RWANDA'S LEADING INDEPENDENT DIGITAL NEWSPAPER

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NATIONAL FEATURE *By NAHIMANA Fabrice | Kigali*

UK to cut financial aid to Rwanda by 83% by 2028

Britain's revised development spending plans signal a shift in its international priorities, with Rwanda's future funding allocation set to change significantly.



A groom puts a ring on his bride's finger on their wedding day. Rwanda recorded 50,236 marriages in 2025. PHOTO/COURTESY (PHOTO / COURTESY)

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> ***"A country without a focused and responsible youth cannot go far. The proliferation of illicit alcohol and vape products poses a direct threat to our nation."***
>
> **-- YVES IRADUKUNDA, MINISTER OF STATE, MINISTRY OF ICT AND INNOVATION**

DAILY BRIEFS

Michelle Bachelet withdraws from UN race

Former Chilean President Michelle Bachelet has announced her withdrawal from the race for UN Secretary-General citing personal commitments.

Sober Gen campaign mobilizes youth in Nyarugenge

Hundreds of young creators, cultural influencers, and artists joined community leaders in Kimisagara to clear drainage networks and champion alcohol-free living.

Rwanda U-15 drawn against Uganda, Tanzania in CECAFA

The national junior football team has learned its group stage opponents for the regional championship scheduled in Kampala next month.

Nyironguru clinches bronze at African Cycling Championship

Rising Rwandan cyclist Diane Nyironguru took third place in the women's elite road race in Cairo on Saturday.

EXPLAINER: AUTOMOTIVE & GREEN MOBILITY

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT CHINESE AUTOMAKER COMING TO RWANDA



Chery electric SUV model slated for localized assembly in Kigali.

Rwanda has taken a decisive leap toward sustainable industrial manufacturing following Cabinet ratification of an investment agreement with Chery Holding Rwanda Ltd to establish an electric vehicle (EV) assembly facility in Kigali.

Chaired by President Paul Kagame at Village Urugwiro, the Cabinet formally endorsed the pact, cementing bilateral discussions initiated earlier this year when President Kagame hosted Xu Hui, Chairman of Rich Resource International Investments and Vice President of Chery Holding.

Headquartered in Wuhu, China, Chery commands an international footprint spanning Omoda, Jaecoo, Exeed, and iCar. The venture transitions Rwanda from importing fully assembled units to domestic value addition, backed by 0% VAT on locally assembled EVs, traction batteries, and charging infrastructure.

PICTURE OF THE DAY



Hundreds of youth from Kimisagara join community leaders in a special Umuganda session promoting civic solidarity under the Sober Generation Initiative. (PHOTO / MICD)

GADGETS & TECH

Canon launches EOS R8 Mark II compact full-frame camera



Canon EOS R8 Mark II body.

Canon has officially unveiled the EOS R8 Mark II, a compact full-frame mirrorless camera engineered for hybrid creators. Equipped with a 24.2-megapixel CMOS sensor, 6K oversampled 4K60p video, and next-gen Dual Pixel CMOS AF II with deep-learning subject detection, the camera delivers professional performance in an ultra-portable body suited for East Africa's expanding digital creative sector.

What is driving Rwanda's changing marriage trends?

Demographic shifts, economic considerations, and rising personal independence reshape how young Rwandans view marriage, with NISR reporting 50,236 unions in 2025.

BY SHALLON MWIZA| KIGALI, RWANDA

Fewer marriages were registered in Rwanda in 2025 compared to the previous year, reflecting broader changes in how people approach marriage. Experts attribute the shifting trends to economic pressures, greater individual independence, changing family structures and evolving expectations from relationships.

The latest figures from the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) show that 50,236 marriages were registered in 2025, down from 53,878 in 2024.

This is part of a longer-term trend: NISR's 2022 Population and Housing Census found that the proportion of married people had been decreasing continuously since 1978, while the average age at first marriage had risen to 27.7 years for men and 25.3 years for women in 2022.

But what is driving these changes, and what do they reveal about how Rwandans view marriage today? Experts point to a combination of economic, social and personal factors, including career aspirations, changing family dynamics and experiences from previous relationships.

