

# 'The EastAfrican' returns to Tanzania

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*The EastAfrican*, the region's authoritative weekly newspaper, is back in circulation in Tanzania after a year out of the market.

The paper stopped being printed and circulated in Tanzania on January 21, 2015 after the government banned it for "lacking proper registration" despite having been in the market for 20 years and top government officials presiding in celebrations of its key milestones.

On Friday the Assistant Registrar of Newspapers Raphael Hokororo issued Mwananchi Communications, a subsidiary of Nation Media Group which publishes *The EastAfrican*, with a new certificate of registration.

"I hereby certify that *The EastAfrican* has this day been registered under the Newspapers Act No. 3 of 1976," read the certificate signed by Mr Hokororo.



Image via Pxabay

Tom Mshindi, the Nation Media Group's editor-in-chief, said: "We are delighted that *The EastAfrican* is finally back and able to operate freely and to circulate in Tanzania. We appreciate the cooperation we have received from government agencies during the registration."

"As we return to the streets, we wish the new government of President Magufuli and the Tanzanians well in their efforts to improve the lives of citizens and to develop an all-inclusive, transparent and equitable environment for businesses to grow," Mshindi said.

He added that *The EastAfrican* would remain true to the pursuit of media independence, objectivity and integrity in the conduct of public affairs. "This we will continue to live up to without fear, favour or bias," he stated.

Hokororo had a year ago sent a letter to Mwananchi Communications instructing the company to "immediately stop publishing, printing and circulating the newspaper until it has officially registered."

The order came days after then Tanzania Government spokesman, Assah Mwambene, raised issues with a cartoon that criticised the country's President Jakaya Kikwete on his fight against corruption and an opinion that criticised Tanzania's stance against UN-backed force to take on the FDRL rebels in the Democratic Republic Congo (DRC).

"The barring was unfortunate because we had run smoothly in the market for 20 years. We are heartened by government assurances that the disruption was not caused by disregard for press freedom or journalistic independence," Mshindi said.

Speaking on the newspaper's return to Tanzanian newsstands, Felix Mosha, chairman of the East African Business Council (EABC) said it was a positive development that showed East Africans were able to resolve obstacles to regional integration.

"The newspaper in the past had contributed to business development and integration. Its absence was definitely a setback. I welcome this development as one which will foster further cooperation in the region," Mosha.

John Reyels, Deputy Head of Mission, at the German embassy in Dar es salaam said: "I have always valued *The EastAfrican* for its reliable reporting, sharp analysis and entertaining cartoons. I am glad it is now back on the Tanzanian market. It will make my weekend!"

Executive Secretary of the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) Kajubi Mukajanga sent a congratulatory message Friday to *The EastAfrican* in Dar es Salaam saying "We are very excited that a major player in the media is now back to Tanzanian news stalls. We believe that Tanzanians will continue to be treated to high quality journalism that is niche of *The EastAfrican*. On part of the Council we congratulate *The EastAfrican* and we promise to keep fighting for a media-friendly legal regime."

Zitto Kabwe, leader of Alliance for Change and Transparency (ACT-Wazalendo) said he had missed *The EastAfrican* and its reliable regional news.

"It was hard getting to grips with regional affairs without it... I am happy to go back to my ritual of every Saturday morning walking to a newspaper stand and grabbing my copy. *The EastAfrican* was good for our democracy."

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