace over 40,000

More than 40,000 residents are likely to be displaced as half of a location in Kilifi County, land owned by Giriama Ranching Company Limited is set to be auctioned next month on August 6 for Development Bank of Kenya to recover Sh258 million from its sale. If the land in Bamba location, Ganze constituency, is auctioned, it will be one of the biggest land takeover ever witnessed in the Coast region. DAILY NATION

5. SOUTH SUDAN

MSF medics resolve to stay put despite the fighting and hardship

Violence is widespread and has significantly affected MSF operations, with armed groups attacking health facilities protected by international humanitarian law. Over 50 medical facilities have been attacked and healthcare providers robbed, medical facilities looted, damaged or destroyed. MSF has operated in South Sudan for the past 35 years. MSF has 16 projects in South Sudan, including major hospitals, some with a 160-bed capacity, to
doctors travelling with backpacks to reach those in the villages in need of primary healthcare, and even mobile clinics using boats. We also offer surgeries, caesarean sections, trauma care and including malnourished children. MSF spends $95 million annually on South Sudan, the biggest operation after the Democratic Republic of Congo.

**THE EAST AFRICAN**

**UK warns national against travel to South Sudan**

The UK, through a statement issued by the Foreign Commonwealth Office (FCO), has warned its citizens against traveling to South Sudan over insecurity emanating from several factors related to fighting between rebels and government forces. UK noted that fighting was continuing in South Sudan despite the ceasefire agreement and worsening economic crisis. the FCO statement advised the British nationals in Juba to remain vigilant, monitor the local media and stay in a safe location. **THE EAST AFRICAN**

**Fury as South Sudan MPs given $40,000 car loans**

Lawmakers in South Sudan came under fire on Thursday after it was announced they would receive $40,000 car loans, while more than half the population depend on food aid. Parliamentarians' salaries are just $50 (9,000 South Sudanese pounds). A lawmaker and a parliament spokesman both independently confirmed the scheme to AFP. However, a presidential spokesman defended the $16m expenditure, saying MPs could not be expected to "use motorbikes". Critics have accused the government of rewarding MPs two weeks after they voted to extend President Salva Kiir's term to 2021, stating that the money would have been used to fixing roads and help more than half the population depend on food aid. **THE EASTAFRICAN; BBC**

6. **UGANDA**

**Uganda top court backs lifting of age limit rejects Parliament term extension**

Uganda's Constitutional Court delivered its ruling on the consolidated presidential age limit petition at the High Court in Mbale on Thursday. In the verdict, the five-judge bench, by a majority of 4-1, upheld the removal of the 75-year age cap that allows President Yoweri Museveni, now 73 and in office for 32 years, to seek a sixth term. **EAST AFRICAN**

7. **ZIMBABWE**

**Zimbabwe elections: Opposition says poll threatened by fraud**

Zimbabweans are heading to the polls on Monday to elect their president and members of parliament. It is the first election without Robert Mugabe at the helm. But the opposition says the upcoming polls are already fraught with problems. **Al Jazeera**

'The Crocodile': Zimbabwe's Mnangagwa emerges from Mugabe's shadow
It is hard to imagine Robert Mugabe standing in line for fried chicken and chips at a provincial fast-food outlet. That is exactly what Zimbabwe’s President Emmerson Mnangagwa did last month as he tries to bury the memories of his long ties to Mugabe and rebrand himself as a ‘man of the people’ ahead of what is expected to be a tight election on Monday. Mnangagwa, a 75-year-old who came to power after Mugabe was removed in a de facto coup last November, has campaigned on a promise to mend divisions in Zimbabwe and rebuild the economy. The East African