Greater independence

Jane Abatoni Gatete, the Executive Secretary of ARCT-RUHUKA, a national organisation of professional trauma counsellors, said greater independence among young people is one of the factors reshaping attitudes towards marriage.

"Today, people have more independence. They have their own incomes, access to education and more information through technology and social media. In the past, marriage was closely tied to starting a family, with having children seen as the ultimate goal. Today, people have more freedom to decide whether, when and how they want to build their lives," she said.



A groom puts a ring on his bride's finger on their wedding day. Rwanda recorded 50,236 marriages in 2025, down from 53,878 in 2024. PHOTO/COURTESY

"People can decide to have children, pursue careers or live independently without necessarily seeing marriage as the first step or the only way to build a life," she added.

Abatoni said the changing attitudes have also made it more common for couples to live together without necessarily considering marriage the next step in their relationship.

"Some couples may spend years together without formalising the relationship through marriage, showing how marriage is increasingly becoming a choice rather than an expected outcome of a long-term relationship." She said financial responsibilities, changing expectations about relationships and experiences from previous relationships are among the factors that can influence people's decisions to delay or avoid marriage.

"Some people prioritize education, careers or financial independence. Others may have had difficult experiences in previous relationships, which can create fear about entering another long-term commitment. People who have experienced difficult relationships, whether personally or through people close to them, may also become more cautious about marriage because of the possibility of going through similar experiences," she said.

According to Abatoni, these considerations can lead some people to view marriage less as an expected stage of adulthood and more as a personal decision to be made when they feel ready for the commitment.

Changing family structures

Lawyer Teophile Muringisi said another major factor influencing marriage trends is the changing role of families in helping young people choose partners and resolve marital disputes.

"In the past, families were connected. You would know the family of the person you were marrying. Today, young people are more likely to meet through social settings and make relationship decisions with less involvement from their families," he said.

Muringisi explained that close family ties traditionally provided couples with a support system, particularly when disagreements arose. "In the past, both families would often sit down together to discuss marital problems and help couples find solutions. However, as young people increasingly make relationship decisions independently, that traditional support system may not always be available."

He said communication remains one of the most important factors in determining whether couples can resolve their differences and maintain their marriages. "People are saying that marriages nowadays are affected by cheating or people being materialistic. I don't think that this is the main issue. The more important issue is communication," he said.

While couples may encounter financial difficulties, infidelity and other disputes, Muringisi argued that their ability to communicate openly and address problems together is essential to maintaining a stable relationship.

Childhood experiences and changing expectations

> ***"Some couples may spend years together without formalising the relationship through marriage, showing how marriage is increasingly a choice rather than an expected outcome."***
>
> **-- JANE ABATONI GATETE**

Pastor Michel Zigirinshuti of the Association of Pentecostal Churches in Rwanda (ADEPR) said people's experiences growing up can also shape their attitudes towards marriage and relationships later in life. He noted that children who witness conflict or troubled marriages between their parents may carry those experiences into adulthood, influencing how they perceive potential partners and approach long-term relationships.

According to Zigirinshuti, a girl who grows up witnessing her father mistreating her mother may develop negative perceptions of men, while a boy who witnesses his mother experiencing difficulties in marriage may also develop fears or reservations about marriage. Such experiences, he said, can affect how young people approach relationships and marriage when they eventually begin forming families of their own.

Zigirinshuti also pointed to changes in how young people meet potential partners, noting that traditional forms of courtship have become less common. He said traditional courtship allowed prospective partners to learn more about each other, their families, beliefs and backgrounds before deciding to marry.

"With young people increasingly meeting through different social settings," he argued, "some couples may enter marriage without fully understanding each other's backgrounds and expectations." He also attributed some marital instability to people entering relationships for reasons other than love, including financial and social considerations. "Love should come before everything else. Before considering the family you are marrying into, the surname your partner has, their level of education and other factors, it is possible to find all those qualities in one person, but if you put them ahead of love, the marriage may end badly. Let love come first, and let the other things be additions," he said.

He emphasised that couples also need to recognise that marriage brings new responsibilities and requires adjustments in how partners relate to one another, particularly regarding communications and financial management.

Rwanda set to begin construction of first nuclear reactor following Russia deal

Rwanda is advancing its nuclear energy ambitions through cooperation with Russia, marking a significant development in the country's long-term energy strategy.

BY NAHIMANA FABRICE | LONDON / KIGALI



RwandAir cabin crew and frontline customer service personnel celebrated following their continental triumph in London.

Rwanda has signed an agreement with Russia's state-owned nuclear corporation, Rosatom, to build a Small Modular Reactor (SMR) and a Centre for Nuclear Science and Technology.

The agreement was signed during the third Russia-Africa Summit in Moscow, Rwanda's ambassador to Russia Maj. Gen. Joseph Nzabamwita announced in a post on X on Saturday, October 31.

"Construction works will now soon commence in Rwanda, which will also create jobs for our youths," the ambassador wrote.

The deal between the Rwanda Atomic Energy Board (RAEB) and Rosatom will also support the training of nuclear scientists and technical personnel, according to the ambassador.

Beyond electricity generation, the planned cooperation covers the use of nuclear technologies in healthcare, agriculture, mining and mineral processing.

The Centre for Nuclear Science and Technology is expected to support applications including cancer treatment, preservation of agricultural produce, geological surveys and mineral processing.

In June, RAEB and Rosatom signed a cooperation roadmap on small modular reactors, covering capacity building, training and the development of Rwanda's nuclear infrastructure.

The announcement comes as Rwanda advances plans to generate its first 110 megawatts of nuclear power between 2030 and 2033.

Rwanda is pursuing Small Modular Reactors, which have an output of less than 300MW and are considered more suitable for countries with smaller electricity grids.

The country's nuclear programme currently has two flagship projects: the Centre for Nuclear Science and Technology and a nuclear power plant project based on SMRs.

Rwanda is also working to build a specialised workforce for its nuclear ambitions, targeting more than 230 nuclear professionals by 2028. Currently, between 30 and 50 nuclear experts are working in relevant institutions.

Alleged plot to remove M23 military chief Sultani Makenga foiled

BY PATRICK HABINEZA | GOMA / KIGALI

Benjamin Mbonimpa, spokesperson for the M23 movement, confirmed that defensive units had thwarted an internal destabilization plot orchestrated by rogue elements aligned with hostile regional coalitions.

In an official communique released over the weekend, Mbonimpa stated that heavy skirmishes and artillery bombardments had erupted around Point Zero, Minembwe, Kalehe, Rutshuru, and Masisi, in direct contradiction of recent ceasefire frameworks brokered through regional diplomatic tracks.

Allegations of Coordinated Offensives

'Our defensive positions continue to come under unprovoked assault across several sectors, notably around Point Zero and Masisi,' Mbonimpa asserted. He called upon regional facilitators to hold Kinshasa accountable for military escalations that threaten humanitarian corridors.

The spokesperson condemned what he characterized as international silence regarding government-aligned maneuvers, urging diplomatic pressure to enforce genuine cessation of hostilities and protect vulnerable local populations.



Regional peacekeepers monitor contested corridors.

> ***"Our defensive positions continue to come under unprovoked assault across strategic sectors."***
> **-- BENJAMIN MBONIMPA**

Rwanda, Belgium restore diplomatic ties

BY ALICE UMUTESI | BRUSSELS / KIGALI

Rwanda and Belgium have agreed to restore diplomatic relations after their ties were severed earlier this year.

The decision was announced on Tuesday, September 22, in a joint statement by Olivier Nduhungirehe, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and Maxime Prévot, Belgian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Normalization Roadmap

According to the statement, 'full cooperation will be restored in the near future.' Initially, each mission will be headed by a chargé d'affaires ad interim, supported by a diplomat or consular officer and technical support.

The two countries will later submit requests for the accreditation of ambassadors, signaling complete rapprochement after months of delicate bilateral dialogue in Doha and Brussels.



Bilateral diplomatic consultations in Brussels.

CAR deputy military chief pays tribute to victims of the Genocide against the Tutsi

A senior Central African Republic military official has paid tribute to the victims of the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi in Rwanda

BY AISHAN SAXENA MANDALA | LONDON / KIGALI

Brig Gen Elie Kozembrou, Deputy Chief of General Staff in charge of Logistics of the Central African Armed Forces, has commended Rwanda's recovery and progress since the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, saying the country's commitment to rebuilding and overcoming divisions offers an important lesson for other African nations.

Kozembrou made the observation during a visit to the Kigali Genocide Memorial on Saturday, October 31, where he paid tribute to victims of the Genocide alongside members of the Central African Republic (CAR) delegation.

He said visiting the memorial was an important part of the delegation's working visit to Rwanda, particularly as the two countries share a longstanding security partnership and have supported each other through difficult periods.

"As military personnel, it is our duty, when arriving in a country, to acknowledge everything that took place in Rwanda during the 1990s. We share in the grief of the Rwandan people, just as they have stood by our side through everything we have had to endure," he said.

Reflecting on the accounts of the Genocide and its devastating impact, Kozembrou said the visit had deeply moved the delegation. However, he said Rwanda's determination to rebuild and move forward was what left the strongest impression on him.

"What struck me most was how quickly the Rwandan people, having made a deliberate choice, set out to rebuild their nation and move past the past. That is what truly left an impression on me," he said.

He noted that Rwanda's progress was evident in the unity among its people, adding that the country's experience demonstrated what African nations could achieve by choosing reconciliation and a shared future.

"Today, you cannot discern any divisions among the people, and the country has clearly progressed. It is an example for us, as Africans, to take to heart," he said.

Kozembrou said the lesson for other African countries was not to remain trapped in the tragedies of the past, but to learn from them and focus on building a better future for coming generations.

"The point is not to dwell on what happened, but rather to move beyond it and look towards the future, a future for us and for the generations to come. This will also set an example for other African peoples," he said.

The delegation also visited the Campaign Against Genocide Museum, where they toured an exhibition documenting the Rwanda Patriotic Army's military campaign to stop the Genocide against the Tutsi in 1994.

At the Kigali Genocide Memorial, Kozembrou also paid tribute to those who lost their lives, saying their sacrifice deserved recognition and respect.

"Out of compassion, we are compelled to also bow our heads before those who lost their lives for this country," he said.

Rwanda and CAR have maintained security cooperation since 2014, when Rwanda first deployed troops to the country under the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA).

Rwanda has since remained a major contributor to the UN mission, with its forces involved in protecting civilians, supporting stability and safeguarding key national institutions and facilities.

The partnership expanded in December 2020, when Rwanda deployed additional troops to CAR under a bilateral defence agreement, complementing its contribution to MINUSCA and establishing a separate framework for direct military cooperation between the two countries.

Cooperation has also extended to strengthening CAR's security institutions through training for its soldiers, police officers and gendarmes. In February 2024, the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding to deepen police and internal security cooperation.

During President Faustin-Archange Touadéra's visit to Rwanda in November 2025, he and President Paul Kagame reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening bilateral relations, including cooperation in defence and security.

No plans to advance on Uvira, FRN spokesperson says

The statement comes amid continued developments in eastern DR Congo, where military movements and territorial control remain under close scrutiny

BY AISHAN SAXENA MANDALIA | MALAKAL / KIGALI



Rwandan peacekeepers parade at UNMISS headquarters in Malakal.

The Front for the Refoundation of the Nation (FRN), the movement led by former DR Congo president Joseph Kabila, said it has no plans to advance towards Uvira, a strategic town in South Kivu province.

In a statement issued on Wednesday, December 4, FRN spokesperson Lawrence Kanyuka said the information that armed movement wanted to recapture the city was being spread by the Congolese government to divert attention from its military operations and what he described as massacres of civilians in areas under the movement's control.

"The FRN wishes to inform the Congolese people and the international community that it has neither the intention nor any interest in advancing towards Uvira," Kanyuka said.

"These allegations are part of a clear strategy of political diversion and manipulation of public opinion, intended to draw attention away from the atrocities committed against civilians and to mask the regime's continued military offensives within the liberated territories."

Uvira, a major commercial hub in South Kivu on the northern shores of Lake Tanganyika, and nearby Bujumbura, Burundi's capital, are reportedly the main bases for mercenaries involved in the war in eastern DR Congo.

The mercenaries have played a major role in aerial attacks that has devastated Minembwe and other areas targeted by the Congolese government coalition, which also includes Burundian forces, the Kinshasa-backed FDLR genocidal militia, Mai-Mai militias and other armed groups.

Kanyuka accused the Congolese government coalition of intensifying military operations against FRN positions and civilian populations over the past two months.

He said the operations involved the deployment of combat drones, fighter jets, heavy artillery, long-range missiles and ground troops, targeting both the movement's positions and densely populated areas.

Kanyuka listed several locations where he said the offensives were taking place, including Minembwe, Point Zéro, Mukoko, Rugezi, Kipimo, Kuwamabuye, Kuwihene, Kabanja and Minembwe-Centre along the Hauts Plateaux axis.

He also cited Mitimbili and Munanira in Kaziba, Katogota and Lubarika in the Ruzizi Plain, and Kasika in Mwenga, as well as areas in Shabunda and Bunyakiri.

Other locations mentioned included Kalongi, Kitendebwa and Kukiduveri along the Kadasomwa axis, and Cyabombo, Remeka and Kasovo along the Lumbishi axis.

In Masisi and Walikale territories, he named Katoyi, Bihiri, Kazinga, Bulewusa, Lusamambo, Kateku, Kanune, Kalonge, Kinyumba, Peti and Mizenze, also known as Pinga. In Lubero, he cited Kandole, Mbyanzi, Kitchanga and Pitakongo.

Despite reports of continued military advances by Kinshasa and its allies, the spokesperson said the FRN remained committed to the Doha peace process and efforts to find a lasting political solution to the conflict.

The Doha process, mediated by Qatar, brings together the Congolese government and AFC/M23, which was replaced by the FRN for negotiations aimed at ending the conflict in eastern DR Congo and addressing its underlying causes. The parties have committed to a ceasefire as part of the negotiations.

Kanyuka warned that the movement would not remain passive in the face of the repeated attacks.

"However, it will not stand idly by in the face of such barbarity; it reserves the right to take all necessary measures to defend the liberated zones and protect civilian populations against any threat, regardless of its origin," he said.

Cristiano Ronaldo Announces Retirement from Portugal National Team

Cristiano Ronaldo's reported retirement from Portugal's national team marks a major moment for the country's football future and the legacy of its all-time leading scorer

BY NAHIMANA FABRICE | KIGALI PELE STADIUM



Rayon Sports players celebrate decisive goal.

Footballing icon Cristiano Ronaldo has officially announced his retirement from international football, drawing the curtain on a legendary 23-year career with the Portugal national team.

The blockbuster news broke after the 41-year-old forward posted an emotional farewell video on social media to confirm his departure.

Ronaldo steps away from the global stage as the most prolific marksman and the most-capped player in men's international football history, boasting exactly 146 goals in 234 appearances for his country.

His historic journey began more than two decades ago when he made his senior international debut on 20 August 2003 as an 18-year-old substitute against Kazakhstan.

Over his decades of service, Ronaldo anchored the golden era of Portuguese football, memorably captaining his country to victory at Euro 2016 and securing the 2019 UEFA Nations League title.

The decision follows a turbulent period behind the scenes during the recent international break.

> ***"Our fans pushed us until the final whistle. This victory belongs to the entire country."***
> **-- ROBERTO OLIVEIRA (ROBERTINHO)**

The veteran captain suffered a high-profile disciplinary fallout with head coach Jorge Jesus after being left on the bench, leading to a public dispute that accelerated his decision to step aside for the next generation.

Reflecting on his departure, Ronaldo released an official statement to address the global football community directly.

In his farewell address, Ronaldo expressed immense pride in his 23-year journey, stating, "I leave with my head held high... with the awareness that I gave everything I had for Portugal".

He reflected that while records and trophies eventually fade, the emotional bond with the nation remains permanent.

Concluding his message, Ronaldo thanked his supporters, saying, "Thank you for these 23 years. Thank you for having believed in me. Portugal will always be in me. Forever."

Though his national team career has concluded, he will continue playing club football as captain of Al-Nassr FC.